*Tape two, side one:*

NL: This is tape #2, side #1 of an interview with Mr. Harold Stern, September 10, 1981, Nora Levin interviewing.

HS: When nothing could be found for me to work at, next, a lady whose family had a little factory producing fountain pens and mechanical pens in Frankfurt, and it was a very small place, but the company was still going, and so they said, “Yes, Harold can work here, but in order to teach him the business, you have to pay towards it.” So instead of earning money working there, we paid just to have myself occupied. I learned how to cut pencils on lathes, how to polish them and...

NL: Did you find it interesting?

HS: It was quite nice. I had very nice company and it was a place to go to and, under the circumstances, I was thinking of having a place to go to instead of getting up in the morning not knowing what to do. The foreman came from very far away every morning and it was, the man came from the Odenwald, which was a big distance away from Frankfurt. He must have gotten up very early. But there were two other, three other young Jewish men there. One was from Poland, and got deported into no man’s land when the Poles were transferred suddenly by Hitler into Poland.

NL: Did you ever hear from him?

HS: Yes, that too is a very interesting story. And then came November 10, finally, and the two owners of the company were put into concentration camps. They came back and left Germany, of course, immediately. In the meantime, well, maybe two months later, everything fell apart. The factory was taken over, and here we were again we were sitting there. I think that was 1938, and by that time things were very desperate. My grandmother...no, an aunt of mine was living at the other end of my street in Frankfurt, and I went to visit her one afternoon, having nothing to do. She was the sister of my father, and when I got there, she was just finishing with her English lessons, which were given by the best friend of my late father. We exchanged a few words, and then I left, and that friend of my father’s, whom I had only seen intermittently over the years because he lived far away in a different suburb, said to me, “Harold, if I can be of any help to you, (he wanted to tell me about the birds and the bees and anything at all) I would be very happy to. There are things you might want to discuss with me you don’t want to discuss with your mother,” and I said, “You know, the only way you can help me is to get out of here, but I don’t expect you can do that any more for me than you can do it for yourself.” The man was married to a Gentile lady, and he himself had lost his job as a writer for a New York paper, and also had nothing else to do but give English lessons. He said to me, “You know something, Harold, I don’t know whether it is worth anything, but it is worth a try. When we were young men, your father and I and a third young man went abroad, and this third man settled in England and went into the banking business and stayed there. He is an Englishman now, lives in London, and maybe you will write to him. I haven’t heard from him for a long time. Tell him that I mentioned his name.” Now at that time, there were children’s transports going to England for children under the auspices of the Quakers, Society of Friends.

NL: Jewish children?

HS: Yes. The Society of Friends was extremely helpful in rescuing children, and under their auspices some children went to Holland, some to England, some to France. I think what it was, certain people in these foreign countries had declared themselves willing to take in the children. It is a very interesting chapter, because for years people in Germany relied to some extent on the aid and assistance of the Quakers from abroad, especially from Holland, to organize these transports.

NL: Do you have any idea how many Jewish children were saved? I’ve never heard of this.

HS: No, but you can find that out, I am sure. But I was too old for a children’s transport. I was already over 16 years old and over the age. My mother and I had been registered on one and the same quota number, and a very early quota number in Stuttgart to go to America.

NL: Can you tell me when Mother first registered? Do you have any idea? Did she wait until ‘38?

HS: Oh, absolutely not, when you first could register. We had a very early number, we had number 11,022.

NL: Now, you had said something before about the long lines.

HS: We were waiting and could not get out, even when our quota number came due. The papers were not all right, because too many people who gave us the affidavit in this country had given so many affidavits that the consulate people laughed in Stuttgart when we mentioned their names. They wouldn’t give us a visa to leave.

NL: Let me interject for a moment. Give me some idea of the numbers of people who used to wait in line to apply for emigration.

HS: The American Consulate was not in Frankfurt. The nearest Consulate was in Stuttgart, which serviced a great part of western and southern Germany. I imagine there was another one in Hamburg, and, of course, in Berlin.

NL: You had said before that people waited in line three stories up the building.

HS: That was something else. That was in the police station. Every Jew had to get something called the *Kennkarte* which was a special Jewish identification with a “J” in it. All the men had later in their passport their name, with “Israel,” and the ladies with the name “Sarah.” So if my mother’s name was Alice Stern, her name would then be Alice Sarah Stern for identification purposes. Well, the only other way for me to get out to England was with a guarantee in a bank in London, with a job as a so-called trainee in an English factory, with the understanding that as soon as my number and visa came up for the United States, I would leave England for the United States.

NL: You had written to this old friend of your father’s?

HS: Well, this was the situation. I had written to him and within a week I had an answer that he would do everything possible he could do. He found me a job immediately and was contacted by a friend of my mother’s who was then in London and relatives of ours. One went to the Bloomsbury House which was the clearing station for Jewish immigration in London, and the other lady arranged for money to be paid into the account. It was fifty pounds. My father’s friend became my guarantor and deposited the fifty pounds in a bank, and a distant relative of mine who was a medical student in England at the time, from a very small stipend that he had himself, paid off a pound per week to pay back the guarantor. In this way I got to England.

NL: What? March ‘39.

HS: March, ‘39.

NL: And Mother, of course, remained.

HS: My mother stayed in Frankfurt and had to split her apartment with a German dentist, an Aryan dentist, apparently a very young man who was, from what I understand later, very very nice, who established his dental practice in the front rooms and she had the back rooms until she would be able to move out. I left Germany in March 1939 and had the job waiting for me. My guarantor, Mr. Worthing, picked me up at the station in London and had found a room for me in the East End of London, in Dalston. I think I arrived on a Friday, and on a Saturday we went, my landlady’s daughter took me around. The people in that particular section of London were a totally new breed. They were not only British, but they were first or second generation immigrants into England and spoke more Yiddish than English.

NL: And you didn’t know Yiddish.

HS: So once again I could not learn too much English.

NL: Sounds like a conspiracy.

HS: Of course, they spoke it, but they used it only outside. They could not understand that a Jewish person doesn’t speak Yiddish. And among themselves they always spoke Yiddish. I understood less of their Yiddish than I understood their English. When I went to the factory everybody spoke Cockney. And there again, no English. Gradually my ear got attuned to it.

NL: What work did you do?

HS: O.K. The people for whom I worked had a factory in Pentonville Road. The owners were former German Jewish people who had moved from Nuremberg to London and had for some years been naturalized citizens of England. They had a very nice thing going with one branch by that time established in England and one branch in New York State. They had under one roof lots of different businesses. They had one department which made shoelaces and boxed them. And the next department made a kind of powder that when you added it to water makes an orangeade or lemonade with a fizz. The next department produced games, like Snakes and Ladders, which is an English game for kids, and another one made firecrackers, and another produced Christmas stockings.

NL: A multipurpose business! And what did you do?

HS: And for all this there was a department that produced boxes, and things were boxed and sent to Canada and all over the world, mostly utilizing merchandise produced in Germany and Japan and so on. Well, I was working in the box-making department and after a few weeks of carrying papers and cartons, I was privileged enough to work on something called the guillotine, which today we call a papercutter.

NL: This was a promotion.

HS: Yes. This went on for quite a while, several months. In the meantime I heard from my mother occasionally, and I met some friends in England who subsequently moved in with me, the same house, and at one fine point we reached September 1939, and I was on my way to see my guarantor in Hempstead. At that point people were talking, in the train, what Hitler’s answers would be after the ultimatum that Chamberlain had given him after the invasion of Poland. And with this, the sirens went off and the train stopped for a moment and went on and somebody said very dryly, “Well, this is Hitler’s answer.” A marvelous British understatement. They’re so wonderful. So I arrived at my station and, of course this was the middle of a Sunday afternoon, it was about 12:00, and the streets were swept clean of people. I arrived on Finchley Road, which is a main street in Hempstead, and wanted to go to my guarantor who lived on top of a department store in a very nice apartment building, but had to duck into a doorway in order not to be seen by the air raid wardens. That was the time that started for everybody to start seeking shelter. When the “all-clear” sounded ten minutes later, and I proceeded to my guarantor and I said to him, “With this war on now, what am I going to do?” And he said, “Harold, there is nothing I can do for you. You have to fight your own battle now.” This was a great education. He was very nice throughout and very helpful. The rest of the day I spent with another man, an English teacher of mine from Frankfurt who, at that time lived just around the corner from these people in Hempstead. When I came home that evening about 6:00, my landlady and her daughter had flown the coop. They got so panicked that they immediately packed a few things and went into the country together with other relatives. I never saw her any more, ever again.

NL: Were you able to get into your room?

HS: Oh, yes. My friends were there with a short wave station and watching things that way, and, in the meantime, there was a raid on the Kiel Canal and it was very heartening, but didn’t result in very much, and then I cooked some of the food that was still available in the house, and after a week of this, I was working and nobody else touched anything, I said to myself, “Why should I go shopping for food and why should I do all this? If nobody else is interested in it, I will move out.” So I moved.

NL: Your friends also had moved out?

HS: No, they were still there, but nobody made a move. The landlady had gone and it was really an untenable situation. How can you live in a house with a landlady gone? We were not equipped to keep house. We all had our jobs!

NL: You had taken your meals with her before?

HS: Yes, she provided dinner and breakfast for one pound a week. I couldn’t argue with this, but I only made 30 shillings at the time, out of which one shilling and six-pence went for health insurance. But a streetcar or bus ride was only tuppence, two pennies or one penny. So I found myself a room closer to where I worked in North London, and these people were...it was an interesting situation. These were very poor working-class people, and the house had no electricity and no telephone. I understand even to this day telephones are not as common as they are in this country, when it comes to England. But electricity was provided by gas jets. My room had two canaries, and when I woke up at night and I heard them scratching I was happy. This was the only way I could find out that no gas was escaping. Still and all, I was corresponding with Germany still because somehow my mother had found somebody in Denmark who forwarded correspondence between different parties.

NL: What was her life like in ‘39? Did she still have the means to exist? Was there food rationing for her?

HS: Yes, eventually things got very rough for the Jews living in Frankfurt, or Germany altogether. They were forced to move into boardinghouses and give up their apartments and move into single rooms. Each one had a single room, which, I suppose, was all a measure to get them closer together for later events.

NL: Her number obviously had not been called for immigration?

HS: It was absolutely useless. So she ended up in a boarding house that my grandmother had lived in before my grandmother moved to Holland. My mother saw my grandmother off to the airport in Frankfurt, and my grandmother went to Holland, where she joined two cousins of mine in Amsterdam, and my mother still kept the friendship of a very nice Jewish man who liked her very much apparently and wanted to marry her, as a matter of fact. But she also had the friendship of a Gentile lady, who used to be the housekeeper and companion of a lady in Frankfurt, who, before that, had moved to California. Without these two people my mother could never have left Frankfurt, because, after she had moved out of the apartment, she then could not move around as freely as before. There were curfews for Jews and curfews for others. You were not allowed to buy groceries until late at night. I happen to know that our former landlord, a Gentile, was beaten up by party members because he had dared to sell fish and food to Jewish customers. These are things that usually don’t come out very often, but they do exist. My mother had bought a lot of new furniture, because she had intended to go to New York and open a boarding house. So we were sitting there, with all this disillusion taking place, in great grandeur with fruit-wood modern furniture, Oriental carpets, everything...she was hoping to bring it out. We almost succeeded. What happened was, everything was put into a great big box, which is called lift-van, and my mother paid for it to go to America, and it was all paid for with the exception of a few Guilders that had to be paid in foreign currency to pass through Holland. This was a device by the Nazis to get in foreign currency. The trip from Holland to New York was paid in German *Marks* to the German shipping agency. Whatever you took out, you paid extra money, which was called gold discount, which was an extra way of the Nazis to get Jewish money, usually from accounts that were already blocked anyhow. All this almost worked, but our relatives in Holland, and my mother never stopped talking about it, did not have the money to pay those ten Guilders or 15 Guilders. So my mother stored this whole thing in the free port of Hamburg, waiting for an occasion to get it out later. In the meantime, she was pursuing her own emigration. I was in England, of course. Finally, it became obvious that there was no way of sending this out anymore. The war had started, she wanted to leave Germany, couldn’t get the stuff out, so she said to her friend, “You know what, I am going to get all the stuff back, and you can put it into your apartment, and you can administer it for me or enjoy it.”

NL: This was her non-Jewish friend.

HS: Yes, “Until such time when and if we meet again.” And there was all this furniture, and all the housewares, and it was brought back from Hamburg to Frankfurt, and put into the apartment of that very, very lovely lady, and when they opened it up, of course the oriental carpets were missing, the stamp collection was missing, which seems to be silly to talk about under the circumstances and in view of what had happened afterwards. It’s just to illustrate how things worked. So my mother, after many trials and tribulations, finally got her visa and went to Berlin in a sealed train in August or September, 1941.

NL: She was in Germany until 1941?

HS: Yes, but America wasn’t in the war yet, and people left Germany on the Trans-Siberian Railroad to Japan and then to America.

NL: Yes, but in the ‘30’s, not so much in the ‘40’s. This was a very late departure, was it not?

HS: There was a time, with the Stalin-Hitler Pact, where people...

*Tape two, side two:*

NL: This is tape #2, side #2 of an interview with Mr. Harold Stern, September 10, 1981, Nora Levin interviewing.

HS: My mother left Germany with one of the last steamers leaving Portugal for America. In order to do this, they were all gathered at a certain place in Berlin at the station, and went with a sealed train through occupied France and Vichy France and Spain to Lisbon, where they boarded their transport for America. My mother said good-bye to her brother in Berlin on that occasion. He was later on hunted by Gestapo agents.

NL: He couldn’t get out?

HS: No. He was really very, very daring. He had a very nice Christian girlfriend who stuck by him and wrote to us after the war that she saw him being, well—he was actually apprehended on his roof with bloodhounds. They took him to Gestapo headquarters, and she stayed outside the Gestapo headquarters all night, and she never saw him again. Another thing that happened in the family was that my mother had a sister in Germany who was a musician. She taught piano and had a very deep friendship with a critic who was fairly well known in musical circles, who wrote musical articles in the daily papers, and who had also written books on music. That was the oldest sister of a family of four children. She was a little bit of a nervous person and never married and all she had was her music. She lived with my grandparents. The attachment to that family of the critic was a very deep one, and they felt very, very congenial to her and she to them. But these people lived in the Taunus mountains somewhere, a little distance away from Frankfurt, and one fine day they said to her, “We are very sorry, but you know, we cannot have you here anymore.” This was a terrible blow for that poor soul and she never quite recovered from it. She lived with my grandfather, who, by that time, was, of course, very much retired and just made a living with the support of my mother. She felt very much misunderstood by everybody and, of course, after the death of her own mother she was pretty much alone. I understand that after I left Frankfurt, they had to put her in a sanitarium, and my mother went to visit her from time to time, and when she spoke to one...on one of her visits, she spoke to one of the doctors there. She was in a public sanitarium in Niederrad which is near Frankfurt, and the doctor said to my mother, “I have to tell you, we are required to send your sister East.” She had tried to commit suicide twice, the first time she only broke her leg jumping out of the window, the second time I don’t know what happened, but this was the time that Hitler had instituted the elimination of people who were a drain on the “German *Volkskörper*,” so to speak. [German population -ed.]

NL: Euthanasia.

HS: This man actually said...and my mother said, “Well, what can I do? Can I take her into my house again? Can she live with us?” The doctor said, “I am very sorry, Mrs. Stern, but we have strict orders, and your sister will not feel anything. We are going to put her on a train, and she is going to get a needle, and that will be all we can do.”

NL: He told her this?

HS: My mother didn’t talk about a lot of things. It was one of the few things that came out, and she only mentioned it once.

NL: This is the first time I have ever heard of an admission by a German that this euthanasia was in existence.

HS: Well, my mother had a very good way of relating to people wherever she went. She got to people, and people respected her, and she had a very pleasant appearance, and she knew how to talk to people. She was a business woman. She was a civilized human being, and she dressed nicely and was attractive so...

NL: Now back to you, Harold. You had left your landlady...

HS: O.K. I stayed with these people and now we get into 1940 more or less.

NL: Was there any pressure on you from the British authorities to leave? Was there some labeling of you as an enemy alien, anything of that sort?

HS: I want to come to this. In the meantime the war went through Dunkirk in Europe. The British troops came back. Everything went against England. Paris had been occupied, and the Jewish refugees in England were classified. There were three classifications: A, B and C. The A category was simply Nazis, Fascists, and real German Gentiles who were caught in England with the German Mercantile [Merchant?] Marine, political business, diplomatic business, and these were clear-cut cases. I don’t think that the British quite knew what they were doing in those days, and it was admitted later on in the House of Commons, too. The classifications of B and C: You had to, every refugee had to appear before a tribunal with a judge, to be classified for the future and for the security of the State, of course. They all were not only violently anti-Hitler and pro-British, but I would say that 95% had volunteered for National Service, which was the only thing you could do, under the circumstances, as an enemy alien in England to prove your willingness to fight Hitler. These judges had very unspecified instructions, and the B case was...if you were a B category, you had more of a curfew, less chance of moving around, and you were supposedly declared a little bit more dangerous, if at all, than the C cases.

NL: Could you work in the B category?

HS: Oh yes. Many of the judges, not knowing what they were doing, in the interest of their country, imposed the classification of B category on people who were perfectly innocuous, and other judges just went ahead and classified these German Jewish refugees as C cases. It really was a very arbitrary matter, and I brought testimonials from the people I worked for, and from my landlord and I happened to become a C case. I think what helped me was the fact that I was in a district of London where there were very few refugees, and that judge simply set me up.

NL: It was accidental then?

HS: Well, there were a lot of C cases, but the B cases were all interned on May 16, 1940.

NL: What happened on that day?

HS: On that day all the B cases were picked up by Scotland Yard or by the army, let’s call it British authorities, and they were taken to the Isle of Man, and the C cases were still running around freely. I was still working, and, I think, it was June 10, I am not quite sure, I was cutting papers on my papercutter, when the son of one of the owners of my factory, who never talked to me; they were very remote, came to me and said to me, “Harold, they’re interning all the refugees. Maybe you want to go home.”

NL: Home?

HS: Well, you know.

NL: In England.

HS: Yes, of course. My home was ten minutes from the factory. I said, “Thank you very much for the information,” and that was the last time I saw him. I went home, took my camera and my bank book to my guarantor in Hempstead, came back, and then I said to my landlady, “You know, I am going to pack. It is possible that I will be picked up sometime between today or tomorrow, and I want to have my suitcases packed. When somebody knocks at the door don’t get alarmed.” They were very simple people, you know. So she said, “All right.” When I happened to them, so to speak, I had brought in a totally different world, something they had never seen, something they had never heard, and I was able to really become very good friends of theirs. They were very nice to me. One funny episode happened. There was a man living in that house who was a little bit of a drunkard, a bachelor. He had a room there, and he was employed by the London County Council. His job was to check the manholes in certain districts of London and see that everything went all right. I didn’t know what his real classification was. It was one of those jobs, but he could never get it through his head that I was a refugee. To him I was “dyed-in-the-wool German” and an enemy. And whenever there was a setback for the Germans and, unfortunately, there were very few setbacks, when there were any, he would talk to me and say, “Your country isn’t doing so well, is it?” I told him, “It’s not my country. I am on your side. What are you talking about?” He did that several times and finally my landlady and my landlord said, “Don’t talk to Jock, he’ll never understand.”

NL: I presume a number of British had this feeling.

HS: Well, you had to be very dense under the circumstances. But this man was very, very stupid. It was sheer stupidity. You couldn’t convince him. There was somebody else who lived in the house who felt sorry for the refugee boy. I was between 18 and 19 years old. He took me to a music hall to entertain me on a Saturday afternoon. This happened, too. One night in the winter, long before this internment business happened, there was a knock on the door. Nine o’clock at night, and my landlady said, “Scotland Yard is here, and they want to talk to you.” I said, “Scotland Yard? What would they want from me?”

NL: You had left your job already?

HS: That was in the evening.

NL: In the fall of 1940.

HS: Yes, but I had not left my job. I worked in my job in London until the last day before I was interned.

NL: But your boss had said...

HS: But I am switching back now to four months earlier, and Scotland Yard knocked on the door, and two very nice gentlemen came in and said to me, “We have some information. Do you have a typewriter?” I said, “Yes, I have a typewriter. There it is.” And I got a little bit apprehensive, because I was corresponding with my mother by way of Sweden, and having been brought up in Germany, I very nicely put everything in a folder, punched date by date, not only her letters, but all the copies of my letters. I was brought up like that, and I guess it gets into your blood, and you don’t do it differently. I said, “Well, here is the typewriter. What else do you want to see?” And I was ready to show them all the correspondence. There was nothing in there that was in any way inimical. I could have done without it. Why start up a hornet’s nest. So they looked at everything and I said to them, “Do you feel you want to see some of my correspondence?” They said, “No.” And then I said to them, “Look, to whom and to what do I owe this pleasure?” They said, “Well, apparently there is somebody in this house who hears you using the typewriter, and he called us and informed us that you were doing that, and that you were corresponding with the enemy.” That was that idiot. So you can get into all kinds of situations. Before I moved from the East End to North London, I was in a very Jewish neighborhood. And after two weeks I hear the *Horst-Wessel* Song [the Nazi anthem] in English, and speeches and people at my next street corner. I didn’t believe it.

NL: These were English Fascists.

HS: They were English Fascists. It was the Mosley group, who, of all the places in London, picked my street corner to demonstrate and hold their meetings. So you can imagine. Well, anyway...

NL: And they were not being stopped? Even after England declared war on Germany?

HS: Well, I guess they were stopped, but then I moved out a week later. What happened afterwards, I don’t know. I heard later on that Jewish people banded together and beat them up or something. This was even a tough Jewish neighborhood where I was. These people were not taking it anymore. But there were quite a few experiences. So, I went...when I left...to get back to the day before my internment, I told my landlady that I may be picked up, and sure enough I was picked up the next day.

NL: This was in June?

HS: This was in June 1940, and I was taken to a police station and got processed, or a general gathering place, where I met a lot more German Jewish people, and then we went on a truck to a race course in London.

NL: Did anyone tell you why you were being taken out of your homes?

HS: They were rounding up everybody. If you were familiar with the situation of the B case, of course, they just processed you to be interned as a C case. At that time the Home Office was under Herbert Morrison, and he claimed he couldn’t guarantee the safety of Britain with all the German refugees running around, after what had happened in Holland, with the nuns in the trains who had hairy hands and suddenly threw off their habits and became the real Nazis. So, it was a very bad time. We got to a race course called Kempton Park and after a few...we slept in the grandstands...it was the summer, and from there went to an internment camp near Liverpool. The name of the place was Huyten. Huyten was a working settlement that had just been finished before the war to harbor workers’ families. It was like a new development for low-income people but, instead, at this time it was occupied by thousands of people who were interned, and who slept on the ground in the empty houses.

NL: These were Jews and non-Jews?

HS: They were mostly Jews. The non-Jews had been interned much earlier. They were on the Isle of Man, and, by that time, one transport of internees had already been sunk on the way over to Canada. The name of the boat was the *Arandorra Star*, and at one time...it was lunch time or mess time, and quite a few of the people who had been floating in the water came back to the camp where we were, too.

NL: They told you their experiences?

HS: Well, they were in a separate area, I think. I never met them. But then...also a lot of them were not only Jewish, but they had been German Nazis, and Mercantile Marine, and so on, and Italians, too. After a few days there, we were on parade, roll call, and the leadership of the camp told us that a boat was leaving Liverpool the next day for Canada and, if we wanted to volunteer to go to Canada, we would then have a much easier time immigrating to the U.S. from there, and this was July, 1940. The war was lost, so to speak, on the Continent. It was pretty hopeless. I didn’t have any people in England except for an aunt, and there was no reason for me to stay in England. So I volunteered for that transport together with many others. The next day we were taken to the Port of Liverpool and we boarded the ship in the evening and left for, supposedly, Canada. The garrison on that ship were mostly members of the dregs of the British Army, people who had done time in the penitentiaries, people who had only one eye...there’s nothing wrong with having one eye...but they were the opposite of the cream of the crop, so to speak. No political understanding at all. On this ship were people from the Kitchener Camp, which had been emptied, and all these people were interned. The Kitchener Camp was the refugee camp established in England to receive those who had come from Buchenwald and Sachsenhausen and other concentration camps, on their way to America, as a transfer station. However, not only were we treated very badly on this ship, people had their life’s belongings with them, documents of books they had written, jewelry, anything of value was stripped from them. The luggage that they had was opened up, and partially thrown into the sea, partially the soldiers took it for themselves. Those who protested were roughly handled, and we finally got on our way.

NL: Do you have any idea how many people there were in this transport?

HS: The ship’s name was the *Dunera* and was a 12,000 ton ship and I think there were 3,000 people.

NL: And your impression is that there were other ships like this leaving England with German Jews on them?

HS: No, not too many. I think we were perhaps the last or next to last boat.

NL: But there had been others?

HS: Yes, but there were boats that went to Canada, and I know people reached Canada on boat. I don’t know anything about this, unfortunately, because I never really pursued this. We never heard about anything like that under the circumstances. But then we started out in a convoy, several other ships, and the second night out...we were in the Irish Sea...by that time people were very, very sick, very desperate, the food was very bad. We were not allowed on deck, the rumors got worse and worse about how people had been treated. It had no proper accommodations, people slept on hammocks hanging in the upper deck and lower deck, or on the floors or on the tables. It was totally overcrowded. I’m trying to find a picture of the boat. Anyway, we were...when people were at their worst and sickest, we were attacked by German U-boats. Until this day I can still hear the clatter of the depth charges that our ship threw off. But we got through it all right. After two or three days we were allowed on deck for twenty minutes, barefoot, marching around. We couldn’t get to our belongings at all. We had one suit, what we had on our backs, no toothbrush, no comb. A few people rescued some things, and had put some things in their pockets and that’s what they had. What we did have, however, was constantly hot showers and sea baths. You know, hot showers and salt water. Amazingly, we kept somewhat healthy. Of course, the food was so bad and so rare that people were very hungry and after a while...