

# Yiddish Leben

CD 6 of the series “So klingt Owenglie” (The Sounds of Ober-Gleen)

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- O1. Veronika Bloemers (piano) and singers, Synagogue of Ober-Gleen, rehearsal, Hashivenu (first part).
- O2. Since the late Thirties, no one had sung Jewish songs any more in the Synagogue of Ober-Gleen. The Congregation has ceased to exist. The Synagogue, built in 1873 on Obergasse 48, had been a blacksmith's working place and a storage room for decades. Newly renovated, it is a house of culture now, its interior lighter than linen cloth. In September 2017, Veronika Bloemers is rehearsing here with a little choir for the first premiere after 80 years. „Hashivenu“ ist a mourning song, a verse of the prophet Jeremia after the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem, written in exile in Babylon: „Lead us back, G-d, to you. We wish to return. Renew our days as they have been.“
- O3. Veronika Bloemers (piano) and singers, Synagogue of Ober-Gleen, rehearsal, Hashivenu (second part).
- O4. Matthias Eislöffel, a relative of Schmidts Kall, the former blacksmith Karl Fröhlich, knows the building.
- O5. Matthias Eislöffel talks about family feasts in the blacksmith's shop in the Seventies.
- O6. The Jewish community was small, too small to have a rabbi and soon also too small for its own teacher. Around 1900, the Jewish communities of Ober-Gleen and Kirtorf were looking for an unmarried candidate for the position of a religious teacher, someone who would sing and pray and kill animals according to the religious rules. He would live in the annex of the Synagogue and teach the few Jewish children of the village, make them familiar with the Jewish religion and one of the oldest blessings of the Thora and the Bible, from the fourth book of Moses.
- O7. Veronika Bloemers and choir no. 2: Der Herr segne und behüte dich (The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace).
- O8. Linda Silverman Shefler is a descendant of Berta (Brünel) Lamm from Ober-Gleen, who had emigrated in 1853 on her own to America, at the age of 21. She had married the bookbinder Aaron Marx, a migrant from Sterbfritz. Brünel's husband fought in the American Civil War in 1862, sold used goods afterwards and became policeman in Cleveland. Brünel gave birth to six sons and one daughter. For more than 30 years, Linda Silverman Shefler is doing genealogy research now. She has found some of her family roots in Ober-Gleen, others in Stordorf, Alsfeld, Angenrod and Sterbfritz. Her ancestors have lived in Ober-Gleen since the 18th Century. Five of nine Jewish families called themselves Lamm, the others were Sondheim, Maierfeld, Stern and Rothschild. And as everybody in the village, they had village names, as well: Timewitnesses recall Heasche (Hirsch's), Haunesse (Haune's), Evas (Eva's), Räise, Jirre-Wolfs und Lesemanns (Eleser's).
- O9. Linda Silverman Shefler tells her story in English.
- O10. Veronika Bloemers, Instrumental.
- O11. About 30 Jewish men and women belonged to the village's community in the time of the Weimar Republic (1919-1932). Unlike many others in Upper Hesse, they were liberal, not orthodox. Jewish men were heads of the veteran's club, and the younger ones went side by side with the Christians of their age to the front in WWI. In civil life, they were cattle dealers, sold food or fabrics, were tailors, shoemakers, worked in the fields or were schochets, butchers who killed cows, chicken, goats or sheep according to the religious rules. Jewish housewives cared for the household, the garden, the family and the tiny shop. Their children went with all the others to the public school, and the congregation held its prayers in the Synagogue that was called Jirreschul, Jewish school, in the dialect. A protestant was heating the Mikwe, the bath of the Jewish

women at the Borngasse. Nonjews liked the Matzos on Pessach, as well. And Schalet, the Jewish potato dish, is served from time to time up to today, but not kosher: with bacon.

12. Grate 1,250 kg of potatoes, add an onion, salt and pepper, two eggs, some bacon (or not) and a bread roll, soaked in water. The mixture is baked in a stewing pan at 200 degrees celcius in the oven, for about an hour, till the Schalet is golden brown on the upper side. Serve it with apple sauce.

13. Yale Itsik Strom, a US-American musician, ethnograph and film producer has been seven times to the Vogelsberg region already and knows that people in Upper Hesse are crazy for potatoes, no matter if they are an ingredient to the traditional *Saalzekùche* (salty cake), or if they are coming along as *Saalzschdegger* or *Kwellkaddoffen*, *Kaddoffeselod*, *Kaddoffelsobb* or *Kaddoffelgemies*, *Kaddoffelglies* or *Kaddoffelbrai*, *Reesderkaddoffenn* or *Kaddoffelpannekùche* (dialect words for potato dishes) that are called latkes in Yiddish. Yale's grandmother Dora Hoberman Wainer was from the formerly big Jewish community of Stolin that belonged to Poland then and belongs to Belarus today and is connected to Homberg/Effze. From his grandma, his Buba, Isaak has learnt how a week becomes a potato week.

14. Yale Strom and Nikolai Muck, potato song.

15. Emma Schulz, The Jewish Families of Ober-Gleen. She tells us about the people, their homes and their village names.

16. Suse Lina, Jewish Merchants. Lina says that Jewish men had not been farmers, as they could not own land, so they opened little shops, sold their goods from door to door or became cattle dealers. Mostly, they sold fabrics or food.

17. From sunset on Friday until sunset on Saturday, no work was done. The Jewish ethnograph and musician Yale Strom from the U.S. explained the rules in his own way. On a Sonnowed (dialect word for Saturday) in November 2017 in Ober-Gleen, before he played a song together with guitar player Nikolai Muck from Frankfurt/Main.

18. Yale Strom und Nikolai Muck, Sabbath Song.

19. Emma Schulz and Lina Kirchner, Schulze Emma and Suse Lina (their village names) from Ober-Gleen, and Elfriede Roth from Lauterbach have been Schabbesmädchen (Shabbesgoj/Shabbesgirls) in their childhood.

20. Emma Schulz explains what Schabbes means, that Jews who follow the rules will not turn on the light, won't make fire or even open envelopes and that they ask Nonjews to do that for them as she did when she was a girl in Ober-Gleen.

21. Suse Lina tells us that she had helped Guta and Hirsch Lamm, called Lesemanns, on Sabbath. She also remembered the rules well.

22. Veronika Bloemers, Instrumental.

23. Thanks to the local historian Ingfried Stahl from Angenrod we know: The man who had walked on Fridays to Ober-Gleen in the years 1934 to 1937, to make sure that there had been enough man for a service in the Synagogue, was Markus Stern. He died at the age of 77 in Theresienstadt. Veronika Bloemers knows the rules of Sabbath from her time in Israel.

24. Veronika Bloemers, Who doesn't provide for the Sabbath. (Veronika explains a Hebrew proverb).

25. Elfriede Roth has helped Rosa Weinberg, nee Lamm from Ober-Gleen, in her household in Lauterbach on Sabbath.

26. Elfriede Roth, Schabbesmädchen (see the English version of her portrait on [www.monikafelsing.de](http://www.monikafelsing.de))

27. Guta und Hirsch Lamm, the Lesemanns, had two daughters. Rosa had married Salli Weinberg and had given birth to her son Arthur in Lauterbach. Johanna, the elder sister, had moved to her husband Louis Stern in Diez upon the Lahn. They had three children: Hermann, Ruth and Ernst Lothar. Hermann had been in Ober-Gleen often and played with neighbor children, Otto Kirchner and a daughter of family Dächer. His sister Ruth Stern Glass Earnest wrote in her childhood memoire „The Gate“:

28. „In April 1928, a couple of months before I was born, Papa brought four-year-old Hermann, about to become my big brother, to Ober-Gleen, in Oberhessen, about seventy miles from Diez, to stay with our maternal grandparents, Gutta and Hirsch Lamm, our Oma and Opa. (...) My parents hadn't questioned the decision to send Hermann away. Oma might finally teach him to eat better. (...) Opa's cousin, mischievous Josef, prepared Hermann for my arrival. They'd called me Ruth, he said, because my hair was rood (Dialect for rot/red). (...) Josef also said that our parents didn't need a boy anymore, now they'd gotten a girl. All this helped toughen my big brother who would later be sent to spend part of his first grade in Ober-Gleen to give Oma another chance to fatten him up“ (Ruth Stern Glass Earnest, *The Gate*, page 9).

29. Ruth Stern Glass Earnest has also described her Simchat Bat, when Sister Lena had decorated the room and tried to charm her brother.

30. „She'd tied small pouches of hard candies in the creases of my plump wrists. They told Hermann, whom Papa had retrieved, ‚Ruth brought along these sweets for you.‘ It was their strategy to placate our four-year-old after sending him away“ (*The Gate*, page 10).

31. Family Stern has also celebrated Rosh Hashana. The Jewish New Year starts on October 5 the latest, with ten days of atonement. It is the opportunity to think things over, to ask for forgiveness and to forgive others. On the Eve of Rosh Hashana, Louis Stern said the blessings for bread and wine, the Brochos, and handed everyone some challah sprinkled with salt and a sip of wine, actual wine, not the usual Sabbath sip of water in which raisins have soaked overnight. Next they ate grapes dipped in honey, after the blessings for the new harvest. The children handed their parents notes of gratitude and promise.” On New Year, the family went for a walk to the river Lahn. Louis Stern said the blessings, G-d is merciful, compassionate, slow-to-anger and overlooks our mistakes. Serve and earn his mercy’, und Johanna Stern provided the children with bread-crumbs.

32. ‚Feed your sins to the fish,‘ Papa says and tosses breadcrumbs. He's his cheerful self. Mama gives handfuls to Hermann and me to scatter before she tosses her down. I wonder if I'm forgiven for kicking Hermann's shins. It's convenient that G-d forgives us once a year, that fish swallow my crumbs and my sins don't make them suffer. Papa says, ‚As healthy as fish in the water.‘ My parents forgive me, and they're G-d's representatives on earth. I remember my crime. Would it be a sin to forget it?“ (*The Gate*, page 88)

33. Yale Strom und Hot Pstromi, A ganz Joahr frelekh.

34. The late timewitness Ruth Stern Glass Earnest remembered other details: The ceiling and roof of her mother's girlhood room, which faced the back garden, could be lifted and slid under the adjoining barn roof, leaving only a wooden lattice open to the sky. It was a built-in sukkah, a bower for taking meals during Sukkot (*The Gate*, page 77). The sukkah of Johanna's sister Rosa in Lauterbach was a very solid wooden hut. Too solid, the orthodox Rabbi from Gießen judged. The little hut is still standing. And in the old Synagogue of Ober-Gleen, Yale Strom and Nikolai Muck played a song in November 2017 that had been played on Sukkoth and other occasions in Hesse. The melody has its origin in Tann in the Rhoen mountains, a town with 400 years of Jewish history as we know thanks to Michael Imhof's research.

35. Yale Strom und Nikolai Muck, the pilgrim feast's song.

## CD2

01. The favorite holiday of Daniel Kester is Passover. His father Paul Kester (then Kleinstraß) had celebrated it in his childhood in Wiesbaden, as did his ancestors, the Flörsheims, in Romrod, Angenrod, Alsfeld and Ober-Gleen. The Aktive Museum Spiegelgasse in Wiesbaden has published Paul Kester's childhood memoirs in German. His son Daniel explains the feast to us:

02. „Passover is a celebration of freedom: We celebrate the escape of the Jewish people from slavery in Egypt 3500 years ago. But because Jews have faced oppression many times in the centuries since then, it is also a celebration of freedom when we have had it, and time to long for it

when we have not. For those Jews who were lucky enough to escape the modern-day Pharaoh in 1930s Germany, it was an especially meaningful holiday; they knew that oppression can still occur and understood the value of freedom. My own Great-great-grandmother, Jeanette Florsheim, was born in 1849 in Romrod, just a few kilometers from Ober-Gleen. The Florsheim family lived in Romrod, Angenrod, Alsfeld, and in Ober-Gleen. While I don't know much about what their life was like, I can be certain that an important event for them each year was the celebration of Passover, as it has been for Jews all over the world for thousands of years. (...) The Jews who escaped Egypt did so in great haste, they did not have time to allow the bread they made to rise. We remember their escape by not eating any bread made with yeast during those eight days. Instead, we eat only Matzo, unleavened bread, a flat, cracker-like bread. (...) The highlight of Passover is the Seder, the Passover dinner, celebrated on the first two nights of the holiday, when family and friends come from far and wide to be together. During the dinner we read from the Haggadah, the story of Passover and our escape from Egypt. (...) We are taught to think of that escape to freedom as something that happened to us personally in our own lives. (...) During the Seder we have a special Seder Plate containing six ingredients that help us remember: Matzo; a bitter herb, usually horseradish, which reminds of the bitterness of slavery; parsley which we dip in salt water to remind us of the tears of the slaves; a roasted lamb bone symbolizing the ancient sacrifices made to God, an egg symbolizing rebirth; and Haroset, a mixture of apple, honey, wine, and nuts, to remind us of the mortar used by the slaves as well as of the sweetness of freedom. On the table, a beautiful silver goblet, 'Elijah's Cup', is filled with wine. The story goes that Elijah will visit every Seder table during the night. Some families also add a cup for Miriam, Moses' sister, filled with water. (...) After the telling of the Passover story, the meal is served, which can be anything the family likes, as long as it does not include bread or anything else containing flour. The meal is followed by further readings, the search by the children for a special piece of Matzo, the Afikomen, that has been hidden, and the singing of traditional songs. The Seder includes the drinking of four cups of wine, which leads to a relaxed, joyous atmosphere and helps encourage the singing. The Seder ends with a traditional hope: "Next year in Jerusalem."

O3. Veronika Bloemers and Singers, Nächstes Jahr, du wirst sehen... (Next year, you will see).

O4. The Jewish families from Ober-Gleen are not forgotten. The former teacher of Ober-Gleen, Heinrich Dittmar, had seen to it, the archivist Katharina Jacob in Lauterbach, Stolperstein groups, the Förderverein zur Geschichte des Judentums im Vogelsberg and the historical society Lastoria, Bremen. In the eighties, the architect Thea Altaras from Gießen has documented the Synagogues in Hessen that had withstand the NS-time and the decades after WWII. A Jewish path along the old merchant's trail is marked for hikers, books and newspaper articles have been published, the website „Vor dem Holocaust“ (Before the Holocaust) of the late Monica Kingreen and the pages of villages and towns on Alemannia Judaica, made by Joachim Hahn. On the fieldstone wall of the idyllic protestant graveyard of Ober-Gleen, there are several plates with the names of some of those who have fled to other countries or have perished in the Holocaust. Ernst A. Bloemers has initiated that. His daughter Veronika explains how Ober-Gleen and Israel are connected.

O5. Veronika Bloemers tells us how her parents bought the old house in Ober-Gleen and went to Israel in 1979. Her father, a hotel manager who had worked for first class hotel in Germany, France and the U.S., was asked to lead a hotel management school. Together with his French wife and his two daughters, he moved to Israel and stood there for a while.

O6. Yale Strom und Nikolai Muck, Instrumental.

O7. The family felt welcome in Israel.

O8. Veronika Bloemers talks about learning Hebrew. She has studied music and played organ in protestant churches. And she loved the multicultural society.

O9. Herbert Sondheim has been a Gliesbeurel (dumpling bags), as people from Ober-Gleen are called for fun. As a child, he has surely understood dialect, High German and Yiddish, maybe also

a bit Hebrew. When his family flew to the U.S., Herbert had to learn English very fast. In his mother tongue he has always felt at home. At any opportunity, he has used German proverbs. In the Seventies, he has explained some of them to one of his sons-in-law.

10. Herbert Sondheim: Der Apfel fällt nicht weit vom Baum. An apple doesn't fall far from a tree. Was ein Bäumchen werden will, krümmt sich beizeiten. Whoever wants to become a tree, has to straighten up early. Wenn das Ei klüger ist als das Huhn, das tut nicht gut. If the egg is smarter than the chicken, it is no good. Hunger lernt Kohle kauen. Der Hunger lehrt dich, Kohle zu kauen. Hunger teaches you to eat coal. Die Eingebornen saachen, sie sind Affen, sodass sie nichts zu tun brauchen. The natives say they are monkeys, so they don't have to do any work.

11. Ruth Stern Glass Earnest has used very many Hessian, German and Hebrew proverbs in her book „The Gate“, sayings that she might have heard from her father Louis Stern, her mother Johanna and her grandmother Guta Lamm.

12. „In der allergrößten Not schmeckt die Wurst auch ohne Brot“, „Ess, was in dich geht“, „Es steckt sich nicht in die Kleider“, „Wie kommt Kuhdreck aufs Dach?“, „Bildung – und wenn's Einbildung ist“, „Das Haus verliert nichts“, „Die Gedanken sind frei“, „Gute Miene zum bösen Spiel machen“, „Pack schlägt sich, Pack verträgt sich“, „Die Sonne bringt es an den Tag“, „Wie man kommt gegangen, so wird man empfangen“, „Ich mach alles mit mir selbst ab“, „Jeder Tanzmeister behält einen Sprung für sich“, „Man muss *bal dachles* sein“ (man muss seine Grenzen kennen), „Was man sich selbst antut, das ist schwer. Was geschickt wird, ist leichter zu ertragen“, „Es wird nichts so heiß gegessen, wie es gekocht wird“, „Mit der Mischpoche trinkt man Kaffee und isst Kuchen“ (mit Verwandten macht man keine Geschäfte), „Ich kenn' mei' Natur“, „*Viel Schmächel un wenig Sächel*“, „*Schlemielde*“ (Nichtskönnlerin), „Wie die Katz' um den heißen Brei“, „Wer sich nicht satt isst, leckt sich auch nicht satt“, „Der Hinweg für den Heimweg“ (der Weg war umsonst), „Wer kann wissen, wie die Hühner pissen?“, „Lügen haben kurze Beine“, „Mit Verachtung strafen“, „*Wär ich sein Gayes beduch!*“ (wenn ich doch so wohlhabend wäre wie der eitel), „Der ist mir lieb wie Leibscherzen“, „Kinderwillen ist Dreckwillen“, „Sie ist mir nicht maßgebend“, „Der liebe Gott hat einen großen Tiergarten“, „Zu spitz sticht nicht, und zu scharf schneidet nicht“, „abgeschnitten und abgeschnitten und immer noch zu kurz“, „Alles, was sie hatte, das war Watte“, „Als Perle lernte ich sie kennen, jetzt geht sie mit den Kerle' pennen“, „Mädchen, mach derr Locken, dann bleibst du auch nicht hocken.“

13. Till the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, in the region of the Vogelsberg and the neighbor region Schwalm, Jews, but also protestant and catholic farmers hired marriage agents. The Schadchen looked for possible brides or grooms, when a Jewish family thought it was time to get a son or daughter married. Teachers and merchants watched out for a match. Relatives and friends also tried to arrange marriages. Hannah Nussbaum from Ulmbach was brought in contact with Joseph Roth from Nieder-Ohmen by a cousin. „My mother never forgave Rosel for introducing her to my father“, Ruth Stern Gasten writes in her book „An Accidental American“ (S. 35) that, in 2017, has been translated by Monika Felsing („Zufällig Amerikanerin“) and was presented in Nieder-Ohmen (report and audio on the mentioned website). Romance was something not everyone was after. The favorite song of Dannjels Hannes was a lovesong from East Prussia that his granddaughters remember and that others of his generation have liked as well.

14. Sigrun Schindler und Roswitha Hipp, Der Mensch braucht eine Liebe.

15. Herbert Sondheim: „On the occasion of cleaning up the place for someone to visit and the visitor doesn't arrive, the appropriate saying is: Er hat sich seine' Hals umsonst gewaschen. He washed his neck for nothing. The origin of that saying dates back to the time when women, girls, were taken to a bride show, and someone's daughter was taken to a brideshow but she didn't find a groom or a groom didn't find her, so when she got home she told her father: Ich hab mein' Hals umsonst gewaschen. She washed her neck for nothing.“

16. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, young men were not supposed to see much more bare skin of a woman than her neck. The parents of Mathilda Wertheim Stein have first met in 1904, on the

funeral of Lazarus Lamm, the thirteen-year-old's grandfather from Ober-Gleen. How Jewish traditions have been followed in Upper Hesse, Mathilda Wertheim Stein has described in her monumental book „The Way it was. Jewish Life in rural Hesse“: the New Year Rosh Hashana, Jom Kippur, funerals, Bar Mitzwah, Purim, Chanukka, weddings and more. The deceased author was from Lauterbach, her mother Bertha Lamm from Kirtorf, her father Friedrich Wertheim from Angenrod. For the wedding of her parents in 1913, two brothers-in-law wrote „Lobgesang zu Ehren der Schwiegermütter“, a song to the honor of mothers-in-law, sung to the melody of „Kommt herbei, ihr Völkerscharen“.

17. „Als der Herr am siebten Tage mit der Erde fertig war, überblickte er das Ganze, ob auch alles klipp und klar. Plötzlich krault er sich das Öhrchen. Sprach nachdenklich, so aha. Bald vergaß ich, welch Malörchen, eine Schwiegermamama. Sprach's und schuf aus bestem Stoffe ein'ge Dutzend also gleich. Schwarze, blonde und melierte, an Gemüt und Schönheit reich. Schickt sie aus nach allen Zonen, nach dem Nord, dem Ost, dem West, überall, wo Menschen wohnen, bis ins aller-kleinste Nest. Und sie gingen und sie taten nach des Schöpfers weisem Spruch, denn man findet allerorten Schwiegermütter nun genug. Und ein Glück ist es gewesen, dass der Herr sie nicht vergaß, weil das Unglück, wenn sie fehlten, überstiege jedes Maß. Läg das Kindlein in der Wiege? Säß der Kaiser auf dem Thron? Fehlten uns die Schwiegermütter, gäb es dann nen Schwieger-sonn? Wärt Ihr hier, Ihr lieben Leutchen? Tränket heut Ihr Hochzeitswein? Küsste Friedrich die Bertha? Ohne alle Zweifel: Nein! Sie versüßt uns unser Leben, steht uns bei mit Rat und Tat. Recht muss man ihr immer geben, weil sie mehr Erfahrung hat. Hoch darum die Schwiegermutter und zum Segen ist sie da, wer noch ledig, suche schleunigst eine Schwiegermamama.“ (Short summary: On the seventh day of the creation, god realised that he had almost forgotten the mothers-in-law. So he made some of every kind, sent them all over the world. Without them, it would be a tragedy: No children, no Kaiser, no sons-in-law, no party and no wedding wine – and Friedrich wouldn't kiss Bertha. So, it's a blessing that they exist. And who hasn't one should hurry to find one...)

18. Yale Strom and Nikolai Muck, Tumbalalaika.

19. Herbert Sondheim: On the departure of guests it is commonly said that bei dè grösde Simkhe sinn die Gäst nicht da. In other words: After they left, that's the biggest simkhe. David (comment: Herbert Sondheim's son in law) says the equivalent for that is: Everybody brings joy, some when they come, some when they go. I say (lacht, laughs): Mostly when they go.

20. In the reopened Synagogue of Ober-Gleen, the American-German Trio „Yale Strom & Hot Pstromi“, in November 2017, has rehearsed a song from the cd „Borst With bread, Brothers“. „The song was played at jewish weddings in Frankfurt and its environs 19th century into WWI - called Me'yen (refusal) which was performed at the khipe/khupe just before the wedding blessings began - the bride or groom had one more chance to refuse each other before it was too late“, the musician and ethnologist writes in an e-mail. It needed Chuzpe to say no in front all the relatives and the congregation.

21. Yale Strom & Hot Pstromi, Me'yen Nign.

22. Herbert Sondheim: If my son-in-law does something stupid, I say: Ich möchte auch gern lachen, aber dè Schaude is' mein'.

23. Schaude, fool, is one of the Yiddish words in the dialect of Ober-Gleen. A heavy draft has something of a stormy wind that is called hech supha. Es zigg't wie Hechtsobb, people from Ober-Gleen use to say in their dialect. The Yiddish word dalles means misery. In the dialect it is a bad cold. Schmus is flattery, Schduss nonsense. The Hebrew word Uz means to harrass, in the dialect it is mocking someone. If someone does something that is schofel, then this is mean, and there will be Zores. In dialect that means quarreling, in Yiddish suffering. The Schiggse had been the Christian maid in the house or just a pretty girl. Sus means horse. And the descendants of the horse whisperer Peter Kirchner from Ober-Gleen have the village name Suse. Our timewit-ness Lina Kirchner was Suse Lina.

24. Suse Lina remembers Siegmund Sondheim well. She says her father used to play cards with him and other men.
25. On the Jewish Cemetery in Angenrod, Hirsch Sondheim is buried, the one, his family owes its village name Heasche. His great granddaughter Robin Smolen explains us the inscription.
26. Robin Sondheim writes: "Generally, Jewish gravestone include the name of the deceased in the native language and their Hebrew name, the dates of birth and death in the native language and in Hebrew and the relationship to other family members. Two Hebrew letters are often included at the top of a Jewish gravestone. The letters are pay nun, standing for "po nikbar(ah), here is buried". Notice this at the top of this stone (line 1). The second line on the gravestone is Hirsch's Hebrew name: Tzvi Bar Yoseph, which means Tzvi son of Joseph. I am not sure of the exact translation but I believe lines 3 and 4 say that the deceased was of good character, devoted to God, and a good husband and father. Line 5 shows the date of birth. It says Hirsch was born during the Jewish holiday of Purim and then it gives the year according to the Jewish calendar. Line 6 and 7 show the date of death according to the Jewish calendar. It shows day 4 of the month Elul which generally translates to August/September in the secular calendar and then it shows the year according to the Jewish calendar. Line 8 - shows the following letters . . . . . tav, nun, tzadee, bet, hay. These letters are an acronym for the Hebrew words / (t'hay nafsho/ah tzrurah b'tzror hachaim), "May his/her soul be bound up in the bond of eternal life. It is customary to include these letters toward the bottom of the stone. You can see these letters directly above the name Hirsch Sondheim.
27. The funeral was on the day after someone had died. The Rabbi held a speech, a son spoke the Kaddish, and to show their grief, the relatives ripped pieces of their clothing. Afterwards they spend seven days sitting Schiwa. Often there were orbituaries to read in the newspaper, as the one for the widow of Sussmann Sondheim in „Der Israelit“ from the 19<sup>th</sup> of September 1930.
28. „On the 13th Elul (6th of September) many people have mourned for Ms. Therese Sondheim, nee Stern. A noble, brave and pious woman has died short before her 70<sup>th</sup> birthday. 30 years ago, she had moved together with her husband who had went to eternity 15 years ago, from Ober-Gleen to Gießen, to become true members of our congregation and to raise their children according to the religious and worldly rules. Their house had been an example in more than one sense of the word. Both knew how to read the Tora and obeyed the law, had six sons and two daughters who have become law obiding and courageous. As a widow, Ms. Therese Sondheim opened her house to guests how felt surrounded by motherly and humanly love. Noone in need was leaving her door who had not been given something, in her goodness and mildness. Best power she gained from true, internal real devoutness, and trusting in god helped her to stay patient when she was ill for so long. With love and loyalty, she had been cared of by her sons and daughters till her last breath."
29. Veronika Bloemers und Quartett I, Hashivenu Konzert.
30. More joyful feasts have been the Bar Mitzwah of a boy or the Bat Mitzwah of a girl, comparable with the confirmation of protestants of their age. On the occasion of the circumcision of a male baby an old song from Hesse was played. In November 2017 it was heard in Ober-Gleen. The audience sang along to the music of Yale Strom and Nikolai Muck.
31. Yale Strom und Nikolai Muck, Song from Hesse.
32. Childhood songs are keeping us company for our whole life. Ruth Stern Glass Earnest, the granddaughter of Lesemanns, had not forgotten „Hänschen klein“. Neither the popular song from the time of the Weimar Republic, a song about a grandma who drives a motorbike that her father Louis Stern liked to sing: „Meine Oma fährt im Hühnerstall Motorrad, ohne Bremse, ohne Licht. Und der Schutzmann an der Ecke sieht die alte Schachtel nicht!“ (The Gate, S. 118). And Ruth Stern Gasten remembers even after eight decades a song about a little horse, è *Gäulche* (dialect) that jumps galloping over *Schdogg un Schdäi* (sticks and stones, dialect). The

audience of her book show in the protestant community of Nieder-Ohmen has sung it to her in September 2017.

33. Audience: Hopp, Hopp, Hopp, Pferdchen, lauf Galopp. Über Stock und über Steine, aber brich dir nicht die Beine!

34. Herbert Sondheim: A little saying on someone's birthday, little children particularly, that reminds me of my youth. We would bring a flower or something. We would stand and say: Ich bin klein, mein Wunsch ist klein, Mamma, du sollst glücklich sein. I am small, my wish is small, mother, you should be happy. Anyhow, it rhymes. Many of the German little sayings always were in form of rhymes. That's where the mainstay of their culture left them.

35. What had Regina Lamm from Ober-Gleen had said to her granddaughters Johanna und Rosa? „Ihr seid zur verkehrten Zeit auf die Welt gekommen.“ You have come to this world at the wrong time. In the time of the Weimar Republic (1919-1932), Upper Hesse was a mecca of Antisemitic parties. For decades, Otto Böckel from Marburg who had founded a party, had spread out hatred. During the economic crisis, the Bauernbund, a farmers association, was mobbing Jewish cattle dealers. 349 of 397 men and women from Ober-Gleen who joined the elections on the 5th of March in 1933, opted for Adolf Hitler. The people of Kirtorf made him their citizen of honor. There were „Stürmerkästen“ with Anti-Jewish propaganda in the villages, as well as in the towns. And Emma Schulz remembers how Ferdinand Lamm who lived on the street that is called Dr.-Weidig-Straße today, had been mocked.

36. Emma Schulz.

37. Yale Strom and Nikolai Muck, Instrumental.

### CD3

O1. Whoever had Jewish grandparents was no longer German in the eyes of the Nazis. The teacher August Albach has handed the genealogy booklet of the Nationalsocialist association of the teachers also to Addi Sondheim, though it was only for little „Aryans“. „So wollen wir uns immer in Dankbarkeit unserer Eltern, Großeltern und Urgroßeltern erinnern“, is to be read in it. „This way, we will always gratefully remember our parents, grandparents or great-grandparents.“ The booklet stood in the house of the family when Siegmund und Jettchen Sondheim fled to the U.S., together with their children Herbert, Addi und Rita and Siegmunds not married sister Berta in April 1939. The granddaughter of the couple that bought the house, has kept the booklet until today. A rare document.

O2. Name of the father: Siegmund Sondheim, born in Ober-Gleen. House name (village name): Hirsch(s). Profession: merchant. Confession: Jewish. Severe illnesses: none. Siblings of the father: Berta, Hermann, Betty and Joseph (who had died young). Name of the mother: Jettchen Sondheim, nee Worms. Seven siblings. Place of birth: Laudenbach. Paternal grandfather: Hirsch Sondheim. House name: Josephches. Place of birth: Ober-Gleen. Profession: Kaufmann. Paternal grandmother: Rebekka Sondheim, nee Katz. House name: Blümchen. Place of birth: Storndorf. Maternal grandfather: Emil Worms. House name: Gefrieles. Place of birth: Laudenbach near Karlstadt upon the Main. He had emigrated to New York, together with his wife Clara, nee Gunzenhäuser, from Memmelsdorf. The maternal great-grandparents were Gabriel and Babette Worms and David Raphael and Jette Gunzenhäuser. The paternal great-grandparents were the merchant Joseph Sondheim from Ober-Gleen and his wife Adelheid Bachenheimer from Rauschholzhausen, Herz Katz from Storndorf und his wife Blümchen, nee Levi from Bobenhausen.

O3. Moses Katz, the son of Herz and Blümchen Katz, a father of eight children, had died in the Synagogue of Storndorf on the first of October in 1905. His heart had stopped when on the second day of Rosh Hashana, the Jewish New Year, he wanted to read in front of the congregation. His family left Germany before WWI. First of all Siegmund Sondheim's 18-year-old cousin Hermann Katz. Siegmund's aunt Fanny (Fromet) emigrated in 1911 with some of her other children via Bremen to America. On her daughters Ricka, Kathinka, Blanche, Paula und Bertha and her sons Hermann, Willi und Leo Katz, many relatives laid their hopes soon when they needed some-



one who could help them to get visa. They had a bad time – even in school. The late Lina Kirchner from Ober-Gleen and other timewitnesses who had been children or teenagers then remembered what happened 80 years ago.

O4. Suse Lina knew Addi and Herbert quite well, also the youngest, Rita, and Robert who had died so young. He had an ear infection that couldn't be cured as there hadn't been any antibiotics available yet. He is buried in Angenrod, like his uncle Joseph who died as a young adult. And Lina remembers her schoolmate Addi. She says that she was good in school, a girl like all the others. But in the Nazi-time, the boys had teased her, told her – as they had heard from the adults – that Jews had yellow blood. And Addi had said: I can cut my finger and you will see that my blood is red! That had stopped them cold. Lina says that Addi joined everything with the others, but when they had lessons in religion, she couldn't. And went home. They visited each other seldomly in their homes.

O5. Schulze Emma also remembers Addi. They had been in dancing school together. There is a photo showing the whole group.

O6. Rudolf Schneider went to school together with Herbert. He says that they had quarreled with him, had tried to boss him around. And his wife Hedwig says: Today, one would call that mobbing! Asked what Herbert had reacted when he was mobbed, Rudolf said, astonished: What should he do? He defended himself! On one of the school photos, Herbert stands in the top row, above the teacher and does not look intimidated at all.

O7. Herbert Sondheim, Ein Mädchen, das leicht weint. A girl who cries easily.

O8. Veronika Bloemers, Wenn ich nicht für mich bin... If I am not for myself, who will be?

O9. Elfriede Roth talks about Arthur Weinberg. He had had medical problems from birth. She would have liked to play with him outside, but his mother had said that was not possible, as she did not want to get in trouble. Elfriede was too young to understand.

IO. There was a boycott of Jewish shops from April 1933 all over the country. Also in Ober-Gleen. Nationalsocialists threw stones into the shop windows of Johanna and Jakob Lamm and did not let clients buy something. Jews were no longer allowed to work in their profession, and a big sale started. Germany hadn't seen anything like this before. Jewish property got new owners at low prices. Non-Jews bought houses, land and traditional companies like the brewery Wallach in Alsfeld. For Jews, the list of prohibitions became longer and longer, their financial situation worse and worse. In 1937, Johanna and Jakob Lamm went to Palestine, like her daughter Selma in 1935, her son-in-law Jakob Katzenstein from Rhina and the grandchildren Ruth and Samuel. The family Lamm had not been the first from Ober-Gleen in the Holy Land. Willi Sondheim had been a soldier in WWI and had overseen the works at the railroad tracks to Kario, had come back and had gone to America, then. His photos belong to the collection of the Leo Baeck Institute.

II. Veronika Bloemers, Instrumental.

12. Lina Kirchner says that when Hitler came, the Jews left the village. She remembers that Sondheims went to the U.S. and Irma Lamm (village name: Evas), the girl with the long braids, emigrated to England at first. Some went to Africa, others to Palestine, and they once visited Ober-Gleen.

13. With the Nuremberg Laws of 1935, Jews lost further human rights. „No Jews here“ was written on signs in non-jewish shops, restaurants and cafés. From 1938 on, Jewish women in Germany had to take the second name Sara, while Jewish men were called Israel, and because the Swiss insisted, there was a J stamped into their passports. Jewish girls and boys were not allowed to go to public schools any more. To continue school, Addi and Herbert had to change to the Jewish regional school in Bad Nauheim. They met grandchildren of other people from Ober-Gleen, like Amanda Lamm from Homberg/Ohm, Arthur Weinberg from Lauterbach and Ruth Stern from Diez upon the Lahn. „To leave the family, felt like a punishment“, she wrote later. One of her schoolfriends was Karola Stern from Nieder-Ohmen. Karola's sister Hilda had been in Bad Nauheim for a short while, too. „Rather suffer from injustice, than be unjust“, their father Meier Stern had told his daughters. The man from Nieder-Ohmen and his wife Hedwig died in Ther-

esienstadt. The daughters survived Auschwitz. After they had been rescued by the Sowjet Army, Hilda Stern Cohen has written Holocaust poems, that have been discovered only in 1997 and were published soon afterwards.

14. „Genagelt ist meine Zunge an eine Sprache, die mich verflucht, hineingehämmert in meine Ohren mit den Tönen der Liebe und des fressenden Hasses...“ (part of a poem by Hilda Stern Cohen).

15. Yale Strom und Nikolai Muck, Instrumental.

16. Elfriede Roth, the shabbesgirl of Rosa Weinberg, nee Lamm from Ober-Gleen talks in 2016 in front of the Synagogue of Ober-Gleen about the Jewish families of Lauterbach and her own, socialdemocratic family that had helped Jews.

17. Elfriede Roth tells her story, and the story of her parents and of her aunt who took risks to provide Jewish neighbors with food. They had helped them on Saturdays, and had cleaned the Synagogue on Thursdays voluntarily till November 1938 (see the portrait on the website).

18. As his parents and 17000 other Jews of Polish descent had been deported and had to stay under terrible conditions in no man's land between Germany and Poland, 17 year old Herschel Grynszpan from Hannover shot the diplomat Ernst vom Rath in Paris. Even before the news were in the newspaper, Nazis in Hesse organised pogroms. On the 7<sup>th</sup> of November, stones flew in Kassel, Zierenberg, Sontra, Rotenburg and Bebra. On the 8<sup>th</sup>, the Synagogues of Melsungen, Eschwege, Fritzlar, Treysa and Hersfeld were burning, and in Felsberg there was the first dead man: Robert Weinstein had a heart attack as he was mobbed in the public. In the night of the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup> of November, all over the contry, SA-men forced their way into Jewish homes, shops and Synagogues, robbed them, put the buildings on fire and beat up men and women. At the evening of the ‚Kristallnacht‘, four Nazis from the neighbor village Kirtorf threatened a socialdemocrat who owned a car, and made him drive them to Ober-Gleen. The SA-men went into the home of the family Sondheim (Hirsche), forced the merchant to cancel debts and pulled his wife by her hair down the stairs. The next house on their way to the Synagogue was the one of family Lamm (Räise). And even as the postbus arrived at the local pub at ten p.m., there were some Nazis waiting for the Jewish passenger. Rosa Wertheim and her husband Salli had been beaten up in Lauterbach, Mathilda Wertheim Stein had heard. The protestant farmer Rudolf Scheld has been raised in Kirtorf close to the Synagogue. His mother had provided Jewish people from Kirtorf with food when they had secretly come to her door, he stated at the opening of the old Synagoue in Ober-Gleen. The Nazis had threatened to kill his father, he said, when he had intended to light up the court his home shared with the Synagogue. They had went into the Synagogue and took what they wanted. The same evening, four SA-officials from Kirtorf had forced a commonly known socialdemocrates to take them in his car to Ober-Gleen. The attack did not come as a surprise as Karl Gemmer from Ober-Gleen recalls.

19. Karl Gemmer says that there had been a man in his home who was one of the workers who brought sand from a hill in Ober-Gleen to Romrod where the Autobahn was built. This man had been informed that there was something happening that day. And Karl remembers especially Siegmund Sondheim who had been very courageous and had spoken up, against the Nazis at an early stage. Karl thinks that Siegmund had been arrested in 1934 already, and though he was not allowed to he had talked about Buchenwald, about the inhuman treatment that had broken souls. „Cultura Germansky!“, Karl cries out.

20. The SA-men stormend into the home of family Sondheim, forced the merchant to wipe out their debts and draw Jettchen Sondheim down the stairs at her hair. The next Jewish house on their way was the home of family Lamm, called Eva's. And when the postbus stopped at the pub „Zum Stern“, the villians were waiting for a Jewish passenger. Suse Lina, Lina Kirchner, had witnessed what had happened in Ober-Gleen.

21. Suse Lina says she had heard from her sister that there was something to happen that night. She was a teenager then, and she went out to watch what would come. She saw the men break-

ing into the home of family Sondheim and then into the house of family Lamm, and she saw Josef Lamm running to the door of his neighbor who did not open. She said the Nazis rolled the religious scripts in the street in front of the Synagogue, and the very next morning “everything had vanished”, nobody mentioned anything.

22. Yale Strom and Nikolai Muck, Instrumental.

23. In Alsfeld and Lauterbach und other Upper Hessian towns, the Synagogues were burning. A lot of people stood watching. A few Nonjews helped, like the aunt of Elfriede Roth who was on her way to the home of Rosa Weinberg, nee Lamm.

24. Elfriede talks about her aunt who had brought cheese from the factory of Lauterbach to Jewish friends. On the 9<sup>th</sup> of November she came to the house of Rosa Weinberg and found the door and the windows broken. So she took the cheese that had been wrapped in and threw it through the broken window. The Weinbergs found it later.

25. A merchant from Alsfeld sent cards to 20 Jewish families:

26. „Als Christ und Deutscher schäme ich mich wegen der Missetat, die man Ihnen mit der Schändung und der Verbrennung Ihrer Synagoge angetan hat.“ As a Christian and a German I am ashamed by that crime, by what has happened to you and your Synagogue.

27. This was still possible without being punished. In the censored press, the tone was different. The Oberhessische Zeitung wrote on the 12<sup>th</sup> of November 1938:

28. „Der männliche Teil der hier noch vorhandenen Juden hat sich entweder freiwillig in Schutzhaft begeben oder ist zur eigenen Sicherheit von der Polizei in Schutzhaft genommen worden.“ The Jewish men who had been still in Alsfeld had gone into prison – voluntarily, as the journalist in the censored newspaper wrote sarcastically, to be in safety, or had been arrested by the police for their own good.

29. In busses, the men and male teenagers from the district of Alsfeld were deported to the concentration camp Buchenwald close to Weimar. Who was released, was forbidden to talk about the torture and the murders and was told to leave the country as soon as possible. Siegmund Sondheim's health had been ruined in the camp, he would die a few years later. In the year 1939, the last members of the Jewish congregation of Ober-Gleen left the village. Some of them moved to relatives, but most of them to Frankfurt upon the Main, Bad Nauheim or Kassel. In der anonymous towns, they felt safer than in the countryside where everybody knew everybody. And they lived anonymous till in 1941, it was obligatory for Jews in Germany to wear the yellow star of David on their clothes. Herbert Sondheim tells a joke that was told in the NS-time, mocking the Nazis who insisted they could tell Jews from Non-Jews.

30. Herbert Sondheim: Back in Germany, on the train station in Frankfurt, a policeman said: Jew, what time is it? And the jew turned around and answered: Now that you could look through my pants, you could look through my vest pocket! David, der Schwiegersohn, fragt: What was that in German? Herbert: Jude, wieviel Uhr ist es? Du hast mir durch die Hose geguckt, jetzt schau mir durch die Westentasche! (The watches had been in the vest pockets, then, not around the wrist.)

31. Rather stay or leave? Hermann and Grete Sondheim decided to separate from their only son, in order to rescue him. They sent Kurt with a children's transport to England. Johanna Lamm wrote to relatives and consulates for three years, to prepare the emigration. Her sister Rosa wanted to stay in Lauterbach. The 39 year old shared the optimism of her husband Salli. What shall happen, they asked themselves. They had their place in the society, their house, their shop, their relatives and the congregation, they respected the laws, paid taxes, their families were at home in Germany for centuries. Why give up all that and start anew, in a foreign country, in a foreign language, far from home? When they could get visa, they did not take the chance. After they had waited long for it, the Sondheims in Ober-Gleen got a letter of the American consulate in Stuttgart, telling them, that the five of them should come. On the 4<sup>th</sup> of January 1939, Siegmund, his wife and the three children should be in Stuttgart between 8 and 9 a.m., to ask for

the visas. They are told what to bring with them and that they needed to excuse themselves should they not come and ask for a new appointment.

32. „Die Sicherung Ihres Lebensunterhaltes in Amerika scheint anhand der hier vorliegenden Unterlagen sichergestellt zu sein. Es wird keine Garantie gegeben, dass Sie das Visum am Vorladungstage erhalten werden, und Sie sollten daher die endgültigen Reisevorbereitungen erst dann treffen, wenn Sie das Visum tatsächlich in Händen haben. Achtung, wichtig! Mitgebracht werden müssen: ein gültiger Reisepass oder ein anderes gültiges Reisedokument, vier lose Passbilder pro Person auf dünnem Papier – und in doppelter Ausführung die Heiratsurkunde, die Geburtsurkunden und polizeiliche Führungszeugnisse für die vergangenen fünf Jahre. Wenn ein Visumantragssteller nicht in der Lage ist, seinen Vorladungstermin zu halten, muss er dem Konsulat spätestens 3 Tage nach seinem Termin Nachricht gegeben haben, wann er den neuen Termin wünscht, wobei er zum Ausdruck bringen sollte, ob es ihm beim zweiten Termin bestimmt möglich sein wird zu erscheinen.“

33. Who did not call in time, risked to be no longer on the waiting list. The calendar of the consulate was full at least four weeks in advance. Many tried now to get away, but now there were contingents, rules, rules, rules. The Sondheim had already made lists of the things they wished to take with them. German officers checked everything: Which clothes were new and would require 100 percent tax pay? Was something there that could be confiscated? The watch of a child maybe? A pair of cuff buttons? More than a dozen lists of the belongings of the family are still there. For their four-year-old daughter Rita, the parents packed:

34. „6 Hemdhöschen, 4 Hemdchen, 4 Unterröckchen, 1 Taschentuchbehälter, 20 Taschentücher, 2 Strickjäckchen, 10 Schürzchen, 3 Leibchen, 4 Nachthemdchen, 4 Lätzchen, 2 Schlafanzüge, 5 Paar lange Strümpfe, 1 Paar Überschuhe, je 2 Paar Haus- und Lederschuhe, 6 Söckchen, 3 Paar Kniestrümpfe, 1 Paar Bettschuhe, 1 Handtäschchen, 10 Kleidchen, 1 Bademantel, 4 Pullover, 2 Röckchen, 2 Käppchen, 1 Hütchen, 1 Toilettenbeutel mit Inhalt, Schmuck wie auf der Hauptliste angegeben. Spielsachen, Puppen und Bälle.“ (They had packed for example underwear, a box for handkerchieves, handkerchieves, napkins, socks, shoes, pyjamas, bed shoes, stockings, a little handbag, little robes, little skirts, jewellery as listed, toys, dolls and balls).

35. Herbert Sondheim: Wenn ich mir was wünschen dürfte, käm ich in Verlegenheit.

If I could wish myself something, I would be embarrassed, for I have everything and can't think for anything that I could wish for myself. (The original version is from a song of Marlene Dietrich: Wenn ich mir was wünschen dürfte, käm ich in Verlegenheit, was ich mir denn wünschen sollte, eine gute oder schlimme Zeit. Meaning: I would be embarrassed what I should wish for, for a good or a bad time.)

36. Siegmund Sondheim did not want to leave his unmarried sister Berta back in Ober-Gleen and therefore postponed the departure at least once. The agent of the „American Merchant Lines“ in Frankfurt advised him to hurry and told him about the costs and answered possible questions. There was even fresh kosher food on board. The letter is showing respect (sehr geehrter means ‚much honored‘, and hochachtungsvoll at the end – inspite of „Heil Hitler“ – also expresses great respect). The original:

37. „Sehr geehrter Herr Sondheim! Ich beziehe mich auf Ihr Schreiben vom 14. Januar und habe davon Kenntnis genommen, daß nunmehr auch Fräulein Bertha Sondheim zum 10. Februar nach Stuttgart bestellt ist. Die gewünschten Führungszeugnisse anbei zur geflissentlichen Bedienung. Ich habe die Kabinen am 19. April auf der ‚Manhattan‘ zurückgenommen und neu für Sie am 22. März bestellt, ich werde Ihnen in Kürze das neue Angebot zukommen lassen und bitte Sie, alles daran zu setzen, den Ausreisetermin einzuhalten, da es nicht angängig ist, oft die Abfahrtszeiten zu ändern. Rituelle Verpflegung haben alle unsere Schiffe, und zwar Frischküche. Wenn Sie kosher verpflegt werden wollen, brauchen Sie dies nur an Bord dem Steward gegenüber zu erwähnen, der dies dann für die ganze Reise vormerkt. Die Reisekosten dritter Klasse sind 113,50 Dollar pro Person über 10 Jahre, amerikanische Kopfsteuer 8 Dollar pro Person über 16 Jahre, 5 volle und eine halbe Passage Hamburg/New York: 648,25 Dollar. Dieser Betrag, umgerechnet

zum Grundkurs von 2,50, ergibt 1620,63 Reichsmark. Bordgeld ist im Höchstfall 90 Reichsmark pro Person über 18 Jahre, davon 75 Reichsmark reines Bordgeld und 15 Reichsmark Trinkgeldablösung. Es kommt für Sie und Ihre Familie also ein Bordgeld von 270 RM in Frage. Ein Rabatt ist nicht möglich. Ebenso geht die Reise nach Hamburg zu Ihren Lasten. Hotelkosten in Hamburg wären ebenfalls von Ihnen zu bezahlen, es ist aber nicht unbedingt nötig, daß Sie in Hamburg übernachten, denn Sie müssen vormittags am Einschiffungstag in Hamburg sein und fahren nachmittags bereits zum Schiff. 10 Reichsmark pro Person können noch mitgenommen werden, und zwar entweder in deutschem Hartgeld oder in Dollars, welche Sie bei einer Bank umwechseln können. Sie hören in Kürze wieder von mir wegen der neuen Kabinen und begrüße Sie inzwischen hochachtungsvoll Kurt Hofmann, Reisebüro Amerika.“

38. Veronika Bloemers, Klezmer.

39. Hannah and Joseph Stern from Nieder-Ohmen and her five year old daughter Ruth had got visa thanks to Hannah's aunt Dina Gardner, nee Nussbaum. In January 1939, the three of them go in Hamburg on board of the „Deutschland“ and leave Europe. In New York and Chicago relatives are waiting. Over the Atlantic there is a terrible storm. Many on board are seasick, also the parents of Ruth Stern, and so the little one is allowed to sit at the Captain's table and eat as much desserts as she likes to. In September 2017 the bookauthor from Livermore (California) has told her audience in Nieder-Ohmen from this trip and from their arrival in Ellis Island. How the refugees were hugging when the ship went into the harbour of New York as there was someone who showed them they were all welcome.

40. Ruth Stern Gasten, Statue of Liberty.

#### CD4

01. Johanna Lamm, her husband Louis Stern and the children Hermann, Ruth and Ernst Lothar were able to leave for the U.S. in time. Her sister Rosa has been deported together with her husband Salli and her son Arthur from Frankfurt to Minsk. Either they have starved, died because they were exhausted or have been shot. In front of the council house in Lauterbach, three Stolpersteine lay for their memory. Hirsch Lamm und his wife Gutta, called the Lesemanns, had moved to the Jewish old people's home a few weeks after the pogrom night. The 76-year-old had dies in the hospital, of pneumonia, it was said, and his almost blind wife is said to have ended her own life. On the memorial site of Bad Nauheim, there are the names of other people from Ober-Gleen. The pogrom of 1938 has found one more victim. Siegmund Sondheim died in 1945 in the USA. There was an announcement in the weekly German paper „Der Aufbau“ in the U.S., saying that after long time of suffering, the much beloved man had died, leaving back his wife, his three children, his son-in-law, his sister and siblings. The family did not know at that time that Hermann and Betty had been murdered – and still hoped they had survived:

02. „Plötzlich und unerwartet verschied heute, am 20. März, nach langem, schweren Leiden mein innigstgeliebter Mann, unser treu sorgender geliebter Vater, Bruder, Schwiegersohn, Schwager und Onkel Siegmund Sondheim (früher Ober-Gleen, Oberhessen) im 59. Lebensjahre. In tiefstem Schmerz: Jette Sondheim, geborene Worms, Addi, Herbert, Rita, Seargent Jack Löwenberger, Berta Sondheim und Geschwister, 1344 St. Nicholas Avenue.“

03. Family Sondheim lived 1939 in Washington Heights in New York, a part of Manhattan where so many Jewish families of Hesse were living that it was called Frankfurt upon the Hudson. A world of its own, far away from Ober-Gleen. Robin Smolen says about her father who had lost his homeland at the age of twelve:

04. In 1939, my father, Herbert Sondheim, (“Daddy”) was not yet twelve years old when he and his immediate family fled Germany and Hitler's persecution of the Jews. They had to leave their home in Ober-Gleen and most of their possessions to escape to the safety of America. Upon arrival at Ellis Island, they settled in Washington Heights, a neighborhood in New York City with

a big German Jewish community. Daddy had many relatives already living there who had previously arrived in NY from Germany. They lived with Aunts and Uncles at first before renting their own apartment. It was nice having family there since Daddy and his parents and siblings spoke no English and had to start over again in this new country. Everyone lived near each other, went to Synagogue together, took walks together and met for cake and coffee in the evenings. Family, friends and socializing was important to them in Germany and continued to be even more so in NY. In NYC my grandfather became a merchant while my grandmother worked in a millinery factory making women's hats. My Aunt Addi who was older worked in an office and Daddy and his little sister Rita went to school. Daddy spoke no English and had to learn quickly to catch up. He was determined and became an excellent student.

O5. Intro for Robin Smolen's next audio.

O6. When Daddy turned 18 in 1945 he was drafted into the army. Feeling very grateful to be given the opportunity to start a new life in the U.S., Daddy proudly served his new country. Daddy had a very responsible job in the military. He was a topographical surveyor, creating maps for the army. He served with honor and pride.

O7. Intro for Robin Smolen's next audio.

O8. When he was 19, his father died and he was honorably discharged to go home and support his family. Daddy worked full time during the day to support his family and attended College full time at night. He graduated with a degree in Accounting. While in college, Daddy began working at an International shipping company. Daddy started as a bookkeeper, worked his way up to Accountant, Treasurer and was then offered ownership of the company, which he accepted. This was a tremendous opportunity and Daddy made the company very successful. He had a most exciting experience, owning large freight vessels, acting as agent for shippers and dealing with many governments, learning the ins and outs of the shipping business and traveling all over the world. He became well known and highly respected in the industry and also acted as a lead arbitrator for the Maritime Society. Daddy met my mom (Beatrice or Beatie or Bea as he called her - and the love of his life) at a dance in Manhattan when he was 23. He saw a beautiful blond come out of the rest room with her girl friends and bet his friends that he would get her to dance with him. She did and they were married in 1952. They rented an apartment in Washington Heights near his mother and made a happy life there. My 2 sisters were born shortly after and my parents decided it was time to buy a house in the suburbs. They bought a house in 1960 and 4 years later I was born. Daddy and Mom raised us with love and pride, instilling the values important to them. My sisters and I had a happy childhood filled with love and laughter and fun and adventures. Daddy was a special person. He was a loving son who respected and cared for his parents. He was a loving brother who on occasion created some mischief. He collected postage stamps, liked doing jigsaw puzzles and loved potatoes, although sometimes he was not allowed to eat them because he ate too many. He was a devoted husband and father and always provided for his family. He was liked by everyone he met. He had 3 daughters, 6 grandchildren, and 4 great grandchildren, yet later in life he was referred to as "grandpa" by hundreds of people. Every time he met a friend of one of his grandchildren or children they instantly felt a warm familiar connection with him. He had a wonderful sense of humor and a twinkle in his eye and a natural way of making everyone feel at ease. He was a great storyteller, and had many stories to tell about his exciting life and world travels. He carried himself with honesty and integrity making

him very respected in his business dealings. Daddy had a full and enriched life. The importance to him of family, religion, hard work, integrity, humor and enthusiasm for life left a great legacy.

O9. Ober-Gleen/Waldgirmes/Sobibor/Majdanek/Cape Town/New York. In the pogrom night of November 1938, SA-men had went into the house of Jeanette und Joseph Lamm II (village name: Eva's). The 68 year old cousin of Hirsch Lamm who had joked with little Hermann, had been running for his life and had knocked in vain at his neighbor's door. Soon after, the widower moved to his daughter-in-law in Waldgirmes. His son Hugo Lamm, born in 1905, had been arrested in

Dachau after the pogrom and had left Germany afterwards. He went to South Africa where he was united with two of his siblings, Siegmund and Irma. In 1947, Hugo went to the U.S. His wife Gerda, nee Hirsch from Waldgirmes, and his little daughter Edith, who had been born in Wetzlar in 1936, had been murdered in 1942. Gerda Lamm died in Majdanek at the age of 33, together with Edith and with her mother Johanne (Jenny) Hirsch, nee Stern. In Schulstraße 1 in Waldgirmes, Stolpersteine have been placed to the memory of the two women and the child. Hugo's father has been killed in Minsk. Hugo married again in 1948. At the age of 77 he was divorced as he had met the love of his youth again, Rosi Lamm from Ober-Gleen, a daughter of Hannchen and David Lamm. She had been married to Josef Nußbaum and had a daughter, Laura. Since 1966, she was widowed. Hugo and Irma had twelve years together. Both died in 1994 in Baltimore. Rosi's sister Paula had emigrated to the U.S. in 1938 and had become the wife of Fritz Arthur Reis. In 1945, she gave birth to her son Barry Warren in New York. Her brother Hans, born 1910, has also founded a family in the USA. Hugo's brother Siegmund stood in South Africa. He married and had two daughters. His sister Irma, born 1906 in Ober-Gleen, called herself Weiss after her first marriage and May after the second. Her life ended 2011 in Cape Town, South Africa. The girl with the long braids Suse Lina had remembered, has set her personal record for Ober-Gleen: She has become almost 106 years old.

10. Buffalo. Two of the three sons of Jirre-Wolfs, of Joseph Lamm III. and his wife Berta, have survived the Holocaust: Not much is known about the fate of Isidor, born 1907. The 24 year old Nathan had taken the „SS Dresden“ to New York in November 1927. In Buffalo in Erie in the State of New York, not far from the Niagarafalls, lived a good friend from Ober-Gleen: The protestant tailor Heinrich Geißler from Ober-Gleen had lost his job in 1922 and had joined his relatives in the U.S. His sister, the midwife Marie Ruppenthal had taken care of it. In America, Heinrich called himself Henry, and Nathan became Max. Nathan Max Lamm died in 1968 at the age of 64 in Buffalo and is buried on the Forrest Lawn Cemetery. It had not been the first time that an Upper Hessian friendship proved to be true in overseas. Around 1900, the protestant family Ruppert from Ober-Gleen had helped the Jewish family Lamm from Kirtorf to settle in Baltimore.

11. Homberg/Ohm/Palestine/Minsk. One of the last Jewish families who left Homberg/Ohm, was the one of Max Lamm. The son of Lazarus and Fanny Lamm, nee Löwenstein, was born in Ober-Gleen and had been severely wounded in WWI. In 1919, he had taken over the shop of his father in Homberg/Ohm and had found a wife: Charlotte Tichauer, a young woman from Slovakia or Silesia, was a hatmaker and worked in a hat shop in Homberg. She ran her own business in the house of her groom. In 1924, she gave birth to Kurt Ely, in 1926 to Amanda, in 1935 to Werner. The Swiss Help Organization for Emigrating children brought Kurt Ely, the eldest, to Langenbruck. From Switzerland he illegally made his way to Palestine. His aunt Frieda, the sister of his father, lived there with her husband Erich Elias Mandelkern and her child. Kurt Ely Lamm would never see his parents and siblings again. From Homberg, the four of them had moved to Bad Nauheim, where Amanda went to the boarding school. Until the old people's home was emptied, Max and Charlotte worked in the kitchen. On the 11th of November in 1941, the family was deported from Frankfurt to Minsk. The trains with cattle cars needed six days for the trip. In the ghetto, the deported people saw many dead bodies, Jews from Belarus, children and babies among them. There were plenty ways to die in Minsk. People were beaten to death or shot, they died of exhaustion and illnesses, they starved and died because of the cold. From 1942 on, gas cars were used, as well. The Lamms have been under the victims, also 16 year old Amanda and 7 year old Werner. Two sisters of Max perished in the Holocaust, as well: Kathinka died in 1942, Recha half a year after her liberation, in december 1945. Kurt Ely Lamm returned to Europe as an orphan. He worked as a photographer and died in Frankfurt in 2009. He had been married to Marion Rauchmann. His daughters Linda and Miriam are Hessians by birth.

12. Kirtorf/Lauterbach/USA. The 78 year old Jacob Lamm had got his visa for the U.S. in time. The son of Elias Lazarus Lamm from Ober-Gleen and Bettchen, nee Höchster from Stordorf, had

been born in Kirtorf. He followed his daughter Berta Wertheim, his son-in-law Friedrich and his granddaughters in 1938. They had lived in Lauterbach until their emigration. Mathilda had been guaranteeing for her granddaughter. Others flew to the Netherlands, to England, Palestine or Africa, some hoped for emigrating to Cuba, Shanghai or Chile.

13. Berlin/New York/Milwaukee/Frankfurt. Bertha Lamm, nee Katzenstein from Frankenau, had been married to Joseph Lamm I. from Ober-Gleen and widowed since 1927. She had born six children, the sixth at the age of 41. One after another, all her adult children have emigrated to the USA. The first had been the unmarried daughters Ilse und Irene after WWI. Hermann Haune had married Claire Katz aus Steinbach in 1919 in Gießen and had move to the capitol soon after. His son Lothar was born in Berlin in 1923. In 1935, the little family moved to Milwaukee. Goldine (Goldie) Lamm had become the wife of Max Monasch who was from Poland. They also lived in Berlin in the Twenties, her son Heinz Albrecht was born there on New Year in 1924. Goldie's sister Johanna who was married to the Bavarian Adolf Oppenheimer had given birth to her son Alfred and Kirtorf and had emigrated to the U.S., too. Soon Goldie and Max Monasch followed. First they had sent their son Heinz Albrecht who had called himself Harold from now on. The mother, Bertha Lamm, emigrated as well. The 73 year old died in New York in 1942. Goldie's brother Leopold is burried on the New Jewish cemetery in Frankfurt upon the Main. Leopold who was born in Ober-Gleen had left Germany in 1936 and was a US-citizen. He had visited a friend in Bad Nauheim in summer 1963 and was killed at a car accident on the autobahn near Gräfenhausen. We'll hear from his nephew Harold again.

14. The three adult sons of Esther Lamm from Ober-Gleen and of the cattle dealer Josef Flörsheim from Romrod went to England. Fritz together with his wife Frieda. The 55 year old Julius died in 1940 in England, leaving his wife Elsa and his son Edgar behind. Isaak, the youngest, had married in England and had taken the additional name James. After the war he returned to Alsfeld. James Isaak Flörsheim lived in Grünberger Straße 41. He died in 1961 shortly after his 64th birthday and is burried on the Jewish cemetery at his mother's side.

15. Monika Felsing: Ober-Gleen/Crainfeld/Rauischholzhausen/Arnheim

Theresienstadt/Simbabwe/Auschwitz. After his first wife Theresa, nee Katzenstein, had died after childbirth, Josef Lamm II. From Ober-Gleen had married Jeanette Stern from Crainfeld. Josef's sister Rosa married Jeanette's brother Meier Stern in 1904. The Sterns and her 23 year old son Sally flew to the Netherlands in 1933. Maybe that Rosa and Meier Stern had an accident. But probably they have set an end to their lives in Arnhem as they died the very same day, on the 20<sup>th</sup> of February in 1937, at the age of about 60. Sally is supposed to have died in Buchenwald in 1945. About the fate of the other two sons of Rosa and Meier Stern, Ludwig und Hugo, there is nothing to be found in the Crainfeld chronicles of Carsten Eigner. Rosa's mother was Eva Katz Stiefel from Rauschenberg, her father was Herz Lamm, one of the sons of Josef Lazarus Lösmann (Lamm) and Hanna Goldschmidt from Romrod. Herz had seven children. Two of them had died young, all the others in the Holocaust or like Rosa in exile. The Lamms have been a big family as Josef Lazarus Lösmann had remarried after the death of his wife Elkana, nee Schaumberger, from Angenrod. Rebekka, one of his daughters from the first marriage, was married to Juda Plaut from Rauischholzhausen. Granddaughter Rosa and her husband Simon Frenkel had seen their daughter Resi Helisch in 1936 in Palestine. Resi had made her Abitur (a highschool degree for those who might go to the University, not many girls were allowed to go 13 years to school, then) in the Elisabethschule in Marburg and had studied to become a teacher. After her marriage she had emigrated to Palestine. Her parents came back to Hesse after the visit and thought of joining Resi later. But after the pogromnight of 1938, they fled to their daughter Ingrid, their son-in-law Salomon Cohen and the granddaughter Carla who lived in Zutphenschestraat in Apeldoorn in the Netherlands. Shortly before, the Cohens had already lost their second child. Ingrid's fourth baby died in 1941 at the day of its birth. The daughter Carla was not already three years old when the family was arrested one night in 1942. The grandparents, the parents and the



granddaughter were murdered in Auschwitz. Ingrid's brother David Frenkel survived the Holocaust in Simbabwe. Ingrid's aunt Sara Mendel, nee Löwenstein, survived Theresienstadt. The widow was the only one who, at the age of 69, returned to the family home in the street called "Am Rülfbach". Anna Junge, a historian with roots in Rauschholzhausen, describes in her book „Niemand mehr da“ (Nobody left), how the Holocaust survivor had to fight for her right. In the fifties, the granddaughter of Rebekka Lamm from Ober-Gleen wrote to the head of the district, that the officials and others resisted less and less the national socialist circles that were still or again active, and that she would not wish to support this in any way. On the headstone on her grave stands: "Here rests after she had suffered so much: Sara Mendel." And a project of the Gesamtschule Ebsdorfergrund urges: „Don't forget us.“

16. Amsterdam. Only those who managed to leave the European continent had a real chance to survive. Siegmund Sondheim's sister Betty who was born in 1892 in Ober-Gleen, had married the bank clerk Karl Hermann Baer from Frankfurt. They had lived in Cologne for a while, then in the Arndtstraße in the Westend of Frankfurt. After Nazis had forced their entry to their flat in the pogrom night, the Baers had fled to the Netherlands where they had relatives. They found a flat in a new quarter in the South of Amsterdam. Around the corner, at Merwedeplein, Otto Frank from Frankfurt lived with his wife and his two daughters. In the river quarter and its surroundings, more than 13000 German speaking Jews lived, refugees from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Breslau. They were safe till the Germans invaded the Netherlands in 1940. Karl Hermann Baer had a heart attack in the same year and died. His grieving widow left it to his son for a while to keep in contact with the relatives and get the affidavits. On the 25th of March in 1941, Alfred wrote from Biesboschstraat 31 to the Sondheims in New York that he was grateful for all they did for him, his mother and his little brother Herbert. The consulate in Rotterdam had asked for papers.

17. „Wir haben am 21. März Euren Luftpostbrief vom 15ten Februar erhalten. Mit Euren neuen Nachrichten freuen wir uns sehr. Für die Besorgung des Affidavits von Kane danken wir Euch sehr, ebenso für Eure Mühe wegen Herbert. Wie steht seine Sache jetzt? Wird er bald das Visum bekommen und wird er dann fahren können? Nun haben wir gestern morgen einen Brief des amerikanischen Konsulats Rotterdam erhalten. Das Konsulat hat also das Affidavit erhalten, jedoch sind die dem Affidavit beiliegenden Beweise ungenügend, und es wird eine vom ‚Treasury Department‘ beglaubigte Fotokopie des letzten Einkommensbescheides verlangt. Weiter verlangt das Konsulat form 575. Dies erscheint mir jedoch ein Irrtum zu sein, denn form 575 wird nur von Nicht-Amerikanern verlangt und wahrscheinlich hat man übersehen, dass Leo und William Kane die amerikanische Staatsbürgerschaft besitzen. Es scheint, dass das Konsulat für Euch kein form 575 vorliegen hat, denn wie Ihr dem Brief erseht, werden von Euch die gleichen Papiere, das heißt erstens, vom Finanzministerium beglaubigte Fotokopie Eures letzten Einkommenssteuerbescheides und zweitens Department of Justice form 575 verlangt. Um diese Angelegenheit so schnell wie möglich zu erledigen, wurde Euch folgendes NLT Telegramm gesandt: Sondheim 1344 Saint Nicholas Avenue Apartment 21, New York. Für Eure Mühe danken wir Euch sehr, hoffentlich sind alle Papiere bald hier, denn in Zeiten wie heute kann ja jeder Tag eine Rolle spielen. Man hofft hier, dass in der nächsten Zeit mit der Erteilung von Ausreisegenehmigungen begonnen wird und dass auch von hier aus Transporte nach Lissabon abgehen. Wie wir vom Konsulat erfahren haben, werden wir unser Visum dann bekommen, wenn wir Ausreisegenehmigung haben und...“

18. Here the copy ends. A second letter from Alfred – or another version of the letter – was written to Jettchen Sondheim.

19. „Liebe Tante Jettchen, dass Herbert eine Geburtsurkunde braucht, dachte ich mir schon und habe deshalb in Köln angefragt und erhalten. Ich lege die Urkunde diesem Brief bei und sende ihn als Einschreiben heute weg. Die liebe Mutter hat viel zu tun, deshalb antwortet sie auf Euren heute angekommenen Brief erst das nächste Mal. Wir schreiben bald wieder, herzlichen Gruß für heute. Euer Alfred.“

20. On the 30th of March in 1941, Alfred sat down to type another letter. The papers were not ready, yet, and he worried that his letter had not reached his relatives. He tries hard to organise everything that is needed and expresses his hopes to leave. He asks for his brother Herbert who needed visa, as well. And he congratulates his cousin Addi to her birthday.

21. „Es tut uns leid, dass immer neue Schwierigkeiten auftauchen, aber trotzdem hoffe ich, dass bald alles in Ordnung sein wird. Wie ich bereits schrieb, arbeitet das Konsulat nun wieder genauso wie früher, und jeder, dessen Papiere in Ordnung sind und der eine Ausreisegenehmigung besitzt, erhält das Visum. Man hofft hier, dass in allernächster Zeit mit der Erteilung von Ausreisegenehmigungen begonnen wird. Genauer weiß man aber noch nicht. Wenn wir (teu, teu, teu) soweit sein werden, dass wir Passage haben müssen, wird Euch dieserhalb telegraphiert werden. Aber vorerst sind das nur Luftschlösser, und es ist noch lange nicht so weit. Es ist nur immer gut, wenn man im Falle, dass es mal so weit ist, alles schon vorbereitet hat. Ich hoffe, die Erfüllung der oben genannten Forderungen des Konsulats machen Euch keine Schwierigkeiten? Wie steht Herberts Angelegenheit? Ich hoffe, er ist bald so weit, dass er das Visum erhalten kann? Schreibt uns bitte mal genau darüber. Dafür, dass Ihr Onkel Ludwig telegraphiert habt, danke ich Euch herzlich, es tut mir sehr leid, Euch immer wieder Mühe und Kosten machen zu müssen, und wir wollen hoffen, dass dies alles bald nicht mehr nötig sein wird. Viele herzliche Grüße an Euch alle sendet Euer Alfred. Liebe Addi, auch von mir nachträglich die besten Wünsche zum Geburtstag.“

22. England/Australien. In 1939, 15 year old Herbert Baer had been on a children's transport to England and escaped the Nazis. In her book „Over the ocean“, Erica Fischer described what happened when the Wehrmacht ran over the Netherlands, Belgium and France and came near the channel: Jewish refugees from Germany, Italy and Austria had been classified as „enemy aliens“ in Great Britain and were imprisoned and/or deported together with Nazis. In July 1940, the „Dunera“ left England with more than 2500 men and a few youngsters on board. Two months later they reached their destination. Not Canada, as it had been said when they had left. Australia. Herbert Baer was in a camp in the desert for two years, not knowing what had become of his parents, his brother and other relatives. He stood in Australia and in 1961, as the first Jews after a long period, he was accepted to the stock market in Sidney. An English paper wrote about him. Herbert Baer had been to Ober-Gleen. Once after 1945, and then never again.

23. For Berta Sondheim's 58 year old twin brother Hermann and his 40 year old wife Fanny Grete, nee Altstädter from Weinheim, the die Sondheims had managed to get papers in the beginning of 1941. Hermann wrote on the 16th of March in 1941 to his siblings in the USA, saying he was grateful for everything they had done, mentioning health problems (his foot and Grete's teeth), expressing the hope to see his relatives and especially his son Kurt again and referring to Betty and Alfred:

24. „Ihr Lieben! Wir erhielten Euer Schreiben v. 15/2 mit beigefügten Copien der beiden Affidavits vom 13/3. Wir sind freudig überrascht, und sage ich Euch für Eure viele Mühe u. den guten Willen, der aus allem hervorgeht, meinen herzlichsten Dank. Ich kann mir gut vorstellen, daß es für Euch schon manche Anstrengung gekostet hat, bis Ihr unsere Vetter zu diesem Schritt bewegen konntet, nachdem unsere früheren Bürgen abgelehnt hatten. Welcher Grund eigentlich zu dieser Ablehnung geführt hat, wollen wir nicht weiter erforschen. Die Hauptsache ist aber, daß wir von Euch außerdem noch eine Zusatz-Bürgschaft haben, und ich will hoffen, daß beides als ausreichend erachtet werden. Wie ich Euch in meinem letzten Brief No. 5 v. 3/3 versicherte, haben wir Euch gekabelt, daß Ihr versuchen sollt, Schiffsplätze für den nächstmöglichen Termin bei einer Schifffahrtlinie zu belegen, diese Belegung von der Schifffahrtlinie an das Amerikanische Konsulat drahtlich bestätigen lassen sollt, denn wenn in Stuttgart ein Kabel über Schiffsplätze vorliegt, wird man zur Visaerteilung dorthin bestellt. Voraussetzung natürlich ist, daß die Bürgschaftspapiere geprüft u. in Ordnung befunden worden sind. Passage-Zahlung ist dann auf alle Fälle (...) noch nötig. Wir sind glücklich, einen Ausblick zu haben u. der Gedanke, unser Kind nun wieder zu sehen und doch noch mal mit Euch vereint zu werden, ist beruhigend. Wir hatten schon fast alle Hoffnung aufgegeben. Nach Cleveland werden wir auch schreiben und uns be-

danken. Von der lieben Betty und Alfred hatten wir einen Brief. Es geht beiden gut, schreibt die liebe Betty, sie selbst sei etwas nervös und habe etwas mit neuralgischen Beschwerden zu tun und müsste ihr Allgemeinzustand etwas gebessert werden, sie hofft, es kommt wieder. Mein Fuß ist soweit wieder in Ordnung, die liebe Grete ihre Zahngeschichte auf dem Wege der Besserung. In der Erwartung, bald wieder von Euch zu hören, verbleibe ich mit herzlichen Grüßen und Küssen für Euch alle. Euer Hermann.“

25. Grete also wrote to the relatives. She mentioned that, though her mother had tried everything, no one from her side had done anything to help them. She worried about Herbert and about Betty and Alfred and told Hermann's siblings that they had met someone from Ober Gleen in Frankfurt.

26. „Es tut uns sehr leid, daß Ihr so viel Mühe mit uns habt, aber wir hoffen und wünschen, daß es doch auch einmal mit uns klappen wird und hoffentlich bald. Es ist sehr traurig, daß von meiner Seite drüben niemand in der Lage ist, uns behilflich zu sein, aber meine liebe Mutter hat sich ja schon vor Jahren die größte Mühe gegeben, jemand ausfindig zu machen, der uns hilft, aber leider ohne Erfolg, was Euch Tante Beckie vielleicht schon erzählt haben wird. Für Eure guten Wünsche zu meinem Geburtstag danke ich Euch noch bestens. Der Tag ist ganz ruhig verlaufen. Dem lieben Hermann geht es besser & ich hoffe, daß sein Fuß bald wieder ganz in Ordnung sein wird. Ich selbst bin immer noch in zahnärztlicher Behandlung und wird sich dies auch noch etwas hinziehen. Von der I. Betty hatten wir auch Nachricht und hat sie auch allerlei Beschwerden. Der Tod vom lieben Karl ist natürlich keine Kleinigkeit für sie, es fällt ja selbst uns noch schwer, uns an den Gedanken zu gewöhnen. Inzwischen wird der liebe Herbert wohl auch die Trauerbotschaft erhalten haben, er wird nicht wenig erschrocken sein, vom Heimweh garnicht zu reden. Ihr schreibt garnichts mehr von meiner Kusine Mary. Kommt sie denn nicht mehr zu Euch? Sprecht Ihr auch als mal die Vettern aus Wohra? Vetter Hermann besucht uns öfters & übernachtet auch bei uns & seine beiden Mädels, die hier in einem Kinderheim sind, besuchen uns fast jeden Sonntag. Gustchen Stern habe ich vor ein paar Tagen auf der Straße getroffen. Sonntag hat uns auch der Schlägers Josef besucht. Hirsch L. liegt hier im Krankenhaus, er hatte eine Lungenentzündung, der liebe Hermann hat ihn noch nicht besuchen können, da er mit seinem Fuß so weite Wege nicht machen konnte. Wir können garnicht verstehen, daß Ihr so lange keine Post von uns hattet, da wir Euch doch immer Eure Briefe sofort beantwortet haben & Euch auch so und so oft geschrieben haben, ohne daß wir Brief von Euch hatten. Hoffentlich erreicht Euch dieser Brief bei bester Gesundheit. Grüßt alle Lieben & empfanget alle herzliche Grüße & Küsse von Eurer Grete.“

27. Frankfurt am Main/Lodz. In the early hours of the 19th of October in 1941, a Sunday, policemen or Gestapo-officers stood in front of the door of Grete and Hermann Sondheim in Melemstraße in Frankfurt West. A luggage of 50 kilo maximum they were allowed to take with them, plus their wedding rings and a simple watch. Hermann and Grete Sondheim were on the list of the first mass transport from the Prussian province of Hessen-Nassau to Lodz in occupied Poland. 1180 Jewish men, women and children were herded through the city to the engros market. Officers of the Secret State Police (Geheime Staatspolizei, Gestapo) and tax officers examined every single one, each piece of luggage, and made also body search. Some victims died, several people were injured. On the 21st of October, the train from Frankfurt with the Sondheims reached the station Radegast near Lodz. In the Polish town, the Germans had soon after their attack on Poland installed a Ghetto for Jews, lead by the so-called Schutzstaffel (SS). A Jewish council had to make lists for the transports to Chelmno and Auschwitz. 1113 people were still alive when the train from Frankfurt arrived. The daily ration was less than 1100 calories, it was cold, deceases raged, and some of the desparates took their own lifes. Only three of this transport from Frankfurt survived. Grete and Hermann Sondheim were not among them. Also the life of Lina Stern ended in Lodz.

28. New York. At the eastcoast of the USA, a lot of relatives and acquaintances met again: Sara Horn, nee Sondheim from Ober-Gleen, was one of the daughters of Sussmann Hirsch Sondheim

and Therese Sondheim, nee Stern (whose obituary we have heard). Sara had been raised in Gießen and seems to have married Leopold Horn an owner of a factory from Geisa near Erfurt. Her daughter Betti was born 1916 in Gießen, Suse (Susie) Regina 1922 in Fulda. Both left Germany as youngsters, to escape the Nazis. Betti (Betty) emigrated 1933 first to Sheffield, where her mother met her in 1938. The almost 15 year old Susie went all alone to Bruxelles in 1935. The three of them survived the Holocaust in the USA. Sara's brother Karl Sondheim and his wife Hilde emigrated in 1938 together with their child. Levi Sondheim, another brother, left Germany 1939 together with his wife Hedwig, nee Baum, and his son Heinz. In a hospital in New York he had met Heinz Sondheim, a second or third cousin by chance, Herbert Sondheim wrote in an e-mail in 1997. Their wives had given birth to daughters and shared a room for young mothers.

29. One member of the second generation born in the USA has a high reputation in music: Henry Smolen, the 19 year old grandson of Herbert Sondheim from Ober-Gleen has started to play piano at the age of three in 2001. The son of Robin and Stuart Smolen has achieved a lot already, as his mother recalls.

30. Robin Smolen: Henry began his piano studies back in 2001 when he was three years old, and gave his first public performance in San Jose, CA, when he was five years old. A veteran of the concert stage, he has performed all over the United States, making his orchestral debut at 8 years old with the El Camino Youth Symphony in Palo Alto, California. His performances include recitals at Carnegie Hall in New York, the Kimmel Center in Philadelphia, the Monterey Next Generation Jazz Festival, and as a soloist with the South Valley Symphony Orchestra. In past years, Henry has attended the Aspen Music Festival, the Tanglewood Music Festival, and the Banff Music Festival. Henry was admitted to the San Francisco Conservatory of Music when he was 8 years old, and spent ten years as a scholarship student in the preparatory division. Currently, Henry is a sophomore at the Juilliard School in New York City, where he studies classical piano with Finnish pianist Matti Raekallio. When he is not playing piano, Henry enjoys surfing, sailing, and SCUBA diving. The piece Henry is playing is the fourth movement of Beethoven's Piano Sonata No. 3, Op. 2. The sonata, often referred to as Beethoven's first virtuosic piano sonata, was composed in 1795 and dedicated to Joseph Haydn.

31. Henry Smolen, Beethovens Klaviersonata Nr. 3, Opus 2, for Joseph Haydn.

CD5

01. Ober-Gleen/Theresienstadt. Joseph Lamm III. (villagename: Jirre-Wolfs) had lost his 12 year old daughter Grete in 1918. He had helped his neighbor who was in need as her husband had died in WWI, leaving back her and four children. The neighbor's daughter Lina who had been a friend of Grete had never forgotten what Joseph Lamm III. did for her family, providing them with clothes, for example. She was grateful for that her whole life. And she has told her granddaughter decades later how in the Nazitime, the man who had helped her, came to the kitchen window of the house of her parents-in-law and had pleaded: "Lina, Lina, give me bread. We have nothing to eat!" Joseph Lamm III. died in April 1943 in Theresienstadt, his wife Berta, nee Baum from Geilshausen, in May 1943. David Lamm, a nephew of Brünel (Bertha) Lamm who had emigrated in the middle of the 19th century, had left Ober-Gleen in 1933, it is said. He has been deported from Darmstadt and died in Theresienstadt, a few days before his 76th birthday. Minna Lamm, his younger sister, had been living in the Jewish old people's home in Bad Nauheim until her deportation. She died in Theresienstadt on the 28th of december in 1942, at 4 a.m. in room number 30 of building L223. The doctor noted enteritis as cause of death. With other words: typhus. David's wife Johanna (Hannchen) Lamm, nee Andorn from Gemünden an der Wohra, died of the same decease. She might have met her brother Meier Andorn and her sister-in-law Anna in the ghetto. Hannchen Lamm died at the age of 68 in January 1943 in the same room as her sister-in-law Minna. Johanna Katzenstein, nee Lamm from Ober-Gleen, died at about the same time, officially also because of typhus. Auguste Stern, born in 1878, had been deported from Frankfurt in July 1942 to Theresienstadt and has died there in September 1942.

O2. Zierenberg/Prag/USA. On the market place in Zierenberg, there are Stolpersteine to the memory of Siegmund and Johanna Lamm and her children Hugo and Grete. Siegmund Lamm from Ober-Gleen, a son of Herz Lamm and his wife Eva, nee Stiefel, had married into family Gerson before WWI. He had lead the shoe- and textile shop. Hugo Lamm worked in a bank in Kassel. In 1934, Grete married Ernst Neuhaus from Nuremberg. In 1935, the siblings went to Prague where Hugo married a woman from Nuremberg, Ida Fleischer. The couple had a son, Edgar Herbert, born in 1936. They went to the USA in 1946. Grete and Ernst called themselves Newhouse after their emigration.

O3. Kassel/Frankfurt/Theresienstadt. Johanna and Siegmund Lamm had moved from Zierenberg to Kassel and were deported from there in September 1942. They both died in April 1943 in Theresienstadt. Lina Moses, the 67 year old sister of Siegmund Lamm, did not survive the three days of the traintrip from Frankfurt am Main to the town North of Prague. Her 82 year old husband Gerson Moses from Frielendorf died soon after the arrival. In 1936, Lina could have followed her three children Käthe, Max and Hedwig to the USA, but she stood by her husband and had been deported together with him. The eyewitness August Adelsberger reminded the transport from August 1942:

O4. „Die Leute, welche das mitnehmen durften, was sie auf dem Leibe trugen, hatten doppelte Unterwäsche, Hemden und zwei, und wenn es ging drei Anzüge oder Kleider übereinander gezogen und Mäntel darüber. Und so saßen diese Gequälten in der Hochsommerhitze im August stundenlang auf den Stühlen, in Erwartung, dass man sie holen würde.“ (The old people were allowed only to take with them what they were wearing, and so they had put on several layers and so they sat in the heat of the August day, waiting to be taken away.)

O5. Ober-Gleen/Kirtorf/Theresienstadt. Salomon Lamm, born in Ober-Gleen in 1865, was one of the three sons of Lazarus Lippmann Lamm and Regina Lamm, nee Stern. His brothers were Josef Lamm I., the father of Goldie Monash, and Hirsch Lamm, the father of Johanna Stern and Rosa Weinberg. His younger sister Jette had died in 1880 at the age of 14. Salomon had married Rebecca Kaufmann from Kirtorf in 1895 and had become father of three children: Johanna who had married Kurt Lichtenstein from Berlin and emigrated to New York. Theodor who went to the U.S., as well, and had married Ellen Cohen from Berlin-Flatow. And Ludwig who has died in 1978 at the age of about 70. Salomon and Rebecca Lamm have perished in the Holocaust, Salomon at a place unknown in 1942, Rebecca in Theresienstadt in 1943.

O6. Treblinka. Berta Rothschild (villagename: Haunesse Bertha) had moved from Ober-Gleen to the Jewish old people's home in Bad Nauheim. The SS came on the 15<sup>th</sup> of September 1942 and forced the inhabitants of the home to leave. From Darmstadt, the 64 year old Bertha Rothschild was taken to the Generalgouvernement. She was number 237 on a list with 925 people. It is presumed that she has been killed in Treblinka.

O7. Nentershausen/Riga/Stutthof. Karl Monash, a son or stepson of Goldie Lamm, died in 1942 in the Ghetto in Riga. He was 35 years old. One of the youngest victims of the Holocaust with roots in Ober-Gleen was little Rahel Lamm, the daughter of Selma Lamm, nee Katz from Nentershausen, and Karl Lamm from Ober-Gleen. Rahel had been born in the hospital in Alsfeld in 1936 and had spent the first two years of her live in the homevillage of her mother. Since July 1938, the young family was registered in Kassel, and from there the Lamms were deported to Riga. Selma and Rahel Lamm have been murdered in Riga in December 1941. Rahel was only almost five, her daughter almost 37. Karl Lamm, the son of Jakob Lamm and Johanna, nee Oppenheim, died in the concentration camp Stutthof east of Gdansk in October 1944 at the age of 41.

O8. Majdanek. Willi Lamm, born in 1902 in Ober-Gleen, has died on the 16<sup>th</sup> of July in 1942 in Majdanek near Lublin. The son of Josef Lamm and Berta Baum had been married to Berta Dub from Frankfurt and had lived in her hometown. The 36 year old woman also died in Majdanek.

09. In the German newspaper „Der Aufbau“ in the USA, there were more and more obituaries to be read in the 40ies, in which concentration camps and ghettos were mentioned. In front of every hometown or homevillage stood the word formerly. In August 1945, there could be read: 10. „Wir erhielten von unserer Hilde und Karola die traurige Nachricht, dass unsere heißgeliebten Angehörigen Jakob Roth und Frau Sannchen, geborene Kappenberg, Meier Stern und Frau Hedwig, geborene Roth, (früher Nieder-Ohmen), dem Naziterror zum Opfer gefallen sind. Im Namen der trauernden Hinterbliebenen: Hermann Roth und Frau Erna, geb. Roth, 588 W, 189th Street N.Y.C., Joseph Stern und Familie, Chicago, Albert Stern, New York City, Paula Baum; Toni Stern, Aufenthalt unbekannt.“

11. Bendorf-Sayn/Sobibor. Toni Stern did not live anymore when this was printed. The mentally handicapped, kind woman from Nieder-Ohmen with the mind of a seven year old child had been killed with gas in Sobibor. The administrations had send her, like Feist Stern, born 1876 in Ober-Gleen, to the Pflegeanstalt für Nervenranke in Bendorf-Sayn, a home founded in the 19th century as an Israelitic Sanatorium for those who suffer from nervous diseases. The house was emptied soon, the patients deported. On the 15<sup>th</sup> of June in 1942, there was a transport from Koblenz to Sobibor. From Westerbork, trains also rolled to Eastern Europe. Policemen from Bremen guarded them. When Betty Baer, nee Sondheim, was forced to enter one of the cars, she had three days left to live. On the 4<sup>th</sup> of June in 1943, the 51 year old reached Sobibor in Southeastern Poland, a death camp. Her hair was cut short. If she still had something valuable, she had to leave it at a desk. Naked, she and the others had to walk along the “Himmelfahrtsallee“ (boulevard to heaven), as the guards called the last walk. It had been 230 meters to the gas chambers that were supposed to look like showerrooms. The SS-men lead 70 up to 100 people into each of the five meters broad and seven meters long rooms, closed the doors and let exhaust gases in.

12. Auschwitz. Alfred Josef Baer, the elder son of Betty und Karl Baer, was murdered in 1943 at the age of 22 in Auschwitz. The concentrationcamp had been built in 1940 in occupied Poland. Otto, Edith, Margot and Anne Frank from Frankfurt am Main were also in Auschwitz, like Hilda and Karola Stern from Nieder-Ohmen. In one of her poems, Hilda Cohen Stern wrote:

13. „Was wir gelitten! Sieh auf meine Hände. Sie zappeln her und hin wie angebundene Vögel, die ferne, irgendwo den Pfahl zu fassen suchen, an den sie hinterrücks gebunden. In Fetzen hängen die fernen Ketten, die sanften Bande – Oh, arme Hände – nach Eisen tastend...“

14. New York. Karola, Hilda and Ruth Stern have met on a sunny day in the year 1946 in Washington Heights in New York City. The two survivors of Auschwitz, a few years older than Ruth, don't speak about what they had suffered. And the 18 year old doesn't dare to ask. Decades later, Karola Stern Steinhardt and Hilda Stern Cohen have given video intervies. Werner Cohen has discovered Hilda's poems that have been published. And Ruth Stern Glass Earnest has written her childhood memoire.

15. Ober-Gleen/Homberg/Berlin/Borken/USA. Josef Lamm from Ober-Gleen und his wife Hilda, nee Frank from Nieder-Ohmen, had moved to Homberg in the late 19th century. Soon, Josef's brother Lazarus and his wife and children and his sister Mendelina followed. Mendelina married Isaak Marx from Waldeck-Frankenberg. Two of her sons survived the Holocaust in overseas, Julius Friedrich in Brasilia, Hermann in Florida. Josef and Hilda Lamm and five or six of their children are buried in Hessen. Her son Max had emigrated in 1936 with his wife Viola, nee Neuhaus from Salmünster, and the sons Karl Kurt and Joseph over Rotterdam to the U.S. His sister Rosalie and her husband, the chemist Otto Leopold Kupfer from Frankfurt, went from England to the USA. An other sister, Rebecca Aron, nee Lamm, died in France, and the second youngest, Irma, in Davos. About Hermann's fate we don't know much. Leopold Lamm had been born in Homberg in 1887. He had founded a family with Margret Falk from Berlin and lived there till their emigration. In the USA, their daughters married German Jews who have written history. The older one, Liselotte Thekla, became the wife of Dr. Norbert Goldenberg from Kestrich in Upper Hesse. He had studied medicine in Gießen and worked in Washington Heights then. He was much respect-

ed as a doctor and became famous as the editor of the German Jewish weekly paper „Der Aufbau“. Anita, born 1923 in Berlin, married Manfred Gans from Borken in Westphalia. His story went around the world. At the age of 16, the son of a Socialdemocrat and merchant had fled to England. He became a volunteer in a special squad under the alias Freddy Gray in the British Army, took part at the D-Day in Normandy and went with a jeep from the Netherlands to Theresienstadt to search his parents Moritz and Else Gans. And what he hadn't dared to hope became true: He found them both alive. He was not allowed to take them with him, as there were illnesses raging, but he convinced Princess Juliana to get his parents and others survivors out there on a plane. Manfred Gans has died in 2010 in New Jersey. Die New York Times, the „Zeit“ and the Westdeutsche Rundfunk have dedicated an obituary to him.

16. Regina Dietzold: New York/Marseille/Palestine. Many survivors of concentration camps tried to leave Europe after the war. From the South of France, overloaded, old ships went to Italy and from there along the coast of Dalmatia, southward, aware of the British who imprisoned illegal emigrants in Cyprus. More than 1600 people died in the Mediterranean sea. One of the voluntary helpers on board was the son of a woman from Ober-Gleen. It was the fifth time that Harold Monash changed the continent, and he was only 22 years old. The son of Goldie Monash from Ober-Gleen, had fled to the U.S. in 1936. In the uniform of a Ranger, he had returned to Europe. In books and in the internet, he is mentioned as one of the few survivors of Anzio Beach. He was honored with the Purple Heart and had convinced more than once German soldiers to surrender. He did not talk much about the fights nor about his severe wounds, but he has told a journalist about Antisemitism in the US-Army. Harold left the U.S. to study in Palestine, shortly before the United Nations agreed in 1947 to the parting of the country into a Jewish and an Arabic state. As a volunteer he fought in the Jewish-arab war. Asked, why he did that, he is said to have answered: „For the benefit of the country of my birth.“ The 24 year old has been shot on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April in 1948 near Jerusalem. And he wasn't the only dead with roots in Ober-Gleen. Samuel Katzenstein, the son of Selma Lamm, was killed in action, too. A few weeks later, David Ben Gurion announced the founding of the State of Israel.

17. Harold Monash's story resembles to the story of Hannah Aniko Szenes. The Jewish Hungarian had emigrated to Palestine in 1939. She did only stay for a few years. Like the Swede Raoul Wallenberg and the US-journalist Varian Fry she was willing to rescue European Jews from the Nazis. As a volunteer she went to the British Army and became a parachutist on a special mission. In May 1944 she was arrested by the Hungarian police. After she had not given any names or codes, though she was tortured, the 23 year old was sentenced to death and shot. Her famous „Eli Eli“ was to be heard in Ober-Gleen in September 2017.

18. Eli Eli Intro

19. Eli Eli: „Eli, Eli, es möge endlos sein: der Sand und das Meer, das Rauschen des Wassers, ein Funke des Himmels, verströmendes Licht. Lass endlos sein das Beten der Menschen, die Stimmen, die Stille, ein Klingeln vor dir. Eli, Eli, shelo yigamer le'olam: Hachol vehayam, rishrush shel hamayim, berak hashamayim, tefilat ha'adam.“

20. New York. Johanna Stern, nee Lamm, was 43, her husband Louis 52, when they had to start anew in the USA. The former cattle dealer worked in a factory and skinned animals on a farm, till he found a job in a home. He had been in the German Navy for seven years. He had cooked for the team, and that was suiting him well now. In the kitchen of the home, he cooked 200 up to 300 meals, and he brought left-overs home. Johanna Stern worked in other people's households, and Hermann, the eldest son, cleaned shoes or swimmingpools before school. All three children have studied. Ruth worked as a teacher, Hermann for General Electric. Ernst Lothar, the youngest, has become the CEO of a US based subsidiary of Thales, one of the world's biggest companies in this field.

21. Ernst Lothar Stern: „My family, sister Ruth, brother Hermann, mother Johanna and father Louis, we all survived and as noted in my sister's memoir, ended up doing a variety of things. I speak

for myself, since you have informations about the rest of my family. I was educated here in the United States, I was only almost four when we came here. Went to public schools. Graduated from highschool. Went to a very good university called Cornell where I received a bachelor of science degree in economics. And worked in the electronics field all my working career. The job that I held longest and until I retired was with the French electronics and defense contractor then called Thomson CSF and currently called Thales, large corporation. I was the first American they hired, and I lived in New York City, in Manhattan. Our offices were in Manhattan. At first and then eventually, we began buying some companies in the United States. I became chief executive officer (CEO) of the company. Worked with them for 41 years, retired in 2002. (...) I am still connected to the company as a non-executive chairman of one of the divisions of the company. But I really do not much work any more in that connections. A very interesting career. I enjoyed working with the French. We also had activities all over Europe and the rest of the world. I travelled to Ulm from time to time and to Vienna, yearly. (...) Other than that... now, in retirement, I play golf, and I'm still connected as I mentioned to the former company, as I mentioned, and I am also the director of another company, also in the electronics field.”

22. Kurt Nelhiebel, German translation of Ernst Lothar Stern's speech. Mr. Nelhiebel has been a young journalist in Frankfurt in the late 60ies, and he wrote about the Auschwitz process. And he became head of the news department of Radio Bremen later.

23. On D-Day, Hermann Stern was in the Normandy. As a US-soldier he had been under the command of General Patton and had worked then for two years for the American Military Government in Nuremberg, when some of the main criminals went to trial. While the Marshall Plan started, a US program for the recovery of Western Germany, Herman Stern was working in Germany for a while. What had Joseph Stern from Nieder-Ohmen said to his daughter Ruth?

24. „Taten sprechen lauter als Worte. Schau dir an, wie General George Marshall gehandelt hat, um Europa nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg vor dem Verhungern zu bewahren: Er hat den Marshall Plan gestartet. Das ist etwas, das wirklich die Welt verbessert.“ Deeds talk louder than words. Look what General George Marshall has done to save Europe after WWII from starvation: He has started the Marshall Plan. That is something that really improves the world.

25. The cattledealer Joseph Stern from Nieder-Ohmen was an orthodox Jew who had fought for Germany in WWI and had become a prisoner of war in eastern Europe. He loved to read books that told stories of freedom. And he loved songs like “Stille Nacht“ (Holy Night) und „O Tannenbaum“. But much more another old song meant to him and his brother Meier. A song that the Duo EigenArt from Nidderau has played at the Weidig weekend (to the honor of Friedrich Ludwig Weidig, a social revolutioneer who had been reverend in Ober-Gleen and had been arrested in 1835, which prompted one of the first petition for a political prisoner worldwide – see our audio book about Weidig and chapters in volume 3) has played.

26. Duo EigenArt, Die Gedanken sind frei. Thoughts are free.

27. Hermann Stern, the grandson of Lesemann's, helped friends in Germany. He provided his schoolfriend from family Dächer with parachoot silk when she needed fabrics for her wedding robe. Much later, he visited a good friend, the chemist Hermann Wuth in Diez und brought the key of the Synagogue with him, that he had guarded like a treasure since his emigration. In 2017, the key was „object of the month“ in the Grafenschloss Diez. It was the first time that the museum dedicated an exhibition to the years 1933-1945. And also in Kirtorf, where an initiative has fought successfully against Neonazis, where the diversity is celebrated and in March 2018 the first Stolpersteine will be laid, the NS-history isn't documented in the museum of Kirtorf, yet.

28. Helmut Meß the head of the Heimatverein Stadt Kirtorf says that for those who are related to NS-functionairs, it could be embarrassing if this was mentioned in the museum in Kirtorf. The story of the Jewish community is told, but only until 1933. Wouldn't one wish to learn what happened to the people?, we have asked. And the answer: The motto of the museum is “Citizens make the face of the town” (implying that only the stories of those are told who are in town).

29. Herbert Sondheim has visited his childhood village.



30. Bernd Schneider who was born after the war just remembers that in the 80ies a foreigner had approached him, shook his hand and said: „So, now you have shaken the hand of a real Jew from Ober-Gleen.“

31. Gerlinde Christ who has come to Ober-Gleen as a refugee from Sudetenland when she was a child. She invited Herbert Sondheim for coffee when he was in Ober-Gleen. From her garden, he took a photo of his childhood home. He obviously did not enter it. But he had seen the booklet of Addi. Robin Smolen, his daughter, remembers that it was said that the family that had guarded the booklet would send it to her family. Later on, the great grandson of the couple that had bought the house in 1939, scanned it for them and sent it to Lastoria.

32. Yale Strom und Nikolai Muck, Instrumental.

## CD6

01. When Israel's army marched into Libanon in 1982, Veronika Bloemers has been in Tel Aviv. She has been there, when, in 1987, the first and in 2000 the second Intifada started, when Jizchak Rabin and PLO-leader Jassir Arafat made an agreement for the West Bank, rightwing Israeli illegally built settlements and Hamas and PLO split. She has been in Israel when a fanatic, a Jewish nationalist, shot Rabin. During the Iraq war. And when in 2002 the construction of the 760 km long wall started that separates Israel from the West Bank and members of Palestinian families from another.

02. Veronika Bloemers talks about the war in 1991, how she had to take her gas mask with her, how she had turned her bathroom into a shelter room and what civilians were supposed to do. How they lived with the threat of the Saddam's rockets.

03. Veronika Bloemers, Shalom Chaverim

04. Veronika Bloemers talks about the longing for peace that she had experienced in all day life in Israel, the wishes that expressed this hope.

05. Konzertaufnahme Oktober: Shalom Aleichem.

06. Veronika Bloemers talks about the Immanuel Church in Tel Aviv/Jaffa where her family was integrated and had felt at home, a multicultural world with people from all over the world, so many languages.

07. Veronika Bloemers, another proverb.

08. Yale Strom and Nikolai Muck, Intrumental.

09. Ruth Stern Glass Earnest has died on the 16th of August in 2012. At her computer, she had created an ornament that she had named after her doll Renate that she had had to leave in Diez/Lahn in 1938. On her logo, six gas falmes build a circle, symbols for the six million Jews that have been murdered by Germans. The center is to be the star of David and at the same time the space in with the dead can be born again. Ruth Stern Glass Earnest wrote on page 240 of „The Gate“:

10. Katja von Ahn: „People still target each other to rob or to kill, armed with falsely righteous convictions: religious or political. Yet, I want my symbol to say: here is Renate, like a flower, which always blooms, to remind one to strive, to love, to learn!“

11. Veronika Bloemers talks about the youth choir from Israel she had been on tour with in Germany in the eighties.

12. Today, Yale Strom works as professor and artist in residence in a program for Jewish Studies at the San Diego State University. In Sowjet times, he had traveled through Eastern Europe already, had done research as an ethnograph and learned a lot from Klezmer- and Roma-musicians. His sunk world is a village with a shul, a Synagogue. A world full of music, with the songs of his wife Elizabeth Schwartz and as many instruments as languages. Not only in the carpath mountains, but also in the Vogelsberg, Hessian Sibiria, Yale Strom gets along with Yiddish. Here

and there bloyz der kalt Wind kegn sayn Ponim, cold wind is blowing against his face. And here and there he is winning khaverim. Friends.

13. Yale Strom und Nikolai Muck, Instrumental.

14. Veronika Bloemers talks about guests from Tel Avive in Ober-Gleen

15. In Frankfurt upon Main, the socialdemocrat Marlies Rahe, a granddaughter of the last NS-mayor of Ober-Gleen, is donating three Stolpersteine to the memory of Hermann, Grete and Kurt Sondheim. In Lauterbach, Stolpersteine for the parents and the brother of Naftali and Meier Manfred Stern have been laid, as for the parents of Bea Karp and Susie Philipp. The sister were called Beate and Susanne Stern in their childhood, their father Moritz Moses Stern was from Oberbreidenbach, their mother Rosa was a nee Gottlieb from Grebenau. Together with her daughter Deborah Pappenheimer, Bea Karp has written a book about the years in Lauterbach and Karlsruhe, their deportation to camp Gurs in France and their rescue through the Jewish organisation OSE. It is called „My broken doll“.

13. Veronika Bloemers und Quartett I, Hashivenu (short).

14. The Hessian General attorney Fritz Bauer has seen to it in the Sixties that former SS-men were sentenced by a German trial for their crimes. The young generation wanted answers. Hans Felsing, a Bundeswehr soldier from Ober-Gleen, took his motorbike when he was in Lower Saxony, and drove to Bergen-Belsen. In this spot between Bremen und Hannover Anne und Margot Frank from Frankfurt had died shortly before the war ended. The memorial, built in 1952, is one of the oldest in Germany. And the papers of the Auschwitz process are now part of the Unesco World Heritage.

15. Hashivenu (short).

16. Monika Felsing: In autumn 2017, Ruth Stern Gasten has visited Ober-Gleen, Ulmbach and Nieder-Ohmen and has presented her childhood memoir in her old country. The original is called „An Accidental American“, the translated version „Zufällig Amerikanerin“. Her work for democracy and human rights, for a peaceful encounter of human beings of every religion, has become the task of her life. On a rallye in Livermore, California, at the book presentation in Nieder Ohmen, in the German Emigration House (Deutschen Auswandererhaus) Bremerhaven and in schools in Bremen, Ruth has told her audience how it felt when all of a sudden, she was standing before closed doors in her childhood village. What persecution felt like. And what flight meant. And that there had been a Anna Reichel, the neighbor, who secretly took Ruthchen sliding in winter. An Emil Ohnacker, who had milked the cow as long als Joseph Stern was in Buchenwald. Two of the few, who have cosuffered and acted. Human beings as there are in any country of the world, at any time, under any regime, in every generation and any religious community.

16. Ruth Stern Gasten, Rally for Love.

17. Monika Felsing. In Nieder-Ohmen, Ruth Stern Gasten has made a statement for democracy.

18. Ruth Stern Gasten, Democracy is not a spectator sport.

20. Yale Strom and Nikolai Muck, Ale brider.

21. You have been listening to „Yiddish Life“, an audio book, edited by the historical society Lastoria, Bremen. Concept, directory, cut and script: Monika Felsing. Recordings: Justus Randt, Monika Felsing, Dieter Schmidt, Heide Habermann. Gestaltung des Covers und des Booklets: Wolfgang Rulfs. Music: Veronika Bloemers (Clavicord, organ, moderation und singing), Yale Strom (violinist, moderator and singer), Elizabeth Schwartz (Gesang) und Nikolai Muck (guitar), as a little choir Arnulf Triebel and Helmut Meß with Horst and Marlies Hofmann respectively Armin Becker and Tatjana Wittich, and the audience of various concerts. Storyteller: Justus Randt and Monika Felsing. Audios: Matthias Eislöffel, Linda Silverman-Shefler (Livermore/Kalifornien), Emma Schulz (Schulze), Lina Kirchner (Suse), Herbert Sondheim (New York, Aufnahme aus den Siebzigern), Elfriede Roth (Lauterbach), Rudolf und Hedwig Schneider (Wähnesch), Karl Gemmer, Ernst Lothar Stern (USA) und Ruth Stern Gasten (Livermore/Kalifornien). In Bremen, parts have been read by Rosemarie Francke, Reinhard Jung, Mona Opper, Helga Felsing, Wolfgang Rulfs, Marlon-Karl Tjarks, Heinrich Lintze, Eggert Peters,

Kurt Nelhiesel, Erika Thies, Regina Dietzold, Barbara Schellhorn, Annelie Stöppler, Willfried Meier, Werner Landwehr, Heidi Spessert, Kritika Thapa, Katja von Ahn, Nika Dunkel, Joe Zacharias-Steen, Heidi Spessert, Christa Rempe and others.

22. Pauls Monika, Mir sai Geschwisder.