

-TITLE- GERTRUDE EGLOFFSTEIN
-I_DATE- JULY 29, 1988
-SOURCE- CHRISTIAN RESCUERS PROJECT
-RESTRICTIONS-
-SOUND_QUALITY- FAIR
-IMAGE_QUALITY- GOOD
-DURATION-
-LANGUAGES- ENGLISH
-KEY_SEGMENT-
-GEOGRAPHIC_NAME-
-PERSONAL_NAME-
-CORPORATE_NAME-
-KEY_WORDS-
-NOTES-
-CONTENTS-

(Time counter on VCR)

00:00 Credits.

01:00 Introduction. Born in Grunau (ph). There the wealthy Jews had summer houses. Her family was protestant but not religious. Her father was very nice and her mother died when she was very young. She respected, but didn't love her stepmother. She calls herself too good willing-always helping people when they need help. This she inherited from her father.

02:00 She was seventeen when she finished school.

03:00 After that she went to an apprenticeship at a physical therapy center.

04:00 She moved to Berlin, where her brother got her to buy a drug store. She eventually owned four.

05:00 (gives name of first drugstore.) It was close to the station of Stichin (ph) in Berlin.

06:00 Her family did not suffer after World War I.

07:00 No one had a strong influence on her. She met her husband in 1930 or 1931.

08:00 She found out what Hitler had in mind for the Jews around that same time.

09:00 This was because at that time the SA marched up and down in front of her drugstore...(shows picture of her fiance on a horse)

10:00 The SA knew she was anti-Nazi.

11:00 (translation)

12:00 The Nazis took a room in the hotel in front of her apartment. They fixed a rope across the balcony from which they fixed Nazi slogans. Her fiancé then made another examination for pharmacies, and they were able to buy another drugstore.

13:00 They had built their house. She moved to Zundt (ph). There she ran the drugstores while her fiancé was a bookkeeper. The Nazis knew she was anti-Nazi because she didn't have a swastika sign on her door.

14:00 She always showed the old German flag of the empire. She had many Jewish friends at the time. She has a letter of commemoration from the Berlin Senate for her work.

15:00 It is called the "Unsung Heroes." In it the Senate of Berlin thanks her for giving protection to the people persecuted during the Nazi rule (1963).

16:00 Has another letter (translation).

17:00 During that time they gave food for their Jewish friends who were hiding in their house in Zundt (ph).

18:00 One friend of hers was in a camp, and when he was released, he had to show up at the police station about every other day, so she drove him there. It would have been a very long walk. She and her fiancé were very afraid and that is why they never married so that if the Nazis ever captured one of them, they would not get the other.

19:00 Her fiancé was not Jewish.

20:00 (translation)

21:00 She doesn't remember when she met the first Jewish person whom she helped. She met them all at once because they stick together. She was the only Aryans they knew so they came to her to get clothes, money, and food.

22:00 (translation)

23:00 Kurt Rosenberg was taken by the SA.

24:00 She and her fiancé had all the Rosenberg's papers. She burned them so the Gestapo would not find them.

25:00 After liberation she checked to see if the Rosenbergs had survived, but none of them did.

26:00 Her aunt Teresa (not her real aunt—she just called her that) and others came to eat every Sunday because they didn't have any food. Her Jewish friends and acquaintances were very aristocratic people.

27:00 Why weren't she and her fiance taken with the others? One evening Madka (ph), a servant, said men from Podstant (ph) were here.

28:00 At that time Ludz (ph) had already been arrested. One day an inspector came. When he introduced himself, she said that she was very pleased to meet him. He said, "you probably don't mean that."

29:00 Her friends and Ludz were sent to concentration camps.

30:00 (translation)

31:00 Ludz (ph) went to the camp (40 km behind Danzig) and never came back. During the summer of 1945 she lived with a family. One day a very distinguished man came and asked for Ludz.

32:00 The gentleman said that he was in the same camp as Ludz.

33:00 When the Russians liberated the camp, they sent away all of the intelligent people so they wouldn't tell the Russians what happened. Ludz got on a refugee ship at Cap Arcona (ph).

34:00 Thousands of ex-prisoners were on the ship which was mined. This was planned to get rid of them. Did any of the Jewish people whom she hid survive?

35:00 They were all killed in Theresien Stadt and Auschwitz. Some other older people died in the Jewish hospital in Berlin.

36:00 She always visited an older couple. She brought food, etc. The war was a terrible time for her.

37:00 (comments on how interesting the letter is.) Did anyone turn you in?

38:00 One neighbor said she had a Jewish boy living in her house. She said it was a child of some friends from Hamburg who were bombed out. She doesn't know if today she would have the strength to do this all again. She had so much fear.

39:00 From 1942-1945 she was hiding Jews. She brought food to some very aristocratic families who were still living in their villas. They were not in hiding.

40:00 One family even had a servant. She had about three to four Jews in her house at a time.

41:00 (Repeats story about Walter Noiman, the man who she drove to the police station.)

42:00 Walter Noiman returned from the camp in 1942. Before that year some people were released from the camps. Especially the prominent ones--he was a physician. He survived the war and went to England.

43:00 (translation)

44:00 When Ludz was brought to the camp they took everything away from her.

45:00 (translation)

46:00 She did not move in the summer of 1945. She stayed in her town. One day she was sitting on a neighbor's porch and about twenty ex-French prisoners moved into her home and put up the French flag.

47:00 She was never afraid after the war, only during.

48:00 She knew Ludz was dead after she heard they had put the prisoners on trains to Danzig. When she heard the boat was mined, she knew he was dead.

49:00 Directly after the war she gave one drugstore to some Jewish people, a married couple from Klein.

50:00 They had been hiding in Berlin for a while. During that time she brought things they need from the drugstore.

51:00 (translation)

52:00 The Kleins also had a profession in the drugstore business. They decided to go to the U.S. after the war, but they didn't like it there. After a year they returned. She is not in contact with them.

53:00 She thinks she wasn't arrested because she wasn't married.

54:00 She came close one day when an inspector showed up. He told her not to move out of her house for 14 days and not to leave the area.

55:00 But they did not come back in 14 days. The next day after the inspector showed up the wife of the owner of a famous theater in Berlin called her. She wasn't Jewish.

56:00 She told the wife about the conversation with the inspector and asked her that if she were to be arrested to please inform her brother.

57:00 But the Gestapo never came back. Probably the administration was very stupid. She managed to get letters every week from the camp and nobody ever realized that.

58:00 She had no friends who helped Jewish people. She had so many Jewish friends that she had little time for others. Her brother did not help her.

59:00 She helped the Jews because they were her friends.

60:00 They were very anti-semitic, but they also hated the Nazis. They helped because they were friends with the Jews.

61:00 (confusion as to what she meant.)

62:00 They (her and her fiance) were not friends of all Jews. They were only close to a certain circle of Jews. She helped them not because they were Jews but because they were friends.

63:00 She thinks that it is unbelievable that she was part of a national group that murdered six million people. Until this day it is unexplainable.

64:00 (shows a book)

65:00 The book was a novel based on a true story--of a German who marries a Jew.

66:00 Why were you able to act so different from others?

67:00 It was self-evident for her to help. If "you" were in trouble tomorrow she would help "you."

68:00 In her opinion, people are too lazy. They did not fathom what Hitler was doing. At first Hitler was only supported by the big industry and by the unemployed.

69:00 This was a clever trick of Goebbels. He took the people off the street and recruited them to his cause.

70:00 As a job she delivered products to BMW, a big company associated with the state. She worked in this industry with was close with the state, but never was a Nazi party member.

71:00 (translation)

72:00 She sold one drugstore during the war. She opened up a new one in a house in Zundt.

73:00 This new one was near the train station. In 1953, after the Berlin revolt was repressed, people boycotted the trains, thus there was no business. She was forced to close it down.

74:00 (translation/confusion)

75:00 (translation/confusion)

76:00 (translation/confusion)

77:00 (One of the interviewers is writing a book for the children on the Holocaust.) What would she say to them? She would say that what happened here was unimaginable. Have intelligence, be smart and educated is her advice.

78:00 Do you think this could happen elsewhere? (She talks about Grossdeutschland (ph)--there were many countries in it. Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, etc.)

79:00 At first there was a slogan in the German speaking nations: "today Germany belongs to us and tomorrow the whole world!"

80:00 (translation)

81:00 The people said that when the war would be over, the Jews would be saved, but the Nazis would not be brought to justice. The Nazis still had the good jobs. Those people were right.

82:00 She means that when there was peace, the people who saved the Jews were not recognized while the Nazis still had good jobs.

83:00 But still some Nazis were "hit on the head." CORRECTION: This was a prediction only--that they would be second class citizens and the Nazis would still have good positions. Now nobody wants the Nazis except for crazy people.

84:00 People who supported Hitler thought that peace would be worse than war.

85:00 She is very happy to be a Berliner. There is no reason to be, because Berlin is not a great city. She has had offers to move to other cities, but she chooses to remain here.

86:00 She is very happy that all "this" is over. She only wishes that another does not come to power. How did the government of the city of Berlin come to find out of her work during the war?

87:00 She read in 1960 that the Berlin Senate was honoring the unknown heroes of World War II--those who had saved Jews. She wrote to her senator, and that was it.

88:00 Did she ever stay in touch with Walter Noiman? After the war she was very down and letters were not coming from him. She asked the Red Cross to look for him, but they didn't find him.

89:00 None of the people whom she hid survived. She would not have the strength today to do what she did the.

90:00 (Closing remarks)

91:00 (The interviewers want to take a picture of her with a hat, but she says that the hat would not fit with the blouse and skirt which she is wearing.)

92:00 (She offers her interviewers a glass of port wine.)
.END.→