



From the testimony of Ezra Perry on Austrian Antisemitism as a Child

Ezra Perry (formerly Erich Professorski), born in Vienna in 1925. His father, a shoemaker, had been a soldier in the Russian army, and defected during the First World War.

“At school, I was placed in the back row because I was a Jew. On the street, people did not know I was a Jew, but my father was stopped on the street and made to clean it with a tooth brush. They were humiliated in the street along with the religious Jews, while the residents stood by and laughed. Father continued to work at home. At first, the Christian customers continued to come, but later, SA men prevented them from bringing in shoes for repair. There were some people who continued to come in through the back door. The neighbors were quite decent, they said “our Jews are alright”. We tried to leave for any possible destination – Colombia, Panama, Ethiopia. People with money could buy visas. I was active in Hashomer ha-Tza’ir [a Zionist youth movement]. Some in the movement thought about Palestine, but didn’t have any real intention of immigrating there. My father refused to consider Palestine. Only after the Nazis came in did we start to think of going to any possible destination.”

Source: Yad Vashem Archives, VD 405.