

Gilmore's Travels

1936 Rhineland, the German forces marched in without resistance. Nazis took complete control almost overnight. The Stavrosian families in the Rhine knew it would only be a matter of time before they could be found out. In hopes to avoid custody Marten Gilmore decided to move his family out to a safe place. He was going to try for England. This was not an easy trip.

They had to get past German troops that were on the lookout for anyone trying to escape the Nazis' hold on them.

Marten would cross over much of the European countryside on foot so as not to encounter Nazi troops at bus or railroad stations. He moved at night most of the time unless they were in a larger population area. It was easier to move within a crowd where you wouldn't stand out.

They traveled through Baden-Württemberg to reach the town of Konstanz. The hope was to get into Italy and the Austrian police were not of any help at the border. Under the cover of night, the family slipped into Italy. It took weeks of walking, mostly at night to reach the Adriatic Sea. It would end up taking four more weeks to reach Monopolis seaport. They were able to find passage on a fishing boat bound for North Africa then on to Libya by land and then on to Sudan. Martin took work as a laborer in Khartoum for over six months until he had enough money to reach Port Sudan.

The Nazis were already in the area of the Red Sea along Eritrea and Djibouth. Marten knew they were not looking for him. The whole of the German war machine had not gotten that far yet. He was able to sail his family as far as Mogadishu. Here, he took a job loading ships. With money in hand, they once again sailed south to Port Elizabeth at the tip of South Africa. Martin and his wife Gretta worked in a port pub. He talked to anyone he thought could help him get to England. A regular at the pub was an American cargo ship captain. Martin worked hard to make the captain a friend. The pub was the way for Martin to network trying to find a way out. The captain gave them both a job as cooks on his ship until they reached America.

The family shipped out on the Vaalanen cargo ship and then on an early fog-covered morning the ship made port in America. It was a 14-month journey from the Rhine to freedom. Martin with Gretta both started to work at the Brunswick Shipyard. Their children started school as the Gilmore's started their new life.

The shipyard was taken over by the United States Government. Both of them were working for Jones Construction until the end of World War II. Martin died in 1947 with a lung disease. Gretta moved inland to Kansas with her grown children. She later met Dennis, a plumber by trade. He was also a member of the local Stavrosian families. Once they made the connection they became good friends, in 1950 they married and lived out their years in the area. Her daughter went on to be an Air Force officer in a

flight school. Her son went into politics. Neither of them wanted to live near the ocean ever again.

Her son heads the families First Life Celebration held on Wilson Lake, just north of Bunker Hill.

This report on the Gilmore family was sent in by Ryan Gilmore- the grandson. (Note: Robert Gilmore changed his last name to Rhine and moved to West Virginia.) This line of the family is a closely guarded group. The Rhine's have not yet agreed to register with the S.G.L. Library. Some of the family dropped the (H) in their name to Rine.

S.G.L. Researcher
V. Samples

<http://stavrosianalienancestry.com/stavrosianarchives.html>