



Stories of Allied Soldiers from Nuremberg-Fürth: Henry Schueftan

(born 1914)



Hans Schüftan 1932 at age 17
(photo: Nuremberg City Archives)

Introduction

Henry Schueftan was born as Hans Schüftan on November 12, 1914 in Berlin-Charlottenburg as the second child of the salesman Josef Schüftan (born 1887 in Opole, Upper Silesia) and his wife Ludovika, nee Gradus (born 1889 in Warsaw).

In 1921 the family - father, mother, daughter Irma (born 1913 in Burgkunstadt) and the sons Hans and Alfred (born 1920 in Kulmbach) - moved from Kulmbach (Upper Franconia) to Nuremberg. Here Hans became a traveling salesman.

Josef Schüftan died in 1935. Irma and Alfred emigrated to Palestine in 1934 and 1936 respectively. Hans had to leave Germany on March 20, 1937 and went to Chicago. His mother followed him in June 1938. The family's last address in Nuremberg was Fürther Straße 12.

The following autobiographical sketch about his wartime experiences initially was written for and published in the 2014/15 edition of Frank Harris' *Nuremberg-Fürth Newsletter*. The biographical information above was taken from Nuremberg City Archives' holdings C 21/VII passport registry #138 and C 21/X inhabitants' registry # 8.

Gerhard Jochem

In the Army 1943 - 1946

Staff Sergeant U.S. Army, drafted January 1943, served until February 1946 with two years foreign service in U.K., France, Belgium and Germany. Had basic training in Finance Department, Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana. In August 1943 he spent a week on a train as an interpreter for German prisoners of war (General Rommel's Africa Corps) who were picked up in Bayonne, N.J. and taken to an army camp in Louisiana.

He volunteered for the *ASTP* program (*Army Specialized Training Program*) and spent some time at the University of Illinois in Urbana. When the program was phased out he was assigned to an intelligence unit attached to the Air Corps. In early 1944 he flew on a converted TWA C-54 to Europe, touching down in Newfoundland for refueling. He attended a British RAF Intelligence School near Maidstone, England. There being no U.S. Army camp in that area, he was living with a British family in Maidstone. While in Paris after its liberation, he was present at services at the Rothschild Synagogue, the first one in a number of years.

The so-called *Battle of the Bulge* placed him in eastern Belgium near the German border. When German parachutes (they were green) were found near his compound in December 1944 his unit retreated to western Belgium, an area which at that time was called *Buzzbomb Alley*, the target area of the German rockets V-1. Went back to Nuremberg, his hometown, where he arranged to have his father's grave monument restored; it had been toppled.

Besides, he took a most unusual trip; we let him speak for himself:

About October 1945, soldiers with immediate family members were given an opportunity to visit them in what is now Israel. My sister and my brother had been living there since the mid-thirties. I was traveling with another soldier who turned out to be a distant relative. We were given a ten day furlough plus travel time, U.S. Army air transportation, low priority authorized.

We took the train to Paris (from Frankfurt), departed from Orly Field and much to our surprise, we were bumped off in Rome. We were told to come to the airport every day, we were housed in a local U.S. Army transit camp. We followed these instructions, and after about five days a flight took us - Surprise! - to Naples. There, what happened in Rome, was repeated for a four days stay. Finally, we arrived in Cairo, Egypt.

Not having received specific instructions we went to a U.S. Middle East Command center. We were shaken when we were informed that the British Mandate area was now off-limits for U.S. troops. Our contact, a major, was quite understanding: he suggested as we were already

there, we should come back in about four days. Of course, there was another U.S. transit camp for us at the air base.

We found out that the U.S. Leave Center at Tel Litwinsky had been closed after railroad tracks were dynamited. Ultimately we were instructed to take the train from Cairo to Jerusalem at our own risk. That train service has been discontinued. I had a wonderful reunion with my sister and brother married and meeting their four children.

Our return trip started in Rehovoth at 9.00 PM. Due to the curfew at 8.00 PM my brother could not see me off at the station.

We were quite worried about our return flight to Paris - it turned out to be quite different: We arrived in Paris on the same day.

That journey was a wonderful benefit from my service in Europe.

*His Army unit was awarded the Belgian *Pourragere*. He was awarded five *Battle Stars*.*

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