

# **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum**

**Interview with Max Liebmann  
January 19, 1990  
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## **PREFACE**

The following oral history testimony is the result of a videotaped interview with Max Liebmann, conducted by Linda Kuzmack on January 19, 1990 on behalf of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The interview took place in Washington, DC and 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.

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**MAX LIEBMANN**  
**January 19, 1990**

[Technical Conversation]

01:00:20

Q: The tape is rolling. Would you tell me your full name please?

A: I am Max Karl Liebmann.

Q: Where were you born? I was--

A: I was born in Mannheim, Germany, on September 3, 1921.

Q: Tell me about your parents and your family.

A: My father was -- had a -- was in his own business. He and his brother had a textile representation business. They represented a -- what is called here, a converter of textile goods. They had one of the largest -- or the largest European weaver of textile goods and before '33 -- they also had some Czech clothes -- cloth firms, and eventually, after 1933, and a few other companies which I can't remember. And after 1933, in particular, after 1934, when my father's partner which was his brother had a stroke and could no longer work, my father remained with two companies which stayed with him until they could no longer employ him, due to Nazi legislation.

Q: Okay. Would -- did you remain in Mannheim all this time?

A: I was in Mannheim 'til I was deported in 1940.

Q: Okay. Tell me then about growing up in this family in Mannheim, Germany -- the first 10 years of your life.

A: The first 10 years were very -- basically very uneventful. I was told I grew in the midst of the inflation and my parents were middle or upper-middle class and my childhood was very uneventful.

Q: What kind of schools did you go to?

A: I went first in 1928, I started public school. In Germany, you go to public school for four years and then you switch to high school. In 19 -- when I was about 8, in 1930. I started with cello lessons and in 1932, I switched from public school to what was called

Realgymnasium<sup>1</sup>. The Realgymnasium is something which I don't think we have here. You start -- in your first year, you start with Latin, then in the third year, you get, in addition to Latin, you get French and in the fourth year, in addition to Latin and French, we got English.

01:03:00

And I went to school until I decided at the end of December 1937 that it makes no more sense for me to continue school. When I quit school, I was sent in the what was called Obertertia<sup>2</sup>. I would have had three more years to go to make -- to graduate, which was called in Germany abitur<sup>3</sup>. Obviously, everything changed with the advent of Hitler and I have memories that there were the emergency police running around the city in their car -- in their automobiles because they were always demonstrations and counter-demonstrations. We had a balcony where I could watch this very clearly. We were living on a fairly important thoroughfare. School became more difficult with the advent of Hitler. I think it was in the second or third grade of high school -- I was about 11 or 12 when the taunting started. And it was harmless -- it wasn't badly meant, but it was grinding, because it went on and it went on and it went on. So, in the school I went to, there was a custom that each -- each class every other year goes together into a youth hostel for three days to play football -- to play soccer, and generally to have a good time. And I picked this particular time to have a fight with one of the guys who were taunting me and I beat him up. I picked one I could handle. And from that moment on, there was peace, not only for me, but also for my other three Jewish classmates. We were four Jews in my class. I had basically no problem with the exception of one altercation I had with a -- with my German professor. He was a member of the party, if I remember correctly. He -- one day we had to write a paper about how we could contribute to the Four Year Plan. That was an economic plan which Göring<sup>4</sup> was supervising. And when I got the paper back, I got a bad mark with a note that I must have copied this out of a newspaper or a magazine. So I didn't let this sit. Challenged him to show me where I copied it from. Unbeknownst to me, I used American style, "you're innocent until proven guilty." And eventually he had to change the mark. He did.

01:06:04

Q: Okay.

A: At the end of December of 1937 we were only two Jewish boys left in my class and very few other Jews in the whole school, and I decided it made no sense to stay in school. I -- I knew I would never go to a university in Germany. It became more and more difficult, so I told my parents, "Enough is enough. I want out." And I started -- then we compromised and in the

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<sup>1</sup> Liberal arts high school (German)

<sup>2</sup> The sixth grade level in German Gymnasiums (German)

<sup>3</sup> High school graduation examination (German)

<sup>4</sup> Hermann Göring

beginning of 19-- immediately at the first few days of 1938, I went into a private, commercial language school where I had French and I had English. I learned German, steno<sup>5</sup>, just to keep me busy. After all, in 1930 -- at the beginning of '38, I was just 17 years old -- not -- no -- 16 years old. And I went to school there until the famous Crystal Night<sup>6</sup> of 1938 which was the end of school and basically for all German-Jewish children.

Q: Can we slow down for just a minute?

A: Yeah.

01:07:30

Q: You talk about your experiences as a Jew. What was your household like in terms of Jewishness? Was there observance?

A: We were not observant Jews in the -- in the sense that there was a kosher household or any such thing. My father belonged to a Gesangsverien<sup>7</sup>, which is a singing organization which is very customary in, in Germany. This one happened to be the Jewish one. And my father was a member of that Board of Directors since almost immediately after World War I. Incidentally, my father was a soldier in World War I and was a veteran of front service, which permitted me actually to stay -- to stay in high school as long as did, because I believe in 1936 or 1935 already, the children of non-veterans were legislated out of public schools. So, no we -- I mean we never -- my father also was a member of the legislative body of the Jewish community of Mannheim so there was never a question of where we belonged or where we were, but we did not per se be practicing Jews that we went regularly to temple. I mean I was Bar Mitzvah, of course, my father would make an appearance as a member of the legislative counsel at least once a year in the temple on, on Rosh Hashanah or Yom Kippur. I went a few -- I went a number of times on Saturday morning more for social reasons than any other reasons -- we would meet with our friends. And, of course, we had every Friday night, there were -- a different meal with the German version of challah which is called Berches<sup>8</sup>. And so we were, of course -- obviously it was not a matter of denying that we were Jews. We were Jews, but there was no practice -- practicing Judaism. We would not light a home candles for Hanukkah or would have a Seder, notwithstanding the fact that for -- for these days, I always went to my uncle and my aunt, my -- the sister of my mother had no children of her own and until they immigrated in 1930 -- early in '34 to Palestine, I was there on all these holidays like Pesach, etceteras, etceteras.

01:10:00

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<sup>5</sup> stenography

<sup>6</sup> Kristallnacht

<sup>7</sup> glee club (German)

<sup>8</sup> German-Jewish braided holiday bread.

Q: I see. Okay. Thank you. By November, then, of 1938, you were a young 17 year old. You were going into this special school waiting for something. What happened as we -- I am sorry -- as we approach Kristallnacht.

A: Yeah. No, that is okay. Since my father was very active in -- in this what originally started out for 80 or 90 years as a singing organization, was converted in 1933 or 1934, into what was referred to as a Jewish cultural organization. And since we were excluded from everything which had to do with culture, we had our own. In addition to the cause which was a mixed choir, there was an orchestra added, and by the time I was 14 or 15, I was in the orchestra and we did all kinds of opera, opera performances, oratorios. And all this, of course, stopped with the event in of -- at Crystal Night. Incidentally my father at the time of Crystal Night was in Greece. His -- one of his companies where he was always the number one salesman, suggested to him since they couldn't employ him anymore in Germany, if he wouldn't want to try to build an existence in Greece. We'll come back to this a little later. Let's do it chron--chronologically.

Q: Just a point of confusion. You used the word "converted" to a Jewish cultural organization. I wonder if that's what you meant or if you were thinking of the Jewish ethical society.

A: No. No. No. I didn't mean the conversion as a -- in a religious sense.

Q: Okay, I mean, to be clear.

A: I meant it, it used to be a it used to be simply an organization where an orchestra was -- the local orchestra was hired and they would sing concerts. Now we added on a an orchestra and it became a self-sustaining, Jewish cultural organization, where culture was continued parallel to whatever we were able to do with restrictions obviously. We were not permitted to do German composers. We had to restrict ourselves to either foreign composers or Jewish composers so we could not perform after 1934, I think, or '35 -- Bach was out. But we did do *Orpheus and Eurydice*, by Gluck<sup>9</sup>. We were permitted to do an Offenbach<sup>10</sup> opera -- operetta. We did *Judas, Judas Maccabaeus*, by Handel<sup>11</sup> and things like this.

01:13:04

Q: What happened as we moved toward Kristallnacht?

A: Crystal Night, I went to school. This is a commercial school where I went like on every day, and it seems to be I walked on that day. Why I walked and didn't use a bicycle, I cannot remember. But I walked. And I did not really see much of mobs because I was in school at eight o'clock. I saw something which struck me funny. I didn't give it a second thought. I

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<sup>9</sup> Christoph Willibald Gluck

<sup>10</sup> Jacques (nee Jacob) Offenbach

<sup>11</sup> George Frideric Handel

went to school and around nine or nine-thirty, the telephone I was called by the directress and was told, "Your mother has called. You should leave school immediately, and you should go to Heidelberg and you should wait in Heidelberg for your cousin who will come separately and you will spend the day in Heidelberg. When I called home to find out what was going on, I was told, "Don't ask so many stupid questions. Just go to Heidelberg and call me tonight." So Heidelberg being only 10 miles from Mannheim, I walked myself over from the school to the . railway station which was only a 10 minute walk.

01:15:00

And on the way I started to realize what was going on in the city. I saw furniture being thrown out of windows and people being arrested, but since I didn't look Jewish in their sense, nobody bothered me. So I went to the railroad station, bought a ticket to Heidelberg, and 15 minutes later was in Heidelberg where I met my cousin and we spent the day in the famous Heidelberg woods, walking and there seems to be a -- a faint memory that we were supposed to touch base with a -- I don't know if it was a far relative of my grandmother or just friends. In any case they were of Czech nationality and we were supposed to touch base there to see what was going on and I arranged -- we agreed with my cousin that this would take place around -- after four o'clock in the afternoon. So we walked in the woods, and my cousin got very nervous and wanted to come down much earlier. However, I said, "No. We, we said -- we agreed it was four o'clock. We are not going to change the date." Which was very fortunate because by the time I -- we got there or shortly after four o'clock, the man had been arrested. If we would have gotten there earlier, we would have probably been arrested to. So we continued walking around in Heidelberg and when I called my mother at seven o'clock, she said she thinks the worst is over.

01:17:00

We should come home. Now let me add there that in the beginning of 1938, since nobody knew how long we would have to stay in Germany or would be in Germany, my father was gone and there was no income coming we had given up our own apartment and had moved in with my grandmother. My grandmother happened to be a French citizen which is a story in itself which came about shortly after the war. She wanted to go to Mannheim's twin city, Ludwigshafen.

Q: You mean after World War I?

A: After World War I. And when she came -- she was on the trolley car and when she came to the rail to the bridge across the Rhine to Ludwigshafen, the French had blocked passage for the day. They did this on occasion. And so my Grandmother descended from the trolley car and was trying to force her way across the bridge. She called the watch commander and explained to him that she is born before the Franco-Prussian War in 1870<sup>12</sup> in the Alsace and

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<sup>12</sup> The interviewee later corrects this date to 1870.

therefore, by rights, she is French. And the man happened to be a lawyer and explained to her that in order to become a French citizen again, she would simply have to apply for what was called reinstatement of some kind -- I forgot the French word right now -- which she did. Therefore my Grandmother in 1920 or '21 -- my mother always told the stories at -- during World War I, there were no political discussion in her house because my grandmother, notwithstanding the fact that her future son-in-law was a German soldier and her husband was a German -- was always a French patriot. So my Grandmother then applied for reinstatement and became a French citizen. So in 1938, on Crystal Night day, which was November 10th, when the destruction took place, my mother called the French consulate when the SA<sup>13</sup> started to smash in the back loft where my grandmother had commercial space rented out to a Jewish store who sold glass -- glass fixtures, electrical glass fixtures. And this was smashed to millions of bits and when my mother called -- my mother called the French Consulate because after all the apartment was in the name of my grandmother -- was a large apartment -- in order to protect the apartment from destruction. And within five or 10 minutes an SA man in uniform came, stopped the carnage in the back loft and was posted there all day long in order to protect my grandfather's apartment who was after all a French citizen. So I came home in, in the evening. Without a doubt the apartment was destroyed, but I do remember that one or two days after the 10th of November, I went to Ludwigshafen to help a former member of the orchestra straighten out her apartment which was in, in pitiful shape.

01:21:00

After Crystal Night 1938, I spent 1939 basically doing nothing. There was nothing I could do. I was reading a book a day and then war broke out. Now I think we should come back to my father. In March of 1938, my father went to Greece, and after a few months was able to start selling his company's goods again which did not sit too well with the German competition. And when they figured out in 1939 who was behind their loss of business which went to another firm, they managed to get my father expelled from Greece. My father went, I think in May, from Greece to Italy. In fact, my mother visited him in August of 1939 in Italy. She had a passport. We all had passports. And at that time was so convinced that nobody would be insane enough to start another war -- this was in August of 1939 -- that she came back home and instead of calling me who also had a passport to join her in Italy, so the family would have been reunited. So my mother came home second my father illegally went from Ventimiglia to Nice, across country on a boat -- on a little boat around the border and, of course, did all the things other people did who came in illegally. He was in jail for a few weeks, and then he lived precariously in the Nice until he was accidentally until he ran into a German patrol accidentally in, in 1944, and was deported. My mother came back home and on first of September 1939, World War Two broke out. The first thing which happened was that we were called to a Wehrmacht<sup>14</sup> office where we were mustered out of the army for being Jewish. In other words, we could not serve. We were not -- it was, it was not dignified for Jews to serve in the German, army.

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<sup>13</sup> Sturmabteilung [storm troopers] (German)

<sup>14</sup> Armed forces (German)

Q: Had he been admitted to the German army.

01:24:00

A: No. We had not been admitted to the German army, but we were mobilized like everybody else and had to present ourselves in a separate little office and these soldiers were very nice about it and -- but of course, we, we were not mobilized. Then in -- that was in the middle of September. Shortly after that, I was required to perform how would you call this, harvesting service in East Germany. That was east of Frankfurt--Frankfurt on the Oder. It was very far away in those days, it was a trip overnight through Berlin and then to Frankfurt on the Oder, and I was in a small village. We were quartered in the hall where you normally would have weddings. There were they installed platforms where we could sleep on. There were about 30 or 40 young people of Jewish -- German Jews, and we helped farmers harvest the sugar beets and potatoes. I don't know how much we harvested, but I can assure you every time I hit a -- I made an effort to hit into every potato and every sugar beet I had to dig out. And what was traumatic about this was not that we had to do this, but in Germany, there's a law, on the -- was on the books, probably still on the books -- that when you move from one location to the other, you have to go to the local police precinct and notify them you are going from here to there, so that your records are maintained and, of course, my mother probably worried that if, when I would -- when I come back, there would be trouble. But when we were there six weeks and when I came back, there was no trouble. I just registered again I am back. That was the end of it. Then my mother was able to arrange that in on January the third, I think, or second, immediately after the first of the year in -- of 1940, I started to work at the Hilfsverein<sup>15</sup>. The Hilfsverein was an organization set up by the National Representation of German Jews in Berlin to assist people with their immigration problems and since America was still out of the war at that time, there was -- Jews still could immigrate.

01:27:00

German Jews were still able to immigrate to the United States or to Cuba so we had a very busy office and I was working there as a volunteer secretary until we were deported. And in order to be able to work there, I had to travel to Berlin to present myself to the chief of this organization. In the Jewish Reichsvertretung<sup>16</sup>. You know the German Jews had their own organization who represented the Jews with the vis à vis the government and I traveled at night from Mannheim to Berlin, presented myself in the morning to the chief -- was a man with a beard whose name I don't remember anymore -- and traveled back the same night from Berlin -- the next, next night from Berlin back to Mannheim which was not very pleasant because my mother decided I should travel second class. It would be more

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<sup>15</sup> Hilfsverein der Deutschen Juden [German Jews' Aid Society](German)

<sup>16</sup> Reichsvertretung der Juden in Deutschland [Reich Representation of Jews in Germany](German)

comfortable since I would not sleep for two nights and all I had in the compartment were either officers of the army or SS<sup>17</sup> officers who were traveling – it wasn't very funny. But you know I did what my father always did when my father was traveling, as long as he was traveling and working until the end of 1937. He always had Nazi newspapers, so I did the same thing. I had Nazi newspapers and they left, no--nobody bothered me. So nothing much happened in 1940, until on October 21st around 10 o'clock the telephone rang in the office and the chief of my office was at the same time the representative of the Mannheim Jewish community with regard to the Gestapo. So at 10 o'clock around the telephone rang. The Gestapo was on the phone -- he should come down immediately, which he did. He had weekly contact with them. He probably had to report to them on -- on the state of immigration and how people you know people -- we were still able to get a lot of people out. And in fact my own cousin was able to leave through Russia, went to Japan, and managed to get into San Francisco before the outbreak of the war. So he was lucky. The head of this office came back and told us, "We're going to close up now. We are going to be deported tomorrow to France." And he went upstairs to notify the president of the Mannheim Jewish community. And so eventually around noon, we closed up the community offices. We went home. When I came home, I said to my mother, "We are going to pack now because we're going to be sent to France tomorrow."

01:30:00

And my mother was totally -- couldn't believe this. So I started to pull out suitcases, started to put stuff together which I wanted to take along and when she saw I was really dead serious about it, she finally -- half-heartedly believed that what I was saying was true, and then after dark, at night, a -- we had a man who worked for us, bringing up coal from the basement, when we lived in our own apartment. And he came at night surreptitiously, to tell us that he had heard from his friends at the police, that we would be deported tomorrow to France. And then she finally believed it. Unfortunately, why we couldn't -- we were not able to communicate with our friends because telephones were no longer an item for Jewish families after 1939. So we packed and indeed, the next morning the Gestapo rang around eight o'clock and told us that we were arrested and in the name of the people, we should pack what we should take and they would pick us up in a hour which was really two and a half or three hours. So they -- the people were fairly decent. They gave many people enough time to pack, half-way reasonably. They explained we should take stuff along which was warm. We were allowed to take what we can carry, plus 100 marks, plus I believe food for two or three days. They came. They picked us up. We were brought to I think it was a railroad station and then we were loaded into passenger trains no less and this was an action which related to all German Jews in Baden, in the State of Baden, and the Palatinate; the two Nazi officials who -- or the Nazi official who was responsible for these two states wanted to be one of the first ones to report that he has no more Jews in his state. So we were loaded. We, we went into this special train, and it was one of seven trains which, if I remember right which was to go to France and shortly before we departed, an SS officer appeared in our car

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<sup>17</sup> Schutzstaffeln [Protection Squads] (German)

-- why he came to our car I don't know, was haphazardly -- and picked out a man who wore in his lapel a sign which identified him as a, a German war veteran of World War I.

01:33:00

He appointed him chief of the train. So when the train left, we went first through the Alsace in Mulhouse the SS appeared, threatening us and changing -- exchanging our money and telling us that if any money would be found on anybody in excess; of the 100 marks, we were permitted to take the person -- people would be arrested and shot. But nobody -- they never searched anybody, and there were indeed probably a number of people who gambled and had more money on them. So our 100 marks were exchanged for 2000 French francs and then we went on. We came to Lyon and apparently, we were the first train so when in Lyon, the French gendarmarie which was at the station looked for some spokesman. The man who was appointed the transport chief identified himself and asked me to translate because he didn't speak French. So it turned out these -- the French were not notified by the Germans. They were -- the French were told that there are Alsations coming who don't want to stay under the German rule. But that was all they were told. They didn't know numbers. They didn't know that this was a lie. They were dumbfounded when they found that there were German Jews in this train and this was one train and, of course, they didn't know there were six others coming. So they gave us some food, and then the trains went on. Actually, we were deported on the 22nd and we got to Oloron, which is the closest railroad station to the camp on the 25th, so we were three days in this train and we came -- we arrived in Oloron in a down pour which was unbelievable and we were put on trucks and taken to camp, which turned out to be Camp de Gurs. For identification purposes, let's say that Camp de Gurs is in the south of France about 40 or 60 miles from the Spanish border.

Q: Could you describe your arrival in Gurs please?

01:36:15

A: At Gurs we -- when we unloaded in front of the camp, it was still raining. And so it was -- I believe it was evening, and so we were taken into the camp and distributed into a camp block, 30 or 40 people into one block. All we found was an empty barracks. All the barracks were empty. There was some straw and they gave us empty covers and we had to do -- we had to fill them to have a straw mattress. And the ground in Gurs is -- I don't know how to describe it. There was very little there were -- there was one central street. The camp incidentally was built by -- by the Spanish for the Spanish refugees. And so we were dumped into these barracks and that was the end of it. There was a -- at the beginning we had milit-paramilitary gendarmeries there who guarded us and, of course, men and women were separated. It took awhile to sort out where everybody was, but eventually we found out where -- where our -- the members of our families were. I was deported with my mother and Incidentally, my grandmother had to leave Germany abruptly on September 1, 1939, because she was a French citizen. She tried to get into Switzerland where she had a sister, but Switzerland had imposed visa requirements and she couldn't go into Switzerland so she

ended up in an old age home in Nancy and eventually she went to Bordeaux. And from Bordeaux she joined my father in Nice and eventually she set up household with him in Nice, and she died in Nice.

01:38:10

Q: How old was she?

A: My grandmother was born on January 27, 1970, so she was about --

Q: 1870?

A: 1870. So she was she was about 73 or 74. I think 73.

Q: Let's come back to you -- to Gurs.

A: Well, the beginning, of course, was very chaotic. We didn't -- and the first night, we didn't even have our luggage. The luggage was brought the next morning. It was just dumped in the rain and we had to pull our -- you know, it was lying in a big pile and he had to find our luggage. And which I did for both myself and my mother. And so my mother was in one block and I was in the other, and there was nothing to do, of course. We could not get out of the block. And I was here and my mother was a few hundred yards further north in another block with the women. And by the time all of the transports had finally arrived there were over 7,000 or 8,000 people in the, in the camp for which the authorities had, of course, very little advance warning because nobody knew we were coming. Well, eventually things settled down. Every time it rained people would fall in the mud, particularly the old people. The food was abominable. We had very little to eat. The French had nothing to eat, so we had even less.

01:40:00

And since a friend of my father was the vice chief of the block where I was in, I managed eventually to get myself occupied by working in the office in the -- each block had its own administrative office and I managed to work in the office. The one advantage of this was that it was warm. There was no heating material, but the offices had, of course, more heat so during the day I was reasonably warm while I was working there. And periodically, maybe once or twice a week, you managed to get enough -- a pass to visit members of your family in the other block and my mother worked in the block office where she was because the woman who was picked as the chief of the block had only one qualification. She spoke fluent French. She was probably the only one who spoke as fluent as French as she did. My mother spoke French obviously, so she managed to be this woman who spoke so fluent French managed to become the block head of the block which had benefits. You had a barrack. At night the barrack was yours. She had alone -- she lived alone in this big barrack which during the day was the office and somehow or other, all of the block chiefs ate better

or most of them. They just took food out of the kitchen and life settled down. There wasn't very much to do. Eventually I managed -- we managed to get musical instruments and we started to play a quartet and in this respect, I must say, the French administration, who really showed not very much sympathy organized to have one barrack in each block as a cultural, as a cultural barrack so you had lectures. We gave concerts, and for me it was very good because the moment I was a part of a quartet, I had a permanent pass and I could circulate in camp. And the instruments came from the YMCA<sup>18</sup> who, who were with other organizations very active in trying to ameliorate our fate.

Q: What instrument did you play?

A: I played cello. I still do. I met my wife in camp.

01:43:00

Q: Tell me about that meeting.

A: Oh, my wife worked in, in the -- she was a messenger, I believe, in the, in the office where my mother worked, so when -- I met her when I visited my mother. And eventually the Secours Suisse<sup>19</sup>, or rather the Swiss Red Cross who had sent a nurse -- Elsbeth Kasser, she is still alive -- set up in a barrack, breakfast for the young generation. And that was really -- I don't remember now if we got it once or if we got it daily or if we got it two or three times a week, but we got a supplementary feeding which helped many of us survive better. So, every morning I would come -- I would -- we were permitted, of course, to leave the -- the block for this. We would I would pick up my wife at the end of the -- her block. We would walk together to the barrack to have our food and come back, and I would see my wife every time when I obviously we weren't married then -- when I would visit my mother or if I came to visit to see her. We met in a -- I met her in, I think, it was December of 1940, so this is now 50 years.

Q: What kinds of things were you able to do during the day? Were you able to see your wife during the day?

A: No. We saw each other fairly frequently since I could circulate. She worked. I think she, she will tell you that herself. She was giving out mail. She was running errands. I worked in the office and she was able to leave well before me. She left in, I think, in September of '41. I am not sure about the date. She will tell you.

Q: We'll take that up.

A: You take that up with her.

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<sup>18</sup> Young Men's Christian Association

<sup>19</sup> Swiss Aid (French)

Q: Let's pick up where you -- I am sorry.

01:46:00

A: I was still in my block. However, eventually the French authorities needed to stage an example on -- for everybody's benefit to limit corruption. By corruption I mean the two chiefs in my block and one chief's wife were really stealing food from the block and lived very well. And there were French inspectors who noticed this and eventually this became -- was very pervasive. I believe it was done in almost every block with the exception of one. And the French became concerned with this, so since other things happened about which I am not quite sure what happened. They caught them in all kinds of unethical things. They decided to stage an example and to get rid of these people, the block was dissolved. And one morning before some movement of people started, the redistribution of our entire block to other blocks started. The French inspector who was responsible for our block, stood in front of me and asked me if I would do a job for him. The job was I had to inventory -- do the inventory for the whatever little equipment there was. Which I did. It was my first experience with inventory. Little did I know that in my later life, inventory would play a big role because in accounting, inventory is a very important feature. And so when this was done and I had given him all the lists and all the equipment, He said to me, "I will thank you in kind. I will take care of you." Now I don't have something for you at the moment." He knew I was working at the office, of course. Otherwise, I wouldn't have gotten that job. "But I will take care of you." So I was put into really a terrible block mostly with people who were not from the group of German Jews who were other people who were interned there. And I was there about three weeks, very unhappy. Fortunately, I had my pass and I could get out when I wanted to get out to see my mother and.... Well, one day three weeks later, he stood again in front of me, "I haven't forgotten you. I have a job for you. We'll move you to the hospital and you can do the office in the hospital." This was a very privileged position because I shared the -- the room. I had a room in a barrack, but it was a room with a door with our own stove with a bed. Had only a straw mattress, but it was a bed while we slept basically on little wooden platforms which the Spanish refugees had made for us for money with barbed wire where the barbs were taken out and the wire was used as, as a mattress support.

01:49:00

So there I had a hospital bed. We could light a fire in the evening during the day and I shared the room with a man who was really responsible for -- he was really the, the block chief for the hospital to the extent that this was necessary. This was basically the job of accompanying really sick people who had to be evacuated to a hospital to ride the ambulance daily back and forth to either Oloron, which was the closest point to a doctor or to the hospital in Pau. And eventually I also was able to commute once in awhile out of the camp and with the ambulance, breathe some fresh air. In retrospect, of course, it was stupid I never took my mother along. I -- if I would have taken my mother along and gone with her to Pau, we could have managed probably to escape and join my father in Nice. But being Germans, it never

occurred to us. Eventually in -- I was approached or my mother was approached -- if I could leave -- if there would apply -- a space some -- somewhere a place could be found for me if I would be permitted to leave my mother and get -- to get out of camp and, of course, she consented to that. And so in probably in July of 1942 after 20 months I left camp with the same social worker who escorted Hanne and her group to Le Chambon, and was brought to Talluyers. Talluyers is a small village outside of Lyon. With me was one other young fellow about a year or a year and a half younger than I was. And the two of us were brought to a farm which was run by the Jewish Boy Scouts of France. It was a working farm. There were a lot of young people there. The one problem we had with the farm was neither he nor I were Orthodox and this was not an Orthodox farm, but an ultra-Orthodox farm. They didn't let us work too much because they knew we were so skinny, we couldn't have worked anyway. And around the end of July, the very end of July, my girlfriend came from Gurs having obtained permission to visit her mother and I saw her then for the first time after about a year. And when she came back from the camp, she came again to tell me that her mother was deported. She could not enter camp. She will tell you that herself. And we arranged then and there that if there would be problems for me that I should try to make my way to where she was because she felt certain that there would be help for anybody who is up there in Le Chambon. Now, you must remember this was -- she was, of course, in 1942, she was just 17 and since people didn't talk about what was going on, it was just the feeling she had and she knew there would be help.

01:53:00

What we didn't know was that about a week or two after she had left we -- an announcement was made by the management of the farm that they were notified that in about two weeks or two and a half weeks, there would be raids on the farm and all the foreign Jews would be arrested, which meant all of us, of course. But not to worry, that we would be helped by hiding. But when the time came to disperse everybody, help was indeed forthcoming for everybody but four of us -- my friend from Gurs and two other somewhat older young fellows who were not Orthodox -- we were told to help ourselves. What was interesting is that these people who were running the camp -- it was an Alsatian Jew and two Rabbis who -- because they are still alive I won't mention their names -- German Rabbis, who were in Gurs who are mentioned by name in, in -- as being very helpful while they were in Gurs -- in a book by Schramm<sup>20</sup> about her experiences in Gurs and but there was no help for us. We were told, "Do what you feel is right. Go wherever you want to go." And that was the end for that. So my friend and I from Gurs, Gurs, we went to Le Chambon, which wasn't so far away from there, because all we knew Hanne had explained to us, we leave to go to Saint Étienne and in Saint Étienne I believe there was a train going up to Le Chambon.

01:55:00

Q: On the camp management, well the camp -- I want to make sure this is clear. The camp

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<sup>20</sup> Hanne Schramm

management did take care of everybody except you four.

A: The farm management.

Q: Yes.

A: Took care -- took care of all of the other people. In fact, I understand that most of these people today are in Israel, including the principals.

Q: What, what was the life like for you on that farm for those two or three weeks you were there?

A: It was probably 5, four or five weeks. I have a very hazy recollection. I really don't remember much. It was obviously much better than it was in camp but you know, I am not the one who is at ease in any farm. I am not the type.

Q: Let's hold it for a moment and let us change tape.

A: Yeah.

01:56:00

**TAPE #2**

A: ...And you know, I have talked with other people about this and they really said that they're not surprised because the Germans are very rigid.

Q: What a minute. Hold on. Is the tape rolling again? We're back on for an hour? Okay. We're back on. Just one minute. I think we should finish this and we should finish this and I think we should finish it on the tape. Will you tell us on tape about the incident in New York please that you were describing to me.

A: Oh, yeah. but to -- to finish up with the farm. We were -- Hanne and I and our daughter was in, in New York. We were in New York only a very short time, a few weeks. We were walking down Broadway, pushing the baby carriage when we ran into the two rabbis who were in Talluyers and whom al-- of course, we also knew from Gurs.

Q: These are the two rabbis who had refused to help you.

A: These are the two rabbis who did, did nothing to help. And their reaction was actually very interesting because if they could have sunk into the earth to disappear when they saw us and we started to talk with them for a minute or two, they would have really disappeared because they visibly had a bad conscience when they saw us.

Q: Okay. Thank you. Alright. So you left the farm.

A: So, we left the farm early in the morning and by 10 o'clock at night, we were in the Le Chambon.

Q: Did you have help in getting to Le Chambon?

Q: No. We took, we took the train.

A: Okay?

A: We had a few francs, and we took the train to Le Chambon.

Q: What did you do?

A: Well, it was 10 o'clock. Where I am going to find Hanne at 10 o'clock at night? I don't even know where she is. So, we decided we're going to sleep. There was a little wooded opening in the middle of nowhere, and we decided that we are going to put our sleeping bags down and we're going to sleep there. And we did. Around four-thirty, five o'clock, five-fifteen in the morning, we hear -- we had just woken up and we had just folded up our sleeping bags when we hear girls' voices passing on the path where we were in the in the little wood and who walked by? Hanne! With a few of the teenage girls who were with her in the little

children's home in, in Le Chambon.

02:03:00

And so I whistled after her because I had to run first to, to catch her and she absolutely refused to turn around. Her girlfriend, who knew me, saw me and tried to stop Hanne walking on and so eventually she physically turned her around. There was I was. So Hanne took us to Madame André Philip<sup>21</sup>, who she apparently -- she knew her, and she figured she would be a logical person to, to help. So Mireille asked her only one question: Can she trust me? Hanne said, "Yes. He's my boyfriend." And so Madame Phillip took me to a villa where I stayed overnight and in the meantime, obviously, she had to find a place for me to stay. And so the next night I walked about an hour and a half at night to a farm like the farms which are -- were shown on the movie by Pierre Sauvage, typical farm like this to a farmer whose name I don't know to this day. If I knew it, I forgot it but I don't know the name. Was a man, maybe in his late 40s. He looked old to me because he had a gray beard already, and his wife, and a teenage daughter and since farms, living spaces very restricted because most is given over to animals and to hay he put me into the hayloft, and I must say the man was very practical. The first thing he did, he cut a hole at the end of the hayloft into the where you would normally put a, a wagon or something. He put a hole there which led right down to the -- where the animals were so that I have -- would have my, my toilet or something. It was the first thing he did, took a saw and cut out the hole. And I spent three and a half weeks in the hayloft. I got my breakfast. I got my lunch, which I ate in the hayloft. They brought it. And I came down for dinner. I ate dinner with them in their kitchen. You know every night was a wonderful dinner for the times -- was potato soup with lard and milk poured into the soup and some vegetable. And what really these three and a half weeks with this farmer permitted me eventually to gain enough physical strength to get out of France through the mountains which wasn't so easy, was a physical, great physical exercise. In fact, the only literature I had in, in this hayloft for three and half was a New Testament. That's all he had in the house so he gave it to me and I read it. And I thought already, "They must have forgotten I am here." I didn't hear from anybody. I didn't see anybody. I was totally alone with these farm people for three and a half weeks.

Q: You didn't see Hanne?

02:07:00

Q: No, Hanne was -- in fact, Hanne during this period was hiding herself most of the time with another farmer because there were raids going on all over the so-called unoccupied zone of France and the people were being arrested and deported. So one day the farmer brought me a little note from Hanne so at least I knew, aside from hearing from Hanne, I knew that people knew where I was. And lo and behold a few days later at right somebody came to pick me up to bring me back to Le Chambon. I slept in the same villa where I was -- when I was

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<sup>21</sup> Mireille Philip

brought. The next day Madame Philip, and I saw Hanne, of course, who had come back at the same time too apparently, and Madame Philip explained to me that they are going to make photograph of me, giving me false papers and will help me to get across France to the French Alps and from there I would be helped into Switzerland. So they had -- the papers were made. I got them at night. And the next morning I set off with three other young fellows from, from Le Chambon. In a train, regular trains, we went across that portion of France into the French Alps and we stopped -- I don't remember the name of the place. One - I believe it was one stop before Saint Gervais -- in the French Alps. There a 10 year old boy picked us up, brought us to the home of his father. We met there a, a young Protestant minister who was supposed to go with us when we would cross the mountains to learn the route so that he would help people later on go the same route.

02:09:00

So the next morning we set off. Our guide was this 10 year old boy who knew these, these mountains like his back pocket. The priest and the four of us, the minister and the four of us and we climbed all day until it was night. We stayed -- it was raining at night -- we stayed under an overhang under a rock so we were dry and we -- I was even able to sleep even. And we continued the next day and sometimes maybe at eight o'clock, we started very early, and sometimes during the morning the boy said, "Now, from here on, you are on your own." He explained to us where we had to go. He told us we would have to go down this mountain. We were about -- I don't now -- somewhere around the 9,000 foot level probably, maybe a little less, maybe a little more, well above the tree line. He explained to us where we should go and said we would come into Switzerland. They also told us -- the minister told us, we should get rid of our false identification cards because they were afraid that if the Swiss find false papers on us, they might suspect an organized effort behind this and would immediately return us. Well we, we climbed most of the day down, eventually ended up on a highway which was totally deserted, and walked on this highway further down, descended through a tunnel and in the tunnel we were stopped by a patrol who had -- as they told us when they brought us back to the -- to a mountain hut where we found another 30 or 40 people which were gone during the day. They told us that they had watched for hours with their glasses coming down. The next morning we were, we were able to buy -- I had one or two Francs. It was enough to buy some breakfast in this mountain hut. All of us were told that we would be returned to France. We would not be kept. A detachment of soldiers started to bring us back up into what is -- what they called no man's land, from where we would descend again to France. Now we came into France -- into Switzerland, in the valley not far from Finhaut.

02:12:00

I was able to determine this later where I was. And I managed also in the morning during breakfast to look at the map and I had somebody show me from the Swiss where we were. So I knew exactly where I was. So a detachment of soldier--soldiers took us back up into the mountains, well above the tree line again. And then something very extraordinary happened during this hike up the mountain. All of a sudden, a non-commissioned Swiss soldier started

to scream at me and tiraded me for about 15 minutes, screamed at me what I'm not permitted to do: I'm not permitted to come back to Switzerland, I'm not permitted to do this, I am not permitted to do that. What the man really did in these 15 minutes, he laid out for me but exactly how to go back to Switzerland. All I had to do is subtract the word "not." The tragedy was that everybody in our group heard this. Nobody understood what this man was trying to do. So eventually the captain of -- of this detachment stopped and told us that they would stay here and we should go on. So the first thing I did was -- we went on. We went across a bend, around the bend, where I was sure the Swiss couldn't see us anymore. Then I stopped the whole group and I explained to them what just had transpired, and they had all heard it. And we argued this out for an hour and nobody understood -- had understood what this was all about and these people were so shaken that after an hour of talking with them, I finally found one person who was willing to see the -- my logic and my reasoning that we know what's down there and all we do is possibly waste another day, but we also may -- might save our lives. So this one fellow and I separated from the group, and the rest went down and I went back towards Switzerland. We crossed a little icy stream coming down, which was a glacier border, you know, but not further than a few like this.

02:15:00

Was very narrow because it had only started a little further up, and we climbed further up and all of a sudden we were on a very, very narrow path and the fellow who was with me who didn't know really where he was -- an Austrian, I never saw him again after, after we separated in Switzerland -- wanted to go to the right and I wanted to go down to the left. And I said, "When -- look when you go to the right, you're going nowhere. You're going back to France possibly." But in order to convince him, I said, "Alright. Let's walk to the right the way you want to walk because I am sure you will, will end up nowhere." And lo and behold, after five minutes, we were abruptly at the precipice down 1,000 or 3,000 feet, was nothing. So, he finally believed me and we turned around and we walked the same path. We came back and eventually this very narrow little path became wider and became wider, became a little road and we eventually came into a little village which was Finhaut. Now I had no Swiss money. He still had some. And we had been told in Le Chambon already that if we need help we should look for a Protestant minister. If there's no Protestant minister, go to the Catholic priest. They probably will help you. So I went to church, to the church. There was a church. Yeah, but the priest wasn't there. He was -- had gone into the valley for the day. So we went on and it became dusk. I didn't want to stay in Finhaut. It was too big for me. So it became eventually dark and we walked and we came through another few -- a village of maybe 10 or 15 houses and I looked around and I said, "I don't want to sleep in the open again tonight." I had slept two nights before in the open -- in the rain. So I picked a house which I thought looked friendly and just knocked at the door and a man peers out. I explained to him, "We are refugees. Could we stay over for the night?" And he said, Well, he's newly-wed. It's not his house. It's a house of his brother-in-law, but why don't we wait. "I'll, I'll ask him." Well, after five minutes, he came back, "Come on in." They gave us food. They gave us a bedroom. They gave us breakfast the next morning and they explained to us where we were and where we should go, so we walked most of the day and, and he also told

us not to go to Martigny -- which was the next larger place -- because Martigny was a garrison city with military police all over. So -- and military all over. We would probably get, get stopped.

02:18:00

So we went to -- he showed us a way how to go to the next village. I don't remember the name. And by then it was already two or three o'clock. Here we had walked all day to come down and then I went again to the Catholic priest's house. He gave us two eggs to eat, which was something because there was strict rationing in Switzerland and he gave me five francs which was enough to go by railroad to Lausanne, the next bigger city, where I wanted to go. And he also told me, "Don't go with the express trains. The express train is checked by military police. Go with the local train." And lo and behold, we got to Lausanne. Nobody had bothered us. Then I was in Lausanne in the railroad station and I really, for a moment, didn't know what to do with myself until about 15 or 20 -- we were wondering aimlessly around this -- this railroad station until I realized, "You are Jewish. God, why don't you look in the telephone for the Jewish community?" I went to the telephone book. The other guy wasn't much help. He followed. And lo and behold, the Jewish Community was Rue de la Gare -- it's the railroad street, the station street. So we went out of the railroad and within one or two minutes, we were -- we walked into the Jewish community, who welcomed us and told us, "Now look, we have to turn you over to the Swiss authorities, but don't worry. You will not be returned." These people had not known, of course. I had never told anybody that I had been arrested and, and the Swiss who were up in the mountains did not take apparently our names down, did not report it, so nobody knew apparently, as it turned out, that I had been 48 hours or 24 hours before already in Switzerland, and was returned. So we were turned over to the military. We were kept for a few days in the barrack at Ouchy, which is a suburb of Lausanne, where we had to fill out long questionnaires and were interrogated by some investigators who fortunately did not speak German and my Austrian friend with whom I had come did not speak French or very little French, so I was translating the way it suited me from what he said, to what I told the guy, so he never knew anything what I didn't want him to know.

02:21:00

And from Ouchy, we were taken to a quarantine, military camp. You can't call it a camp. It was in the back room of a local inn, where they had made matt-- you know, platforms to sleep on. And they fed us, and the food was good. There was nothing wrong. It wasn't, wasn't French food. It was at least -- and we were there from September after -- oh yeah, end of September, October first maybe until about four weeks and then four weeks later, we were transferred to another identical facility on the other end of Switzerland in the German part of Switzerland and there I was for another four weeks probably. And on December 22nd, 1942 I was given papers to a work camp again in the French part of Switzerland. And when I came there in the early afternoon, the only person in the camp was the camp director. It was then a civilian camp -- was internment camp with barracks, but it was a civilian camp. The

only person there was a director of the camp who had -- with his wife and his small child at the time, who not that small -- the daughter was maybe 12 or 13. Everybody else was on leave somewhere in Switzerland. So the first question was, "What are you doing here?" I said, "I was assigned here" "You have any family somewhere in Switzerland?" I said, "Yes. I have a cousin here." "Let's call him. Maybe you can go there." So I came from, from almost the border of, of the Swiss-German border and I went practically back to the same place because my cousin lived very close by. And I spent three days or four days with my cousin during the Christmas holidays and then I came back to camp and I started camp life in, in Switzerland.

Q: Do you know -- two questions. Did you know first what happened to the people who you left?

A: No. I don't know what happened to them.

Q: Okay.

A: I know. No. I don't know really what happened to them.

Q: What camp was it that you are in what internment? Do you know the name of it?

A: Oh, yeah. Where? In, in, in Switzerland, I was in many internment camps and we can -- I can read them off to you. I have this--

Q: No. The one where you just left--

A: Was Sierre.

Q: How long were you there and what did you do? What was life like?

A: Well, the camp was set up really to clear land, to make land arable because there was a great shortage of food in Switzerland. You know, they had to be more or less self supporting and I am really not familiar with the dates. We can -- I can show you the dates afterwards on my -- when we take a photo of the identifications -- Swiss identification papers. Well, when I came back, it had snowed. There were about two or three feet of snow. And the first thing we had to do was to clear the road from the camp to the street -- to the main highway and I didn't very much appreciate this. I don't like physical labor. So I decided at that point already that this is not for me. I got to do something about it.

02:25:00

And I managed to get, within two weeks, I was in the office. They needed somebody in the office because there was a great deal of administrative work to be done on a daily basis. There was rationing and you had to do rationing reports which had to be typed a certain way

in order to get the rationing tickets to which we all were entitled to or the camp was entitled to, so there was a great deal of administrative work to be done. So I went into the office. And I was in offices in refuge camps or homes for the rest of my Swiss stay for five and one half years. I was in -- the only time I was out was a few months while I was -- where I was in Geneva where I took some social services courses. We -- one did not know what would be. I had no profession basically. So when the opportunity came to take some courses in social service, I took the opportunity. I was put in the pension in Geneva and I took these courses. Incidentally, we also got married during this period in Geneva.

Q: Alright. Tell, tell me about that. How did you meet up again with Hanne and how did you--?

A: Well, Hanne came in February of -- February 28, 1943. She will tell you she came a different way. The difference between her and me was that I came and remained an illegal alien in Switzerland for the entire five and a half years we were in Switzerland while the moment Hanne set foot on Swiss soil, she was legal because her relatives had procured a Swiss visa. We managed to get permission after I was married. After all, I knew the ropes, how to do these things. I was in the offices all this time. I got permission to bring her .with me, to live with me. Then eventually they decided since she is really not an internee, and a -- but a legal foreigner, she could not live with me. Then we had to go through the charade of having a room, renting a room in Montreux would cost a lot of money. We had to pay for the room, which she didn't use once. She stayed with me in, in the home where I was. Eventually, we were able to give up the room again.

02:28:00

And after the social services course we came -- I went back to a refuge home in the office. I was assigned again to an office, to run an office and she came along. By the way, while I was, while I was in Geneva and Hanne was in Geneva -- and the circumstances of Hanne staying in Geneva she will tell you herself -- we, all of a sudden, we are approached by -- now I can't think of the name of the man -- by a German Gentile. I believe he was Gentile. And we were not married at the time yet. Hanne will probably supply the name. I can't think of it right now. He invited us for tea twice, and he was really trying to recruit us. The war would end soon. It was in 1944 or early 1945, and why wouldn't we come to East Germany where the Russians were to help build up East Germany? And we got into a rather lengthy discussion twice about the merits of going into an authoritarian dictatorship. I pointed out to Siberia and the camps in Siberia which the man tried not to play down, of course. And eventually, I made -- we made it clear to him that we are not interested. What is interesting about these two interviews is that about 20 years<sup>22</sup> later, we are reading an obituary in the New York Times about the right hand of Mr. Brandt<sup>22</sup>, who was German Prime Minister, and it was this man and the obituary related that after the war, he came back to East Germany, eventually ran afoul of the Russian authorities, was in Siberia, somehow when he was released managed to get to West Germany and became the right hand man of Mr. Brandt. So,

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<sup>22</sup> Willy Brandt (nee Herbert Ernst Karl Frahm)

Hanne and I got married in Geneva in -- on April 14, 1945. Our daughter was born in March of 1946, and in 1948 in -- after we had obtained our visas for the United States, we came here.

02:31:00

Q: Where did you go once you came here?

A: We came to New York and we stayed in New York. In the beginning, you know, I was told, "Go to HIAS<sup>23</sup>. Maybe they can help you." And we went, and the suggestion was made, "Why don't you go to Pritoria -- Peoria?" Peoria, Illinois. Well, first, of course, no where -- I didn't know anything. For the first two weeks so I permitted myself the question, "Who's going to pay for all of this?" "Well, your relatives, of course." So, we never went to Peoria, Illinois. We stayed in New York.

Q: Is there anything else that you would like to add?

A: No. Probably after we all finish with the interview tomorrow or the day after, I probably can think of all kinds of things which I forgot, but right now --

Q: Thank you very much. What I would like to do now is to photograph the passports that he brought with us -- with him, please. What we will do, we will ask you to hold each up, and describe it, but they have to do funny things with them.

A: Yeah, I realize that. We will, we will Hanne her passports and I will just show mine, my two. And then we'll show the travel document yet.

Q: My notes say here that you succeeded in returning to Le Chambon. When are you talking about? You talked -- when we talked, before the interview, you said -- you described the 30 people. You're just talking about a later visit.

A: No. That is much, much -- No. That is five years ago, four years ago.

Q: Okay. Okay. That's all I needed to make sure.

A: It's not of consequence to--

Q: I just needed to be very clear.

A: This is my internal refugee pass for Switzerland. It contained identification with a picture. It shows--

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<sup>23</sup> United Hebrew Sheltering and Immigrant Aid Society.

Q: You'll have to hold on that longer.

A: Longer? Okay. Raise your hand when, when you want me --

Q: Alright. Continue.

02:35:00

A: It shows that there were always periods given in which we are permitted to remain in Switzerland. It was always a year or so and then it had to be renewed, which was a formality because they know, they know we couldn't go anywhere. It shows here, for instance, that we were interned by order of the police -- the federal police really. This is the record of all of the refugee camps and the homes where I was in from. And it finally has pages which shows what rationing cards were issued to me. Because after all, the Swiss are worse bureaucrats than the Germans. Now finally, on this page are three numbers. One is a number which -- under which I went while I was interned in these camps or homes. Actually I was more in formal hotels which due to the war were empty and where refugees were housed. One of those numbers is a police department number from the federal police. My -- I had an aunt who lived in Switzerland, who was married in Switzerland, who gave on the occasion of one of her visits a passport application where we had tried for me to come to Zurich to study at the conservatory of music. And as we discovered, this was a number which was given to me by the Swiss when I became -- when I came into Switzerland. Not only this, but when Hanne married me, all of sudden she -- this same number turned up on her refugee pass. We never were told anything about it, but you know the Swiss are very subtle. And since we had to fill out when we came a questionnaire of maybe 30 pages, they were able to trace back who we were and they matched my passport application from 1939 to my arrival in 1942 in Switzerland. Now, the other thing I wanted to show yet is the passport I used or we were issued in Switzerland since we refused to accept German papers. I did not want a German passport. I wanted no part of Germany. So this is the Swiss travel document which was used for us to obtain our American visa which is in here. It's just like a regular passport. It had our transit visa and our immigration visa. This is the immigration visa into the United States signed by the same man who had been promoted from Vice Consul to Consul who in Germany gave untold people untold trouble. I don't know if this ever was mentioned in an interview, but to obtain a immigration visa in those days in Germany was an extremely harrowing experience. Any pretext would be used to deny a visa. People would come with their children. The child might have bumped her arm or his leg and there would be a blue mark. This was enough, during the physical examination which was given in the Consulate in Stuttgart and in Berlin, to reject an application or to postpone an application for three, or four, or five months.

Q: Okay. That's it.

A: That's it.

Q:     Alright.

[Conclusion of interview]