Chapter Four

The End of the War

To sit in Broadway, Worcestershire, for three months while exciting battles were being fought in France was very frustrating. One by one my fellow soldiers and officers received assignments and left for the Continent. Would my turn ever come?

Broadway is a charming old village, one of the principal tourist attractions of southern England. Situated on the edge of the Cotswolds, it has quaint little houses with thatched roofs, a village church dating back to Norman times, and a fancy hotel, the Ligon Arms, that must have been a noble manor in earlier centuries. Up in the nearby hills there are towns and villages even quainter; time seems to have passed them by. Evesham, with its narrow streets and pleasant river embankment, is within bicycling distance. So is Stratford-on-Avon with its Shakespeare theater; and even Cheltenham, a well kept town where many retired army officers choose to live, is not too far. But who wants to explore quaint villages and towns when there is a war to be fought? I managed to visit my brother Rolf in Manchester once or twice, and he and his wife visited me in Broadway. In Cheltenham I attended a piano concert by Salomon, and in Stratford I met with my father's favorite fraternity brother and saw a performance of "The Merchant of Venice." Once I had some official business at the Field Interrogation Division near Southamptom. FID, it was joked, really was an abbreviation for "francs into dollars" because so many German prisoners came with large sums of money in their pockets which their interrogators took from them. That was convertible currency, and some of my colleagues at FID thus accumulated substantial savings.

While I was there, a German general—I believe his name was Elster—was just arriving, his orderly panting under the heavy load of the general's voluminous baggage. Elster had been stationed in southern France, and, when Patton's armed columns had penetrated the German lines, had realized that France was now in hands of the Allies. But there were still thousands of

German troops in the South, effectively cut off from Germany. He had gathered them, marched them north, and surrendered them to the American forces. For this, Hitler had condemned him to death in absentia. He had only recently heard about this judgment and was agitated about it. When he heard me speak German he buttonholed me and lapsed into an excited apology to the effect that, instead of condemning him, the Führer ought to be grateful that he had saved the lives of so many German troops, presumably for the next war. I listened to him politely, but am sorry to say that his apology was lost on me.

In August of 1944, I spent a couple of weeks in London to attend some courses given by British Military Intelligence. This was the period of the famous buzz bomb blitz. Buzz bombs were pilot-less airplanes filled with explosives. The Germans launched them from the Netherlands or Belgium in the direction of London, with just enough fuel in them to reach that city. Once the fuel was exhausted, the planes would fall down and explode. They rumbled in noisily; and when the rumbling stopped everyone would dive under some table or desk, because these planes, known as V-1s, might hit anywhere. The V in V-l stood for *Vergeltungswaffe*, which means vengeance weapon. V-2 weapons came later that fall. They were rockets.

In September, I at last received orders to go to the Continent and to report to Military Intelligence Service, ETO, for assignment to a combat unit. A short but stormy journey in the hole of a steamer carrying frozen sides of beef to France took me from Southampton to Normandy. From the ship we were loaded into landing craft, and from them we waded ashore at Omaha Beach. There we put up pup tents on a rain-soaked muddy field, while the rain kept coming down in buckets. For what seemed an eternity but may have been no more than two weeks, our daily diet consisted of Spam, crackers and canned grapefruit juice. Once a local farmer came by to talk to me and offered me a very much-appreciated swig of Calvados, the Norman applejack.

Finally, we arrived in Paris, which looked cold and deserted. In a toiletry shop I managed to buy a vial of perfume for Eva—Le Chic de Molyneux was the name—wrapped it in a

handkerchief, and mailed it to her. Military Intelligence Service was quartered in St. Germain, a very elegant suburb of Paris. There I was assigned to an intelligence team commanded by Capt. Hans Kohler. Beside the two of us, our team included four enlisted men, all of them graduates of Camp Ritchie. We were given our individual weapons, either carbines or pistols, two jeeps and a trailer, and ordered to join the 29th Infantry Division, an outfit to which Kohler had belonged since before S-Day. The division had suffered heavy losses on D-Day and in the battle for St. Lo, had participated in the siege of Brest and in the bloody battles around Aachen. Its blue-and-gray shoulder patch in the shape of a Yin-Yang symbol indicated its home base--Virginia and Maryland. The 29th was a National Guard division straddling the Mason-Dixon Line.

Our trip from Paris took us through Northern France, Belgium and the Dutch province of Limburg. At the border between the Netherlands and Germany, an American soldier was doing guard duty. As he saw my jeep driving by he saluted, and I returned the courtesy. It was, for me, a very satisfying way of returning to the country that had driven me out.

Alsdorf, a few miles behind the front, where division headquarters was located, and where we quartered ourselves in a half-ruined building that had once been a restaurant, was a coal-mining town. The deep mines had plenty of hot water, and this was used to allow their crews take hot baths or showers after coming up from the pit. There was, of course, no mining crew now, but for our troops, who were trucked in from their foxholes, an occasional hot bath was a great gift, especially in the winter of l944/5, which turned out to be cold and wet. During those months our division suffered more casualties due to frostbite than to enemy action. Even behind the lines the harsh climate affected us. In our ruined quarters there was no heat, and some windows were broken. We wore many layers of clothing, slept in them, and only on very rare occasions were able to change into something clean.

Everything in Alsdorf was black from coal dust—the outer walls of the houses as well as the sidewalks. Thick coal dust lay on the windowsills. Even the trees, now denuded of foliage, seemed black with soot. Imagine my amazement, then, when I crossed the border into the nearest

Dutch town, Keerkrade. That, too, was a coal-mining town—home of the famous Emma mines, named after the Queen Mother. In Kerkrade, however, one could have eaten off the sidewalks, and the houses looked neat and pretty; every Saturday the local housewives scrubbed the outside of their homes and the sidewalks in front of them with soap and water, thoroughly, removing all the soot. The contrast could not be attributed to the difference between German Catholic and Dutch Calvinist culture, since the Dutch province of Limburg is solidly Catholic, just as is the neighboring German region around Aachen. The difference between the soot in Alsdorf and its absence in Kerkrade was not a matter of religion, but of national culture.

I was in the theatre of operations now. I could follow the course of the war by reading not only the daily newspaper, *Stars and Stripes*—an excellent paper—but also the weekly situation reports issued by General Eisenhower's command. They were marked TOP SECRET, but that did not mean much in the field. They were freely circulated among us; and as intelligence officers I assume we had a need to keep up with these news. Occasionally, I would visit colleagues in some of our regimental headquarters. Much of the time in these autumn and winter weeks, however, I had nothing to do. Between the end of September and the middle of December the front in our sector did not move very much. Sometimes a German prisoner, or a few of them, would be brought in for interrogation, but not often.

When the front lines remained fixed, only few prisoners were taken, although this was precisely the time when they were needed. Many prisoners were taken when the lines moved after an offensive; but then their information usually was outdated because their position had been overrun. Still, occasionally I would have some interrogation to do. The purpose of it always was to obtain as much useful knowledge as possible. This included the identity of the unit facing us, its strength and weakness, its weaponry and where it was deployed, the identity and character of its commander and the morale of the troops. Prisoners of war, of course, were reluctant to reveal any such information; so it had to be coaxed out of them. In the stern language of the intelligence service, our task was that of 'breaking' the prisoner

In our training at Camp Ritchie, we had been told that there were several techniques for doing this, and that each of us should develop his own technique or persoal style. Some of my fellow interrogators sought to get information by intimidating or even terrorizing the prisoners. Sometimes that worked. I, for one, did not have the necessary personality traits to do that convincingly. My style of interrogation was the opposite: I treated my prisoners humanely and gently. When a soldier was taken prisoner, his emotions were likely to be very mixed. He might be relieved that he had survived the war and that the dangers of battle now were over for him. He might also be terribly upset at having fought in a losing battle, and be in great fear of what his captor would do to him. If, in this state, he found that the interrogating officer offered him a cup of coffee or warm soup, or in other ways treat him like a human being, with compassion and gentleness, this might open the floodgates of speech. The prisoner might freely answer any questions he was asked—especially seemingly innocent ones. Some of my prisoners reacted this way; others did not.

Another technique I found very useful was a show of knowledge. Once I had found out any little detail about the unit we were facing, especially by asking seemingly innocent questions, I could display my knowledge to any new prisoner brought in to me. The cult of secrecy was so engrained in the German soldiers that such a display would astonish and dismay them. "Your espionage system" many of them would say to me, "must be fabulously efficient." All I had done, however, was to tell them something I had learned from a previous interrogation. It disarmed them and made them ready to tell me more. This technique did not always work, however. Some German soldiers, especially lieutenants fresh out of officer candidate school, were so thoroughly indoctrinated and so fanatic that they would refuse to talk altogether.

As I said, the occasional interrogation was not sufficient to keep me busy in the weeks after I joined the division. To relieve my boredom I volunteered for a somewhat unusual assignment. For mid-December the top command had planned a major offensive, with the spearhead somewhat to the south of us. In order to mislead the enemy into thinking that the

offensive would start in our sector, our division was asked to engage in increased propaganda activity. This meant not only the usual artillery barrage of leaflets but also some direct broadcasts across the lines with the help of large public address amplifiers. My job was to help set up these big loudspeakers on the end of no-man's land and then do news broadcasts from a more protected place several times a day. The news at that time was increasingly discouraging for the Germans, since the Soviet army was rapidly approaching Germany's eastern borders. My broadcasts were supposed to demoralize the enemy. Setting up the loudspeakers was dangerous. The Germans spotted us and showered us with mortar fire, but I was too inexperienced to be afraid. A few days after I had begun my daily news broadcasts, my division was involved in a relatively minor engagement in which we pushed the Germans across the Roer River. One enemy bridgehead remained on our side of the river. There, a platoon of Germans occupied a well-protected position in the Julich sports stadium, and it would have been difficult and costly to smoke them out. Once more we set up the loudspeakers, and I was asked to try to talk them into surrendering. I was later told that my talk had persuaded about twenty-five German soldiers to give up, and for this I was awarded a Bronze Star.

The big offensive had been planned for the 16th or 17th of December. It never took place because one day earlier the Germans attacked us with an entire armored army in the Aardennes. Since the existence of that armored army had not been discovered by allied intelligence, the attack took our generals completely by surprise. The Germans cut deeply into our lines, thus creating the 'bulge' for which this battle is named. While it raged, our division held its position and defended a wide front that had earlier been the front of an entire army corps. Meanwhile a vast amount of military hardware—more than I had ever seen—rumbled through our sector on its way to relieve the units caught in the bulge.

I spent the week of Christmas 1944 in the division hospital. Some weeks earlier, I had stumbled over some wire in the pitch-dark and injured my shin. I paid no attention to it, if only because for days I had no occasion to take off my boots. Eventually the break in the skin became

badly infected, and my leg swelled up to such dimensions that I no longer could put on my boots. On Christmas Eve, I was lying on my cot in he division field hospital and listened to the radio as Hitler was screaming about final victory and his secret weapons. When he was done, I turned to my fellow patients and said, "You have jut heard Hitler's last speech."

A week later I was given a three-day pass to visit Brussels. There were four of us, three sergeants and myself, in a jeep. I sat next to the driver, the other two passengers huddled together on the narrow rear seat. I do not remember where I stayed overnight, but it must have been some official billet. During the day I walked through the center of the city and into the narrow street where I had stayed with my relative some eight years before; I did not know then that he had been deported and murdered in Auschwitz.

Eva had given me the address of an old aunt of hers who might still be living in Brussels, although she had not been heard from for years. It turned out she was still alive. Her daughters were living in Sweden, and a Swedish Consul in Brussels had taken her under his wing. Life for her in war- and occupation-ravaged Belgium obviously was no bed of roses, but at least she had survived; and since I introduced myself to her as Eva's fiancé, I was the first encounter she had had with any family member in six or seven years. In the evening she took me to the first symphony concert to be performed in Brussels since the expulsion of the Germans. In my battle uniform, with steel helmet and pistol, I must have been a somewhat unusual member of the audience. The program included only music that had been banned by the Germans—a Mendelssohn symphony and a Tchaikovsky piano concerto. (Mendelssohn and Tchaikovsky were both Jewish composers.) The next evening I had dinner at the house of the physician who in 1936 had examined my allergic hives. His wife, a distant cousin of my mother, served me a lavish meal featuring filet mignon. Catching my questioning look, the doctor smiled and said, "We got these on the black market; of course, everybody does it." Having just seen the poor diet on which the old aunt had to survive, I felt my conscience troubling me. He did not seem to have one, however.

That night a thick snow fell, and the next morning was brilliant and sunny. To see the Grande Place, a rare jewel of Baroque and Gothic architecture, with this kind of icing was a delight that I will never forget. Nor will I ever forget the ride back to Alsdorf. We ran into an ice storm on the way, and the hand-operated wiper could not remove the glaze from the windshield. We had to lay it down, flat on the hood of the jeep. The roof had not been up all this time, by order of the Division commander. That was a sensible order: When you come under fire while riding in a jeep you want to be able to leap out without having to climb around the rods that hold the roof up. Now, with the windshield lying on the hood, our jeep looked like a motor boat on wheels, and the rain froze on our faces—an unpleasant experience.

In February 1945, we finally pushed off for the big offensive. We crossed the Roer river into Julich, a town where not a single house remained standing, then traversed the Rhine near Wesel and spent a few days in Gladbach-Reydt, the home town of Josef Goebbels; from there we moved into Westphalia, the province in which I had grown up. Near Ludenscheid we passed a large Baroque palace, and my captain, who was a bit nuts about high nobility, drove into the park, rang the bell, and introduced himself, whereupon the owner of the palace, a Prince Arenberg, invited him and me for dinner that night. For dinner we sat at a round table in a beautiful dining room, the prince and his wife, a pretty teenage countess who was their daughter or niece, and the prince's uncle, the Duke of Croy. Behind every chair stood a servant dressed in fancy livery. The food was good and plentiful. The horrors and hardships of the war seemed to have passed these fossils of feudalism by. What I remember of the conversation dealt with the confidence of these folks that their relatives in the royal families of Belgium and Great Britain would help them also over the coming hardships of the post-war period. These people belonged to an 'old boys network' centuries old.

Munster, where I spent a couple of days in some high-ranking Nazi's half-destroyed apartment, was badly destroyed, its Gothic cathedral no more than a heap of bricks. As we moved further east, we came within about twenty miles of Bielefeld; and since we were in reserve

and therefore moving slowly, I had time to visit there. The familiar landscape through which I drove looked lovely with the fresh green of spring. In the outlying districts many houses showed bombing or shelling damage, but the old city center with its Gothic churches and its 16th-century merchant houses was totally destroyed. "For this, too, we have to thank the Führer," I thought

My old homeroom teacher from the Gymnasium greeted me with pleasure. At the *Gymnasium*, other former teachers seemed pleased to see me also, although some appeared more reserved towards me than others. I met some people who had returned from the concentration camp from which my parents had not returned, and would never return, or so these people told me. I was too stunned at the time to ask them for details about my parents. They themselves seemed unable or unwilling to volunteer any information. The shock of what they had experienced silenced them. I also saw one of my father's cousins who, being married to an 'Aryan', had survived the war and the final solution. Her husband was a coal miner's son from the Ruhr area who had been a social-democratic city councilor around 1930 and spent several months in a concentration camp after Hitler came to power. After his release he retired to a small farm near Bielefeld. Their daughter was now working for the British occupation force there. A militant anti-fascist, she was furious about the tolerance for former Nazis that the British were showing. Ursula (that was her name) also gave me the last address of my younger brother, Hajo, who had been in the Netherlands. It obviously was a cover address because he had written her under an assumed name.

In Bunde, a small town near Bielefeld, I had occasion to speak with the local British Major in charge of administering the town. He complained to me that he had great difficulty finding someone whom he could appoint as mayor. As luck would have it, I knew an attorney there, an old friend of my parents and a man of liberal political views. I suggested his name to my British colleague, who indeed appointed him mayor. Historians of Bunde now will know why Mr. Nalop was given this assignment, about which he was not at all happy.

After being held in reserve for a while, the 29th Infanty Division, part of the 9th Army, was attached to Field Marshal Montgomery's Twenty-first Army Group. Our progress was swift. Within a few days we had reached the Elbe River, taken about ten thousand prisoners, and linked up with our Soviet allies. At the party we gave for General Chapurkin and his staff, liquor flowed freely. A regular supply of scotch, bourbon and gin was part of every officer's ration in the European Theater of Operations; we were never short of the stuff. Even though our Division Commander, unwilling to shake hands with his Soviet colleague, was absent from the party, it was a joyous affair. The war was over. The total surrender of the Germans was only days or weeks away. Soon we would all go home.

One or two days before this meeting, I had for the first time seen evidence of the bestiality of which the Germans were capable. A few days before our arrival in the town of Gardelegen, a troop of concentration camp guards had come through town guarding a large contingent of prisoners—between one and two thousand of them—whom they were leading on a forced march west, away from the rapidly approaching Soviet army. From the West, the American and British troops were coming closer, and the SS thugs wanted to rid themselves of these prisoners, change into less incriminating uniforms, and flee. But what were they to do with the prisoners? They herded them into a large barn filled with straw, posted machine guns around the barn and set the entire building on fire. Prisoners who tried to claw their way out of the fire by desperately digging under the walls were shot; all the others burned or choked to death. The sight of these terribly emaciated corpses lying in heaps, their faces distorted with fright, was nauseating. Indeed, shortly after I came upon this scene I had occasion to talk with a Swedish nurse who had been working as a volunteer with the German army medical corps. She was singing the praises of the Germans and their noble culture until I suggested that she could climb into my jeep and take a little trip with me. I took her to the barn in Gardelegen. She threw up and cried bitterly.

Of course, the treatment of outcast human beings as if they were disgusting vermin was no invention of the Germans or the Nazis. Hitler himself once pointed out to Cardinal Faulhaber of Munich--apparently without being contradicted--that in murdering as many Jews as possible he was only doing what the Church itself had been preaching and practicing for many centuries. [1] War is no picnic; Mao Tse-Tung said something like that, and it is a trite observation. War brings out the animal in all those who participate in it. The killer instinct is fostered, and those who kill most effectively win. War unleashes other instincts that are suppressed in more civilized times. Hence, the French have a saying: *á la guerre comme á la guerre*. War has its own very loose morality.

That loosening of moral precepts affected the behavior of British and American soldiers too. In Bremen, where our Division was the occupying force, I made friends with a young widow who had been raped by an entire platoon of British soldiers. Later, I served as interpreter in two divisional courts martial in which soldiers from our own Division were convicted for raping German women. To be sure, as far as American soldiers were involved, rape remained a relatively rare occurrence. What almost all of us did, however, was to loot. Some soldiers I knew refrained from it, some did it casually and often, and some did it systematically. Casual looting meant that soldiers (and officers) who happened to see something they liked in a house they were occupying, or in a building they passed, took it along—cameras, silverware, books, works of art or fine craft, jewelry and cash. Systematic looting meant deliberately looked for such valuables, including weaponry. German Lüger pistols were considered a real prize. Some shipped their booty home to the States in large packages or wangled a three-day pass to England, where they sold them on the black market. I heard about one of our sergeants who allegedly had cracked a safe in an abandoned jewelry store and took its contents. The practice disgusted me, and I did not participate, although a fellow officer who had found a Gestapo library and looted it gave me a few of the books he had taken along but did not particularly care for. On the troop ship going home a good friend of mine who had three German cameras with him also gave me one of them.

After the war, many Germans were prone to accuse the U. S. forces of other atrocities. One of them was the charge of inhumane treatment allegedly received by some German prisoners-of-war. That was an unjust accusation. Prisoners we had taken received food and shelter as well as medical service as needed. To be sure, on at least one occasion our side was not prepared for the many thousands of German military personnel who surrendered to us. That happened in the Ruhr area, where our forces took so many enemy troops that we had neither sufficient food nor sufficient shelter for them. The weather that spring was cold, and some of these Germans, especially if they were wick or wounded, perished under these conditions; but that was not our fault

It later became fashionable in Germany to equate the outrages of Auschwitz and other extermination projects with the bombing of German cities practiced by British and American air forces and, ultimately, with the use of atomic weapons over Hiroshima and Nagasaki. What these Germans conveniently forgot was that the indiscriminate bombing of cities containing civilian populations was pioneered by them—in Spain in the 1930's, in Warsaw in 1939, in Rotterdam after the Dutch surrendered, and over Great Britain during the so-called Blitz. The indiscriminate bombardment of cities by allied troops may indeed have violated international law concerning the limits of warfare. World War II, however, was 'total war,' as the German leaders themselves loved to assert. In criticism of our bombing practices, one might further argue that it did not have the intended effect. It was meant to make the German people get tired of the war, but seems to have made them, if anything, more defiant and less prone to oppose their leaders. They blamed us, not Hitler, when their houses and everything in them were destroyed.

American troops in occupied Germany were strictly forbidden to 'fraternize' with the native population, a ban that was not enforced with any seriousness and did not apply to me at all, because my duties included dealing with Germans. What was their mood now that the war was over, their government had disappeared, and their armies had formally surrendered—first to the Western allies and one day later to the Soviet forces? What had they felt when British or

American troops reached their ruined towns? White bedsheets draped over windowsills were a common sight as we drove into a newly conquered town. They were supposed to be white flags of surrender; and to display them required courage. Everywhere, the local party bosses preached resistance until death and ordered the summary execution of anyone who in the last minute tried to save himself, or of anyone who urged that the senseless fighting be stopped. While there thus was evidence that people had wanted the war to end, very few of them greeted us as liberators; they were as scared of us as they had been of their rulers. Ever since the battle of Stalingrad, the idea that Germany was going to lose the war had slowly seeped into the consciousness of a very few Germans. Many whom I talked to, however, believed that Hitler had some ace up his sleeve, some secret wonder weapon that would be deployed in the last minute. Until the very end, some of our prisoners cockily expressed their confidence in this.

For years, most Germans had cheered the Führer, marched in parades, and watched others parade; they had gloated over victories and proudly displayed the flag. They had enjoyed the booty that came in the wake of the victories; for their sons or boyfriends sent home French perfume, Dutch cheese, Polish ham, and countless other goodies, while the government provided slave laborers from all of Europe to factories and farms. Life had been so comfortable for them even during the war that Hitler never troubled to mobilize German women for work in industry; it went counter to his patriarchal views, anyway. When Josef Goebbels early in the war asked a huge crowd of enthusiasts, “Do you want total war?” the mob had answered with a thundering “Yes!” Allied propaganda just loved playing this back to the Germans in their broadcasts; for now they were getting a taste of total war, as their towns and cities were smashed or burned to pieces one after the other.

Some Germans, contemplating the ruins around them, might have blamed Hitler for this. After all, it was the reckless paranoia and delusions of grandeur harbored by this Austrian misfit that had plunged Germany into this war. But if such sentiments were voiced, then it was only

within the confines of the private home or among highly trusted friends. Most Germans seem to have been too busy with their personal misery to think about its causes.

Now that the war was over, this misery was deep, and it reigned universally. Millions of people were dislocated, either because their homes had been destroyed or because they had fled from the advancing Soviet armies. American troops now lived among them, and these troops were quartered in the most comfortable housing they found. An officer looking for quarters for his platoon might give the owner of a house a couple of hours' notice and then move in with his men. The owner was free to find shelter somewhere else. The government that had ruled them had collapsed, not only in the country as a whole but also in the province, district, and town. Some allied officer now was in charge; he would, of course, appoint some German to assume the burden of local or provincial administration. Some anti-Nazi Germans did this gladly, others reluctantly. The economy had also collapsed. Industry and transportation systems lay idle. There was no work. Hospitals were filled beyond capacity with wounded soldiers and injured civilians, and their medical supplies were running out. Little food was to be had, except in the countryside. Money was of little value. The real currency was cigarettes or candy bars. One could observe respectable citizens stoop to pick cigarette butts out of the dirt; if they took the remaining tobacco from six or seven of them, they would have enough to roll themselves a smoke. I met a father who was ready to prostitute his teen-age daughter for a bottle of whiskey. We ourselves lived in relative comfort. A steady diet of K-rations was boring but adequate. If for fifteen months I tasted fresh milk, fresh meat, fresh vegetables or fruit only once or twice, that was certainly better than going hungry, and the Germans were going hungry. The contrast between our full stomachs and their empty ones made me feel uncomfortable, and I was looking forward to being shipped home for discharge.

Meanwhile, the 29th Infantry Division moved to the Bremen enclave, a piece of territory within the British zone of occupation set aside for U. S. troops so that we would have access to an ocean port. In that area we were the army of occupation. What do soldiers on occupation duty

do? They are simply supposed to be there. Of course, armies know how to keep their men busy; and I imagine that average soldiers' duties including being drilled, standing guard, washing dishes, and various kinds of make-work supposed to keep them out of mischief. For me, however, the Army found an interesting job. I was assigned to the counter-intelligence unit of the Division, and became a Nazi hunter

What motivated this assignment was the U. S. government's intention to purge the German people of National Socialists. We wished to effect a political revolution by removing all Nazis from public life and by depriving them of liberty, at least temporarily. That was easily planned but difficult to carry out; for who were we supposed to arrest, in this hunt for human beings? Were we supposed to consult the captured archives of the Party and its many auxiliary organizations to determine degrees of involvement and culpability? Were we expected to consult the population, in systematic or haphazard fashion, as to who the 'real' Nazis had been? Did we even have a clear idea concerning the political ideas, aims and practices that we wished to end? The answer to all these questions was negative. Consequently, carrying out our policy of ridding Germany of Nazis presented a problem. The solution that occurred to our top command was a bureaucratic one: In the Third Reich there had been numerous organizations, many of them auxiliary to the Party. Others were equally notorious or obnoxious in the eyes of Americans—the police, Gestapo, military intelligence agencies, and the entire administrative apparatus of the Reich. All these agencies were structured hierarchically; each of them had its list of ranks and titles. We Nazi hunters were given these rank lists, with a line drawn underneath certain titles; any rank or title above the line was designated as an 'automatic arrest category.' My task was to locate people fitting this category, arrest them, and deliver them to the special prison that the Division managed in Bremen.

In my few months' of this activity, I did not catch any big fish, and I felt compassion for the little ones I did catch. In line with this policy of 'denazification', as it was called, we often acted unjustly, whether out of ignorance or for the sake of obedience to orders. The people whom

we incarcerated for a few years had gotten into the automatic arrest categories for many different reasons or motives—idealism and fanaticism, hope or despair, patriotism and racial hatred, blind ambition and love of constructive work. They included thoroughly decent people, as well as the brutal or mean. Moreover, many contemptible people in Germany had profited from the Nazi regime, supporting it without ever holding any office that would have placed them in an automatic arrest category. I am thinking of people who denounced their neighbors for real or imagined opposition to the regime, industrialists who made ample use of slave labor without even joining the Party, and the many entrepreneurs who acquired Jewish properties for a fraction of their value.

In Bremerhaven, where I did this work for a while, I occupied an office in what used to be the Gestapo building. There were times when I would visit the home of some village party boss to arrest him. If his wife told me that he was not there, I would tell her to have her husband report to me the next morning in room 15 of the Gestapo building. The irony of this did not escape me. Above my desk the previous occupant of the office had hung a framed sign which said, in Gothic calligraphy, 'LERNE ZU SCHWEIGEN OHNE ZU PLATZEN." - (Learn to keep your mouth shut without bursting.)

Once a delegation of four men came to my office, the last remnant of what had once been a very large local chapter of the German Communist Party. What they wanted from me I do not recall. Apparently they felt we had liberated them, and perhaps they merely wanted to show their gratitude. I made the mistake of telling about them to one of my fellow counterintelligence officers, a man who happened to have done previous service in the FBI. His ears pricked up when I told him I had met these four communists, and he urged me to write a report about them and have them placed under surveillance. Guarding Germany against communism obviously was more important to him than purging it of National Socialists.

After we kept the objects of denazification in prison camps for a few years, the occupying powers obviously had a change of mind. By the early 1950s most of those we had arrested in

1945 and 1946 had been freed and rehabilitated. The press at the time referred to this process the 'renazification' of Germany. Those released then were immune against further prosecution, on the basis of the rule against double jeopardy. To this, one must add the well-known fact that it was thought we had good use for some people that had occupied prominent positions in the Third Reich. When I was about to be shipped home in the fall of 1945, Military Intelligence headquarters offered me a promotion to the rank of Captain if I stayed on. The job they proposed I do was to recruit German rocket scientists and other weapons specialists for work in the United States. I declined, not because I would have minded the assignment, but because I wanted to get out of the service and start my civilian life. Again, it's well known that we that we hired not only weapons specialists but also intelligence personnel, experts in Soviet and East European studies from various ministries, and political refugees from beyond the Oder-Neisse line. The first book I wrote was written in collaboration with a former German diplomat who had been brought to the United States illegally by some of his friends in the Department of State. The only observation that should be added to this sorry story of the denazification program is that higher SS leaders and others deeply implicated in war crime had well-prepared plans for escape to neutral countries with the aid of South American dictators, friends among the Arabs, or the Vatican. My judgment was that the denazification program was poorly conceived and sloppily executed, indeed partly sabotaged; that in the end it was deliberately slowed down and then reversed. Whether it could have been run more effectively, I don't know.

Our troops, as I already stated, were forbidden to fraternize with Germans. That did not prevent some soldiers from striking up friendships with young German women, and I am not aware that the ban against fraternization was enforced anywhere in the U. S. zone of occupation. But it remained official policy. In order to enable our GIs to have some friendly female companionship, our command arranged with the authorities in the nearest Dutch town, Groningen, to set up some recreational facilities for our troops. When I heard about this I asked permission from the Division G-2, Colonel Krznarich—or perhaps from his deputy, an officer

named Major Minor—to ride along to Groningen next time some staff car would go there, and then go on to Amsterdam to look for my younger brother. As late as early 1943, my cousin Ursula had given me the address and told me about a reckless thing she had done. After an uncle and aunt of hers, also cousins of my father, had been deported, she had gone to the Gestapo to find out where they were. Told that they were in Auschwitz, she had actually traveled there, gone to the camp gate and inquired about our relatives. Miraculously, they did not keep her. The word "Auschwitz" did not yet mean anything to me; and the thoroughness with which the Nazis had managed to wipe out virtually the entire Jewish population of the Netherlands had not yet made the headlines. My intention to go to Holland to find my brother, therefore, was sheer madness.

Sometime in June, I was told that a staff car would drive to Groningen and that I could ride along and stay away for a few days. I put on a neat uniform, strapped my pistol belt with its weapon around my hip, and off we were the next morning. Once in Groningen I bade the driver good-bye and intended to hitchhike to Amsterdam. That was easier thought than done. On Dutch highways there was hardly any traffic except for an occasional Canadian Army vehicle. Thus my progress was slow, and by nightfall, I had made it only halfway to Amsterdam into the town of Zwolle. Walking on, I found out that a bridge ahead of me was out, so that I had to walk back to Zwolle. By now it was pitch dark. I entered a police station, introduced myself, and asked the desk sergeant whether he could find me any quarters for the night. I didn't speak Dutch, but the Low German spoken around Bielefeld is close enough to Dutch, and from my mother I had picked up the lilt of the Dutch language, so that I could at least try to make myself understood, and I succeeded.

The police sergeant sent one of his men off on an errand to find me quarters for the night. He then turned to me and said, "You speak a strange mixture of Dutch and German, and just a day or two ago another American officer was here who spoke the same gibberish; he was looking for some relatives of his." I asked for the name of the officer and found out it was a former

neighbor of mine in Bielefeld, whose sister had married a Dutch citizen. When the sergeant told me they were still alive, I said, "Now I know where I will spend the night."

This family welcomed me warmly. He was Christian, she was Jewish, and they had a four-year old daughter. During the German occupation they had gone into hiding, separately so as to be safer, and for years they had not seen their child. They were glad to have survived, of course, but the conditions under which they now lived were horrible enough. The Netherlands had been looted empty by the departing Germans. There was no transport, and in the towns and cities, little food. My hosts fed me a miserable breakfast featuring Ersatz coffee, bread, and honey.

By early afternoon of that same sunny June day, I arrived in Amsterdam. I had no idea where to look for my brother or what to do. The address my cousin Ursula had given me was misspelled, and while I believed it was in Amsterdam, it really was in a suburb. So I was stumped from the very beginning. People at a police station referred me to an agency where I might get help. But there was no such agency; or anyway I did not find it. Near an address from which rather early in the war Hajo had once written me, I found out that the Jewish children who had once been confined there were long gone. A friendly passer-by stopped and talked to me; in my American uniform I must have aroused his curiosity. He told me about an agency that registered people returning from German concentration camps. They would be open Sunday morning, he said.

Meanwhile I found sleeping quarters for the night with some Canadian troops near the center of Amsterdam, and in the morning went to that agency. In my strange Dutch I asked about my brother; someone looked at a long list of names and told me that they had no record of him. My heart sank. I decided that my quest was hopeless, and that I ought to return to my Division. Suddenly, a young man lounging around near the door asked me, "Did you say you were looking for Hajo Meyer? I saw him yesterday; he has just come back from the concentration camp," and he gave me the name and address of people where I might find him. There I went, rang the bell,

and asked the woman who opened the door, again in my strange German-Dutch, whether she knew someone named Hajo Meyer. Whereupon she shouted up the staircase, "Hajo, your brother is here!" He was upstairs, shaving. A day or two earlier he had returned from Auschwitz, where Soviet troops had liberated him and somehow kept him alive. He had returned via a painful trek through DP (displaced persons) channels and was still in terrible shape—little more than a walking corpse.

When the Germans invaded the Netherlands, Hajo had been living on a farm run by some Zionists where Jewish youngsters from Germany were being trained for life in a kibbutz in Palestine. The Germans dissolved the farm, sent the children to Amsterdam and placed them under house arrest. Some weeks or months later, Hajo went into hiding, obtained some forged identity papers, and even managed to attend a secondary school and graduated with distinction. By selling all of his belongings he survived for a while, but eventually was arrested and sent to one of the branch camps of Auschwitz. He found it difficult to discuss his experiences there with me, and only managed to say that he had died and gone to hell. Twice he was selected to go into the gas ovens, but somehow managed to avoid that fate. In the camp, he had to work with poisonous materials that damaged his lungs. He was coughing badly.

Early in 1944, as the Soviet army was approaching Auschwitz, Hajo was one of four thousand prisoners who were taken on one of the infamous death marches to Buchenwald. Seventeen hundred made it there alive. They were overtaken by Soviet troops; and the SS guards fled. At that time, he claimed, he had been a skeleton with skin, walking like a gorilla with bent knees, hands almost dragging on the ground. One could see every bone of his pelvic structure. He could not hold any food, suffered from chronic diarrhea, had lost all his body hair, and believed he had become impotent. His body had shrunk to a height of 5 feet and 3 or 4 inches. But his mind was remarkably alert and active.

The memory of this miraculous reunion with my brother still moves me deeply. Hajo and I pursued very different interests and careers since then. We became close friends, however, and

could discuss differences of opinion in the spirit of love and mutual forbearance. After having found him, I made my way back to Bremen and resumed my activities as a Nazi hunter.

Once the Germans had surrendered, American forces in Europe were demobilized very rapidly. It would have been politically risky for the Truman administration to keep them overseas any longer, even though there may have been some American political leaders who believed we ought to have kept them there in anticipation of the inevitably coming conflict with our former allies—the Soviet Union. The demobilization was handled very democratically: Service men and women were given so and so many points for every month they had served, additional points for service outside the United States, and even more points for service in combat units. The number of points each one had determined how quickly he or she would be demobilized. I was to be sent home very soon. In August 1945, I reported to Military Intelligence headquarters, now located in Bad Schwalbach, a pretty spa in the Taunus Mountains, surrendered my jeep and my pistol, and was sent on my way home. After spending a few nights in some antiquated French barracks in Lorraine, I traveled by train all the way down the eastern side of France to a transit camp near Marseille, and then boarded a creaky old Victory ship for the journey home. After a wildly stormy passage during which the ship seemed ready at times to break in half, we finally steamed past the Statue of Liberty and up the Hudson River. Many boats in New York harbor welcomed us by sounding their horns. Riverside Drive in Manhattan was lined with people waving at us. After so many months during which I only saw motor vehicles painted in olive drab, I was delighted and surprised to see cars that were red and yellow and blue and white. We debarked at Yonkers, where a steak dinner was served to us. Then I was free to go into the city, where Eva was waiting for me. She had taken a day off from her work in Cambridge, and we spent an evening together at the apartment of friends of her family. The next day I boarded a converted bomber plane for an overnight flight from Newark to Los Angeles; and at Fort McArthur, California, where I had been sworn in fourteen months earlier, I was given my honorable discharge.

A courtesy visit to the Reinhaus family in Santa Ana kept me there for a week or two, and then I traveled to Chicago for a stay with my relatives. Eva met me there also, and in early September she returned to Cambridge, taking me with her. Her parents welcomed me with open arms and allowed me to stay in their home. Some weeks after I had joined their household, Eva's father asked us whether we had any plans to get married. We answered quite truthfully that we firmly intended to spend the rest of our lives together, but had given this any formal thought. Finally, we went to the city hall to announce our intention, were told to get Wassermann tests and to wait for three weeks while notice of our intention was being posted. When the three weeks were over, we went back to the city clerk who mumbled some formula pronouncing us husband and wife. I asked him how much I owed him, and he said, "Whatever it's is worth to you," indicating that I owed him nothing but that he expected a tip. I gave him two dollars. We then announced to Eva's parents that we were married. They seemed pleased, and her mother threw a party for us at the international Students Center. She insisted, however, that I should wear my dress uniform with all its service ribbons at the party, although I had already been discharged. The timing of the party being a bit unorthodox; she called it an engagement party, though I am sure that most of the guests knew the score. I was honestly able to tell people thereafter that Eva and I first had our honeymoon, got married two months later, and then got engaged

Eva's maiden name was Apel. Originally, it had been Appelbaum. Her grandfather, Max Appelbaum, had been an attorney in Konitz (Polish: Chojnice), a town located to the southwest of Danzig, in Poznan province. Around 1905, Konitz acquired some notoriety because of a scandalous court case that was tried there: A Jewish butcher had been accused of having murdered a Christian child for ritual purposes—a kind of slander originally invented by the Church fathers. Max Appelbaum was one of the lawyers on the defense team. But the entire affair so disgusted or frightened him that, once it was over, he moved as far away from Konitz as he could within Prussia—to Dusseldorf on the Rhine.

His oldest son, Willi, had wanted to become a concert pianist, but gave up that ambition. When World War I broke out, he was a student of mathematics working on his doctoral dissertation. Then he had to go to war, and when he came back four years later, someone else had solved 'his' problem. He then got his degree in natural science and became a secondary school teacher, giving courses in natural science, math, and music at a very progressive and famous private boarding school, where he later married one of his students. Some years later he wrote a pioneering book about the notation of polyphonic music in the late Middle Ages, one of the many books on musicology he was to write in subsequent years.

He and his younger brother Hans had a sister who was murdered by the Nazis. Hans himself served as a soldier in the war and throughout his life enjoyed relating some of the daredevil exploits that earned him a battlefield commission. After the war, he studied economics but quit before getting a degree because he thought his professor too stuffy and reactionary. He then went into various business ventures and quickly rose to the position of Director of a corporation that distilled a well-known brand of liqueurs. In his spacious director's mansion there seems to have been an intense social life with artists, scholars, musicians and left-of-center intellectuals. He had married a distant cousin, Toni Werner, the daughter of a coal dealer in Posen (Poznan). Eva was their only child. By 1935, he had to quit his job with the liqueur distillery, and the family then spent a year in the Netherlands and another year in England before moving to the United States. His brother Willi, who by that time was teaching musicology at Harvard, probably helped them immigrate.

Hans and Toni Apel had a very hard time in the States. They had arrived during the Great Depression, and various odd jobs he managed to get did not bring in enough money or security. Toni kept the family alive by working as a salesperson in a woman's clothing store and by making and altering dresses for a fancy clientele of Brattle Street and Chestnut Hill ladies. Eva added to the family budget by selling some of her art craft in the Window Shop, a cafe run by and for refugees in what used to be the village Smithy under the spreading chestnut tree made

famous by Longfellow's poem. The founder of the window shop was a woman who during World War I had become famous due to the help and comfort she rendered to German soldiers held as prisoners of war in Russia. She had been known as the Angel of Siberia. During the Hitler regime there was not a single town in Germany that did not have a street named after her—an Elsa Brandstrom Street. That she had immigrated to the USA with her Jewish husband nobody in Germany ever guessed.

Sometime during the war, a training program for army officers slated to administer occupied Germany was opened at Boston University, and there my future father-in-law was hired as an instructor. He took the opportunity to complete his university education and, at the age of fifty, obtained his doctorate in economics. He then taught economics at a number of small colleges.

For me, now discharged from the service, the time had come to make some decisions of my own. There was no doubt in my mind that I wanted to go to college. As for a field of study, I took the line of least resistance. My knowledge of Russian, acquired during the war, still made me somewhat of a rare bird in the United States, and so I decided to study Slavic languages and literature—but where? Still in my uniform, I paid a visit to Samuel H. Cross, the chair and only tenured professor of the Slavic Department at Harvard. He received me in his office in Widener Library, a room lined with books and journals from floor to ceiling. I asked him whether he remembered me from the ASTP, and he said he did. I then told him I would like to enter Harvard College and asked how I might go about that. I was still a recent immigrant and very green, especially concerning the American system of higher education. "One fills in an application form," he said dryly, whereupon I hemmed and hawed and timidly asked whether in view of my good performance in the ASTP Harvard might accept me as a Sophomore or even as a Junior. He looked at me, dialed a phone number—it was that of Payson Wilde, the Dean of the Graduate School. "Payson," he said, " I have a young man here who wants to enter Graduate School. I want you to give him most favorable consideration. With that, he sent me over to 24 Quincy

Street, the office of the Graduate School. I filled in an application blank and two weeks later received a letter of acceptance.

Why was I accepted so readily? My academic credentials were unorthodox, to put it mildly, but they may have looked good to the graduate admissions committee. I had received outstanding grades in the ASTP and a seemingly solid German *Gymnasium* education, even though truncated by a year. Four-and-a-half years of army service may have added to my learning experience; or so they may have thought. Like many other veterans, I was a few years older than ordinary college graduates, hence likely to be a bit more mature, more eager to learn and equally eager to finish the degree program. I would not be a financial burden to Harvard because under the GI Bill of Rights the government would pay my tuition plus a monthly stipend and a book allowance. It was a very generous law. Some of my fellow students abused it by buying not only assigned textbooks but also books that were merely recommended. For them, the GI Bill of Rights laid the foundation for their professional library. In later years, I had cause to wonder why the veterans of World War II were treated so lavishly, those of the Korean conflict much less generously, and those of the Vietnam War with disgusting shabbiness.