Richard Gauch & Torsten Schleip

He was just a nine-year-old Boy: Hans Richard Levy

Kindertransport to England 1938/1939

Rosa Luxemburg Foundation Saxony

He was just a nine-year-old Boy

To Aaron Fabrice

A dedication is the expression of the relationship or the thoughts of the author to a person who is close to him. This is exactly how it should be.

When I began to work on the theme of the Kindertransport to England, you weren't even born. The completion and publication of this book, which was originally in the form of a brochure, happened after you were born. So I would like to dedicate this book to you. I wish you, my dear grandson, a happy and uncomplicated life in freedom without worries over the future. So I hope that in your life, you will always encounter open hands which will always be with you, which will always support you, hands which love you and are gentle and comfort you. For the whole world you are just someone. But for me you are the whole world.

Richard Gauch

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He was just a nine-year-old Boy: Hans Richard Levy. Kindertransport to England 1938/1939

A translation from German into English
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Leipzig, Germany

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FOREWORD

In answer to a question in connection with my "family research" I learned from a Dutch cousin that on the 10th November, 1938, one of our relatives, Berthold Levy, was sent to Buchenwald. For me it was clear that this was no ordinary date. On the Internet, I clicked on the website *Aktion Koffer* (suitcase action) and got to know Richard Gauch of the *Gedenkmarsch* (memorial march). This was the beginning of an intensive search for Hans Richard Levy, the son of Berthold Levy. As a consequence of the period of National Socialism, successive generations of our Jewish relatives can be found in many countries. Once the "old" had died, contact, partly as a result of the division of Germany, had fallen away. The television company *Mitteldeutscher Rundfunk* [MDR] succeeded, where I didn't, in bringing about a miracle. This was to find Hans Levy and to invite him to Leipzig with his daughter. For the three of us, these were unforgettable days as we had never never met previously. The meeting with Paul and Julius in Ariowitsch House was for Hans Levy and his daughter a moving sign that the suffering under national socialism did not leave the young generation indifferent.

Marianne Wingten

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

On the 22nd April, 2009, I received, as project leader of the group *Gedenkmarsch,* an email under the address www.leipzig-gedenkt.de with the following question from Marianne Wingten:

> "Dear Mr. Gauch,
> Do you have any further information of my relative Berthold Levy? On the 10th November, 1938, he was deported to Buchenwald and died in 1939 after his release. He had two children: Hans and Elisabeth. His wife was Lotte. She could emigrate to England with Elisabeth. Hans had already gone to England with a Kindertransport. With best wishes, M. Wingten"

Thereupon I asked the *Friedenszentrum Leipzig e.V.* for help. After weeks of research, Torsten Schleip of the *Friedenszentrum* and I discovered that the son of Berthold Levy, Hans Richard Levy, lives in the USA and is a professor there. The letter which we received from Marianne Wingten and the initial results of our research were put on our website. This news reached colleagues at MDR and we were then asked to help in the preparation of a film in the series *Spur der Ahnen.* At this point, the project gained a new dimension. MDR was able to find Hans Richard Levy and invite him to Leipzig.

Parallel to this, we proceeded further with our research and have been able to reconstruct the lives of Richard Frank, whose daughter Charlotte Frank married Berthold Levy, and their children Hans Richard and Elisabeth. Initially, we had been

confronted with the moving topic of the "Kindertransport to England" during the period of national socialism and decided to publish our findings in the form of a brochure under the title *Er war doch nur ein neunjähriger Junge!* (He was just a nine-year-old Boy!) We were especially pleased that this aroused interest among school pupils.

At the beginning of October 2009, Hans Richard Levy, through an invitation by MDR, visited Leipzig for the first time since his emigration. As a result of this, an MDR film in the series *Die Spur der Ahnen* was produced. Most notable was the meeting between Hans Richard Levy and his daughter with their distant cousin Marianne Wingten from Berlin. On the 6th October, 2009, there was a meeting in Ariowitsch House (a Jewish cultural and meeting place in Leipzig) of all those who were involved in the search for Hans Richard Levy. Hans Richard Levy pressed for Leipzig school pupils to be involved and two of them, Paul Moritz and Julius Völkner of the Immanuel Kant school, conducted a long interview with him. For him, according to Marianne Wingten, this was "a moving indication that the suffering under national socialism did not leave the young generation indifferent". We presented Hans Richard Levy with our manuscript "Kindertransport nach England! Er war doch nur ein neunjähriger Junge!". He took it with him, made some corrections and additions and made available photographs, which we were allowed to use in the publication of our work.

The publication of this work is dedicated most of all to the young generation—so as to ensure that biographies like this are never forgotten and that they are also a warning. This is in part a documentation and a presentation of the present facts as

a basis for further work on this theme by school pupils and in teaching projects. Contemporary witnesses are listed in the bibliography together with sources of further information.

We would like to thank Marianne Wingten, whose initiative encouraged Hans Richard Levy, who then read the draft of our manuscript, the *Friedenszentrum Leipzig e.V., Friedensweg e.V. Leipzig,* the group *Landesverband Ost der deutschen Friedensgesellschaft – Vereinigte KriegsdienstgegnerInnen,* the editorial board of *Leipzigs Neue* and the Leipzig city executive of the party *DIE LINKE.* Our special thanks go to the editorial board of *Spur der Ahnen* at MDR, who made possible the visit of Hans Richard Levy to Leipzig, especially Nadine Oehls and the production editor Frau Friedrich for the trustful and excellent cooperation. We would also like to thank the *Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung Sachsen e.V.* for making this publication possible.

Richard Gauch,
September 2010

THE LEIPZIG BUSINESSMAN RICHARD FRANK

Initially the area surrounding Berliner Straße 65 in Leipzig was one of the flourishing industrial areas. The Frank Brothers garment firm was initially in a one-storey building with a corrugated roof. For the latter, to have been able to apply for five toilets with running water must have been a privilege for a firm at that time in the Kingdom of Saxony.

At the beginning of the 20th century there then came a three-storey building with a big storage space of some 2000 square metres in the yard of which a few areas remain. The city tram company was situated next to the depot in the Wittenberger Straße. In the 1920s came five full floors and roof structures. Part of this building still stands today. After the bombing raids of 1943 and 1944 only a completely destroyed building remained.

The daughter of Richard Frank, Charlotte Levy née Frank, remembers: "I was born in 1900 in Leipzig and in my family I was the first woman of the 20th century. Both of my parents came from highly respectable Jewish families who had lived for generations in Germany.

My father was a wonderful man, ahead of his time. He owned a factory which produced clothing of such a fine quality that they were hardly equalled elsewhere on the European continent. At the peak of its time, the factory employed a thousand workers and administrative staff."

Invoice from the Firm Gebrüder Frank (Frank Brothers) with an illustration of the factory in the Berliner Straße

From the beginning of 1938, the national socialists became more oppressive in their policies towards the Jewish community, both on the national as well as the state level. The State began to undermine the basis of their economic existence and to isolate them in society. On the 14th June, 1938, an Order was issued under the third decree of the Reich Citizenship Act, which stipulated that all Jewish firms had to be registered in a special list. The seizure of Jewish firms had already been planned. On the 15th June, 1938, the "June Action" began through the arrest of Jews throughout the German Reich and their deportation into concentration camps.

In Leipzig, the first wave of mass antisemitic arrests had already begun. 45 people were sent to concentration camps including friends and acquaintances of Richard Frank. The paperwork necessary for the registration of his firm under the list of Jewish firms had already been completed. Frank was forced to sell his flourishing business. On the 30th June, 1938, he wrote to a distant relative:

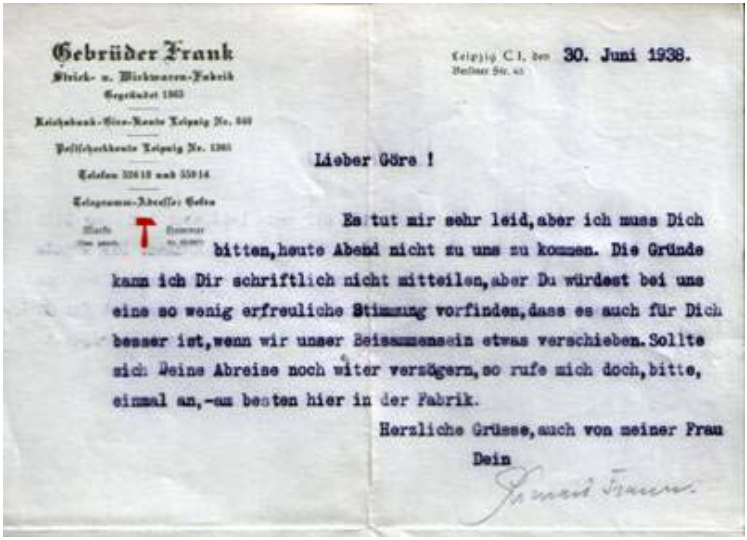
"Dear Göre,

I am very sorry but I must ask you not to come to us this evening. I can't tell you why in writing but you wouldn't find the atmosphere so pleasant so it would be better if we were to postpone our meeting. Should your departure be postponed again, please give me a ring preferably at work.

With good wishes and also from my wife,

Yours, Richard Frank"

The economic destruction of Jewish firms which was initiated in 1933, came to a legal conclusion on the 12th November, 1938, with the Act for the Exclusion of Jews from German economic life. By the 1st January, 1939, all Jewish firms and



Gebrüder Frank
Strick- u. Wirkwaren-Fabrik
Gegründet 1865
Reichsbank-Giro-Konto Leipzig Nr. 660
Postscheckkonto Leipzig Nr. 1361
Telefon 55818 und 55814
Telegramm-Adresse: Gefra

Leipzig C 1, den 30. Juni 1938.
Nathanaelstr. 45

Lieber Göre !

Es tut mir sehr leid, aber ich muss Dich bitten, heute Abend nicht zu uns zu kommen. Die Gründe kann ich Dir schriftlich nicht mitteilen, aber Du würdest bei uns eine so wenig erfreuliche Stimmung vorfinden, dass es auch für Dich besser ist, wenn wir unser Beisammensein etwas verschieben. Sollte sich Deine Abreise noch weiter verzögern, so rufe mich doch, bitte, einmal an, - am besten hier in der Fabrik.

Herzliche Grüsse, auch von meiner Frau

Dein

Richard Frank

Letter from Richard Frank

businesses had to be "Aryanised" or liquidated. Already in January 1939, the Lord Mayor of Leipzig was "full of pride" to report that the implementation of this Act apart from the odd few minor cases had been fully completed.

Until 1940 Richard Frank lived in Funkenburgstraße 22 but then he was forced to move into the "Jewish House" at Walter-Blümel-Straße 10. This was one of some 47 "Jewish Houses" which existed in Leipzig in 1939. Frank lived there until 1952. After the War, the name of this street reverted back to Löhrstraße.

On the morning of the 18th April, 1945, a young journeyman decorator went to Richard Frank in the "Jewish House" and reported that while he was working at the Gestapo, he had heard that the remaining sixteen Jews in Leipzig would be

Löhrstraße 10

"transferred". On the basis of this news they hid in the surrounding ruins.

"Even on the days before one could see the SA in Leipzig in uniform, on the streets fully armed and at important in-coming roads, holes were dug for antitank mines." As further defence measures, sand-filled-trucks were placed on bridges in such away as to stop the tanks. At around 11 o'clock on the morning of Wednesday the 18th April, 1945, the first American soldiers appeared on the streets of Leipzig. Out of the windows, according to an eye witness, one could see "white bed linen and pillow cases and flats were searched".

On the 19th April, Leipzig was liberated by paramilitary units of the third US army. In front of the "Jewish House" in Walter-Blümel-Straße 10 there was a canon. 150 men of the *Volkssturm* [troops of the territorial army raised by Nazi Germany shortly before the end of the War] barricaded themselves in the main building of the City council. The rebellion there was short lived. In the afternoon of the 19th April, 1945, a German fireman together with US politicians finally persuaded the last remaining *Volkssturm* troops to surrender. After leading party functionaries, the Lord Mayor and other leading city officials hung themselves in the tower room of the city council, the

Richard Frank (1870–1960)

remaining *Volkssturm* troops no longer wanted to put up any resistance. SS and *Volkssturm* troops under Colonel von Poncet continued to hold out for a number of days in the monument to the Battle of Nations.

Also during the liberation of Leipzig a number of American soldiers were killed. In the afternoon of the 18th April, 1945, an American soldier was killed at the tram stop in Angerbrücke. He took up position in the corner building of Jahnallee / Lützner Straße. The internationally well-known photographer Robert Capa showed the death of the soldier in the Photograph "Last Man to Die". Capa's photograph was published on the 14th May, 1945, in Life magazine and it was shown around the world.

On the 20th April, 1945, an American captain visited the then 75-year-old Richard Frank and asked what he could do for him. Richard Frank asked the Captain to bring the Jewish

community back to life. This ensued. On the 2nd July, 1945, on the basis of the first London supplementary protocol of 1944 and the decisions of the Yalta Conference, the Soviet army moved into Leipzig, and it became part of the Soviet occupation zone.

From 1945 to 1952 Richard Frank was chairman and 1952/1953 honourary chairman of the Jewish community. Richard Frank was the oldest of the sixteen Leipzig Jews who survived the repression in the city. He owed this to his second wife, Amanda, who was non-Jewish. She died in Leipzig on the 29th August, 1954, and was buried in the Frank family grave at the Old Jewish Cemetery. From 1952 to 1956, before Richard Frank emigrated to the USA, he lived at Humboldtstraße 13. During the time of the GDR, the Jewish Religious Community kept very much to itself.

THE FAMILY OF BERTHOLD LEVY

After the pogrom night, more than 500 Jewish men were arrested in Leipzig between the 10th and 15th November, 1938. One of the victims was Berthold Levy, the son-in-law and an employee of the Leipzig businessman Richard Frank, inheritor and co-owner of the clothing factory Frank Brothers, founded in 1865 and then located in Berliner Straße 65.

Charlotte, the daughter of Richard Frank, got to know Berthold Levy in the 1920s. She recalled this time: "In 1929, I married Berthold Levy, a young assistant at my father's firm. My father liked him and let me invite him to our parties. From then we became friends and this developed into a long friendship before we eventually became closer. After our wedding, Berthold and I found a wonderful modern flat in Leipzig. In 1929, our son Hans Richard was born. He was the greatest and most unique joy of my life. Then came 1933, the terror with Hitler and with it a catastrophe of untold proportions which all too soon ended Berthold's life and my existence in Germany.

From the turmoil of those years, many things have been forgotten, but some things remain deep inside me. In the afternoon of the 30th January, 1933, when I was walking along the street with Hans, I suddenly saw swatstika flags in all the windows. The 1st April, 1933, was the day of boycott. For us that was outrageous. That evening, the family came together and discussed our future lives. I talked like a Cassandra and

Hans Richard Levy
in Mittelberg, summer 1933

argued that we should go to Paris but my father and husband were more sensible than me, because how would we survive there? Although it was forbidden, many people had transferred money abroad. We hadn't and so we couldn't do anything. Naturally we couldn't assess how dangerous everything was going to be. Unfortunately, we hadn't read *Mein Kampf*—a big mistake—but even those who were aware of

Summer holiday Wyk auf Föhr 1934

Hans Richard Levy, summer 1934

Brandvorwerkstraße 80

Fregestraße 7

the contents of this book hadn't seriously believed what was at stake until it was too late. Everything we had made of our lives appeared to be lost and our fate appeared to be sealed."

From 1929 to 1939 Charlotte Levy lived with her husband at Brandvorwerkstraße 80 in Leipzig. Their son Hans Levy remembers: "We lived in Brandvorwerkstraße until we, as Jews, were thrown out. Then it was difficult to find another 'flat', but eventually my mother succeeded."

At the beginning of 1939 the family moved into Fregestraße 7.

THE YEAR 1938

On New Year's Eve 1937/38, Charlotte embraced her husband and young son and said: "Everything will be OK, I wish you a happy new year 1938." The birth of their second child was approaching, the expectations were big. There were thoughts of their tenth wedding anniversary in the following autumn.

Has something been forgotten? Will everything be OK? Was Charlotte Levy fully aware of what was going to happen to her and her family?

She said further: "On the 19th January, 1938, our daughter Elisabeth was born in a broken world. The only hospital, which was available to me, was a small private Jewish orthopaedic clinic. Although this was forbidden in Germany, Jewish women were urged to have abortions. Some of my lady friends went along with this. Happily, everything was OK with Elisabeth. She was a rosy and beautiful baby with oriental eyes, quiet in nature and her presence filled us with great joy.

Hans was very excited. He was very proud of his sister. There was never the slightest hint of jealousy. Elisabeth was "our" baby, the only ray of sunshine in those dark days." (Elisabeth was born in the Jewish Hospital in Eitingonstraße in Leipzig.)

Very soon, the family's daily routine returned. In October the celebrations of their tenth wedding anniversary were prepared. It should have been a wonderful celebration. There appeared to be nothing to the contrary. Yet, the mood turned

Hans Richard Levy in 1936

to the awareness of the bad situation and the hostile feelings towards the Jewish people, to everything that had happened in recent months!

Charlotte Levy: "The Jews were always to blame: people with whom I was at school for many years, no longer greeted me: they turned away whenever I saw them in the tram. One became a leper. Friends and relatives left the country without saying good-bye.

Up to the last minute, we were worried whether we could achieve it. The noose around our necks became tighter and tighter. We no longer had the right to vote, to membership in organisations, to go to the theatre, to go to concerts or readings or to go on excursions. No state schools for children. No maids under 45 years old. Just denunciations."

It was compulsory for Jewish businesses to display a sign –in the public reading galleries and in the City Library signs were put up with the words "Jews unwelcome". City officials and administrative staff were told only to go to non-Jewish doctors and dentists. The city authorities banned Jews from using the city swimming baths. The Jewish Religious Community and Jewish associations no longer had the use of city

Memorial at the place of the former synagogue in the Gottschedstraße

sports halls or other city facilities. The "Arianisation" of property and living spaces for public purposes was forced through.

The City commerce authorities no longer supported Jewish businesses. In many cases, welfare support was indiscriminately cut and rental agreements for living and commercial space in city buildings were cancelled.

Charlotte Levy: "I remember the day when my father and Berthold were called to see the Gestapo and the tax office, respectively. The worry and the relief, when they returned."

Still, nobody could predict what was going to happen one month later, on the 9th November. It was unimaginable. On the 22nd October, 1938, the ninth birthday of our son Hans Richard, we had a small celebration with friends and relatives. This was, for the time being, to be the last happy day in our boy's childhood. Barely three weeks later the suffering and distress of the Jews in Leipzig including the Levy family was to begin.

LEIPZIG, NOVEMBER 1938

In 1938 in Leipzig, there were thirteen synagogues and four prayer houses. In the night from the 9th to the 10th November, 1938, the so-called Crystal Night or the Pogrom Night, the main synagogue to the west of the old city centre was set alight and destroyed. It had been built according to the plans of Otto Simonson and was officially opened in 1855 and had seating space for up to 1600 visitors.

After the destructions of the Pogrom Night, Jewish associations and religious communities were banned from any access to their buildings and numerous objects and files were confiscated. Under these conditions no proper work could be carried out in the Jewish community. Destruction, lack of space, emigration and police restrictions led to the liquidation of the Jewish community at the end of 1938.

On the 12th November, 1938, the Reich government issued an Order requiring the Jewish community to pay a special levy of one billion Reichsmarks.

An Order was issued to Jewish businesses to restore the streets to their former state, and Jews who suffered damage and losses to their homes and businesses were forced to pay for this. Insurance benefits they were entitled to from the state were withdrawn.*

* Reichsgesetzblatt 1938, p. 1581, Mitteilung über das Ende der Vereinstätigkeit, 16th January 1939, In: Staatsarchiv Leipzig, 20031 Polizeipräsidium Leipzig, Nr. PP-V4406.

Memorial Stone Gottschedstraße

In the early morning hours of the 10th November, 1938, the Ez Chaim Synagogue in the Otto-Schill-Straße was destroyed. It was set on fire by a small group of national socialist paramilitaries. The library of the religious community was also burned.

Further arson attacks were carried out at the New Jewish Cemetery in Delitzscher Straße 224 and at the Bamberger & Hertz department store in Augustusplatz.

Almost all synagogues and prayer houses, Jewish schools and many businesses and flats owned by Jews were looted. SA men murdered the Jewish doctor Felix Benno Cohn. According to a police report, 193 businesses, 34 private flats, three synagogues, four prayer houses, a cemetery chapel, a Jewish old peoples home and a Jewish school were destroyed in the Pogrom Night in Leipzig.

Memorial Plaque at the former Leipzig synagogue in the Gottschedstraße

Margarete Kampf remembers: "I lived at Uferstraße 10 on the first floor and was therefore an eyewitness to how Leipzig Jews were forced to go together to the river Parthe. I got my camera out and wanted to photograph this from my window. Two SA men shouted at me from below: 'Camera away!'—A few minutes later the bell rang and somebody wanted to confiscate my camera. I said that was out of the question as I hadn't photographed anything. Finally they demanded the film. I said that they were only holiday photographs. They replied that I could get them back on the following day at Dittrich-ring 11. When I got there, I learned that nothing had been handed in. Then the door opened and a high-ranking Nazi came in.—'SA-People? But they weren't involved!'—'But I saw them and they took my film away with them!'—'If I say they were not involved, then they were not!'"

Margartet Kampf's photographs would have been the only documentary evidence of the rounding-up of the Leipzig Jews.

Charlotte Levy remembered further: "On the grey morning of the 10th November our dedicated maid Änne woke us up. She was in an awful state. SA men had smashed at our door and then yelled: 'Come here you Jewish swine and proceed to

such and such a place!' We got up and went there. I got Elisabeth ready and had already put her in the pram but at the last minute I decided that I didn't have the heart to take her so I left her with Änne.

Warmly dressed we went to the assembling point, with our totally distraught nine-year-old boy between Berthold and me. Nobody was there. They only wanted to scare us. This was just one of many ways of tormenting the Jews. Relieved, we wanted to go back but then we met a friend who told us that during the night synagogues had been burned down and Jewish businesses were looted and set on fire. He was on the way to the train station and wanted to travel back and forth between Leipzig and Berlin until all this was over.

We thought that this would also be a good idea for my husband but first he had to go to the factory to see that everything was OK. We went back home. When we got there we noticed that someone had removed our name plate. We had become non-persons. My husband didn't want to go inside. Behind the house there was a large field and he waited there until I had checked whether anything had happened to my father as they started rounding up all the Jewish men. I rang and heard that nothing had happened. I gave Berthold the agreed 'all-clear' signal that everything was OK. He said that he wanted to go to the factory and ring me from there before going to the station. There was no call. I waited for a while and rang the office—only to learn that Berthold had been arrested in front of the gate and taken away.

By then he was already a very sick man and I was terribly worried that something worse would happen to him. From then I tried to find out over the following days where he

Former Department Store in Goethestraße which was destroyed on the 9th November, 1938

was and what I could do. Thank goodness my sister came by with her little daughter so that I could leave my two children with her.

In the meantime I found out the police station where Berthold was sent to and took the tram there—but naturally to no avail.

Then I went to the main police station. A friendly policeman told me, in the strictest of confidence, that on the following day at five o'clock in the morning Berthold was going to be taken from a barrack to Buchenwald. I had never heard of this place. The next morning, before five o'clock I went to the barracks in the hope of catching a glimpse of Berthold but there wasn't a soul there.

I tried to find out how I could help my husband. Shortly

Memorial Stone at the former
Department Store Hertz

before this he had undergone a life-threatening cancer operation from which he had to recover so I rang his doctor who was a very understanding man.

He was outraged at the arrest and rang the Gestapo for information about Berthold. In a very direct way, he was told to keep out of this or he would be the next to be taken away. All-day long I racked my brains but to no avail. Then, after ten days, as I came home I saw my sister at the window waving

Berthold, Charlotte, Hans Richard and Elisabeth Levy

and I knew that something good had happened. My husband had come home and was busy shaving his beard. In fact, Berthold hadn't been in Buchenwald.

All the men the Nazis arrested were examined. When they saw the large fresh scar from Bertholds recent operation, they kept him in prison. They feared that he wouldn't survive the journey. At that time they were not yet interested in sacrificing their victims."

Despite his serious illness, Berthold was held and badly treated. Altogether 500 Jewish men were rounded up, 400 of whom were sent to so-called "Pogrom special camps" at Buchenwald and Sachsenhausen. After a few weeks, they were released if they could show that they were going to leave Germany. Berthold Levy was released from prison on the 21st November.

Charlotte Levy: "How was one going to explain to a little boy, who was crying his heart out, that his father had been taken away, that his school had been burned down, whose teacher had been arrested, and who asks you 'Why does God allow this?' And what can you do with a lively young boy who can no longer go to school, has nowhere to play, no friends, only a father who is terminally ill and a mother who is

exhausted caring for her husband and baby? All this made him extremely difficult. A new life was absolutely necessary for him."

The Levys decided to send Hans Richard to England. Charlotte Levy: "After Berthold Levy was released from prison, we did everything possible to leave Germany. We applied for Sweden—Bertholds first choice, England, Australia and the United States. First, Sweden rejected us and then came the other rejections, none of the applications were approved. We had long thought of sending Hans Richard away but after all this there was no longer any doubt. But how were we going to do this? I sent telegrams to everyone abroad whom I knew, and one of them rang me. This was one of my father's first cousins in London and she promised to do everything possible to help."

The cousin in London spoke to her daughter Winifried Schlesinger, who was married to the pediatrician and later major general in the British army Dr. Bernard Schlesinger. Before the Second World War he commanded the British garrison in Narvik in northern Norway, during the War he was mostly stationed in India.

"Win Schlesinger in London spoke to her five children John, Wendy, Roger, Hilary and Susan about us and the Schlesingers decided to sponsor my son Hans Richard (then nine years old) and this made his entry into Britain possible once we could get him out. Win and Bernard were also prepared to take care of the one-year-old baby. But I didn't want to send Elisabeth away, what would have happened to her? But the hope of sending Hans Richard into safety was like a light in a dark tunnel. So we applied for an exit visa for him to go to England."

Winifred and Bernard Schlesinger

"We prepared for his departure. As we couldn't pay the Schlesingers anything, as a gesture of good will, we supplied Hans with clothing in three different sizes which we thought he would need and which would last him for a few years— coats, pullovers, suits, pyjamas, underwear, shoes, socks and so on. I packed everything for him in a suitcase which was big enough to hold everything.

Ironically, he couldn't wear any of these things as the clothing for boys in England was completely different and what he needed most of all was school uniform, which was not available in Germany. Anyway, all this clothing was later put to good use: It was sent to English children who had been bombed out of their homes. It was very very difficult to get ready in time. Whilst I was sorting out the clothing, I found a small diary. My husband called from the neighbouring room: 'What have

Hans Richard's class, Jewish School, 1938

you got there?' I told him and he told me: 'Then read it.' I read it and was furious. Whilst Hans was still going to school, he had to change from one tram to another. He noted everything which happened on his way. The ridicule he encountered was unimaginably antisemitic. But he never told us or even dropped a hint about all this humiliation. I put this book in my desk drawer. Whenever I had longing for him, I would have a quick glance at this and feel relieved that he was no longer here."

KINDERTRANSPORT TO ENGLAND

On the 15th November, 1938, the British prime minister Arthur Neville Chamberlain met a delegation of influential British Jews for the purpose of securing his support for a temporary intake of Jewish children and young people. The British government relaxed the immigration regulations and then an appeal was made to the British people to welcome foster children into their own families. Even though it had fulfilled its immigration quota, the British government made this decision as a gesture of good will in the hope that this would encourage the USA to relax its immigration regulations. However, shortly afterwards, the US Congress rejected a Bill enabling this so Kindertransports could only go to Great Britain.

The Kindertransports (also known as the Refugee Childrens Movement) enabled almost 10,000 children, who were deemed as 'non-Arian' under the Nürnberger Laws to leave Nazi Germany and other endangered countries and go to Great Britain in the period between the end of November, 1938, and the 1st September, 1939. Through this, children, most of all from Germany, Austria, Poland and Czechoslovakia could go into exile. Emigration took place by train and ship. Most of the children never saw their parents again. Very often, they were the only ones in their families who survived the Holocaust.

The story of the Leipzig Kindertransports to England has largely been unresearched. A little over fifty names are known. In this way, these children were spared from what would have been certain death.

The Kindertransports took place under strict conditions. Only one suitcase, one bag and ten Reichsmarks per child were allowed. Toys and books were not allowed, only one single photograph was possible. Articles of value were confiscated. A group visa was issued for every travel group, every child got a number. In order to prevent tearful farewell scenes from becoming public, good-bye scenes were banned and at the time of the departure of the children, parents and relatives were not allowed to go onto the platform.

HE WAS JUST A NINE-YEAR-OLD BOY!

Early in the morning of the 15th March, 1939, Hans Richard Levy began his journey into a free world. He was on one of the first Kindertansports to leave Leipzig.

The days preceding were spent getting ready for the journey. Thought had to be given to what could be packed and how the luggage could be reduced. Clothing was important as neither Charlotte nor Berthold knew what things were going to be like in England. In view of this his parents sought to get him a new set of clothing so that he would have an adequate supply upon his arrival in England. The day before departure was the last visit of relatives. Otherwise everything went quietly.

Charlotte Levy: "Hans Richard was so happy about being allowed to go to England. He knew that he would be going to a family in which there were twins of his age and all the other good things: they lived in the country and had dogs and so on. On the evening before his departure, he sang in his bed. Baby Elisabeth woke up and sang with him.

On the day before this, Berthold's condition dramatically worsened and the doctor who operated on him came to us. We were so happy that this man was so friendly; no other doctor would have let himself be seen at our home. I knew that my husband didn't have long to live and I wasn't sure whether I should inform Hans of the full extent of his condition. I am very grateful to my sister Martha that I didn't do this.

She advised me: 'Let him go happily to England and not with a heavy heart. England would in any case be a major turmoil for him so don't tell him anything about this.' When early in the morning of the 15th March Hans said goodbye to

his father, it was terrible for me as I knew that they would never see each other again. I was asked to accompany a group of children on the transport to Westphalia. So I had to go on the train and was responsible for the children and the handing in of their travel documents. It was unforgettable, seeing all these children of all ages from little babies upwards and with very few adults to look after them."

Charlotte and Hans arrived at the Leipzig main railway station at the agreed time. Grandfather accompanied them both to the train. The meeting point was a separate waiting room at the station so that the general public didn't notice any traumatic scenes of departure.

Then the children were taken to the train. Hans and Charlotte got on the train. The journey was from Leipzig via Westphalia to the German-Dutch border. During the journey many children just sat feeling stunned. Two hours later they arrived in Berlin and were registered for the continuation of the journey. In Berlin he and the other children, who were included in the block visa received their assigned numbers.

There was a terrible scene when the names of the children were called out. There was one very excited woman. She was hysterical when she learned that the names of her children weren't on the list. The guards beat her with clubs and she fell to the ground.

On the train there was a compartment of young children wearing cardboard labels around their necks. Their names and the names of those who were going to receive them were clearly written on the labels. The children, according to an eye-witness, were simply reduced to human packages and already looked like orphans. As there weren't enough adults

accompanying the children, many mothers pressed their children into the arms of older children so that they could look after them.

The train stopped in many towns so that other children could be picked up. Mostly the journey proceeded calmly. The children in the train were mostly quiet, partly due to the fact that they were afraid they might yet have to stay in Germany. Many were worried about their new future or were simply sad that they had to leave their parents.

In Westphalia, just before the border, Charlotte got off the train. Charlotte Levy: "I was never any good at saying goodbye. But what could I do? Hans had to proceed and I was glad that I was allowed to accompany him at all. When I got off the train I bought a newspaper. The headlines in bold print were something like: 'German Troops heartily welcomed in Czechoslovakia.' Even though this new invasion was so terrible, I was relieved that the Nazis, being euphoric, would leave the children alone at the border."

When the train continued on this fateful day, Hans Richard stood at the window to have one last look at the world he was going to leave behind. He saw his beloved mother becoming smaller and smaller.

Throughout his adult life, this scene would continuously repeat itself in front of his eyes.

Right up to the Dutch border Hans Richard kept seeing

marching German soldiers. They had nothing to do with the transport; they were just there. Hans Richard and the other children always got a shiver down their spines whenever a uniformed guard walked along the compartment wearing his swatstika armband.

"So, according to an eye witness, there was a tremendous sigh of old relief when we reached the first Dutch railway station. We all had this feeling of relief once we crossed the Dutch border. From then we no longer had to fear the accompanying guards. We reached the Dutch North Sea coast. From there we went by ferry until we reached the English coast at Harwich on the 16th March, 1939."

Others would follow on these Kindetransports right up to the closing of the borders with the outbreak of war on the 1st September, 1939.

The sea crossing from Holland to England was organised by Geertruida Wijsmuller-Meyer who became known as "Auntie Truus". From the 11th December, 1938, until the outbreak of the Second World War, she succeeded in rescuing over 10,000 children. Although all the borders had been closed, she succeeded one last time, in getting children from Holland to England. On the very last transport, there were eighty children from an orphanage in Amsterdam together with other Dutch children.

An eye-witness noted: "Our getaway buses stopped at the port of Ymuiden. We were quickly taken to the peer where an

Dutch steamer, the S.S. Bodegraven, was moored with its engines already running." "When we left the port in the evening of the 14th May, 1940, we had to throw ourselves on to the floor as two German bombers were flying low over us and spraying us with machine-gun fire. Luckily, no one was injured." This was how Yaacov Friedler described this situation. When the ship arrived in Harwich a few hours later, the British authorities initially refused to let us anchor in the harbour out of alleged fears of a hostile occupation. Only after hours of delay did the ship get permission to anchor so that the children could go ashore.

ARRIVAL IN ENGLAND

On the ship on which Hans Richard travelled to England in 1939, there was an office in a converted area in which the children for landing were registered. He would be called out and had to show his label together with his permit number and name. The counterpart would be stamped by the Passport Control Officer and then he could get off. Once he got off he proceeded to customs with the other children. The customs officials were friendly and only occasionally checked any of the bags. If they found anything of any value, the children would have said that this was all they had. So in most cases, there were spared any customs duties. Once they were through customs, the immigrants would be medically checked and a doctor stamped their permit papers. The children, who were going to stay with foster parents or who would be looked after by organisations such as "Youth Aliyah" went to their destinations once all the formalities had been sorted out. The foster parents would then be informed of where and when the children were going to arrive and would meet and collect them.

For Hans and the other children, the journey went onto London. On the 16th March, 1939, they arrived at Liverpool Street station. There, they were met by cars and then taken to "their" homes in Hampstead. Twelve other children whom the Schlesingers also rescued went to live in a big house—not their private house. The house provided accommodation,

which could hardly be compared to that of a home. But Hans Richard, being a distant relative, was to live in their own home.

Hans Richard remembers: "Everything happened so quickly. The sea crossing from Holland to Harwich was rough so I was seasick but everything was OK when we arrived. Despite being homesick, I soon got used to my new life and learned the language quickly. I was in England as a nine-year-old boy. The mood was totally against Germany and that was also my opinion."

On the 23rd April, 1939, Berthold Levy died as a result of his illness and his mistreatment whilst in prison. He was buried in the family grave at the Old Jewish Cemetery in Leipzig between Berliner Straße and Theresienstraße.

Charlotte Levy: "Berthold died five and a half weeks later peacefully, on the 23rd April. I was alone with him. His illness had changed him badly but in death he looked like his former self. In the candle light I wrote to Hans. He had lost, what one would call a wonderful father."

Four and a half weeks after his arrival and a long way from home, without the closeness of his mother and sister, the young boy had to experience the pain of his father's death. Even his foster family and caretakers could provide no comfort.

The Schlesingers took over the financial responsibility and the maintenance of the twelve children. For the care of the children, a matron, a cook and supervisors for the boys and girls were taken on. Furthermore, great emphasis was laid on providing the children with a good school education.

Hans Richard Levy wrote: "I lived in a small village and went to a good 'boarding school'. In their free time the family, including their own children, devoted themselves to the refugee

children and did everything possible to keep in contact with them and their families even once they had left the home.

"Over the next six years Win [Schlesinger] had to care for the family alone; she made these years, so tragic for many millions, happy and fulfilling for us children. During our school holidays we went riding and cycling, amused ourselves, did theatrical performances, played at home and when the house was too full, went into the pig sties, which were coverted to offices. Win never gave us the slightest hint of how difficult everything must have been for her, to bring up six children in one house, in which there were often visitors together with all the uncertainty of the War whilst Bernard [Schlesinger] was at the other end of the world."

Initially the refugee children were warmly welcomed by the British people and the media. Very quickly, however, there were more and more refugee children so that it became increasingly difficult to find loving foster families for them.

Many of them were used as unpaid servants and many were kept in refugee camps. Furthermore, there was the suffering of the children who couldn't come to terms with the circumstances of them having to flee or couldn't understand why. They often thought that their families had simply disowned them.

With the outbreak of the Second World War, the situation regarding the refugee children changed. Many of them were sent into refugee camps by their foster families or were looked upon as German spies and interned. Many of the children only learned after the War why they had to leave and what happened to their families back in Germany. Many of the children only realised later that through the Kindertransport to England they were given a new life. Most of them regret that they were no longer able to thank their parents for this.

There is no question that many of these children would not be alive today if they hadn't been able to flee to England on a Kindertransport!

CHARLOTTE AND ELISABETH LEVY GO TO ENGLAND

"After Berthold's death, the most serious challenge for me in my life was to leave Germany as quickly as possible. In recent months my life had been overshadowed by the growing threat of war. The newspaper deliveries began their rounds at five o'clock starting at our house. Whenever I heard the rattling of the letter box, I ran down to see if there was still peace. I remember the horrible headlines: 'Poles murder German Baby'; 'Poles ransack German Homes'.

As our emigration had been arranged through Berthold's business contacts, I had to start everything all over again after his death. Perhaps I could have gone to England as a house maid but that would have meant having to hand Elisabeth over to a nursery and I would have only been able to see her on my free days. This was totally out of the question. I had already lost Berthold, Hans had become separated from me —Elisabeth and I had to stay together. At this time, I heard that one could go to England on the basis of 'guarantees'. Bloomsbury House would provide a third of this, a further third would come from friends with whom we had deposited money and Win Schlesinger's mother gave me a written guarantee that we could stay with her if all else failed. In this way, we got the sum together. I am happy that we didn't have to take up the offer from Win's mother.

On the 21st of August, 1939, my father took Elisabeth and me to the aeroplane. That meant yet another painful departure. This was my first flight. I found it symbolic that the country beneath me became smaller and smaller until it finally disappeared, the country in which I recently had to put up with so much humiliation and misery."

REUNION IN ENGLAND

"As soon as I arrived in England, I wanted to see Hans as quickly as possible. The Schlesingers had already moved into a country house, which they had bought during the September crisis in 1938, and they didn't want to send Hans to London. Before I could go there, I had to register at Bloomsbury House.

Hans Richard und Elisabeth, August 1940

This was compulsory for all immigrants. One couldn't imagine the scene there. The House was full of last-minute refugees, who didn't know where to go; whole families waited there with their luggage. I had to queue for three days before I could register.

Finally on the fourth day I could go to Kintbury with Elisabeth. Win and Hans waited at the railway station. We hadn't seen one another for five and a half months. And a sun-tanned, healthy, happy young boy fell into my arms. And he was so happy about his little sister, whom he loved so much. Bernard and Win prepared a warm welcome for us. In Germany, we had always heard how reserved, formal and cold the British were. Then in England I realised how reserved and formal the Germans were. I had never experienced such a relaxed atmosphere as at the Schlesingers. It was a wonderful welcome and I really felt that it was like a home coming.

After a nice lunch Bernard put a bicycle, which had to be repaired, on his shoulders and went with Win and the five children into the village so that Hans and I could be alone in the garden. Immediately, Hans opened up his heart; he had some concerns which I could clarify for him. Elisabeth, whom I laid down for an afternoon sleep on a mattress dozed off with

Hans Richard, Charlotte und Elisabeth Levy, England, autumn 1941

her arm around one of the Schlesingers' big dogs. He kept an eye on her. Later the Schlesingers and I talked about Hans, how they and I thought about everything. It was a great comfort for me that he was in such a healthy environment with such kind people. Bernard Schlesinger was a well-known pediatrician with a practice in Harley Street. They were well off and they used their finances to help others. They rescued twelve Jewish children from Germany and built a home for them.

It was an unbelievable stroke of luck for my son that after everything he had been through as well as the loss of his father he had the chance of being able to grow up in a stable atmosphere surrounded by such understanding and loving people.

As with most of the English people I met, they didn't make too much about what they did. I can't emphasise enough what they did for us and the manner in which they did it. A few

Hans Richard, 1941

days later when war was declared, Elisabeth and I had to be evacuated and sent to a place unknown to me. I could leave Hans Richard in the hands of the Schlesingers without any concerns."

"The degree of despair into which one can be driven shows itself most clearly in this reversal of natural feelings and principles. To be happy about what? To send ones young nine-year-old boy to a foreign country, whose language he didn't know, to people he didn't know and the uncertainty of whether one would see him again? It was an awful decision, to give our child away to the Schlesingers, whom we had never met and to leave him in their custody with the responsibility of bringing him up, having him educated and the financial burden all this caused. But to leave Hans Richard in Germany would have been a catastrophe."

Charlotte Levy and Elisabeth stayed at "Goodfellows" in Filkins near Lechlade in Gloucestershire. Charlotte worked for John Cripps, the son of Sir Stafford Cripps. He had made his house available for children who had been bombed out. He hired Jewish immigrants to run the house and the land it was on. In 1931, Sir Stafford Cripps was one of three Labour ministers in the British government. He was the number three in the Labour Party after Party Leader George Lansbury and Deputy Leader Clement Attlee. Sir Stafford Cripps was an advocate of a united front against the growing threat of fascism.

EMIGRATION TO AMERICA

Martha Heymann, Charlotte Levy's sister had already moved to her new home in New Jersey, USA, before the War had begun. After the terrible years Charlotte and her family had been through, it was very important that their children could have a better future. Also the longing for her sister was a reason why Charlotte and her children emigrated to the USA after the War. Charlotte lived for the rest of her life in the USA and reached the age of 102. Speaking proudly of his mother, Hans Richard Levy said that: "She was the bravest woman I have ever known. She was determined to do everything possible for her children and actually did so."

"In 1956 grandfather Richard Frank also came to America. Mother was so happy about this."

Charlotte Levy: "All those I knew who survived the holocaust and began a new life have done well. The terrible experience and uprooting gave us new strength and confidence. The Jews have had to experience all this throughout their history. The Nazis could take away all our goods, our money, our jobs, our homes but not what remained in our heads and hearts: This was the basis upon which we could build new lives for us and our children."

After finishing school, Hans Richard studied chemistry at Rutgers University in New Jersey and then went on to study biochemistry in Chicago. In 1963 he was made professor of biochemistry at Syracuse University in New York state. Hans

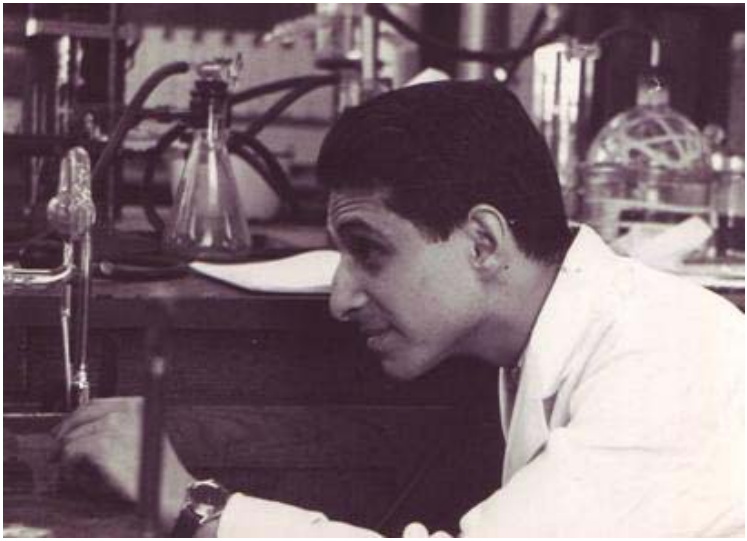
Family Levy, July 1948

Degree Day Rutgers University

Richard and his wife Betty adopted a child, their daughter Karen.

Already in Chicago Hans Richard and Betty were actively involved in the Committee for SANE Nuclear Policy and in the Congress for Racial Equality (CORE). SANE was an organisation which campaigned against nuclear weapons and for the control of atomic research. This committee together with the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign became the peace organisation Peace Action. In connection with an action of civil disobedience in Syracuse, Hans Richard Levy was arrested and had to spend a night in prison.

Today, Hans Richard Levy said that "After 37 years as a professor of biochemistry I entered into my well-earned retirement but I have many interests, for example, I sing in a choir and I am writing a book."



University of Chicago, 1954

"At first I didnt want to speak German again but when I was about thirteen years old, I thought that this was nonsense and I asked my mother to write to me and to speak to me in German so that I could once again learn this important language. This was also important for my later profession."

Charlotte Levy and her sister Martha Heymann finally lived in an old people's home in the state of New Jersey. Elisabeth Levy, the sister of Hans Richard, had already died a few years ago. Neither Charlotte nor her daughter Elisabeth had ever returned to Germany. Apart from anything else, remaining worries from these terrible memories stood in the way of Hans Richard visiting the grave of his father in the Old Jewish Cemetery in Leipzig until today.

TRACING YOUR ROOTS

After parallel research by the editorial staff of *Auf der Spur der Ahnen* and the *Friedenszentrum Leipzig e.V.* there was then a meeting between Marianne Wingten and Hans Richard Levy when he visited Leipzig on the 6th October, 2009, for the very first time since emigrated.

Marianne Wingten: "Our first meeting was at the Leipzig railway station where I immediately recognised Hans Richard Levy because of family likeness. My wish was fulfilled, something I thought would never happen. The pleasure and warmth of our meeting will remain with me for the rest of my life. We were together at the Frank family grave where his father is also buried. This was a moment which greatly moved us all.

A tinge of bitterness arose when we noticed that a nearby family grave still showed traces of desecration (such as 'Jewish swine')."

Late in the afternoon there was a meeting in the Jewish cultural and meeting centre Ariowitsch House between Hans Richard Levy and two pupils from the Immanuel Kant school. The pupils presented a brochure together with its accompanying audio book, which Hans Richard accepted with deep emotion. As a very personal memory of his grandfather, whom Hans Richard Levy was very fond of, he was presented with a 1902 invoice from the firm Gebrüder Frank.

Paul Moritz and Julius Völkner described this meeting: "The meeting with Herr Levy more than fulfilled our expectations.

Hans Richard Levy, Marianne Wingten, Richard Gauch and colleagues from the television station MDR in Ariowitsch House

We went with mixed feelings to the interview. On the one hand it was great to meet a living witness and on the other hand neither of us had any experience interviewing and the presence of the media made everything for us a little more demanding. The interview with Hans Richard Levy, which we regarded as much more than just a meeting, went very smoothly. Once the discussion really got underway, all the tension and nervousness went away and everything went well. We were amazed that Herr Levy could speak so openly about his past and that he could personally answer all our questions in full detail. His story and the circumstances whereby he and Frau Wingten found each other deeply moved us. In retrospect, had we had more time we could have talked with Herr Levy much longer and in more detail. However, we were most grateful that he gave us this opportunity though it was for us the first one."

Paul and Moritz talking with Hans Richard Levy

Frau Wingten and the school pupils agreed to participate jointly at the city-wide memorial initiative "Candlelight vigil at all the stolpersteins" in Leipzig on the 9th November, 2009. In connection with this initiative a stolperstein was to be installed for Berthold Levy in front of their former flat at Brandvorwerkstraße 80.

HANS RICHARD LEVY IN DISCUSSION

Childhood place: "I am so happy that I have come back." However, for him it's a difficult journey back into the past. He no longer has many memories of his childhood in Leipzig. There are things which remain unforgotten such as the Leipzig main railway station from where he left on the *Kindertransport* on the 15th March, 1939. He went to the flat from his childhood days in the Brandvorwerkstraße. He saw the building that still remains in the Berliner Straße where his grandfather produced clothing. Not far from there is the old Jewish cemetery where he was able to visit his father's grave for the very first time. "That was very moving for me." With each passing minute in Leipzig, a piece of memory comes back. He remembers his family life in Leipzig in the mid 1930s. Everything centred on our family life: "I was brought up very well and sheltered. I still remember that my father accompanied me to the Rot-Weiss Tennis Club of which he was a member. There I drank Coca Cola for the first time ever! I remember how nice it was to see 'Peterchens Mondfahrt' in the theatre until Jews were banned from going to such performances. I had to go by tram to the Jewish School in Gustav-Adolf-Straße and I liked going on the tram. I enjoyed going to the Jewish School until the Nazis closed it."

Antisemitism before 1938: The bans on Jews going to the theatre or attending state schools were part of the discriminatory measures that were enacted after the Pogrom Night of 1938. Was the growing antisemitism noticeable before then?

"At least I must have known that something like antisemitism existed as I wrote about it in my pocket diary: 'Experience in the Tram'. I must have forgotten about all this until my mother happened to find my diary on the night before my departure to England. She asked my father, whether she should pack it for me. He was against this, saying that I should not take such bad memories with me. Today, I very much regret that I no longer have this diary with me."

9th November, 1938: "This is the worst memory of my childhood. Early in the morning of the 10th November, 1938, I was woken up by loud banging on the door of our flat. Men were there who told us to get out and meet at a place nearby. It was a cold day and we dressed warmly. At the last minute my mother decided not to take my little sister, who was only ten months old. She left her with our maid.

I was only nine years old and very nervous. I walked between my parents holding their hands. When we got to the place we were told to go to, we heard loud noise again and I still know how I thought that this is where the Jews are being slaughtered. Then it became clear as we were approaching that it was just a shoe factory, and that the whole business was just a horrible hoax to torment us Jews.

Then as we were returning home, we met a woman who was crying and was agitated. It was the wife of one of the owners of the biggest Jewish department store in Leipzig *Bamberger und Hertz*. It was the first time I had ever seen an adult cry. The lady told us that the windows of the department store had been smashed and that it had been looted. She also said that the synagogue in Gottschedstraße was in flames. That was the beginning of our expulsion."

Emigration: "My father died just a few weeks after I left. He was only forty years old. My mother and sister managed to leave Germany in 1939 just in time. Their KLM flight from Holland to the safety of England was the last before the outbreak of the Second World War. After the War we went to live with my mother's sister in the USA. I studied there, founded a family and became professor of biochemistry at Syracuse University in New York State. Elisabeth Levy got married in the USA and had two sons but sadly she died at the very early age of 49."

Visit to Leipzig: "This was difficult for me. In fact, I had never wanted to return to Leipzig because Germany meant for me the Nazi period, the murder of my relatives who were deported to Terezin and Ravensbrück, and of the millions of other innocent people. But the possibility of being able to see the place of my childhood once again motivated me. I also wanted to visit my father's grave, which I only knew from a photograph. I finally wanted to say farewell to him."

Neonazis: "As far as the neo-Nazis in the USA are concerned", Richard Levy says "Terrible! But there are people with very bad thoughts who also do bad things all over the world." "All the more, I am impressed that so much has been published in Germany about the Nazi period and, for example, that all school children have to visit a former concentration camp. I was also impressed that so many young pupils visit the Jewish museum with their teachers. This, in my view, is very important!"

Fate: "I have understood my fate but it has taken time for me to work through it and to no longer be angry about it. In that respect, this visit has been very helpful." "I am so happy that I

came to Germany, it has been healing for me." "I very much hope to come again." Do you consider Leipzig to be your hometown? "Not yet, perhaps a little", said Hans Richard Levy at the end of his visit to Leipzig.

Article on the Meeting on the 6th October, 2009,
in: Leipzigs Neue, Nr. 10/2009, S. 6.

WHAT could be nicer than a meeting of people of all generations, who have something to say to each other? On the 6th October, there was a meeting in our *Haus der Begegnung* of people from all walks of life. As a result of parallel research by the editorial staff of *Spur der Ahnen* of the MDR television company and the Leipzig peace group *Friedenszentrum Leipzig,* there was a meeting between Marianne Wingten from Berlin and Hans Richard Levy who visited Leipzig for the very first time since his emigration. Today, Levy lives in the USA.

Among other Leipzig school pupils, Paul and Julius from the Immanuel Kant School undertook research on the Jewish family of Berthold Levy. He was arrested in Leipzig in the early morning hours of the 10th November, 1938, detained and mishandled and died on the 23rd April, 1939. Six weeks previously, his son was able to go to England on one of the Kindertransports. After that he had never returned to Germany. In our house of German history, Abitur pupils interviewed the former Leipziger in English. Those who were present at the interview had a most unusual history lesson and were deeply impressed and moved. It lasted much longer than the originally planned half hour. Frau Wingten and the pupils agreed to take part in the city-wide memorial action "Candlelight vigil at every stolperstein" on the 9th November. In connection with this project a stolperstein will be laid for Berthold Levy in front of the former family home at Brandvorwerkstraße 80.

With this hope: Schalom, Annette Boenheim

Further information can be found on www.ariowitschhaus.de. For questions and answers: ariowitschhaus@yahoo.de

APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1
TANTA TRUUS RESCUES THOUSANDS OF JEWISH AND "NON-ARIAN" CHILDREN

During the period of the "Third Reich", Geertruida Wijsmuller-Meyer, known as Tanta Truus, rescued thousands of Jewish and "non-arian" children through her Kindertransports.

Not so much is known about Geertruida Wijsmuller. She came from a Dutch shipowner's dynasty Wijsmuller. She was born in Baarn near Utrecht and was brought up with her five brothers on the family country estate in Bloemendaal in the Dutch province of North Holland. In 1906, her father, Jan Wijsmuller, founded the shipping company N:V: Bureau Wijsmuller. It's believed that Geertruida was married to a banker with the name of Meyer (or Meijer), so this would explain the later double-barreled name Wijsmuller-Meyer. It was said, that she was a resolute, sharp, modest and down-to-earth woman who wasn't afraid of anything or anybody and that beneath her tough exterior she had a soft heart for children. So she was known by two names: Tanta Truus and the Steamroller.

In the 1930s, Wijsmuller started working for the Dutch Committee for Special Jewish Interests (Comité voor Bijzondere Joodse Belangen) and initially specialised in the deliveries of food and medicines in various parts of Europe. As the situation of Jews and "non-arians" in Nazi Germany worsened, she often travelled to Vienna beginning in November 1938.

Bronze bust of Tante Truus, Bachplein, Amsterdam

She didn't let up until she met Adolf Eichmann, who was then Head of the Central Office for Jewish Emigration. Finally, at the beginning of December, she was able to get permission for 600 children to travel to England within the following five days, if transport could be organised. She seemingly managed the impossible: on the 11th December, 1938, the first Kindertransport left from the Netherlands to England. More were to follow and by the time this action ended, on the 1st September, 1939—the day when the Second World War began—over 10,000 children from Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia were brought to England.

APPENDIX 2
SIR NICHOLAS WINTON, ORGANISER OF THE KINDERTRANSPORTS

Nicholas Winton (born 19th May, 1909, recently becoming a hundred years old) witnessed as a young London stockbroker on a trip to Prague the suffering of the Jewish refugees. He is known as the British "Schindler" and rescued 669 children, mostly of Jewish origin, from what would have been certain death. To assess the importance of Winton for the transports, we have to go back to the year of 1938.

On the 29th September, the British prime minister Neville Chamberlain signed the Munich Agreement, which had been drawn up by Hitler. Chamberlain's French counterpart Edouard Daladier as well as Benito Mussolini also signed this. Through this Agreement, France and England hoped that they would stop the growing threat of war—but in so doing they sacrificed the Sudetenland in Czechoslovakia.

Hitler's Wehrmacht marched in and was approaching Prague —the end of a democratic and self-governing Czechoslovakian state was approaching. Like many other British people, Nicholas Winten was ashamed of what the British government agreed to. He was then working as a stockbroker in London.

In winter 1938, he wanted to go on a skiing holiday to Switzerland, as he had done the year before. However, a good friend invited him to Prague. There he saw the masses of refugees from the Sudeten areas, who only wanted one thing: emigration to a safe country. At this point Winton began to think about the destiny of the children.

Sir Nicholas Winton

After his return to London, Winton tried to bring as many Jewish children to England as possible. In an interview for the English broadcasting station, he informed the English people of the situation of the Jewish people in the German Reich. He wanted to find as many English people as possible who could take in Jewish children or make donations for them. The British government gave permission for children with "sponsorships" to enter England without papers. The children had to come without their parents, they could not be older than seventeen and had to have "sponsors" who had enough money to support them. Every child was to be accommodated with a foster family and a deposit of fifty pounds had to paid for every child taken

Nicholas Winton, 1938

in. This also applied to German Jewish children. In this way, children, mostly from Germany, Austria, Poland and Czechoslovakia were able to go into exile.

So, through Nicholas Winton, 669 Czech children were rescued. After the beginning of the Second World War, the transports were abruptly stopped. 250 Czech children, who on the 1st September were on a train didn't manage to cross the border. None of these children survived the War. Thousands of other children were on lists in Germany, Austria, Poland and Czechoslovakia for further rescue transports and most of them became victims of the Nazis.

Although the rescue missions came to a sudden end, many people today have been affected by them. This is also the case for school pupils in the South Bohemian community of Kunžak. Apart from other things, they took part in organising a petition in the Czech Republic in which they demanded the awarding of the Nobel Peace prize to Nicholas Winton.

APPENDIX 3
SHORT BIOGRAPHIES OF OTHER ESCORTS AND CHILDREN IN THE TRANSPORTS TO ENGLAND

Walter Tschapek, born 1928 in Schönwald, North Bohemia, was sent in a Kindertransport to England. The following are excerpts from his research on other children which have been put together on the basis of original documents held by the Museum in Douglas, Isle of Man, shortly before his death in 2010. The information on the first nine is from Francis Steiner. Information on those with the numbers 10, 13, 15, 16, 17, 19, and 21 is from Rudi Leavor. Some of the children personally registered themselves at the Museum in Douglas after the War. Many of them fought in the British army against Germany though the actual army units were not listed.

1

Aberbach, Moshe

Arrival in Great Britain on 12.12.1938, then 14 years old, Isle of Man from end of May until 4.7.1940, released to go to his mother in Leeds.

2

Bass, Ernst David

Change of Name: Ernest Elie Bass

Born 19.12.1909 in Vienna Ottakring, sent to an orphanage in Döbling after the death of his parents, 10.11.1938 sent to a concentration camp, active in organising the Kindertransports, 1939 in the Cotswolds (west of Oxford), interned 1940, from

6.11.1940 in the army (pioneer unit), wounded in Normandy, then in the third "Jewish Brigade" in Italy, wounded again.

3

BAUMGART, GÜNTHER (or GUNTHER)

Change of Name: GERRY ROGERS

Born 8.12.1923 in Breslau, Great Britain since 30.3.1939, army (pioneer unit), landing second day after D-Day, with army to Hamburg, translator and investigator in a camp for war criminals, 1947 demobilised, married a German woman, returned to Great Britain 1949, emigration to Australia 1964.

4

BRUCK, HEINZ

Name changed 1942: HARRY BROOKE

Born 13.3.1923 in Berlin, went to Great Britain at the age of 16, May 1939 Kitchener Camp (military base on Orkney?), taken on by the secret services to intercept and decipher radio messages to German submarines, interned on the Isle of Man, sent to Australia, back in Great Britain in 1942 registered as a parachutist, at the end of the War news intelligence officer in a prisoner-of-war camp in Chalthwaite, Great Britain.

5

CARLEBACH, JULIUS

17 years old, son of the chief rabbi of Hamburg, Grandfather was a rabbi in Lübeck, maternal grandfather JULIUS PREUSS (prominent medical historian), one of the few who refused to change his name upon joining the British army, went to England with his sister Judith, worked for a short time with a

Jewish fur trader, then worked in the scrap trade, registered for a pioneer unit, then sent to the navy.

6

Friedmann, Friedolin Moritz Max

Born 2.6.1897 in Burgkunstadt (Baveria), schooling in Munich, studied at various universities including Munich, Heidelberg and Cologne, served in the First World War, 1925 awarded a doctor title at the University of Erlangen, teacher at various Jewish schools, 1938/39 led many Kindertransports to their reception centres in England, after an English course at Regent Street Polytechnic in 1939 became a teacher at a reception centre at Great Engeham Farm, November 1939 became a teacher in Bydon House, North Devon, in summer detained for a few weeks.

7

Glückmann, Harry

Born 24.3.1924, was in a hostel in Bradford (a home for foreigners), became a soldier for the pioneer unit.

8

Goldschmidt, Josef

Name changed: Josef Goldsmith

Born 9.1.1923, arrival with the Kindertransport 16.3.1939, studied agriculture, imprisoned in Chichester, three months Isle of Man, deported to Canada (Ripples Camp, Fredericton, New Brunswick), after 13 months returned to the Isle of Man, three months later released, worked on a farm (Guildford) until the end of the War.

9

GRÜNBERGER, RICHARD

Born 7.3.1924, after being released from the Isle of Man worked in a munitions factory, after the War wrote books on the "Third Reich".

10

KERPEN, LUDWIG

Name changed: LEWIS KERPEN

After arrival in Great Britain went to a hostel in Bradford.

11

LEMBERGER, HANS KARL

Name changed: J. C. LEE

Went to Great Britain December 1938, worked as a motor mechanic in Belfast, then in prison, then interned in Huyton and Isle of Man, wanted to go to the Czechoslovakian air force, served as an ambulance driver in the British army, from 11.7.1944 in Normandy, two years as a translator in Germany, 18.5.1947 demobilised.

12

LEWIN,

Name changed: MARTIN DAVIS LEWIN

Born 2.1.1922 in Tempelburg, Pomerania, his family murdered by the Nazis, February 1939 to Great Britain, 1940 interned, registered for the pioneer units, parachute training, special unit for parachute jumping in North Africa and Italy, later Arnhem, there seriously wounded in the chest, 1945 jump over Norway to assist the partisans, refused to go to Palestine.

13

LINDENBERG, KURT

Nothing special known.

14

MOSES, MANFRED

Born 4.9.1922 in Alfeld (Upper Hesse), arrival in Great Britain 4.8.1939, June 1940 arrested, then in Lingfield, then Prees Heath (middle July), interned Isle of Man August 1940, 5.12.1940 joined a pioneer unit.

15

ROSINGER, HERBERT

In a hostel in Bradford.

16

SILBERBUSCH, ERWARD

In a hostel in Bradford.

17

STIEGEWALD, OTTO

In a hostel in Bradford.

18

TREIDEL, KURT MAX

(Not to be confused with an internee of the same name.) Born 10.4.1922 in Berlin, arrival in Great Britain 24.3.1939, 14.7 to Nov. 1940 on the Isle of Man, worked in the library there, should have received a visa for the United States but this was rejected, finally naturalised in Great Britain, worked in the

tailor trade as a cutter, later as a sales representative in Bradford near Leeds.

19

Weinstein, Walter

In a hostel in Bradford.

20

Wuga, Heinz

Name changed: Henry Wuga

Name appeared in the notes of Geradus Alsen (also Kindertransport), who made a short film in Peel (Isle of Man) under the title "In the Week we were taken to War".

Born in Nuremberg, after arrival in Great Britain went to Glasgow near to a distant (?) cousin, related to a 60-year old lady in the south of Glasgow, went to Queens Park School, then moved into a house with many other refugees, his letters to his parents were intercepted by the secret services and was declared to be an foreign enemy, brought before the High Court in Edinburgh, ten months on the Isle of Man.

21

Zeisler, Lutz

Was in a hostel in Bradford, wrote Hans Beermann (later Beerman, also on the Kindertransport) in a birthday message (20.8.1940).

APPENDIX 4
CALL FOR CANDLELIGHT VIGIL ON THE 9TH NOVEMBER

Friedenszentrum Leipzig e.V.

In Memory of the Dead
and a Reminder for Today

Call

Ladies and Gentlemen,
More than seventy years ago synagogues were set alight in the whole of Germany, also in Leipzig. Through this an unparalelled destruction of the lives of people on the basis of their religious beliefs was set in motion. Also today, accusations are often indiscriminately repeated aloud at assemblies whereby "the others", whether they are Jews or immigrants, are blamed for the critical social situation in the Federal Republic [of Germany]. We must never forget where all this leads to: millions of persecutions, deprivation and the systematic murder of Jews.

Once the synagogues were burnt. We light candles at every stolperstein in the city in memory of the Nazi dictatorship.

9th November—Activities on the Reichs Pogromnight

We campaign decisively
against antisemitism and racism!
Therefore:
Let us light candles at every stolperstein in the city
as a reminder of the crimes of the Nazi dictatorship!

9th November
Commemoration at the Stolpersteins
Candlelight Vigil from 6 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

This action is supported by numerous associations, initiative groups as well as people of public standing at local, state and federal level. Of special importance is the support from the Lord Mayor of Leipzig as well as school pupils. *Come and join us!*

Further information under:
http://leipzig-gedenkt.de/gruppeleipzig

APPENDIX 5
STOLPERSTEINS

The artist Gunter Demnig remembers the victims of the Nazi time by installing a brass plaque in the pavement in front of the last place where the victims lived. By now, Stolpersteins have been laid at over 300 hundred places in Germany as well as Austria, Hungary and the Netherlands. "A person is only forgotten when his name is forgotten", says Gunter Demnig. With these Stolpersteins in front of these houses, the memories of the people who once lived there will remain alive. On these stones, the following words are written: "Here lived...". One stone, one name, one person.

"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil
it is for good persons to do nothing!"
(Edmund Burke (1729–1797), British author,
state philosopher and politician.)

Together with Rote Hilfe e.V. Leipzig and the participating school pupils the Friedenszentrum Leipzig e.V. will cover the cost of producing, laying and preservation of a stolperstein for Berthold Levy.

Example of a Stolperstein: Edith Stein

PHOTOGRAPHS, BIBLIOGRAPHY AND INTERNET SOURCES

Photographs

Cover, pp. 12, 19, 22, 30, 32, 33, 46, 47, 48, 50, 51: R. Levy, private
p. 14: M. Wingten, private
pp. 15, 20, 23, 25, 26, 28, 29, 53, 54: Archive, Friedenszentrum (T. Schleip, M. Frenzel)
p. 16: Jüdische Religionsgemeinde Leipzig (Jewish Religious Community Leipzig)
p. 35: http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/OSK/NEOS_Sonderseiten/Aktuelles/
pp. 38, 39: Source: www.judentum-projekt.de
p. 40: http://www.imdb.com/media/rm62363904/tt0248912
pp. 43, 62: Source: wikipedia.org/wiki/kindertransport
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