

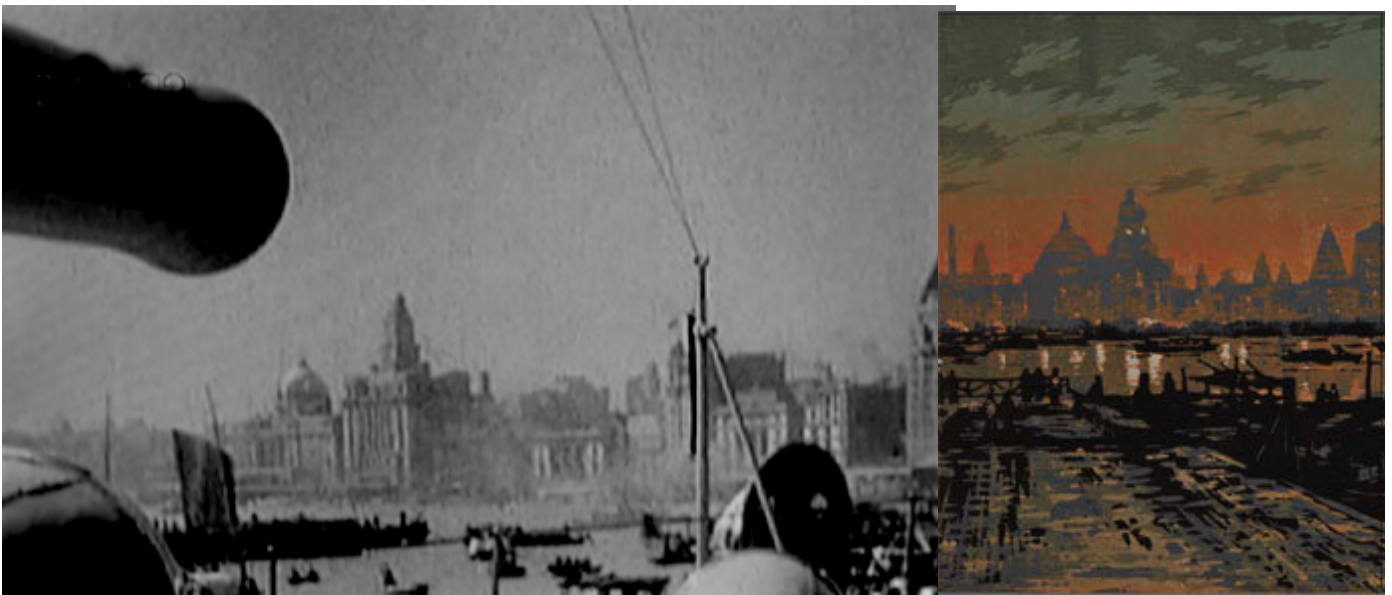
The committee still restored more of those damaged houses.

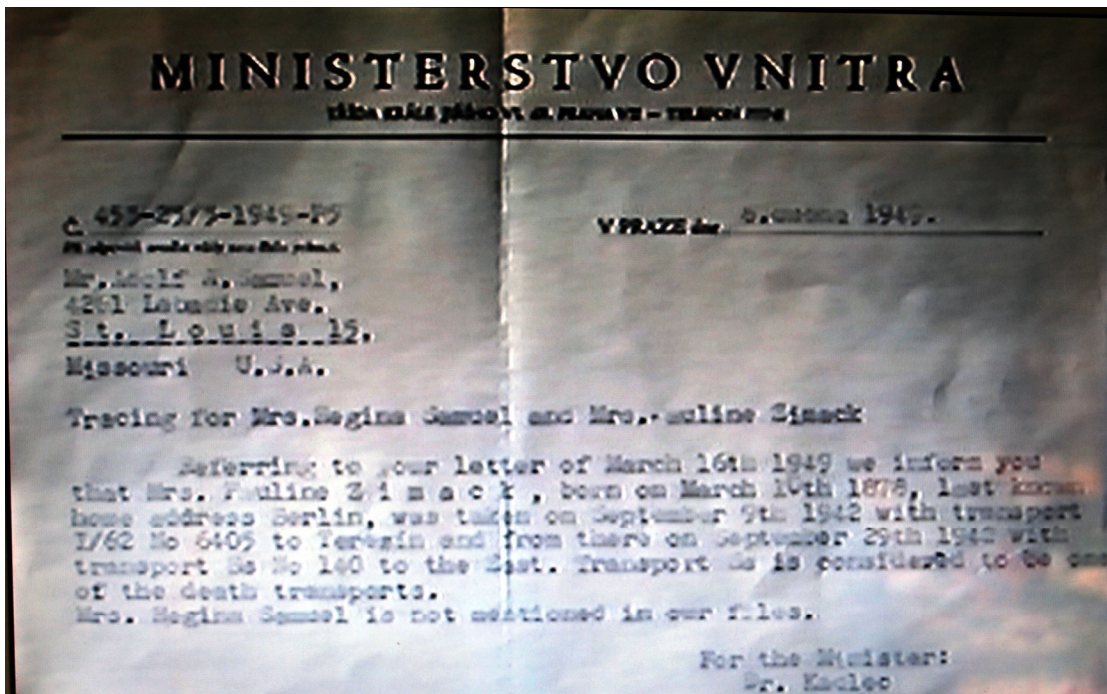
And Ralph was only one in the meantime. And one day they came and showed us the room we were going to move to. That was fine with us except once you were in there you couldn't get out anymore. And after that it was nothing. And I started to sell whatever I could do without. As I said before my husband sold his violin. There came a man. And my husband took the violin out, and he never had it out before. And he started playing. And Ralph had never seen that before and didn't know that there is something which could make noise. He started crying. He wanted to play it.

In 1945 in July the Americans flew over Shanghai. High up. One time I saw a plane that looked like the head of a straight pin. They flew across to bomb Japanese installations that were beyond Shanghai. One day they made a mistake and one or two bombs fell on our area. That day over a hundred Chinese and over 20 immigrants died. One of them I knew. And after that we took the children every morning after we were taking breakfast and went down the street maybe one or two blocks. There was a little playground and kids could play. But across the street was a big Chinese prison which was considered bomb proof. So in case there was an attack again by the Americans we could go across the street into the prison.

Every time the alarm sounded which wasn't often we went across the street into the prison and waited it out. But it never happened again after this one time.

Then the Americans said they would invade with ships into Shanghai. And the Japanese really dug little foxholes along the street. How they would hide in them I don't know. That was late July early August. Just when they were supposed to come there was a big typhoon in the ocean and the ships couldn't come into the harbor. And then the bomb fell in Japan. That saved our lives. Because we lived close to the harbor. I'm sure we wouldn't have made it. The first (atomic) bomb wasn't enough. They had to have a second bomb.





After the war ended we found out what had happened in Europe.
"Transport is considered to be one of the death transports"

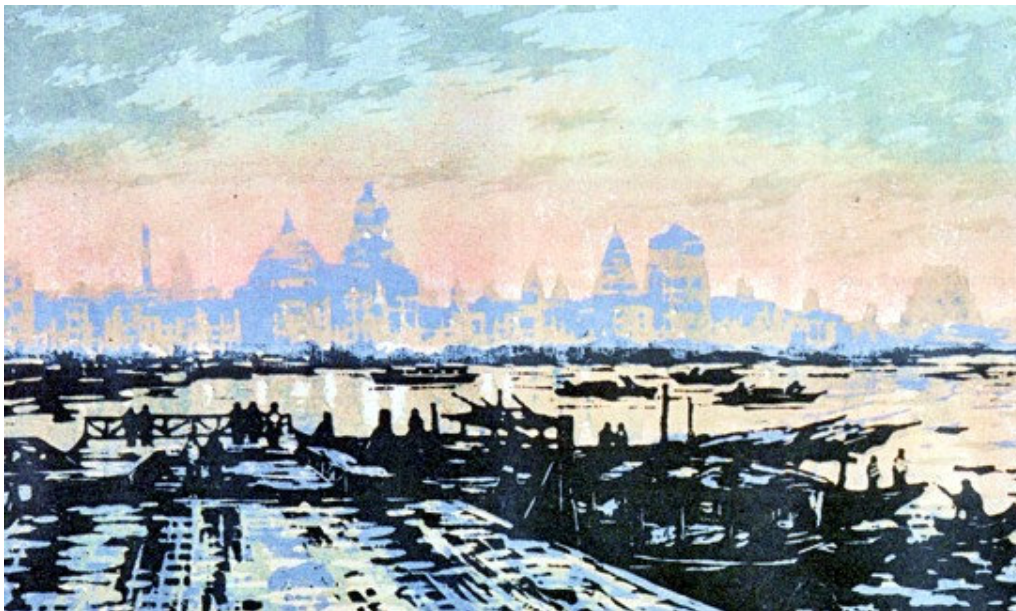
We couldn't stay in Shanghai. We were 18,000 people. Many of them had their papers to come here to the states or some to Canada or Israel. We didn't have any plans. We would have loved to come here. But at that point we still were not able to and we were told to choose between Canada, Israel, Australia, or back to Germany. But that was out, of course. All of that took time because there were so many people.

But in the mean time my sister in law from Mexico wrote "Oh you come here. And don't you worry about anything." We couldn't at the time so we didn't lose anything.

Then we got another letter from a sister in law in England who said "please. Don't listen to Ginny in Mexico. She has no way of getting you there. That costs very much money that she doesn't have." So that was that.

A friend of ours once told my husband: I just come back from the American counsel that I registered. I got a number. I wish you would do the same.

My husband said: I might take the number away from somebody because we have no chance to go to the States.



He said get a number. It doesn't cost you anything. It doesn't hurt.

So we did.

And soon after we got the number the law here was changed that organizations could vouch for you. Not just relatives. That's how we came here in 1947.

After that law came through of course we went to the consulate and we had the number so it took till August when we got the visa. We had examinations. We had x rays. And medications.

The last two months in Shanghai the American army was there. And they needed drivers. My husband was a driver. He got a job as a driver. And those were just a few months left. And those were the only months we had a real salary.



Evening glow on the Huangpu River 1955 Shen Roujian

August 1945. Before that we

young Ralph and

Ruth

were hungry. The first time it was like Hanukah. Now we got food, we got food galore. We got sugar and coffee. Anything. You could name it. It was in these packages. We got it regularly. We got so much food we couldn't barely eat it. It was just wonderful. But we



gained too fast. Not me as much as my husband. It wasn't good for him because it tasted good. We got so hungry. That was 1945. Now it didn't matter so much that we didn't have the money because we got the food. But we still had to wait until 1947 when the law here was changed. After we got the visas we took the next ship that happened to be October 28th.

We got November to San Francisco. On that trip I was so sick I wanted to die. The kids were fine. My husband was fine. We stopped one day in Honolulu. That was like in heaven. That was beautiful. Then



we went another three days to San Francisco. And when we came into the bay it was over night. I didn't even go to bed. I was so excited. And it was so beautiful. The golden gate ahead. We had to stop in the bay overnight before we could come ashore. And San Francisco. I don't know if you have ever seen it at night. The streets of San Francisco come

down the hills and they look like strings of pearls. After you come from the dump and you come to this city. It was out of the world. There we were taken care of by the Jewish Family service.

We got a very nice room in San Francisco right above where the cable car was turning.



This was November and there was already Christmas decorations. We hadn't seen anything clean in so long. It was just beautiful.

San Francisco 1946

Several cities didn't want to take us because they didn't have housing. But St. Louis agreed to take

us. We moved to St. Louis.

It took two months for them to place us somewhere because housing was here so scarce. It was still early after the war and the soldiers had come home and wanted to get married and needed rooms. And with us with two small children we couldn't just take a room. Many of our friends took a room with kitchen privileges. People wouldn't take us with 2 children like that. I tried to find one but that was not possible. So we were put up in an apartment hotel which was much too expensive. But they paid for that. They kept after me to find an apartment.

I didn't know where to look. I didn't have transportation. I couldn't. Ralph I put to school right away. Around the corner from the hotel was a school. The first day I went to pick him up after school and I thought he might be crying. After all it was strange. Instead a boy came out beaming all over.

Mother. That's beautiful. They were all so nice to me. And the pencils and paper are free. So I didn't have that worry. But I couldn't find an apartment. It took us 6 months. And the poor family service paid this hotel \$100 a week. It was terrible. Then one day the case worker called me. He found an apartment. Not the best neighborhood, but so what. It wasn't bad either. It was a one bedroom flat. My keys were compounded because he happened to know the man who moved out of this apartment. And he told him when you move out you give me the key and I move



my people in. The agency who was in charge didn't even know about it. Then they gave me a list of the furniture. We were allowed to buy second hand, of course. And I had no complaints. They even told what streets to go to look for. Where those stores were.

A few days later somebody knocked on my door. It was a tall good looking man. And he said: How did you get in here?

I was so scared. I still had that fear in me and I'm not sure if I could explain but I told him the case worker got this for us.

And he got in touch. And it was alright.

After over a hundred dollars a week, this was 23 dollars a month. I couldn't believe our fortune. There we lived for five years. Ralph went to school immediately. My daughter was only 4 years old and I couldn't go to work. The baby sitter would have cost more than I could make. I didn't like that idea anyway.

My husband found work in and out. He was more out than in. The last one in is the first one out, always. And that went on for two years. Then Ruth came to school and I started looking for work. And a woman I knew, I met, she had also been in Shanghai. She said why don't you go to my place. They always need some body.

So I did. I got there. The receptionist took my application. And she said: I'm sorry. Today we don't need somebody. I'll keep this on file. But why don't you come back in two weeks. It always is changing. Keeping on file means the wastebasket.



But I did go back. I don't know if I went anywhere else in the mean time. But I did go back and this time she said: please sit down for a minute. I'll talk with somebody. And a few minutes later a young man came in from outside and she pushed my application form over to him. He looked

at it. I didn't know him. He didn't know me either.

He said: she's an office girl. I didn't apply for anything specific. I just applied for work. I would have done anything. My application showed what I did in Germany. I hadn't worked her yet. So he saw. It turned out he was from Germany too. I didn't know. So now he's calling somebody from the office to talk with me. And he happened to be the nephew of the owner. When we talked he said, you know I think I could use you. When can you start?

I said, right away. But I need a permanent job.

He said you can make this job as permanent as you like.

So I started on a Monday. That must have been on a Friday. They started me on the lowest. But I didn't care. It was 75 cents an hour anyway. After I was there for a two weeks when the boss of the office came back from a vacation. After a few days he called me to his desk. He says, You know, I don't mind telling you we are very satisfied with your work. But If I had been here when you applied I wouldn't have hired you.

I could feel the blood drain out of my face again.

I said why?

He said I'll tell you why. We had this couple from Austria and they knew everything better. We did this this way. And we used to do this that way. So I swore I'd never take an immigrant again.

But he wasn't there and that was my luck.

So now he talked so nice to me I said I also have a husband at home and he also needs work.

Well. Let him come and talk with me. If we can use him we will hire him if he wants to start at the bottom for 75 cents.

So my husband started at that place for 75 cents. And from that day we were on our own. We never needed anybody anymore.

One evening I got a phone call and a gentleman introduced himself and said I was wondering if you would like to come to work for us.

I said I have a job.

He said I know but maybe you would like to change.

I say the only reason I would change is if I could make more money.

He said why don't you come and see our boss and talk with him.

Where I worked they were very tight on salaries and they would not give me a raise. I tried several times and they always refused.

I did go to this place and I talked to the boss who was the opposite of the other boss. He offered me much more than I was getting.

I accepted him but I was nice enough to give the other ones notice. One shouldn't just leave. When I gave notice they wanted to give me the same. But I wasn't that stupid.

Because there it was the end and here it was the beginning. And my boss was just wonderful.

Samuel family 1956

My husband stayed there and I changed. And I worked for this company 24 years. I retired in 1976.

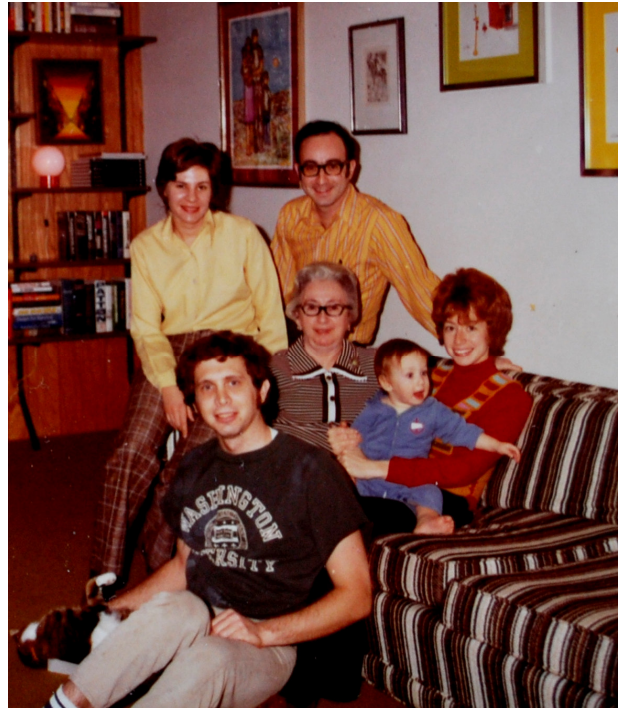
My husband passed away in 1956.



Shelly Hilda Ralph

Cindy Samuel Andrew Nisenshal

Ella and Jake grandchildren
HILDA Kim Nisenshal





ruth and paul

Marion Seidemann (Fredman) and Friend Ljuba Davis at Shanghai Synagogue 2005



Julius and rete Seidemann and Hilda Samuel



6th grade camp. Marion second from left front row Ruth right standing

