

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

**Interview with Ruth Danner
September 18, 1991
RG-50.028*0009**

PREFACE

The following oral history testimony is the result of a videotaped interview with Ruth Danner, conducted on September 18, 1991 in Paris, France on behalf of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The interview is part of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's collection of oral testimonies. Rights to the interview are held by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The interview cannot be used for sale in the Museum Shop. The interview cannot be used by a third party for creation of a work for commercial sale.

The reader should bear in mind that this is a verbatim transcript of spoken, rather than written prose. This transcript has been neither checked for spelling nor verified for accuracy, and therefore, it is possible that there are errors. As a result, nothing should be quoted or used from this transcript without first checking it against the taped interview.

RUTH DANNER

September 18, 1991

INTERVIEWER: Today is September 18, 1991. We are in Paris, France, and we are interviewing one of Jehovah's Witnesses. She's going to tell us about the story regarding her mother and father and her family and herself, and what happened during World War Two.

Q: Would you tell us your name?

A: My name is Ruth Danner.

Q: And what is the name of your parents, please?

A: My father is Jacque Danner. My mother, Augustine Danner.

Q: And her maiden name?

A: Her maiden name was Hance.

Q: And when were you born, Ruth?

A: I was born the 9th of December, 1933.

Q: And how old were your parents? When were they born?

A: My father was born in March, 1898, and my mother in February, 1899.

Q: How many brothers and sisters do you have?

A: I have one sister, Helen, and she was born in January, 1922.

Q: What was it like in France, probably you were going to school, before Hitler and the army of Germany came into France, do you recall?

A: It was a very easy life, and I just started school in 1939, just before the war came the Germans came into France.

Q: What was the religious background of your parents?

A: My father was Protestant, and my mother was very Catholic.

Q: When did they become Jehovah's Witnesses?

A: My father started in 1925. One of the first books, the Heart of God, I don't remember, but by that book he became one of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Q: And what about your mother?

A: She fought against the truth very long, and in 1929 she became one of Jehovah's Witnesses, four years later.

Q: Well, what was it that appealed to them, since they came from a Protestant and Catholic background, why would they want to change their religion?

A: My father, because the Protestants, they had the Bible but no explanation, they just had a Bible and he wanted to know what was in it and what it meant. And my mother, by the way of life of my father and his faithfulness meant that she got interested too.

Q: Did your parents understand that if Hitler would have come into France that it could create problems for them because of their religious position in connection with the war?

A: Yes, they knew it because Jehovah's Witnesses were persecuted since 1933 in Germany. And we lived in the eastern part of France, close to the German parts and sometimes German parts came over in France to take Watch Towers and publications.

Q: So then you were aware of what was going on in Germany?

A: Oh, yes, we knew it, and we had the _____ in Switzerland. In Germany it was the title I don't remember.

Q: Then your folks were instrumental in helping to get some of the publications of Jehovah's Witnesses.

A: To Germany, in Germany.

Q: How were they able to do that, do you remember? You were very, very young, of course.

A: I was very young. The sisters came and they put the Watch Towers on them so when they found them it could go through. They even had sometimes an assembly and met, so the Germans came over and met, and they had a one-day assembly.

Q: What was the purpose of those one-day assemblies?

A: Just to give them instructions and have an assembly.

Q: I see. How many people were in the congregation that you were within the eastern part of France?

A: About 25 when war came. Twenty-five, thirty.

Q: And how did your family prepare you and your sister in case something might happen? Or didn't you think anything was going to happen?

A: No, we were prepared. We were prepared. My sister, she was quite a few years older than I, so she was an adult person?

Q: Adult?

A: Yes, but I had to take spanking at school for not saluting the flag and saying Heil Hitler, so my parents prepared me in giving instructions what Jehovah wants one of his witnesses, to be neutral. And they taught me they taught me to have confidence in Jehovah whatever might happen, because sometimes I came from school and the SS had taken my mother from home to put them to question, so when I came home there was nobody at home.

Q: I see. Well, for a moment let's just go back to the time when you first started school if you can remember, it's many years ago of course, before the German armies came into France. What was it like in school, do you remember, about the idea they had to

A: They have to salute the flag, to say Heil Hitler, and sing the hymn.

Q: The national anthem?

A: Yes, with having the hand, the right arm out.

Q: Well, why wouldn't Jehovah's Witnesses Heil Hitler and salute the flag?

A: They couldn't do it because they were neutral and on account of in the book of Acts, Chapter 4, Verse 12, it is said that the head, no, not the head, how do you say it in English?

Q: The leader?

A: Don't have an English Bible. I don't know how to say it in English.

Q: Well, that's okay. Why don't you just give us the gist?

A: Well, it is written that the...it's one word I need. Could we come back?

Q: Yes, if you like.

(Recess)

Q: Okay. Now that we have that word, go ahead, would you like to begin?

A: Yes, because it says there, that salvation only comes by Christ and not by human, so we couldn't actually get salvation to Hitler, and say Heil to Hitler, which means salvation to Hitler, so we couldn't do it.

Q: So then your parents prepared you for this ahead of time?

A: Yes, every day before I left home to go to school my mother prayed with me.

Q: That must have been a very hard time for you.

A: Yes, it had to be. But we were confident in Jehovah, which my parents showed me to have all the time and every time before I should answer when they asked me, I was supposed to pray very fast so that my answer would be as Jehovah wanted, and to have the strength to be faithful.

Q: I see. Do you remember what it was like as a very young girl, what it was like when the German armies came into France? What was everyone talking about, or were you too young to remember that?

A: Everybody was afraid. They put down the stop (indicating) and looked behind because they were afraid. Everybody knew that when the Germans came it was terrible for France.

Q: Okay. Now, what began to happen to you and your family after the German armies came in? What happened to your mother, your father, your sister and yourself?

A: My father was supposed to go in the aperitif army, the army where that was civilian, to help out when there was the bombs come in so. My mother was supposed with my sister to sew the soldiers' vests. And I was at school. So my father refused, my mother refused, my sister refused, and I refused to work with the Germans.

Q: All right. So did that bring real pressure on you?

A: Yes.

Q: And the whole congregation that you...

A: And the whole congregation, because my father was...congregation _____ by that time.

Q: So he was the one in charge of the congregation?

A: Yes.

Q: I see. How was he able to help the others in the congregation? What did he do to help them to prepare for this?

A: Well, he make many home visits and help them, explain them, and very often we had studies at home. So I was playing outside and watching if the SS came. So when I saw somebody who was like an SS, I called my mother and they put away the Watch Tower and drank coffee, so there was nothing wrong.

Q: Very good. What was the year that the Nazi, or the German armies, I should say, came into France?

A: 1940. When the month of May...

Q: So that was after they attacked Holland?

A: Yes, afterwards.

Q: So after they attacked Holland, you knew it was just a matter of time.

A: Yes.

Q: ...that they were coming down? Okay. Now, your parents and your older sister refused to engage in any type of activity for the war?

A: Uh-huh.

Q: ...because of your position of neutrality?

A: Yes.

Q: What began to happen from that point onward?

A: Well, from time to time they came, the SS, at home and searched everywhere for publications, for pictures, if we had some pictures, some address of one of our parts, they picked them up.

Q: So they knew you were Jehovah's Witnesses?

A: Yes, we were very known as Jehovah's Witnesses all around.

Q: I see. Everybody knew that. So there was no hiding that?

A: No, no, none at all. They knew it. So sometimes they went to the work of my father and picked him up and two or three hours later they let him go. Sometimes they took my mother, or my sister, for interrogation to arrest them and they let them go.

Q: What type of work did your father do?

A: He was a machinist where...There were many industries in the eastern part of France. He was machinist. Well, he know machines.

Q: And what was the town that you were from?

A: He worked in Chambie. Beetenhoven they called it in Germany. Now they call it in France Chambee.

Q: Is that part of the Alsace?

A: Lorraine.

Q: Now they call it the Lorraine area. I see. Did the people there after the Germans came in, did the people there put pressure on you and your family also because they were pro German? Did they put pressure on your folks or did they try to help Jehovah's Witnesses?

A: It was half and half. Some helped Jehovah's Witnesses, those who were for the French, and others put pressure on us because they were pro German. So we had some who helped. The lady who lived under us, she helped us. When she saw somebody who looked like SS or something like that, she knocked so we put away Watch Tower or something. She helped very much.

Q: Now, maybe you can tell us what happened to your father now. He was picked up, released, picked up, released for interrogation, and then what finally happened to him?

A: Well, in January '43, they picked us up altogether, all four together. At January 28 at half past three in the morning, they came and picked us up, all four.

Q: Half past three in the morning?

A: In the morning.

Q: Do you remember that?

A: Yes.

Q: You remember it. Were you very startled, were you surprised?

A: No, we were not surprised, because we expected this. They picked us up so very often for interrogation, and said they would put us in the camps if we don't stop being Witnesses, or meeting, so we expected. We were not surprised at all. Every evening we said we are together

today, where we would be tomorrow? Will we be together? How will it come, if they would pick us one after the other or...

Q: Okay. Well, that's interesting. Then from 1940 to '43, they didn't put you in prison. How were you able to carry on your Bible educational work that your Jehovah's Witnesses engaged in?

A: Everything was underground, so the meetings were underground, and the preaching was underground. We had to be very careful to whom we spoke and what we said and had nothing at all, no picture, no photo, no Watch Tower, nothing, so when they came there was nothing there.

Q: So then your father, was he able to do any of the translating or passing on the information?

A: He passed the Watch Towers. He covered a lot from one congregation to the other, to take the Watch Towers and print it to others. And we were all busy, not I was too busy, but the publishers were busy writing, copying the Watch Towers by hand, a few pages.

Q: So then in January of '43 they came to your house at three o'clock in the morning?

A: Yes, half past.

Q: Half past three, you remember?

A: Yes.

Q: Now, what would happen from that point on?

A: So they put us in the train, and they put us three days later, we were three days in the train.

Q: Who were you with in the train? Who were you with in the train?

A: Well, people from around. Just one family was Jehovah's Witnesses, even not the whole family, just the father was one of Jehovah's Witnesses. He became one in 1941, but his wife and his ten children were not Jehovah's Witnesses, but they picked them up as Jehovah's Witnesses, and the lady came out as one of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Q: I see. Interesting. Okay. Then you were on a train together. What type of a train was it? Were you standing, or were you sitting?

A: Some wagons were for sitting and some was standing.

Q: Was it very crowded?

A: It was crowded. Forty about in one wagon they were standing.

Q: Okay. And who were some of the other people that were on the train?

A: They all were Communists or it was political prisoners they pick up.

Q: Then you were taken to where?

A: We were taken to Kornowiec. It's near Katowice. Now it's Poland.

Q: That far?

A: That far. That's why it was three days long, the trip.

Q: Did they serve you food and things to drink?

A: Yes, sometimes they gave food. Once or twice a day we got some food.

Q: As a young girl at that time, could you describe what was going through your mind? How did your mother feel and your father, and even for yourself though, how did you feel?

A: It was very terrible for them, because a child doesn't know why one is hungry. I told my mother, "Mother, I am hungry." But she had nothing to give to me, so for her it was worse than for me.

Q: She was concerned?

A: Yes, she had nothing to give to her child, and I didn't realize this and I hurt her. So, well, I was waiting what will happen.

Q: You had no idea?

A: No.

Q: And how about your father, how did he feel? Do you know what he said to you on that trip?

A: He always told us to be faithful, whatever we had to do, should be faithful to Jehovah. And if one of us would die, we expect a resurrection. If we couldn't meet again in this system, then we would meet again in the new system. He had a very, very strong faith, my father was confident in Jehovah for his faith.

Q: So what do you mean by the new system?

A: Well, in the new world we are praying for that God's kingdom would come on earth, and that His will would be done on earth, so it's just a new system.

Q: Oh, I see. Now, it took you three days. What happened when you arrived at your destination?

A: Well, they put us in the Camp Kotlow. And it was a camp, it wasn't very hard not in the kind of concentration camp. It was just deportation camp. It was not as bad as concentration camp. It was to change our mind, to make of us Germans, with German idea. Well, two months later they give to my parents the paper to sign that we wouldn't be Jehovah's Witnesses anymore.

Q: Oh.

A: And my father refused. So they said you will never more get back to France. We were condemned to stay in the camp.

Q: Well, during that two-month period, what did your father and your mother do, and yourself, did they assign you some type of work?

A: Yes, they had to work. I don't know exactly what they did, but they had to work.

Q: And how about the young children, your sister and yourself?

A: My sister, she always worked with my mother, they never got apart, because she was an age to work. They were always together. I had to work to make to sew.

Q: You had to sew?

A: Yes.

Q: How old were you at that time?

A: Nine years.

Q: And they had you sewing?

A: Yes, or taking care of the vegetables, preparing the food. Since we were Jehovah's Witnesses, the SS had confidence in us and they sent me sometimes out to do some shopping for them.

Q: Oh, is that right? So you worked in your homes?

A: No, in the camps, but they sent me out to do the shopping for them, go to buy them the bread and so on.

Q: Did you have on your ordinary clothing?

A: Always.

Q: Did you have on the purple triangle?

A: No.

Q: You didn't?

A: No, no.

Q: Did you see the mistreatment of any of the other prisoners in that camp? Or what type of other prisoners were in that camp?

A: They all were political prisoners, because they had no German minds, because some of the kin out of Lorraine was with Germany as one country, so the young men were supposed to do German military service, and they didn't want to do it, so they went to France. And the parents that stayed there, they picked them up and many of those who were with us in the camps were parents of sons who didn't want to go in German military.

Q: I see. All right. Now, you were in that particular site camp. Were there other Jehovah's Witnesses in the same camp with you?

A: Just one family.

Q: Just the one family?

A: One family.

Q: Were you able to get together at all for your Bible reading?

A: Yes, we got together with them.

Q: Were you able to get any information inside that camp, your Bible publications?

A: No, we just had the Bible. We just had one Bible.

Q: They permitted you to have a Bible?

A: Yes, one Bible, so with one Bible we had to discuss it.

Q: Was it in French or German?

A: German, because my parents only spoke German.

Q: Oh, is that right?

A: Yes, because the eastern part of France, they went to school before 1918 when Alsace became France. It was Germany before 1918 so they spoke German.

Q: That was part of the Versailles Treaty that went back over to France?

A: Yes.

Q: So they spoke mainly German then?

A: German.

Q: Did they speak any French at all?

A: No, no. Very little. They say some words, but they spoke German.

Q: Were your father and your mother and your sister, or even yourself, were you able to carry on your Bible educational work inside of the camp?

A: Well, we talked to the other prisoners, but they were mainly busy getting to eat, getting some food and getting out of the camp. They weren't interested in the Bible.

Q: Now, as a young person at nine years of age, there you were peeling potatoes and going to the store. What was going through your mind? Did you think you'd ever get out of that place?

A: No, at the beginning we didn't expect to get out. We thought, because the Germans was going on, and we expected that at the end of the war maybe it will be Armageddon, but later we got the Watch Tower, well, some sheets of the Watch Tower, and it was explained that after the war there will be great work to be done in preaching, and it wouldn't be Armageddon at the end of the war. So we expected to come out. And then we knew that the Germans were losing the war, so we waited to come out.

Q: How did you find out that the Germans were beginning to lose the war?

A: Well, there was some prisoners who made the radio and they could listen and they told us what was going on outside.

Q: Is that right?

A: Uh-huh.

Q: So some of them?

A: Uh-huh.

Q: Now, was your father, your mother and your sister ever mistreated by any of the SS guards or soldiers?

A: My sister and my mother, they had very hard work to do, _____ work, and it was very hard for them, and it was very cold there in Poland. My father was sometimes mistreated because I refused to say Heil Hitler, and they always telling him that he was forbidding me to say Heil Hitler, and this was not true. He gave me the reason why I was supposed not to say Heil Hitler, but it was a thing between Jehovah and me, not between my father and Jehovah and me. It was my own decision not to say Heil Hitler. It wasn't his decision. So the Germans couldn't believe that a little girl, nine, ten years, has a personal decision not to say Heil Hitler on account of her faith.

Q: So then they would persecute your father?

A: My father because they were telling him that he convince me. It was not true.

Q: So he gave you the reasons, you understood them?

A: Yes.

Q: And you made up your own mind?

A: He always said if they beat you up and you say Heil Hitler, you still are my girl, doesn't change anything between you and me, it change something between you and Jehovah. So if you say or not say, it's between you and Jehovah. So it was my own decision.

Q: I see. Was it hard for you to stand up to those men and not say Heil Hitler? Was it difficult?

A: Well, I was very shy when I was young, and so it was difficult, but I always prayed Jehovah before answering so I could do it.

Q: It was said that some of the German soldiers would sometimes try to take advantage of the female prisoners. Did you ever hear of that happening in the camp you were in?

A: In the camps we were, no. I know it happened in some camps but not in the one we were.

Q: But some terrible things went on?

A: Yes, but mainly in the concentration camps. Not the deportation camps where we were.

Q: What type of food did your family get when you were there?

A: The food was very bad. We had the peeling from the potatoes, not the potatoes. The peeling. And it was poor. There was no meat, no vegetables, and they cooked, they boiled the bones of horses and the water they gave, the boiling water, they put it for our food. Very bad.

Q: Were you always hungry as a little girl?

A: Always. Always.

Q: And then what did they give you to drink other than soup? Was there coffee every morning or tea?

A: Well, there was something like coffee, but very bad coffee. It wasn't good coffee. Hot water.

Q: Now, what were the living conditions like in the camp that you were in? Were you in your own room as a family?

A: No. It was different at camps, and the most of them you were two there was a bed below and a bed on the top, and there were about fifty, sixty persons sleeping in the same room.

Q: Is that right? So you slept very close together?

A: Yes.

Q: What type of heat did you have in your barracks?

A: Well...

Q: Did they keep...By the way, before we go on to that, did they have all the females together and all the men someplace else or did they have the families together?

A: They had the families together.

Q: Was that the same way with other families too?

A: Yes, there was families, one after the other.

Q: So all the families were very close? All right. And what type of heating system did they have there in Poland in those barracks?

A: There were what you call it? Coal and wood...

Q: Just one stove?

A: Yes. One stove for whole room.

Q: For the whole room?

A: Uh-huh.

Q: Who was able to be the closest to the stove where the heat was?

A: Those who arrived the first.

Q: Is that right?

A: Uh-huh.

Q: So you had some sense of seniority; the oldest ones or the first ones there...

A: The first ones.

Q: And who was put in charge of the barracks?

A: They were SS.

Q: Did they place a kappo in charge?

A: Yes, there were SS kappos.

Q: So they were the ones in charge themselves?

A: Yes.

Q: Did they take one of the prisoners and put them in charge under them?

A: Always German. We were always with German.

Q: And what type of clothing did you have, just...

A: What we had when we came from home. We kept that.

Q: So you kept that clothing?

A: Uh-huh.

Q: Did you have an overcoat as well to keep warm?

A: Yes, because we were picked up in January, so we were already clothed.

Q: Did you see any of the people there being persecuted other than being in prison and having hard work to do; did you see any of them being beaten, being tortured, or did you hear...

A: Tortured, no. There were some who were beaten up, because they were not neutral, you know, they sang the Marseillaise. When they met SS, they sang the patriotic songs, so they were picked up.

Q: Do you remember as a young girl since they were German, did they celebrate the Christmas holidays?

A: Yes, Christmas.

Q: Now, Jehovah Witnesses don't...

A: No, no. We had no...we didn't teach the Christmas.

Q: So you didn't celebrate?

A: No.

Q: What did you think of these people who claimed to be Christians celebrating the birth of Christ, yet they were treating other people the way that they did?

A: Well, their whole way of acting showed that they were not Christians.

Q: But yet they celebrated the birth?

A: Yes, but their life was no Christian life. So it was very hypocritical.

Q: Hypocritical?

A: Yes.

Q: Were there any clergymen in the camp that you were in?

A: No, no clergy.

Q: No type of Catholic or protestant clergymen at all?

A: No.

Q: So there you were as a family, deported to Poland...

A: Yes.

Q: ...three days travel from your home by train. So in the beginning you didn't think you were going to get out?

A: No, no, and they told us since we refuse to sign no more to be Jehovah's Witnesses, they told us you never more come out of the camps.

Q: Did they ever threaten your family, your father and your mother and your older sister that they were going to, say, Auschwitz or any of the other camps?

A: They told my father that he would go to Auschwitz because it was the closest where we were.

Q: All right. Did your parents ever experience any health problems or yourself because of the lack of proper food and type of conditions you were under?

A: Since we came back from deportation, I have been all the time to take care of the health. I have a very poor health.

Q: What type of health problems, if I may ask, do you have?

A: The bones, because of nutrition.

Q: I see.

A: The bones mainly.

Q: How about other prisoners, did you see other prisoners having health problems there because of the lack of proper food, nutrition?

A: Yes, many have very poor health. But the difference is, they were very disappointed because they were deported on account of politics, so afterward they were disappointed because things were not going better than before the deportation, so they say they suffered in vain, but we suffered for being faithful to Jehovah, so even if we had some problems with the health afterwards, we never regretted to be in the camp.

Q: I see. As the war started to come to an end, which armies were getting close?

A: Well, the Germans put us out of the camps in Schleching where we were, and we had to walk 249 kilometers by foot.

Q: What was that now?

A: Because where we were, there was the Russian soldiers came and Germans wanted to empty the camps, so they put us out and put us in the western part of Germany. So it was American soldiers that liberated us.

Q: I see. Now, you had to walk that distance?

A: Yes.

Q: And how were you able to walk that distance? How were you and the other prisoners able to do that?

A: Well, it was very difficult. And those who couldn't walk, they just left them and killed them on the street.

Q: So they shot them?

A: Yes.

Q: I see.

A: So we walked.

Q: And you were able to help each other as a family?

A: Yes.

Q: Now, what was going through your mind at that time since you were walking to the western part of Germany?

A: Well, we knew that freedom was close and so we were glad to be free again and to get to go home.

Q: So then who finally then who did you come in contact with, which of the armies?

A: USA Army, Americans.

Q: And which army was it? Do you remember which battalion or which division?

A: No, no, I don't remember.

Q: And how did they treat you folks when they...

A: They were very kind because by that time we were the only Witnesses. All others were war prisoners and political prisoners, so they put us together and put us in the train. It was on April 20 they came to deliver us, and on May 5 we were back home. So it went very fast. They put us together and on the train and home.

Q: Did the American soldiers ask you why you were in the camps?

A: No, they were not interested. They put everything together, everybody together to go home.

Q: Okay. But they knew that all of you had been prisoners?

A: Yes.

Q: Did they catch the German soldiers that were seeing to it that you were transported?

A: The German soldiers were all gone. There were no SS anymore in the camps. Nobody was there. We were free because the Germans were gone.

Q: So they all took off?

A: Uh-huh.

Q: At what time did they all take off? No doubt they had to run away or something.

A: It was Steinfeld. I don't remember exactly when it was.

Q: How did your family...Did you wake up one day and they were all gone?

A: No, no, they came at half past two in the afternoon. We were in the mine, where you put out the...

Q: Coal?

A: Coal, uh-huh. We were there because the shots...

Q: Oh, the armies were shooting?

A: Uh-huh, so we went there to keep safe.

Q: Okay. With who, was it just your family or was it all the prisoners?

A: All the prisoners were there, and some knew what was going on and at half past two the American soldiers came and we were free.

Q: Did the American soldiers at first think that maybe you were part of the enemy?

A: No, they knew there was a camp there.

Q: They realized that?

A: Uh-huh.

Q: Had your father and your mother and the other prisoners, had they lost a lot of weight?

A: Yes, everybody was very slim.

Q: So the American soldiers knew that you weren't soldiers?

A: Yes, we were prisoners.

Q: If you were soldiers you were very thin?

A: Uh-huh.

Q: I see. So then when you arrived home, how did you feel?

A: We were very, very happy to be all four together, that none was dead, and none made the compromise. All four were faithful to Jehovah up to the end. We had nothing more material. Even to the clothes we had, they didn't belong to us, it was the neighbor who gave it to us, because what we had was very dirty and we had to burn this up. So the neighbor gave us some clothes, borrowed the clothes, and we had nothing more. And my mother said to my sister and myself always remember that day, we have nothing, even not the clothes we have belong to us, but we are back home.

Q: How about your home?

A: Well, we had no home anymore because the Germans gave...to the neighbor everything that belonged to us.

Q: All your furniture?

A: Yes. And somebody else was in our apartment. So one of the neighbors gave us a home and we stayed there, and day after day somebody came, we have your bed and pulled us the bed and table.

Q: So little by little they started...

A: Uh-huh.

Q: Is that right?

A: But the thing, when we came home we had nothing more, nothing.

Q: So little by little the neighbors began to bring back...

A: Yes.

Q: Well, that was nice of them.

A: Yes, very nice. We didn't get all things back, but much.

Q: So then your father went back to work doing some type of...

A: Well, we had some time to take care of the health, to eat and all that, and sometime, about two months later my father started to work, working where he was before.

Q: What did they think about you and your family? What did other people think since you were picked up for your faith, your beliefs, taken to a camp and came back?

A: Well, they were...how would you say it in English? They appreciated that we came back. And one man who worked with my father before we were in the camp, after watching was interested in the truth and he became one of Jehovah's Witnesses because it impressed him that my father and his family went to the camps and came back.

Q: Very good. Now, what happened to you after the war then, did you go back to school?

A: I went back to school.

Q: And then what did you do with your life afterwards then?

A: Well, I wanted to pioneer, so my father didn't want to let me go when...I wanted to go at fourteen years and he said, "You are too young, you have to learn first a job." So I had to learn to sew. And at seventeen then I began pioneering.

Q: What do you mean by pioneering?

A: Serving God as a minister, missionary, and teaching the people the Bible, the truth.

Q: I see.

A: And teaching them what is the hope for mankind, God's new world where there will be no war any more, and where all the bad will be destroyed.

Q: Now, I understand you went to a school.

A: Yes. In 1953 I went to theist school and there I got the touch for being a missionary, and then I was sent to Paris.

Q: So then you were sent to France?

A: Uh-huh.

Q: So you thought you might be going to Africa or South America?

A: I was hoping. I was sent back to France, because by that time there were not many of Jehovah's Witnesses in France.

Q: I am sure you enjoyed your assignment.

A: Yes, I was very, very happy in working in Paris.

Q: And your parents, are they still alive today?

A: No, my father died in 1978 and my mother died three years ago in '80.

Q: I see. Do you have some pictures there maybe you'd like to show?

A: This is my father when he came out of the camp (indicating).

Q: I see. And what type of a card is that that you are holding?

A: This is the card from the deportee politic. It's a card they gave us when we came back. Identification card.

Q: Oh, after you came back they gave that card to you?

A: Yes.

Q: In order to get some type of food?

A: Food, clothes, things like that.

Q: I see. And it also indicated that he had been in...

A: In the deportation camp.

Q: I see.

A: The date when they picked us up, 28th of January, '43, and that we were liberated on the 20th of April, '45 by the USA Army.

Q: All right. Would you like to show the picture of your mother?

A: This is my mother about two weeks after coming back (indicating).

Q: Very fine people, very lovely. Very good. Now, you have some other type of publications there that you wanted to donate to the Museum?

A: This is the book which explains what happened to the Struthof which was in Shermac, in eastern part of France.

Q: All right. Thank you.

A: And this is a paper twenty years after deportation, the liberation from the different concentration camps.

Q: And what year was that printed?

A: This was twenty years later, so it must have been '65.

Q: I see. 1965.

A: Because the time is twenty years later, and since it was '45 so...

Q: What do you think, Ruth, about people today who say that maybe these things were just exaggerated, that, well, they really weren't that bad?

A: Well, they certainly are wrong, because when you went through it, you know it's the truth. It really happened.

Q: It's sad that some people don't want you to believe the truth?

A: Yes. It is a fact because it happened to me.

Q: Well, Ruth, we want to thank you very much for taking your time to share with us the experiences that happened with your family. It's a part of your life that is an outstanding part of your life, and United States Holocaust Museum truly appreciates the fact that you were willing to share that with them so that other people can learn from it.

A: Thank you.

Q: Once again, the card...

A: Well, the card explains when we were...when they picked us up on January 28, '43, and that we were liberated on April 20, '45 by the USA Army, and this is our address where we were living.

Q: Uh-huh. And that's the picture there of your mother and father?

A: Yes, when we came back.

Q: Okay. And those are the other magazines.

A: This is the newspaper Liberation, who make this...magazine explaining the different concentration camps, and this is the story of one camp, the Struthof, in Eibar in the eastern part of France.

Q: Once again, even the library in the Holocaust Museum extends their appreciation to you as well for these publications. Thank you once again.