The Simple Life of a Rural Community

In Bradford, in the north of England, the 100th birthday of the Reform Temple was recently celebrated by the whole city. One hundred trees were planted in Israel in the name of the Mayor and all the citizens, Jewish, Christian, and Muslim.

POHORELICE, MORAVIA

The chairman of the Reform congregation, Bob Ellinger, who came to Bradford after World War II and has worked hard for good relations between the different faiths there, is from the 1,000-year-old Jewish community of Pohorelice.

Mr. Ellinger told the Archive: "Before I left, my parents took me to the graveyard and showed me the tombstone of the first Ellinger in Pohorelice, going back to the 15th century."

BOB ELLINGER: We left Pohorelice in October, 1938, when it was ceded to Germany [as part of the Sudetenland]. Up to that time you still had the old ghetto, the *Judengasse,* and those little narrow streets. We had a very large temple, with two flights up, and the Jews lived close to it.

I don't think you can imagine how primitive it was. We didn't have running water or electricity. There was a communal pump. My grandparents were very modern, they actually had a water closet. The maid always had to bring water from the pump and pour it into the tank.

The 500-year-old Jewish graveyard of Pohorelice.

My grandfather Heinrich Ellinger was at one time Mayor of Pohorelice. I don't know if they went to school together, but when Masaryk came through, he stopped and talked to my grandfather.

> **ABOUT POHORELICE**
>
> In Roman times three Jews founded Pohorelice in what was then wild forest, according to old tradition. The ancient synagogue was supposedly built in the year 4475 of the Jewish calendar, 724 A.D.
>
> Modern scholars doubt these claims. But customs records do establish that Jewish families lived in Pohorelice in the early 10th century, making it one of the oldest Jewish communities in Czechoslovakia.

A lot of the Jews were connected with agriculture. The Schnabels, and Pollaks, and so on were either farming themselves or connected with the buying and selling of cattle. Kobler repaired agricultural machinery. Schnabel's garden bordered on the river, and in front was a big farmyard with a haystack.

For the threshing: Imagine a little pyramid on a pivot, with four arms, and cows or horses marched round driving this threshing machine!

During harvest time, poor people came from Slovakia and were taken on and paid so much to clear a field. Twice a day a water wagon went out, a horse-drawn carriage with a large bowl containing dripping water. As kids, if we could hitch a ride on that, it was lovely!

We had Jews from Carpatho-Russia on *hachsharah* [agricultural training for emigration to Palestine], around '34. Opposite the synagogue was a little building they were given. There were about eight blokes and two girls, they worked for the Jewish farmers.

There were two Jewish pubs, the Gasthaus Adler and the Gasthaus Spitz, within a hundred yards from each other. Saturday night, one either met at Gasthaus Adler or Gasthaus Spitz. One thing I particularly remember was the first radio. It must be the early '30s. Mr. Adler and three or four others clubbed together to buy the first radio set, and you could listen to it in a special room of his Gasthaus.

One or two [people] already had cars. Once a week, when they went to Brno, which was 17 miles away, people always tried to get lifts. People really used to watch their pennies. To no avail, because in the end Hitler came and took the lot! The first petrol [gasoline] pump was outside Adler's Gasthaus, which also was the stop of the postal bus between Brno, Nikolsburg, and Znaim.

The Rabbi, called Dr. Kahan—he was a *kohanim.* The *kohanim* was not allowed to be in a house where there was a dead person, nor is he allowed in the cemetery to grieve. The rabbi lived in the same house as the Feldmans. When the old man Feldman died, he had to move out immediately.

Bob Ellinger at the Pohorelice bus-stop in 1985.

Mr. Ellinger studied electrical engineering at the Brno technical college and came to England in February 1939. When war broke out, he worked on electric air-raid warning equipment for Britain. He joined the Czechoslovak army and fought in France. After the war he married Inge, a Jewish refugee from Germany, and settled in northern England.

A Photographer's World

A renowned photographer and former chief of television at the United Nations, Bedrich Grunzweig has lived in the eye of the storm and captured the history of his times on film. His photos have been shown in several countries, including Switzerland and People's China. His awards and prizes are too many to list.

Melancholy, haunting, of magical beauty, his photos of the Prague ghetto captured the spirit of a vanished world. They were exhibited at the Jewish Museum of New York.

Today 79, Mr. Grunzweig took his first photos in Brno at the age of 15 with "a little box camera." About his fascination with photography, he says, "It's a simple joy in life. Something which is not only a hobby but a social contribution too."

A former sugar factory employee, Mr. Grunzweig escaped Nazi-occupied Czechoslovakia with a Gestapo passport obtained by bribery. He reached New York and worked at the World's Fair.

BEDRICH GRUNZWEIG: The family went to Terezin. My grandmother was 92. My father died in Terezin in May 1942. My mother was shipped on September 19 on a 1,000-people transport to Estonia. My brother and his wife were directly shipped to eastern Poland and perished. One doesn't really know the whole circumstances. One of the problems is one really fears to make the inquiries, to have to face the detailed realities.

Mr. Grunzweig did not go back to Czechoslovakia for 30 years. In 1969 he stood outside his former home in Brno, unable to go in. Three years later, on a second visit, he went upstairs and rang the bell.

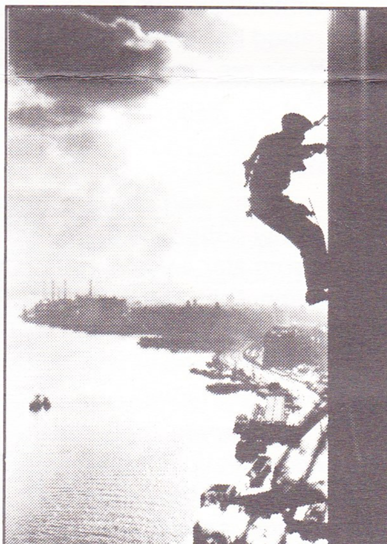
BEDRICH GRUNZWEIG: They let me in. So I was after nearly 40 years in the same apartment where I grew up. Little changes had occurred. But basically it was the same. The window was cracked—the crack was still there. It was wonderful. I sat there for two or three hours. We talked, we had some wine, we talked about America, about the old times. They were so friendly; Christian Czechs who took me into their midst. I was very fortunate. It relieved my feelings of fear and loss.

Affluent Jewish mothers in Brno in the '20s invited their daughters' friends to dancing classes. "It was a very sheltered, intelligent life. Nobody had any great worries about the future." Teenagers at a class arranged by Mrs. Gerstmann, c. 1929.

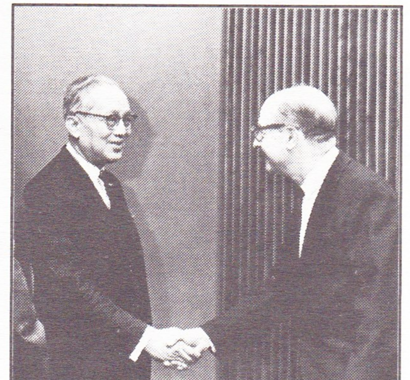
Family vacation: the Grunzweigs at Namest, Moravia, 1913

Mrs. Ernestine Bondy, Mr. Grunzweig's grandmother, at home. She was sent to Terezin aged 92 and died there.

Brno: Car race fans, 1930s



"Human fly" on the U.N. Secretariat building. Photo by B. Grunzweig, 1950



Secretary-General U Thant greets Mr. Grunzweig at the U.N., 1965

How a Slovak village saved a Jewish family

Mrs. Aurelia (Relly) Kolar, now of Tamarac, Florida, has given the Archive an account of efforts by the Mayor and people of the little country town of Myjava, Slovakia, to save Jews from the Germans, at the risk of their own lives. We give here a brief excerpt from her remarkable testimony.

RELLY KOLAR: I was informed by my good friend the Notary's [Mayor's] wife that Jews will be taken away. I told this to all the people in the town. My husband went to the next town, Nove Mesto, where the Notary was hiding to escape responsibility. We were not allowed to travel, but my husband didn't look Jewish. He put on a little hat, and he went to the next town, risking his life, to find the Notary.

The Kolars got false papers for themselves and then helped several Jewish neighbors escape into hiding. Mr. Kolar risked his life to take a six-year-old boy to Bratislava to his aunt, married to a Christian.

RELLY KOLAR: Again, the Notary's wife told me the Germans are coming in two days. She knows this, she heard everything and she would tell me. They were wonderful people. She was like an angel. There was no difference, Jews or non-Jews. So she told me the Germans are coming, so the people should hide.

So my brother went with my mother, they went hiding in a hole in the woods. And other people went away if possible.

Mrs. Kolar's great-grandparents, Abraham Bustin and his wife.

I was promised by a local doctor to take us with an ambulance to the Underground. So I went to the beauty parlor—that saved us, really!—and had my hair dyed blonde. . .But the Germans came one day before.

I get dry in my throat when I talk about it. The man in the beauty parlor came: "The Germans! The Germans are here! You have to leave because they would kill us!"

"All right." Anyway, I wanted to leave because I was anxious to know what happened to my son and my husband. Right in the next block was my building. I see the German soldiers banging on my door. There were lots of people around, and I go right in the middle of the people, with the Germans, everything. I see what happens.

I sought out a neighbor and I said, "Go from the back and take a look, if they are there."

There was a Slovak Gestapo's wife with the people. If she would have raised her finger, they would know that's me, they would have taken me. But she was afraid of the other people. They would have killed her. They liked us so much.

So the woman went, and came back to say nobody is there. Then I heard afrom afar a voice, calling "Janko!" I instinctively know it's for me. So I followed the man, and he took me to a chicken coop where my husband and son were hiding.

The family hid in the chicken coop till night, and then moved to a haystack. They were hungry. Little Tomas, aged 3, had picked up two eggs and put them in his pocket. His mother gave him the raw eggs to eat.

RELLY KOLAR: My husband once saved the life of a boy, and the boy's father said, "Whenever something happens, don't worry, we will take care of you." So we sent word to these neighbors, the boy should pick us up and take us somewhere.

At night the Slovak boy, Malicek, came to the haystack and took them to his parents' home.

RELLY KOLAR: The same night a mailman came and said, "All the

From Slovakia to the U.S.: Seven generations of Mrs. Kolar's family.

people what are hiding Jews are killed and the houses burned." The wife was pregnant. Naturally, she said, "No, you can't stay here." So at night the boy, instead of letting us go, took us in the very far woods. Imagine! We went through the German guards, through everything, dressed like peasants, and we went to his grandparents, in the deep woods, in Stara Myjava.

So we came to his grandparents and they were hiding us. We took along some money, but I wouldn't say it was for the money, They needed the money, naturally. But they were angels. Nobody would have done it, but they did. There were houses burning around, the Germans found somebody. That same night the grandfather took us to another place, where also somebody said he would hide us.

The family were finally sheltered by a Slovak forester and his wife, an elderly couple.

QUESTION: Why did they help you?

RELLY KOLAR: They were good people. They were very good people.

The forester and his wife, together with Mr. and Mrs. Kolar, built a hiding-place in the roof between two beams, with a ladder to go up and down. When it was safe, Kolars stayed on the second floor, where the forester kept garlic and stores. When anyone came, the Kolars went up into the roof and hid in piles of straw.

RELLY KOLAR: Next day came the Cherkessy. That's the Russian army that collaborated with the Germans, I think for money or something. They came with long braids and on horses right in the kitchen! So we heard the best thing to keep them from coming up is bring them garlic. So [the forester's wife] took all the garlic down. . . They were wild people. We were afraid. There was a little window, and we covered it with grease, and made a little hole to look through. So we saw them.

And then they ran away because of the Germans. Then came the Germans looking for the Cherkessy. So we said, now we are finished.

We lay in the hay, and the Germans were looking in every house for the Cherkessy. So they burned a house where they found somebody, burned it down. And we were upstairs, and we said when they come to us, when they find us, they find us. We can do nothing. We couldn't run away. There were soldiers all around us.

So we said good-bye to each other. We kissed each other.

In the end, it took till morning, but nobody came to our house. Next morning we found out why. The captain from the German army was living in our building. So they didn't come to this house. Everything was luck! Everything was luck!

Next day, when these people went for training or something, my husband and the man built a second roof. Between the two roofs we were hiding.

That man had us, and, in back, where his cows were, he had the Underground—partisans! In the same building! And the German in the house!

QUESTION: How did you keep your little boy quiet?

RELLY KOLAR: He had to be quiet. When he wasn't quiet he would get a little slap. But he was smart. He was quiet.

One day a cannon was shooting right behind our building. My boy was lying there, and he had such a shock he couldn't move for two hours. I massaged him for two hours. Everything I massaged, always massaged. My son remained hard of hearing, The nerve got damaged. . .

(One day the family was taken by surprise on the second floor.)

RELLY KOLAR: For six hours we were standing with the little boy in one place, and the German was cleaning his gun on the table. My son, suddenly he moved his foot, a little boy you know!—and right away some clay fell on the gun. The German jumped up. "Who is there? Somebody is there!"

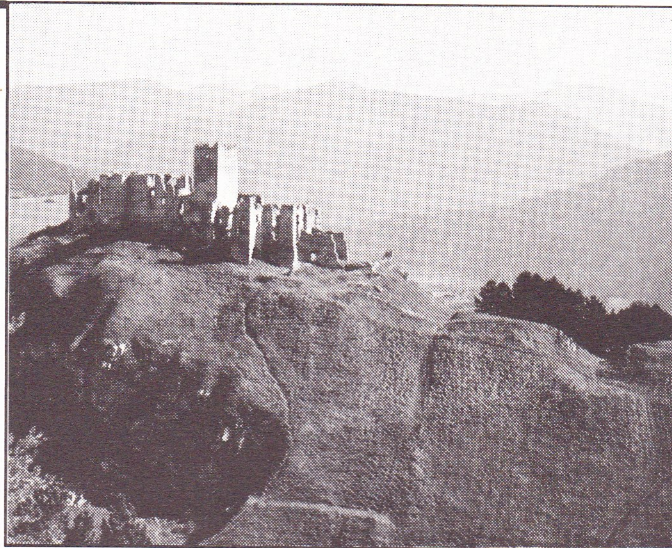
The woman said, "What do you mean, somebody is there! Chickens! I have chickens up there." In the meantime, while he was talking, we went up in the hiding place, and she went "Hesh, hesh, hesh!" and gave the chickens to eat. That saved us.

Then there was a pig. That saved us, too! The pig would grumble so hard that it saved us.

Oh, you don't know what was going on. We were thinking, it would be better to be taken to a concentration camp. Every second was such a fear. If it wouldn't have been for the little boy, we would have long time gone to the Germans and given ourselves up. But the little boy, we couldn't just leave him. The nuns offered to take him, but [my husband] wouldn't let them. He said, "If we die, we die together. We are Jewish people, and we will stay together."

After the war, Mrs. Kolar found her brother and mother. They had survived hidden in a hole in the ground in the forest. Peasants had smuggled food to them. But her sister and little nieces had been killed in Auschwitz.

Mr. and Mrs. Kolar, their son, and a daughter born after the war, came to the United States in 1950. Mrs. Kolar, now widowed, is active in the Florida Jewish community and writes for *The Jewish Floridian.* Her son is a systems analyst in New York. Her daughter is married with three children. Her brother, Ervin Danek, lives in Israel with his wife, two children and eleven grandchildren.



Slovak partisans fought German troops in the mountains and forests in the National Uprising of 1944.

Mrs. Kolar's husband Alfred (3rd from right) played on Myjava's Maccabee soccer team.

King of Poland for One Night

Aged 94, Emil Glauber of New York City vividly remembers the old Jewish quarter of Tachau, destroyed by fire in 1911. He also remembers Jewish village life, gradually disappearing as Jews moved to the towns in search of better jobs.

TACHOV, BOHEMIA

EMIL GLAUBER: At the beginning of the 20th century there were at least six or seven small Jewish communities around Tachov. My grandparents from my father's side came from Langendorflis. There were six or eight Jewish families there.

Grandfather went out on Sunday morning and came home on Friday evening. He went from village to village as a peddler. So did many others.

Q: Where did he sleep?

EMIL GLAUBER: In the villages, they had part of a house. But of course no running water, no toilets, no light, nothing.

Q: What did he sell?

EMIL GLAUBER: All kinds of goods: textiles, sometimes food, whatever he could find. No horse, nothing. On foot, with a pack, fifty or eighty pounds, on his back.

Every summer I was in Ronsperk with my [maternal] grandparents. My grandfather Abraham Langschur had a big farm and a store where they sold everything you can imagine.

My grandfather, with maybe six or eight other men, were every Saturday afternoon with the rabbi for four or five hours studying Talmud. And they had a fantastic Jewish library—old books. I can remember fifty or a hundred, big books, leather bound.

Count Coudenhove Callergi was the count at Ronsperk, and my grandfather was at least once a week up at the castle. He studied with him Talmud and Jewish history. The count wrote a book, against anti-Semitism. At that time he was ambassador to Japan of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy and he married a Japanese girl. As often as they went by in the carriage, they waved. Sometimes they came in and talked to my grandfather.

There was a doctor in Ronsperk called Starkenstein. From my grandparents, when I was 13 or 14, I heard that he had an ancestor who was King of Poland for one night. The king died, and they couldn't find a successor. All the nobles were assembled there. And they knew that guy—he was a nice guy most likely—he was a Jew, and they made him king for one night.*

The medieval Judengasse of Tachov, 1907: Three Americans on a visit to their family. Emil Glauber took this photo aged 13 "with a camera I got for my barmitzvah." The old Jewish quarter was destroyed by fire in 1911.

Q: What did he do when he was king?

EMIL GLAUBER: (laughing) He couldn't do much!

There were about 200 Jews in Tachau. They were comparatively rich. But they came up, most of them, from poor parents. For instance, one Jew started an industry to make mother-of-pearl buttons. A big shipping company went to Asia, they loaded [the ships] with mother-of-pearls, and brought them to Tachov. It was the family Adler. They had people who turned the mother-of-pearls into small buttons, and brought them every Thursday or Friday to Tachov. They drilled them and polished them. The buttons had to be sewed on cardboard, on one side silver, on the other side blue. All by hand, nothing by machines.

THE FAMILY LAW

The history of the Glauber family is bound up with a terrible law: the denial to Jews of the right to marry and have children. The so-called "Family Decree" of 1726, which continued up to 1848, limited the Jewish population in Bohemia and Moravia by assigning each family a number. When a father died, his number went to his oldest son, who only then could marry.

In 1814 the father of Isak Bloch sold his number to Jakob Ehrlich. Isak thus could not marry the girl he loved, Susanne Klauber. Their illegitimate son Benedikt received his mother's name. He changed it to Glauber, meaning, believer.

There were Jewish families, very very poor, and we kids went there and we had a heap of pearls and sewed them on. Jewish kids, six, seven, eight, nine years old. We did it for nothing. The wives—maybe for a dozen they got a penny.

We were three brothers in the First World War. My father made a promise: If we all come back safe and sound, he will stand on Yom Kippur—Kol Nidrei and Yom Kippur all day standing. Which he did until he died. Those were different times.

We all became pretty religious, because of our Rabbi, Dr. Wohl. He was such a kind person. He could tell us what religion means. He always told us: Never forget you are Jewish.

*R. Saul Wahl Katzenelbogen, who died 1617 in Brest-Litovsk; the king was Stephen Bathory, according to a family history by Emil Starkenstein, now in Mr. Glauber's possession

NEWS AND NOTES

We'd like to hear from readers. Please write to Voices, 86-17 139 Street, Jamaica, NY 11435. If you have questions, we will try to answer them.

Bedrich Rohan, Kafka wohnt um die Ecke. Freiburg, Herder, 1986. Bedrich Rohan, Wo Marx die Revolution erfand. Freiburg, Herder, 1989.

"There were certain Jewish families in Prague whose names filled whole columns in the phone book and were thus jokingly called 'collective names,' like Klepetar, Porges, Rubicek, or Kafka." The journalist Franz Bacher as a student was short of money and devised a brilliant method for getting a free meal. After Jewish funerals, the reception was traditionally held at the Bristol Hotel on Dlouha ulice. Sizing the situation up from a distance, as the guests began streaming from the synagogue to the restaurant, Bacher joined them.

"Excuse me, sir, but which family are you with?" the usher at the door would ask. "Porges," replied the hungry student, and headed for the buffet.

This is Prague between the wars, a city of Czechs, Jews, Germans, three languages, three spirits—"a side-by-side, an opposition, and a together-with"—marvelously evoked in Bedrich Rohan's witty, poignant, gentle book. For our postwar generation, it is a tour guide to a lost world, its forgotten landmarks, its obliterated people.

For Rohan, the Golem becomes a symbol for Prague and its fate. "The walls and buildings are empty husks... The soul, the spirit of an utterly different past, the 'name', is no longer there."

Mr. Rohan, born in Aussig, Bohemia, a former foreign editor of the Prager Tagblatt and news chief of Czech television, twice came to London as a refugee: in World War II when he fought in the Czechoslovak Army, and then again in 1969.

His new book chronicles the lives of German exiles in London. With a wonderful blend of scholarly research and personal reminiscence, Rohan connects up historic figures—Holbein, Handel, Marx—with 20th-century refugees from the Nazis.

Research project

Judith Wolt, a research librarian at the Monmouth, New Jersey county library, is preparing a slide presentation on the Czechoslovak Torah scrolls.

She appeals for the following photos: photos illustrating Jewish trades and occupations between the wars, especially the lumber trade and banking; photos of places, especially Zilina, Banska Bystrica, and Bratislava; photos of Jewish centers between the wars; photos of the Torah scrolls amassed in Prague.

The daughter of Czechoslovak immigrants, Ms. Wolt is adult education chairperson at Temple Shaari Emeth, Manalapan, N.J.

Apologies

In the last issue of *Voices*, we incorrectly stated that Paul Hartman "fled" to the south of France. On the contrary, he left Paris to volunteer for the Czechoslovak Army, before Germany invaded France. We are very sorry for this error.

Also, Mr. Hartman arrived in the U.S. in January, 1948—not 1947. His great-grandfather Adolf Popper was not the manager of the Pilsen brewery.

The author of the Terezin article in Judaica Bohemiae was Miroslav Kerner. We apologize for misspelling his name.

TREE OF LIFE MEMORY QUILT

To mark the reunion in Israel in 1990, the Archive is organizing a "memory quilt" for the Jews of Czechoslovakia. We dedicate the quilt to the idea of peace.

The quilt will depict the Tree of Life, recalling that all human beings are part of one family. Women of Czechoslovak Jewish background will be asked to embroider a leaf for the tree with the names of their family and community.

Blossoms on the tree will be embroidered with the names of great figures of the Czech Jewish past, from Rabbi Low and Chatam Sofer to Freud and Kafka.

A tablet under the tree will mourn Jewish men, women, and children of Czechoslovakia murdered in wars and riots through the centuries, up to our own time.

Perched on a branch will be the Phoenix, the bird of legend that rises out of its own ashes. On the topmost branch will be the Dove of peace.

Around the quilt borders will be embroidered symbols of peace, life, and hope, and four quotations drawn from the Czechoslovak Jewish past:

1. "He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered." (Psalm 111)
2. "And they shall rise again as the grass of the earth." (Psalm 77)
3. "Not by sword, nor by power, but by my Spirit," saith the Lord of Hosts. (Zechariah 8)
4. "Pravda vitezi" (Truth will conquer) (Thomas Masaryk)

Please help

We thank Susan Louis, a gifted New York quilter, for acting as quilt consultant. Susan worked on the Long Island Quilt for the Homeless and organized the Noah's Quilt project to help endangered wildlife.

We need an artist, quilters and embroiderers to help make the quilt. If you can help, please write: Tree of Life Memory Quilt, 86-17 139th Street, New York 11435.

Voices is mailed free to contributors to the Archive. Copies may be purchased for $2.50 each, postage included. Proceeds help the Archive. Send check or money order to:
CJC Archive, 86-17 139th Street, Jamaica, New York 11435.

Editor Ruth Davis
Graphics Richard Schultz

The Archive gratefully acknowledges the editorial advice of Margaret Lambert, Barbara F. Palladino, and Esther Pollack.

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He Interrogated the Nazi Leaders

Kurt Robert Wilheim will go down in history as the only Jew to have met and talked with the Nazi leadership. A U.S. Army interrogator during World War II, in 1945 he was handed a top-secret assignment called "Ashcan."

Only when he arrived at the old Palace Hotel of Mondorf-les-Bains in Luxemburg, did he find out whom he would be questioning. They were Nazi Germany's top military and political establishment—from Hermann Goering to foreign minister Joachim von Ribbentrop; Alfred Jodl, chief of Germany's armed forces; Alfred Rosenberg, Reichsminister for the East, and many others.

Wilheim, in peacetime a knitting yarn wholesaler who came to New York as an immigrant from Brno in 1938, says, "I still feel, as I felt then, that none of us was really qualified for this job. It should have been done by men with legal background but—that's the way the Army works!" The U.S. Army rated him less modestly, decorating him for his service.

First Lieutenant Wilheim served in North Africa, Italy, and France. In 1944, "our armies were advancing into Germany and one day I shipped 24 German generals back to my unit." When the war ended Wilheim went to look for his family, driving a U.S. army jeep first to Buchenwald concentration camp. There he saw the unforgettable reality of the Nazi crimes. In Prague, he learned that some of his family were alive in Terezin.

ROBERT WILHEIM: The next morning I drove to Terezin. There was the cholera there and it was just declared safe. I drove back in the afternoon with my jeep full of people; one of them was Dr. Otto Saxl, director of the Brno children's hospital.

Late in the evening, I had my lights on, and a rabbit ran out and I ran over it. All the people said, "Stop, stop, stop!" I said, "Why should I stop?" Nu, at that time, they had no meat. They picked up the rabbit and took it and probably had a meal from it.

On his return, Wilheim went to Luxemburg to report for duty to Colonel Burton C. Andrus.

ROBERT WILHEIM: By the time I got to "Ashcan" most of its famous inmates were already assembled there. Only a few latecomers were brought in during my time. Speer had been there but had already been taken away again. We had a total of about fifty men.

Lt. Wilheim's job was to interrogate them for the United States. Information he and his colleagues took down was used in the Nuremberg Trials.

ROBERT WILHEIM: Interrogations at "Ashcan" were a lot easier than the interrogations of little arrogant Nazis in North Africa. These men were politicians. The war was lost and mostly they only wanted to whitewash themselves.

Illegally—but luckily for history—Wilheim kept a secret diary, jotting down just enough to refresh his memory about dates and the kind of details that were not important to the U.S. but fascinate historians.

Q: What were these men like?

ROBERT WILHEIM: Robert Ley was always together with Streicher. The others, Goering, wouldn't be seen with Streicher. They looked down on him. Streicher was like a school teacher, a very simple and uneducated teacher. Goering was much more intelligent than the others. Doenitz was rather closemouthed.

Q: Did they know you were Jewish?

ROBERT WILHEIM: I was the interrogator. They didn't have the right to ask me questions.

One late afternoon. . .all the internees were assembled in a large room. They were shown the film of the concentration camp horrors. . .lasting 20 to 30 minutes. I did not watch the film so much as the faces of the inmates. Most of them watched with bored expressions and later refused to comment on what they thought was propaganda, but I remember Goering sitting on the side of the hall and nervously wiping his face.

He was sweating. But afterwards he didn't know anything about it. "That is impossible, that this happened!" He denied it. It's possible. What do we know what goes on? I don't think he didn't know, but it is possible.

Q: How could they build gas chambers without Goering knowing?

ROBERT WILHEIM: Look, I'm sure people living near the camps—Buchenwald is next to Weimar, I'm sure people in Weimar knew. But the big people, Goering, whether they knew—I don't know. I'm sure Mr. Streicher knew, although he denied it.

To Mr. Wilheim's surprise, some of the Nazis complained about how the Americans treated them.

ROBERT WILHEIM: I played chess with [Admiral] Doenitz [head of the German fleet]. He was rather bitter about his treatment. He complained because his eyeglasses were taken away at night [and] because they took away his shoelaces. These were precautions to prevent suicide.

Streicher complained to me about his treatment. I gave him a pencil and paper and told him to write it down. He wrote me a seven-page letter. When people read it, they invariably ask me, do I believe that that happened? He complains that he had to put out cigarette butts with his naked feet, and that soldiers pulled out the hair on his chest. . . "Do you believe that that happened?" My answer is always the same: No. I don't think so. That's the way he expected to be treated.

Q: But why should he invent it?

ROBERT WILHEIM: Because he was the lowest type of human being.

Q: Knowing what they had done, didn't you feel like mistreating them?

ROBERT WILHEIM: My friends always ask me that. Of course, I felt like beating them up. But I was wearing the uniform of the U.S. Army. We don't do things that way.

Q: Was justice done at Nuremberg?

ROBERT WILHEIM: It was impossible.