



Tell Us Your Story

Richard Frenkel

My Father, Lothar Frenkel, shown in his 1945 US Army ID Card, and my mother Anita, emigrated to the US in October 1951 from England. My father was a Jew from Vienna Austria, who had been able to emigrate to Britain in June of 1939 on the Kindertransport, two months before the war started. The Kindertransport was a program under which the British accepted almost 10,000 unaccompanied children from Germany and Nazi occupied countries during 9 months in 1938-1939. His parents and all his relatives perished in the Holocaust and Lothar found himself an orphan in Britain at the age of 14. He wrote later that his "life in England from June 1939 to October 1945 is somewhat reminiscent of the novels of Charles Dickens", but eventually he was interned on the Isle of Man where the older internees set up instruction.



Image: Lothar Frenkel and Anita Schroeder Frenkel





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My mother was German and lived through the war in Berlin, narrowly escaping bombing runs that killed many neighbors. She met my father at the Nuremberg war crimes trials where she was bureau chief and reporter for the ADN news agency and my father was a simultaneous interpreter translating between German and English. After the trial, they returned to England, where my father obtained a self taught Master's degree in 1951, shortly before they emigrated to the United States aboard the MV Georgic.

My siblings and I owe our very existence to a precarious series of events. My father was accepted on the Kindertransport because as a child he had been sent to an English speaking kindergarten, and as an older child had met an Englishman while recovering from illnesses at a sanitarium. He practiced English by keeping up a correspondence, and the Englishman served as his sponsor in Britain. Meanwhile my mother narrowly escaped the bombings in Berlin. Given my parentage I have always viewed the world with a mixture of pessimism and hope.

While I was born in London, I was a year old when we immigrated to the US. My father was a brilliant experimental physicist who pursued interesting work which led to us moving around a lot before settling in Massachusetts. Despite arriving at a time of McCarthyism. I grew up feeling the freedom, energy, and opportunity of the post war US for middle class whites.

For more see <https://frenkelfamily.org/FamilyHistory/downloads1/histories.html>

