United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Interview with Peter Feigl
August 23, 1995
RG-50.030*0272

PREFACE

The following oral history testimony is the result of a videotaped interview with Peter Feigl, conducted by Neenah Ellis on August 23, 1995 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.

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PETER FEIGL
August 23, 1995

Q: Please tell me your name and where and when you were born.

A: Okay. My name is Peter Feigl. I have Americanized it to Peter Ernst Feigl. Ernst was my father's middle name. I was actually born as Klaus Peter Feigl in Berlin in 1929 on the first of March 1929. When I was about three years old I didn't like the name Klaus and insisted I be called Peter.

Q: Tell me about your parents.

A: My father was born in Vienna in 1888 and was an Austrian citizen. He served in the Austrian Navy during the first world war. He studied engineering and was a mechanical engineer and at the time I was born, he was living in Berlin working for a multi-national company that had offices in a number of countries and that's, as I said, where I was born. My mother was born in Germany in what is today part of Poland and I think it's in Silesa or Pomerania and she married my father I believe two or three years before I was born. I don't have the exact date and according to then existing European convention and laws she became an Austrian citizen the moment that she married my father and I, although born in Berlin, automatically acquired the citizenship of my father. So, I was Austrian also.

Q: How did your parents meet? Where did they meet and how and under what circumstances?

A: That, I'm afraid I don't know. I cannot tell you. I know that my father had been married before to an Austrian movie actress, I think, and they were divorced; but this was long before my time. And I think during the period that I knew my parents and lived with them, I was too young for them to discuss these matters with me.

Q: You said your father was a mechanical engineer.

A: Right.

Q: Do you know very much about his family?

A: My father's mother, in other words, my paternal grandmother, was still alive when I was born. She died around 1935. She lived in Vienna. She had been a widow for many many years. She had two other children, two girls. One of the girls was named Minnie and she married an Austrian agricultural engineer and lived in Innsbruck from the time she was married until the time she died at about age 98 about two or

three years ago in 1992 or '93 I believe she died. The other sister, Marianne lived in Vienna and she never married, there is very little known about her. On a trip to Austria last year in 1994, I went to the Jewish Community Center there and I found that in their archives they do have a record that she lived in Vienna until about 1942 and the records show that she was then shipped eastwards and I believe to Kiev and never heard from again. So . . . I assume she was deported. My father's father as I mentioned died shortly . . . I think when my father was six he died. My father's grandfather was a Rabbi I am told.

Q: In Vienna?

A: In Vienna, yes, and I did find my paternal grandfather's grave and my paternal grandmother's grave in Vienna last summer in July when I was in Austria.

Q: Do you know very much about your mother's family and . . . (indecipherable)?

A: My mother's family, my mother's birth mother, real mother died in childbirth in 1904 when my mother was born and her father then re-married and the woman whom he re-married then ultimately came to live with us, that is in the same city when we were in Belgium and Brussels, I guess that's the time when I remember her most vividly. I remember also visiting her occasionally in Berlin so I know she lived in Berlin also. But then ultimately we fled together with her and my mother from Belgium into France later on.

Q: Do you know much about your mother's family, what they did?

A: No, not . . .

Q: What kind of a town they lived in?

A: They were born, my mother was born called Ottmachau which obviously was a very small city. It's a very small town. I'm planning to go to Poland sometime next year and I'd like to go and see if I can find any records or traces there. I did obtain a copy of her birth certificate from Polish authorities about two or three years ago.

Q: And what was her name before she married?

A: Her name was Bornstein. Bornstein. B-O-R-N-S-T-E-I-N and her mother's maiden name, that is the, not her birth mother but her, what I considered my grandmother, the maiden name was Kleczewer. The good portion of the Kleczewer family was very active in Germany, Berlin I believe her brother Siegmund Kleczewer was

general manager of one of the major automobile companies in Germany at the time. I think is was called Autounion. They ultimately wound up in England as a matter of fact. They managed to get to England in the late 1930s before the war started.

Q: What are some of your early memories of Berlin?

A: I remember much talk about someone named Hitler at the time. There was a lot of . . . there was some whispering going on in the family. There was I remember one incidence where for a period of five or six weeks it was very difficult for my mother to obtain any milk, eggs and butter in Berlin and Hitler made a speech and promised them butter and eggs and the next morning the stores were full and I remember my parents saying that this was manipulation of the people that most likely Hitler had just prevented deliveries from being made in order to get better control and maintain a popularity among the masses. I went to school and my first school was in a German school. I don't have any, I can't remember anything unpleasant having happened to me at the time. I know that there was talk about the Jewish problem and so forth. My father basically took the position that this doesn't concern him nor his family because we were Austrian. This is a German problem not an Austrian problem and so he didn't feel very concerned about it. As a matter of fact, because he represented a number of foreign manufacturers, he was for some time courted by the German authorities to assist them in obtaining materials which they couldn't readily have access to. One of the companies that he represented was an American company called Champion Spark Plugs.

Q: What kind of business was your father in?

A: The company was named Danish and Friedmann. I don't know whether it was an Austrian company with branches in other companies. I don't know where the home base was. I think it was in Austria but they did have offices among other places in Vienna, of course, and Berlin, in Prague, Czechoslovakia in Antwerp, Belgium and my father traveled extensively throughout Europe. I remember his coming back from trips to Bulgaria and bringing my mother "attar of roses" which was apparently a very expensive perfume at the time, rose extract. But he did travel extensively.

Q: Does he . . . was it an automotive kind of thing?

A: It was automobile primarily in the automotive parts and accessory business. Another company, an American company that he represented, manufactured brake linings, I don’t remember the name of the company and all types of automobile accessories. They then later on also got into the business of handling radios, that is for home use and there was also an American radio company called Detrola. D-E-T-R-O-L-A. We

had several Detrola radios at home that he had brought home as samples.

Q: Your mother stayed home with you? You were the only child?

A: I was the only child. I was an only child.

Q: And you had a nice life in Berlin.

A: We were very comfortable. As far as I can remember at least in 1934 or 1935, I think we had at least two servants in the house and my father drove a big fat Mercedes. If I had it today, it would be worth a fortune and we lived a very very comfortable life going on summer vacations either to the seashore or the North Sea or travelling to Switzerland. We lived well. No question about that. We had a villa at first. Later on we moved into an apartment before we left and we were in Berlin until about 1936, until about the middle of 1936.

Q: You mentioned that your father's attitude was that he didn't think that what was happening applied to him. Were your parents observant Jews?

A: Not at all. Not at all. I mean there was . . . Judaism was not practiced, no religion was practiced. I remember as a child, I think the only time that I ever set food in a synagogue was for the wedding of a friend or a relative of my parents and apparently I scandalized everyone when in the middle of the ceremony I loudly said to my grandmother, "Grandma, look at my beautiful brand new black patent leather shoes." I seemed to have interrupted the ceremony but that's about the only thing that I can remember about it. We never had a menorah in the house or mezuzah at the door. This was unknown. The only other symbol or connection to Judaism if you will was at Easter time, at Passover time, there was usually matzo at home which my father used to love. He loved to eat and also it was broken up into pieces and put into a bowl and then you poured coffee, milk and sugar on top of it and eat it that way.

Q: Did you, as a child, did you know that you were Jewish? Did you think about that at all? Did you have Jewish friends or was it just not a concept that was mentioned?

A: It didn't mean anything to me. It was not something I was aware of. I don't recall ever having been harassed in school while I was in Berlin during the first year. The name Feigl is a very common Austrian name and if you look in the Vienna telephone book today, you'll probably find something like 30 or 40 Feigls listed there spelled the way ours was spelled. F-E-I-G-L. F-E-I-G-E-L would have been a more Jewish name but G-L was a typical Austrian name, almost as common if you will, as Smith in the States.

Q: Can you tell me how it was then that you all came to leave Berlin? Do you remember very much of that?

A: Yes, about '36, mid-'36, my father was told to go to Prague and close down the branch office in Prague. Apparently, this office didn't do very well. It was not profitable. So, the entire family moved to Prague and the move was totally unrelated to what was going on politically in Germany at the time and we lived in Prague for a year. I certainly found myself thrown into a Czech-speaking environment which I apparently picked up within six months, I was speaking Czech in 1936. I was seven years old and we lived in Prague for one year and then went back to Vienna. When I say back to Vienna to my father's birth place and where what I thought was the headquarters of the company and established residence in Vienna and it must have been in early 1937. At that point, the problem of Jewish persecution and so forth must have concerned my father because at that time he decided to have me baptized Catholic. Over 95-percent of the Austrian population is Catholic and he thought that as an Austrian being a Catholic certainly couldn't do me any harm and so at the age of nine, I'm sorry, eight and a half, I was baptized by a Cardinal Innitzer. He had arranged to have the Cardinal baptize me and I went into catechism school and basically thought of myself as Catholic at this point.

Q: This was the first religious training that you had?

A: That's right, yes.

Q: Did you go to mass?

A: I, well, I went to mass for communion when it was required and for confession and so forth in the beginning. Subsequently, I didn't go because my parents didn't go. Later on in the 1940s when I was in France and various children's homes and so forth, suddenly being Catholic became useful again and in some places where the children were marched off to go to mass in the morning, I tagged along and then some places I was even, was alter boy and served mass.

Q: Were you in a public school in Vienna then?

A: Yes, I was in a public school in Vienna and I guess about one year until the Anschluss came in March of 1938 when Germany annexed Austria and at that point my father actually on the day of the Anschluss was outside the country on one of his many business trips and my mother was hoping that he would remain abroad so that he could send for us but after struggling for three days, my father managed to appear

back home in Vienna triumphantly that he had managed to smuggle himself back into Austria on a cold freight car, inside a cold freight car, coming out of Switzerland and he was all covered with soot and looked like a chimney sweep and there he was.

Q: Do you remember him . . .

A: I remember it because it was a big fight between my mother and my father at that time. My mother was furious that he had returned. She thought he was an idiot for not having stayed abroad and just calling for us to join him and he on the other hand was trying to defend his actions that he couldn't just leave us and abandon us and there was no guarantee that he could get us out and that's what he gets for struggling and risking his life to come back to get us. It was a big argument. I also remember that on the day of the Anschluss in 1938, so I had just
turned nine years old, I left that morning and we lived in the vicinity of the city hall, the Vienna Rathaus and I went down there and I saw these tens of thousands of people on the street and all the German flags and the music and the band and everything else and I was in there with the mass of the people shouting my head off like everybody else, "Ein volk, ein Reich, ein Fuhrer", one people, one Reich and one leader and I actually saw Hitler on the balcony up there on the Rathaus and when I finally got home, my mother was beside herself, she didn't know, "Where have you been? You've been gone for six hours you know?" And I said, "I saw our Fuhrer." Where upon my mother slapped me left and right and said, "Never call that SOB again 'Our Fuhrer'. He is not 'Our Fuhrer'." And I guess that's the first time that I came to the realization, wait a minute, some how I don't fit in, we don't fit into the grandiose schemes of this maniac but as I said, at nine I really, I wanted to have a uniform like all the other kids who were going, who were joining the Hitler Jugend. You know, and have a little dagger and sand brown belt and march to the music and the drums and all this is fascinating and hypnotizing for a young kid. But shortly after that I think within a matter of two weeks, my father managed to get himself transferred to Belgium and we immigrated hurriedly and left most of our property in Austria and fled to Belgium.

Q: Do you remember were there other relatives, what they were thinking at the time? Were there discussions among the family?

A: I was a child and in those days children were told you're here to be seen, not to be heard and I really . . . I cannot recollect any discussions about the dangers and so forth. I don't think that this is something that dawned on me until we left very hurriedly from Austria to go to Belgium. I believe that my father at some time, some where got the German authorities mad at him because he refused to cooperate on importing some materials which they wanted. I think it was aircraft engines to which

he had access and I believe that they were trying to get him to import aircraft engines either into Belgium or into Austria and then transship from there as agricultural machinery into Germany. I know the Versailles Treaty that ended World War I, Germany was prohibited from importing any war materials and so forth and he felt at the time that as an Austrian, they couldn't harm him and he more or less told them to go to hell and he then realized that now that the Germans are in Vienna, I'm probably on their black list and they'll want to get even which I think was the primary motivating force behind his leaving hurriedly and getting out.

Q: What about your school during that Spring of that year? Did the teachers talk about, do you remember any mood or change? Was it obvious to you as a child that something was happening or not?

A: I can't really say that I remember it. I mean, yes, all of a sudden there was swastika flags in the school room and Hitler's picture was up on the wall but other than that, no, I remember that I wanted to be like the others and I knew that the large majority of my classmates were either joining the Hitler youth or other activities and my parents sent me to the boy scouts and I didn't think that their uniforms were as attractive as the uniforms of the Hitler uniform, so. But . . .

Q: Did the other children taunt to you in any way for not joining? Do you remember that?

A: No. I know, I think in Vienna I think, a couple of times I was busted in the nose by some of the kids in school who called me a Jew and it really upset me because my answer was I'm not a Jew, I'm Catholic but other than that I can't really say that I was aware of it.

Q: But they were somehow?

A: I guess they were. Obviously anti-Semitism was rampant but I also know that at one point my mother was paraded through the streets of Vienna after the Anschluss and they hung a sign around her neck saying that this pig woman bought in a Jewish-owned store and my mother apparently tried to tell them that she was Jewish and they wouldn't believe her. They paraded her through the streets with a sign around her neck.

Q: Who did this?

A: I guess the local Nazis. It was just a few days after the Anschluss. I also remember

my mother being very upset. We had moved into a brand new apartment building in Vienna. At that time it was brand new and downstairs on the street level there was a small grocery shop where you got your essentials, milk, butter, essential food items and so on, a small store and, of course, my mother when we moved there they immediately recognized that she was German by her accent. She didn't speak like an Austrian like in Viennese and the store owners always engaged her in conversation and were somewhat differential to her and I know that quite often the conversation turned around Hitler, Germany and the shop keeper would always say to my mother, "Well, just let him try to come here into Austria, we'll show him, we'll throw him out in no time." On the morning of the Anschluss, when my mother went downstairs to get her milk and bread in the shop, the first thing that the man greeted her with was Heil Hitler, Frau Feigl, and my mother was astonished. I mean overnight this man suddenly became a Nazi and as she left the store she looked in the window of the door and there was a big sign, "From today on the Germans salute is Heil Hitler." And the other day prior to that it was always, as the Austrian say, "Gruss Gott", which is little translation is "God be with you" or "God's Greetings" and from one overnight it because Heil Hitler. I also remember that across the street from us in our apartment building and everywhere there were swastika flags that hung from the third floor or the fourth floor of the buildings and it reached to within four or five feet of the sidewalk. I mean, humongus flags. This obviously was something that didn't just happen overnight. I mean, this had been anticipated. It had been prepared and so forth but I also remember that the night before the Anschluss, my mother was listening to the radio and apparently the Austrian Chancellor at that time, made a speech and I remember my mother being in tears about it at the time. But again, I didn't really understand the political upheaval of the time. I just knew it was upsetting to her but I didn't know exactly why or what.

Q: With all these outward physical expressions of the change, the flags and the rally and the shopkeeper must have been impressing to you as a young boy. Clearly it made a strong impression upon you that you still remember visually.

A: Oh yeah. It turned a drab routine life, if you will, into a stage, okay, there was a performance going on, something lively and to a young kid attractive and the masses were engaged and you asked yourself, well why can't I be part of this, you know, what's wrong here, why am I being left out?

Q: I want to ask you about the boy scouts. What did you do in the boy scouts? _____ your parents wanted you to do in the boy scouts and not in the Hitler Jugend?

A: I think basically the boy scouts were outings on a Saturday usually, and you played

games, sports and you learned a lot of things. You learned to build a _____, how to build rope bridges and how to tie knots and I learned how to sew which later on came in handy, and all the things that boy scouts generally do, singing, camp fires, things of that nature.

Q: Did you go for hikes in the mountains?

A: We went on different hikes and so forth, yes, and pitching tents, camping.

Q: Were those kinds of things new to you or had you done them with your parents?

A: Yes, no, no. These were totally new. They were really not part of our normal life. The idea of vacation or what have you was staying at a luxury hotel somewhere and being waited on and catered upon.

Q: Did you like it? Did you like the boy scouts?

A: No, not much. At first I didn't like it at all. I think now in retrospect, I realize that I learned many skills and many things that subsequently helped me but at the time I really resented going because that's not the way I wanted to go, I wanted to be elsewhere.

Q: What did you want to be doing?

A: I wanted to be with the other kids and the Hitler youth or stay at home. Why am I being sent to the boy scouts?

Q: Were the other boy scouts also Jewish boys?

A: No. No. In fact, the boy scouts in Austria were strictly Catholic boy scouts. In Belgium, later on, and in France, boy scouts were broken down into Protestant scouts and Catholic scouts.

Q: Is that what it was called, boy scouts?

A: Well, in Germany, in Austria yes, in Austria it was Pfadfinder, okay, "Pathfinders." In Belgium and in France the Catholic scouts were called "Scoot", in France they were "Scoot de France." The Protestant scouts in France were called "Eclaireurs de France."

Q: What other kinds of things were interesting to you as a young boy? Did you read a

lot?

A: I read a great deal and I think that also in later years helped me get ahead career wise and otherwise because my schooling was interrupted repeatedly. I mentioned going to Czechoslovakia and from one day to the next, suddenly finding myself in a Czech speaking school. When we went to Austria it was back to a German speaking school and in 1938 when I went to Belgium from one day to the next, I found myself in a French speaking school and in the beginning, of course, I didn't speak a word of it so I had to, the first thing I had to do was learn French and Flemish.

Q: I want to ask you, before we go to Belgium, did you have cousins and other relatives, other children your age that you were close with?

A: No. I was an only child, a spoiled only child and my wife can confirm that, I'm spoiled but I really had no relatives and in fact, to this very day, I have a great difficulty in understanding what is a cousin and a nephew because I just didn't have any so about the only concept that I understand is an aunt. My mother's sister, okay, I knew that she was an aunt but go much beyond that, get into the feel of cousins and nephews and nieces and so forth, it just doesn't convey anything to me.

Q: Were your father's family pretty close with them? Did you get together on holidays or birthdays or anything?

A: Well, with my father living in Berlin and his mother in Vienna and his sister, well one of the sisters, the older sister living in Innsbruck, it wasn't that easy. This was in the days before airplanes and I do remember very very long train rides from Berlin to Vienna and much longer still from Vienna to Innsbruck, those were usually overnight trips in a sleeping car compartment. But we did go to Innsbruck at least two or three times that I can remember to visit with my father's sister and there was another aunt, okay, Tante Minnie and Onkel Harry. Her husband, by the way, was Christian, he was an Arian and he helped her survive the period of the Nazis and Onkel Harry was a big strong strapping guy and I remember his carrying me on his shoulders, hikes in the mountains in Austria. I remember salt mines that we visited once where we went through, yes, we did get family visits in Vienna of course, usually my other aunt Marianne, his youngest sister, would come and be in his mother's house when we visited. But those were major expeditions in those days. I mean, you didn't just hop on a plane and in an hour you were there.

Q: So you were, the three of you together were a family?

A: Yes.

Q: You were very close, your family?

A: Yes, I was very close.

Q: What about the decision to go to Belgium? You mentioned a little bit about that. Talk about going to Belgium.

A: Well, as I mentioned I think my father quickly came to the realization that either the illusion that he had created for himself that as an Austrian, the problem of the Jews was not his it was a German problem and now he suddenly found that there are no more Austrians and he was a German Jew at this point and certainly by the definition of the Nazis, which made it a racial definition rather than a question of credence and belief, and then also I think I remember discussions between my mother and my father about, you shouldn't have done that when you were in Berlin and I think that that related to the fact that he more or less rejected some of the inducements or enticements that the Nazis had offered and I think my mother felt that this is going to haunt you some day and now is the time, they are here to haunt you. They are going to come and get you and I believe my father, because of that, managed to get a transfer to Belgium and to get his assignment to Antwerp and he left first and we followed a few weeks later. We followed and we settled into Brussels at that time and he would commute daily from Brussels to Antwerp. I think that Belgium at that time had a very high speed mass transit system and you could move from Brussels to Antwerp in less than an hour and so every morning he would go to the railroad station and commute to Antwerp.

Q: He went ahead and found a place for you to live?

A: Yes. We moved first into a small apartment building, and then later on into a larger apartment. The smaller apartment later was occupied by my grandmother, my maternal grandmother, who also came to Belgium at about that time and she is the one that we subsequently fled with from Belgium into France and she ultimately made it to the United States.

Q: She had been in Berlin?

A: She had also been in Berlin. Yes.

Q: Is she coming from Berlin to Brussels?

A: Yes. But I don’t know how exactly or when, she obviously went from Berlin directly

to Belgium rather than through Austria and it's only speculation on my part, possibly she may have been asked by my mother to come and join them in Brussels.

Q: Do you have any recollection about the trip from Austria to Belgium, passing through customs?

A: Only, yes, only that the border crossing was very traumatic to my mother. Everybody had to get off the train, stood in line for quite some time, every piece of luggage had to be put up on a table there for control people, inspectors, I don't remember whether these were customs people or Gestapo people but they went through every piece of clothing in the suitcases and checked everything possibly looking for smuggled jewels or money or whatever and it took a long time to get through the inspection and when we were finally allowed back into the railway cards and the train got moving into Belgium, I think there was a big sigh of relief on the part of everyone that they had made it.

Q: Did you and your mother travel . . .

A: It was just my mother and I at that time.

Q: And how much did you have with you? What did you have?

A: I can't tell you exactly. My guess is we must have had four or five suitcases or something like that. I know that, of course, when my father left he must have also managed to take along at least one suitcase I know of because he had, which was at the time, a very novel suitcase, it was sort of an expandable thing with expanding hinges and I think he probably mentioned that he, I think he bought it in the United States and that it was an American invention, very fancy leather suitcase. He had that all the way until we ultimately met again in France. So I know he got that suitcase out of Austria when he left.

A: But you all immigrated legally?

A: That was a legal immigration out of Austria into Belgium and I'm sure that it was made easy by virtue of the fact that my father had a foreign assignment from an Austrian, now German company since Austria overnight disappeared.

Q: Well I'm sure your mother was quite frightened for whatever reason that she may not be able to imagine, she couldn't get back to him.

A: Yes, there was that, although perhaps a word about my mother here. Between my

father and my mother, my mother was by far the stronger of the two persons. Both physically stronger. She was much taller than my father and my mother had been a gymnastics teacher and I think also as far as inner character, inner convictions are concerned, I think my mother was the stronger of my two parents. My mother was also about 16 years younger than my father. So there was quite a considerable age difference which by the way was very common in those days. My wife, for instance,

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never had a case like that, go to the prefecture. So she goes to the prefecture and goes through the same routine and they send her back to somewhere else and after about four or five times of being sent from one to the other, someone finally said to her, ah Madame, we know exactly how to deal with cases such as yours, there is a place, it's called Olorons St. Marie, it's in the Pyrenees. You go there and they know exactly how to deal with cases such as yours. So with the little money that my mother had left, she buys a railway ticket to Olorons St. Marie for herself, her mother and for me. We get on the train and we go to Olorons St. Marie and as we arrive at the railway station, the train is surrounding with French Gendarmes with machine guns and they take us off the train and put us on trucks and the next stop was a French concentration camp called Camp De Gurs and we found ourselves in the Gurs camp. Gurs was a camp in the Pyrenees mountains which had been built in the 1930s by the French to house the fleeing Spanish, mostly community people that fled the Spanish revolutionary war and suddenly this camp had been turned into a holding camp or a concentration camp. It was not an extermination camp. For all these refugees, now most of these refugees who were in that camp now, aside from the Spaniards that were still there were now Jewish refugees getting German Jews, French Jews, Romania, Belgian Jews, Dutch Jews, whoever was able to flee was in that camp. My mother, this is 1940s, so she is about 36 or 38 years old, she was in her prime and as I said she was physically very fit, she was immediately picked to become a barracks chief. So as barracks chief she had a lot of freedom within the camp, that is to move from barrack to barrack or to move from one I Lot, as they call them, or islands, the camp was sort of divided into islands and she was responsible for going every day to pick up the food that was allotted to our barracks. So, she knew what was going on in the camp. She was well informed about the happenings and so on and we basically were in wooden barracks with just straw on the floor, there were no mattresses, no beds or anything else. A lot of people were hungry. There was not enough food to eat. Obviously, the French had not anticipated an influx of that many people and they were totally unprepared for handling the influx of people that suddenly showed up. The conditions were miserable. The toilets were open trench latrines, there was no

hygiene. There was no running water. A lot of people got sick and, of course, again, a lot of the people in the camp were elderly people and children and women with children and so forth. So, we were in that camp for I guess it was about almost six weeks or so, close to six weeks and my mother had a run-in with some nuns that were put in charge of the food supply and as barracks chief my mother tried to beg, plead, borrow anything to try to get an extra ration of bread or an extra can of sardines or an extra something in each barrack. I think each barrack held about sixty to seventy people that she had to feed and one of the nuns lectured her and said, Madame, you do not live to eat, you eat to live. Whereupon my mother hauled out and slapped her. It did get her an extra supply of rations. Anyhow, after about six weeks or so, when the French were about to surrender in late June of 1940, my mother learned that there was a Wehrmacht, a German army inspection group that was expected the next morning at the camp and this is where the passport thing comes in. For some reason, my mother's passport had not been stamped with a "J". So my mother said, I want to get out of this damn camp. We've got to get out of here. We'll starve to death in here. She went to the main entrance gate of the camp in the morning when the Germans were expected and as soon as she saw the head of the German group, she went over to him and yelled, "Heil Hitler Herr Oberst. I am a German citizen, I demand to be released from this stinking, filthy camp immediately with my children. These damn Frenchmen have kept us locked up here for six weeks." And she showed her passport to him and he just looked at it and looked at me and my mother had her mother's passport and opened it up and with her passport on top of it, she was hiding the "J", and the German officer was so taken back, he just turned to the French camp commander who had come in there, then said, "You let Madame out immediately with her mother and her son and you call a taxi and you make arrangements with the taxi that you pay for him and he takes them wherever they want to go." Within five minutes, we were out. My mother told the driver, "Just take us north and drive as fast as you can." And he did and we drove.

Q: You witnessed this?

A: Oh yes. I was standing by her. She had taken me along and obviously she was all packed and ready to go, she figured it's either going to work or it won't. We drove for several hours and came to a town called Auch, A-U-C-H, which was a little bit in the area Toulouse, in the south of France, and as we approached the city limits and the town limits, we were crossing railroad tracks, and all of a sudden a group of people came toward us and waved at us, and said, "Stop, stop, don't go any further, the Germans are on the other side of town." So, my mother looked around and she saw that there was a convent off there to the left side of the tracks and so she took our bags and me and my grandmother and dismissed the cab driver and we walked across the open field over to the convent and she knocked on the door and the nuns

took us in and for the next six weeks we lived in this convent. Whether the fact that I was Catholic had something to do with it, I don't know. I don't know whether my mother played that card or not. I really don't know. But the nuns did take us in and during the five or six weeks that we spent in the convent, the nuns made contact with various, or they were in contact with various refugee assistance aid organizations and among them a group of American Quakers who had a food distribution and refugee assistance office in that town, in Auch. So my mother was offered a job with the Quakers to help in the office. It was a part-time job but it enabled her to leave the convent and find a one-room apartment and moved into it. My mother also earned extra money becoming a cleaning lady and now at this point I don't remember what happened to my grandmother. She somehow left at this point. I don't know what but she left us in Auch.

Q: Do you know why?

A: I don't know why. I think that she must have somehow managed to contact her daughter, the other daughter, the younger one who had lived in Paris and somehow, at some point, she managed to rejoin her and managed to get into Spain and from Spain into Portugal and from Portugal to the United States. Now, I think it had something to do with the fact my aunt's husband, the one she married in Belgium, his name was Joel Bloomberg (ph), he was called Jole Bloomberg (ph). He was very active in Zionist activities and so forth and he was, I think a Latvian or Lithuanian nationality so he had a passport from one of those countries and at that time those countries were not yet involved in the war so he was, if you will, a citizen of a neutral country, my aunt had acquired his nationality when she married him and I think that that helped them to obtain the necessary visas and he had been traveling back and forth on Zionist movement activities to the United States, to Palestine and to many countries throughout Europe. I think he was a lecturer also and lectured in many places. So he had a great deal of mobility, if you will, and I think that's how somehow they managed to get her, my grandmother, to join them and to ultimately come to the United States. I think they made it to the States about 1941 or so before Pearl Harbor, obviously. I know they spent a great deal of time in Lisbon waiting for both first their visa and then their passage. There was limited space available on ships at that time.

Q: Do you know what organization he was with?

A: No, I do not. He, as I said, he did make it to the States and I remember in conversations, his name had been mentioned on a few occasions and they say, oh, yes, we know Joe Bloomberg (ph). So, he was quite active in the, I would say in late '30s.

Q: Do you remember when your grandmother left you?

A: No, I really don't. I just know that all of a sudden I have no memory. I know that she was gone and so I know that we lived in this apartment alone and now my mother's frantic search started to try and find out where is her husband, where is my father. She turned the world upside down through police, Gendarmes, the International Red Cross, the Quakers, anyone who would listen, she would try to find out whatever happened to him. I think it was several months until she finally found out where he was. He had been transported from Chen. They then went to the south of France to a camp whose name I cannot think of it right now, and from that camp they went to a camp called St. Cyprien which was on the Mediterranean coast. So now we knew where he was, we started to get letters, he had apparently taken to quite ill. I think they call it here, water in the legs, I think it was a heart related situation and of course, inadequate medical care and so forth and somewhere around 1940 or early 1941 his physical condition had deteriorated to such a point that the French authorities decided to send him home on a convalescent leave, figuring that within the next 30 days he'll die and he might as well die outside the camp instead of in the camp and save us the cost of burying him. I think it was in the Spring of '41. It had been a terrible, terrible winter. The camp was flooded. Where my father was, there had been bad floods. They had typhoid outbreaks, I believe and a lot of people died during that winter. So, he then came to Auch and joined us in a one-bedroom apartment, a one-room apartment, and he then was able to stay with us literally by a month by month basis. Each month they wold renew his thirty-day convalescent leave and extend it for another thirty days and sometimes for sixty days and he had to find some means of earning a living and he couldn't accept a job because nobody would employ him. I mean he was not a French citizen and didn't have the right to work unless he created work for himself so his old experience with Champion Spark Plugs, he found a garage where they had a spark plug cleaner which is basically a metal stand with a can full of sand at the bottom and you hook it up to a high pressure air hose and then you take a dirty spark plug and just put it in at the top and the air blows the sand into the spark plug and it cleans it out. So since it was impossible to get spark plugs anyhow at that time, he had a great idea and he started a spark plug cleaning business, a one-man operation. And he was able to earn a little bit of money that way doing that sort of work. My mother continued to work with the Quakers and in 1941 in the summer through these connections I was sent to a summer camp at Lake Annecy which was very pleasant for me, the food was good and so on. This is obviously something that mother had managed to arrange through these aid organizations that she was working with and the word Quakers kept popping up, the Quakers, the American Friends. In 1942 in the summer, she again arranged for me to go to a summer camp during school vacation and this time I was

sent to a small town about thirty miles from Auch, a town called Condon and there was a chateau and there were about thirty some odd kids there at summer camp.

Q: Before we go to the camp, do you remember your father coming back? Do you remember when he arrived?

A: Yes, he looked terrible. I mean he must have lost a good fifty or sixty pounds. He was literally skin and bones. In one of my diaries, I have a picture of him, a picture that had been taken in order to apply for a visa so a passport-type photograph and when you compare that with what he looked like, a year and a half before, it was like day and night. He was a little bit on the heavier side before then. He enjoyed good food and so he was totally emaciated and he seemed to have aged fifteen years or something like that in that time period.

Q: How did he get to Auch?

A: I don't know. I assume either by train or a combination of train and bus.

Q: Did you meet him someplace?

A: I don't remember that. I think I was in school when he came back and I ran home from school and he was there. So, my mother must have met him or I don't know exactly how the reunion took place but I saw him again for the first in a year in the apartment.

Q: You had been separated for a year?

A: We had been by then separated for almost a year, yes.

Q: It must have been very nice.

A: Yes, it was. But, I also realize that there were big problems. It was a very small one-room apartment. There was no privacy. I remember my mother basically sponge bathing in a little basin of water she would stand in and I remember seeing her naked in the room. I mean, there was no other place to go. So, to literally you live there, you slept there, you cooked there and so forth, but my father suddenly became a farmer. in the backyard there was cages and he raised rabbits in there for food and there were a couple of chickens that provided a few eggs and he planted potatoes and string beans and peas and so forth that he showered a lot of attention and love and so forth on them and tomatoes to provide us with food.

Q: In that couple of years, with the three of you living in that town, what was your parents outlook? Were they just saying let's just be happy here and stay here or were they . . .

A: No, that's a good question. Their reason for going on, for living was only one thing and that is to get out of France and get a visa and go to America. Especially after they had learned that my grandmother and my mother's sister and my uncle were already in Portugal waiting to get to the United States. My parents wanted to do the same thing. My father had approached his business contacts in the United States, Champion Spark Plug. There was another company called Styckgold and Stackgold that they had extensive dealings with. It was a company in New York. He wrote to Mr. Styckgold and he wrote to Mr. Stackgold and invariably we wish we could help you but . . . and it was very disturbing for them. I still have many of the letters that they wrote to my grandmother after she came to the United States which my grandmother left to me when she died and it's a very sad story listening to what my parents had to say at the time. There were utter frustrations for them, they found themselves in a chicken and egg situation. Yes, we will give you a visa to Spain, if you have a visa for Portugal, yes Portugal said we will give you a visa to come to Portugal provided you have a visa to go on to the United States. Yes, you can have a visa for the United States once you get your quota number but we're not going to assign you a number until you can show us that you have booked passage on a ship. The shipping company said we will not book passes on this ship unless you first have a visa to go to the United States. I mean it was, they were just constantly running up against this kind of a problem or you must come up with so many hundred of dollars which today would be equal to in the tens of thousands of dollars to ensure that you have a priority on the ship or to ensure that you get a visa or you get a passage or what have you and they didn't have that money. We lived pretty close to the poverty level in Auch so it was hopeless. He kept writing to, my father and my mother both kept writing to my relatives in the States at that point and they had just recently arrived. They were basically penniless. My father would tell my grandmother, you've got to telephone Mr. Styckgold, you've got to telephone Mr. Stackgold. I've written to them. You've got to get in touch with Champion Spark Plug's management. They know me. They've dealt with me. Talk to Mr. so and so. Talk to Mr. so and so and it was just all in vain, nothing but frustration. So, those were very very difficult days for them again, they did everything in their power to shield me from this such as sending me off to these children's colonies, summer camps and so forth and this brings us basically to the 1942 period and it was in 1942 that the Germans in cooperation with the French Vichy government decided on their policy to round up the Jews in France. The French thought that well, if we're going to round up Jews, let's first try and round up the foreign Jews. That way maybe we can protect the French Jews. The French Prime Minister, Laval, when the Germans asked that they

round up the Jews in France, he only asked for the adults and Laval said, please take the children too. You want to keep the families together, don't you? And the Germans said, no, we don't want the children and Laval insisted until finally they said, well alright we'll take the kids too but there was basically something that Laval, Frenchman, was pushing for and at this point, July, let's see, end of June, early July, just before I left for the children's colony, school vacation starts on the fourteenth of July generally in France. So, I know I remember that there were a lot of whispered discussions going on in our one-room apartment. There was a lot of worry. I would pick up words about raffles, razzigs, they're rounding up people. People are being shipped off, nobody knows where. So, I was somewhat aware of something was brewing and that there was danger here but then came vacation time and I was sent off and I was with other kids and forgot all about this. Sometime in early August, my father came to visit me at the summer camp and he made a very long trip on a bicycle, thirty miles.

Q: Do you want to take a break?

A: No, it's okay. For a man who was sick and he came to visit me and I remember on the back of the bicycle he had square cookie box and out of the cookie box he produced a small bag that my mother had sewn and it contained my father's pocket watch and he had a black fob with a gold Buddha attached to it and his silver pencil which he was very proud of, he had gotten it in America. It was sort of a four color mechanical pencil and a ring from my mother, a broach, a few other items, a small amount of money and he gave it to me and told me to look after it and at first it didn't register with me. Why are they doing this? Why is he doing this? And after he spent a couple of hours with me, he climbed back on his bicycle and headed back to Auch and as the bicycle disappeared over the top of the hill, the crest of the hill, I broke out crying and somehow I had the feeling I would never see him again. It was a few days later, maybe ten days, four days later or so that the director of the camp, a very kind woman, Mrs. Cavaillon, she called me to her office and she announced to me that she had bad news, she had been informed that my parents had been arrested in Auch the day before and they didn't know where they were taken. There was no information and I was obviously very upset and she was a very devoted, very religious woman, a Catholic woman, and I had been going to mass almost daily. She encouraged everyone to go to mass everyday and this was not a camp for Jewish children. I think I was probably the only Jewish child there. These were all French children from I would say middle or lower middle class families who found a summer home there. She also told me that they were going to hold a novena, nine days of prayer and after nine days, my parents would be returned to me and there was nothing to worry about. A day or two later I was again called by her and I was told that they are going to have to make me sick because she had a phone call from the police, from the

gendarme and they alerted her and told her that they had received orders from Auch to come and pick me up but if they come and they find me ill, so ill that I cannot be transported, then they will leave me.

Q: That's what they told her?

A: Yes. They told her that. So, they induced a fever in me and I'm always asked, how do you do that and they took some French bread and made balls out of it, like meatballs and soaked them in vinegar and I had to swallow about eight or nine of these vinegar soaked bread balls and sure enough within a half an hour or forty-five minutes, I was in bed with a high fever and when the police came, they took my temperature and they verified and certified that yes, he is not fit to be transported. So, that saved me that night or that day. The gendarme came back on two or three other occasions and each time the same thing was played. The same act was laid out. During that time period . . .

Q: Let me ask you a question. Do you think that they, Germany or the Germans called for you?

A: No, it was the French.

Q: The French . . .

A: The round-up was conducted by the French police at the bequest of the Germans, of the German authorities.

Q: When they told her that if you were ill they were informing her how to save you?

A: This was a good Frenchman, okay. There were some decent people there and some people who felt that it was not right to round up children. This is 1942 so I'm now thirteen, okay. They didn't like to do that kind of a dirty job. Une Sale Corvee, a dirty deal, a dirty job we have to do. So, they protected me in that fashion if you will. During that time period, Mrs. Cavaillon was in touch again with the Quakers and I'm sure that her summer camp probably got some support or some money from the Quakers also so that she knew whom to contact and through the Quakers I believe she then learned that's where my parents had been sent to. They were first sent to Vernet, a placed called Camp du Vernet. It was somewhere in the south of France which was an assembly camp and then the next postcard, I think a postcard came actually to the summer camp from my parents advising that they were being sent to Paris region, to the Drancy camp. The nine days came and went. My parents didn't return. I started to have some doubts about catechism and all other faith. I raised a lot

of questions and strangely enough the priest told me to go and talk to the archbishop, a thirteen year old. It's only today that I realize that this was most unusual that they would do this. Normally, a thirteen year old doesn't go talk to an archbishop and I vented my doubts and frustration and questions and he basically said to me, he said, well there is no answer to these questions. This is where faith comes in, you must either believe or you don't. But there is no explanation.

Q: What were your questions?

A: I had a lot of questions about how can God, how can Jesus allow these things to happen? What have my parents ever done to deserve this? What have I done and if I'm being punished, what is the punishment for? I also started to ask some fundamental questions, okay, if God created the world, who created God? If there was nothing, than he couldn't have been here. How is this possible? So, basically I turned my back to religion at this point and I haven't come back to it yet, maybe on my death bed but for the time being, I don't feel the need for it. Now came the question, where do we go from here? There was one bit of information that was received from Drancy saying that they left Drancy for a destination unknown and about this time, we were now moving into, this was late August that they were arrested, I think it was August the 24th or 22nd, somewhere around that time. Now we are moving into September and school starts up again. The summer camp can't remain open, what to do with young Peter Feigl and Mrs. Cavaillon came back one day and announced to me that the Quakers are organizing a children transport. Children that would be going to the United States and there would be two ships, the first one will leave around the middle of November and the second one about the end of November or early December, 1942. Ultimately, Mrs. Cavaillon arranged for me to go to Marseilles. In fact, she took me there. In my diaries, there are entries also about a trip to Toulouse. There must have been an American Consulate or something where I went, I was questioned there and I underwent a physical exam to make sure that I didn't carry TB or whatever to infect America and there were forms to fill out and sign. Ultimately, I wound up in Marseilles somewhere around either the end of October or very early in November. The ship was scheduled to leave, the first ship I was told I'd be on the first convoy and it was supposed to leave somewhere around the 20th of November. On the 10th or 12th of November, the Allies landed in North Africa and this gave the Germans the pretext to invade the so-called free zone of France, Vichy zone of France and the port was closed and no ship leaves. So, now the people looking after us scrambled to find a place where to house us and I wound up in a small home. There must have been about 15 or 20 of us outside of Marseilles in a place called Les Caillols and we were more or less prisoners in the house. The people who had taken us in obviously, again hadn't been prepared to have us there. I, in a typical kids fashion said, I'm going to get something to eat, and I found out that

the Germans had established a, there was a Waffen SS detachment that occupied the farm across the road from us. So, I said, I'll talk German and I'll get some food out of these guys. I'll get chocolate and what have you.

Q: You know what, we're running out of tape here. So, let's hold this story and we'll tell it at the top of the next one.

A: Okay.

Q: (inaudible)

A: Fine.

End of Tape #1

Tape #2

Q: Okay, we're back. You were going to tell me again the complete story of your stay with the other children. You haven't been allowed to go or to leave from Marseilles.

A: Well, I wound up in a camp or home which was run by a Belgian man and woman, in fact I think in my diary I noted that they got married while we were there but they were sort of the then mother and father if you will, looking after us. The food was very difficult to come by at the time. I'm sure in part this was due to the fact that they hadn't anticipated taking 15 or 20 kids and with the Germans occupying all of France, what little food there was, was number one the Germans take priority on all food supplies. When I found out and noticed that across the street there was a farmhouse there and the detachment of Waffen SS had moved in with their armored personnel carriers and so forth, I said, well I speak German fluently, I'm just going to go over there and chat up the Germans and I'm sure I'll get some chocolate or something out of them and I'll be able to eat. So, I went across the street and sure enough I chatted them up and I guess my first contact they didn't ask me any questions and then I came upon a German captain there and the captain said, what are you doing here? What's a German boy doing here? I don't know whether this is something I had learned from my mother but I said to him, shhh, you mustn't talk to anybody about this, this is very secret what I'm doing here. I mean, here I'm thirteen years old, okay. He said, well where are your parents? I said, oh, my father is in the Gestapo. He's in the secret police and we came to France on a so-called business assignment and my father has been spying on the French for several years and I go to school in the French school which is why I also speak French fluently and my French school mates don't know that I'm spying on them. So, I wasn't asked any more questions by the German captain after that.

Q: Did he believe you?

A: He believed me. Either they believed me or he was scared, what if it's true and my father really is in the Gestapo? Maybe they could get into trouble. I was very well fed and I got to eat spaghetti and I got chocolate. No complaints at all until about three or four days later when the director of the home where I was suddenly found out that I had been across the street and he then proceeded to ship me out in a hurry because he was worried that I was endangering the other kids there. But again, I was thirteen and I think of number one and I didn't really realize that I could possibly endanger anyone else. So, although my protestations, I was shipped to another place and I think after a number of days, after the lesson had sunk in, then they took me back at Les Caillols, where I had been before.

Q: Could you connect for me, what happened with your parents with those soldiers or was it just something separate?

A: They were something completely separate to me. I just didn't connect it. I just didn't connect it. At this point, I had been without news from my parents for now a couple of months, two and a half months, and I was being moved around from place to place. There was a lot of discussion about what to do with me. Actually, the first discussions about my going to a school in the Department of Haute Loire in the massive central had come up already. Oh, well, I think while I was still in Condon, before my parents were arrested, there was already some discussion there whether to send me to a school that was in the village. Then, now in late November, early December, this became a more pressing question for the people looking after me and the decision was taken, to move me to Le Chambon Sur Lignon, but it was too dangerous to move me at that time. The roads were being watched by the Germans and by the police. There were all kinds of passes, identity paper controls and so forth and the trains were being watched so it was decided to move me over the New Years holiday, over Christmas New Years, that there would be a relaxation of surveillance and I think it was on New Years Eve or on New Years Day that I was actually moved from Marseilles to Le Chambon Sur Lignon. According to my diary, I think I got there at about 2 o'clock in the morning or something like that and was met by a man named Daniel Trocme'. He was the cousin, I believe, or the nephew, I'm not sure, as I explained earlier about relations of the pastor of the village, Andre Trocme', and we had a long long walk in a cold night and wound up finally in a house, in an old stone house called Les Grillons, which was a bed and breakfast-type house, okay, a pension, as they call it in French.

Q: Now was he at the train station?

A: He met me at the train station. Yes, he met me and picked me up at the train station but from the train station to Les Grillons was a good four or five kilometers. I mean, it was a long hike, up the mountain too, up the hill. So, I now find myself in this home together with about 15 or so kids in this home. Daniel Trocme' was our shepherd who looked after us. He was a younger man, he was probably in his twenties, mid- to late twenties. He looked after us and the entire village of Le Chambon really is the full detail, as I didn't become aware of until a few years ago, of ten to fifteen years ago, but the entire village apparently was a conspiracy to protect people and the people in that village are about 90-percent Protestants, fundamentalist and people who, as they put it, lived the Bible, lived by the Bible and their pastor gave them the needed inspiration on the day that France fell and surrendered to the Germans by telling his congregation that it is the responsibility of every Christian to resist the occupier with the weapons of the spirit and that's where

subsequently the title of a film about Le Chambon came from, Weapons of the Spirit. That village has a total population of about five thousand people during the period of about three years, actually hid and saved five thousand people, almost on a one-on-one basis. These villagers never asked who you were or whether you were Jewish or not or what have you. They took you in. They fed you. You never had a situation of people saying, well, I wish I could help you but we don't have an empty bed or no, they opened up their doors and they shared what little they had. I always liked to, when I tell about Le Chambon to Americans, I try to make them understand that European farm villages, the farming community is quite different from the American one in that the people of the village live clustered, very close together, one house next to the other, there's no big yard, no acreage between them. The people look across the street, a narrow street usually, and if they see the lights going out in the living room across the street, they know perfectly well it is ten past nine and they know that they count in twenty seconds a light will go on on the second floor on the third window from the right and that's the bedroom and the light will be on for three minutes and thirty seconds and then the light will go out so you know exactly what your neighbor is doing. You know his routine. You can't escape it. During that period, lights went on and rooms where lights were never on at night and lights stayed on in rooms way past the normal times and nobody ever reported this to the police, nobody ever betrayed anybody and that's truly remarkable. And you must understand that the people did this, this did so knowing fully well that if the police were to find out, they wouldn't just arrest the person that they were hiding but they were subject to arrest as well as the entire family and their children. Confiscation of their property, of their goods and deportation to forced labor camps and so forth. So, what these people did, they did it at the risk of their own lives. So, I was hidden there for about ten months. During that period, they also saw to it that our education was not completely neglected. There was a school, Le College Cevenol, which had been created as a private school before the war and they saw to it that we went to school every day and that we get on with our education. It usually meant long hikes from the house where we lived down to the school and on the way back, we usually came back up with supplies in the village. It was difficult to get shoes. For example, Daniel Trocme' would scrounge worn out old tires and he would cut up the old tires and make soles for sandals out of them and by putting holes into the tires and stringing rope through them, he would make sandals out of them. Something that is very fashionable these days, I see a lot of kids walking around with these black sandals. It was a rugged place. It was at about an elevation of about three thousand feet. The winters were very very cold. Lots of snow. Most of us had frostbite on the hands, on the fingers and on our toes. Partly because our clothing wasn't really that adequate but it also had a lot to do with the fact that our food was inadequate. There wasn't enough fat content in the food and most of us were deficient in a number of nutrients and so forth but just about everybody was frostbitten fingers or toes. Durith that

period, there was an organization there, individuals who specialized in forging papers and so forth.

Q: Local citizens?

A: No. Some of the local citizens, some of them were part of the group of refugees. In other words, either the people that they took in were not just children, they were also adults, some husbands and wives, there was even a German deserter from the German army that they had taken in. I had befriended him because he spoke German fluently so we would speak German together. He was a, I remember as very tall, pale looking, very soft-spoken, gentle type guy who must have been eighteen or something like that. He deserted them. He decided to desert. Anyhow, in order to make room for other people in need, there was a full underground railroad, if you will, operating and if they could pass somebody as a Frenchman, and send them out of the village to some other safe place, safe house, if you will, then they would do so because then they would have more room in the village to take on more new people that might be in need and since I spoke French fluently without the trace of an accent, ultimately I was given some French identity papers, false name, forged ration tickets, coupons that you had to have at the time and so forth and I was sent to a town called Figeac in the lot department as a boarding student, it was high school and boarding school students in France during that time were quite numerous and common almost in every high school because you couldn't commute, there were no school buses so anyone who lived let's say five miles or more away from school, the parents would just have the child boarded in school at least for the week, if not for the entire semester. So, I lived as a boarding student in Figeac.

Q: Before we leave Le Chambon, I would like for you to talk about that ten months that you were there, what was the school, but what was your daily life like, with the other people, who were the other young people that were with you, what were you aware of in the town, did you have a sense of town mood, people were there from other places, or did you just think it was your group of people, tell me about what it was like to live there?

A: They tried to keep us busy first of all. Now during the school months, between walking to school, coming back with supplies, doing your homework, by the time you were finished, it was time to go to bed and get ready for the next day. Our stay occasionally would be interrupted, our activities would be interrupted by suddenly someone saying, ah, we're going to go into the woods for a hike and at the time, I didn’t know the reason why and this is something that I found out later on, periodically the police would tip off people in Le Chambon, and tell them we're coming up there at 10 o'clock to round up or look for Jews or look for people that are

hidden up in your village, get them out. So, they didn't tell us the reason, they just told us, we're going to go and pick mushrooms in the woods or if it wasn't mushrooms season or we're going to go for a nature hike, a little walk and sometimes we would stay in the woods for six hours, eight hours or something like that and then we would come back to the house and everything was fine and dandy. We didn't know what was going on. During the summer months, there was a lot of hiking, a lot of tug of wars and games that were organized, occasionally, we would be visited by Pastor Trocme', Daniel's relative. The Pastor was the inspiration and leader of this village and the groups in the house in which I was, was a very mixed group, there were boys and there were girls. Among them were some Spanish refugees still, children of Spanish parents, of Spanish origin whose parents obviously had fled Franco, Spain during or after the revolution and found themselves in France and were either orphans or were persecuted for one reason or other. There were some people from Czechoslovakia. There were some German Jews. There was a young Frenchman who I am sure was not Jewish. He may have been an orphan. I think he was an orphan. He became a very very good friend of mine. He died of TB up there. We were very close friends. So, it was a mix of people. There was an Italian woman who was the cook, who cooked for us and she had a daughter there also. Her daughter was there. I really don't know why they were there, what the reason was. But, as I said, it was a very mixed group of nationalities. I collected a lot of photographs which I kept and practically all of these photographs were passport-type pictures that were taken by the people who were creating these false documents, these forged documents for us. But, they gave us an extra supply of pictures and when we learned that we might have to leave, we would start exchanging photographs and give a souvenir to our best friend by dedicating the photograph to him or her and so on. I was able to take a lot of these photographs with me which I shouldn't have but we'll talk about that later maybe. But day flowed into day, occasionally I would inquire whether anything had been heard from my parents and by now, I think I came to the realization that there was a program afoot in France, Germany and so forth to deport Jews, deport them to Poland or east to extermination camps. The name Auschwitz, I hadn't heard of it yet and so as time went on, let's say that my hopes faded too and I just kept on. I was of course cut off from any other relatives at this point. I had no idea whether my grandmother, uncle and aunt had made it to the United States and if they did, I wouldn't know where or how to contact them. I had some relatives in England. I had mentioned Kleczewer earlier who was the managing director of the German automobile factory there in Germany. I knew that they had made it to England but I had no idea where they lived in England. So, you just sort of went along from day to day to see what tomorrow brings.

Q: Were you at that time, that ten months, did you feel safe there, and were you anxious, were you feeling sorry for yourself or did you feel that you and the other people there

were all going through the same thing, I mean you were fourteen and you were alone.

A: It may sound stupid, okay. But, I had a good time. Okay, I mean, there wasn't that much food but we had buddies, friends. We could go out explore things in the woods, pick mushrooms, pick blueberries, pick wild strawberries, we could run down to the brook and bath in the brook. There were as a matter of fact, there were also some boy scout activities going on and for the life of me I cannot remember but it was brought back to me when someone a few years ago suddenly produced a photograph of a group of Jewish scouts, okay and I'm right in the middle in the front row of them and the moment I saw the picture, I recognized myself, I knew what I was wearing, okay, the clothes and I remember posing for it but to this day, it's blocked out, I don't know exactly how I got there or what the occasion was but I know it was me. I mean, I know I was in there. So, that's a mystery to me but as I said, I never really felt that I personally was in danger. I always went, at the time and to this very day, my wife can tell you that too, it drives her up the wall, but maybe those war years taught me to be this but I don't worry. I don't worry about things that I cannot control. If somebody is going to come and arrest me, what can I do about it? Worrying about it isn't going to make them go away. So, until it happens, I go on with life and I do what I want to do or what needs to be done and that's it. As the Italians say, Que. sera sera, what will be will be, but don't worry about things that you cannot control and I think that was my attitude even later on as I fled across the Swiss border and we were being shot and so forth. I mean, I , you get hit you get hit -- worry about it then, but until then . . . As I said, it may be stupid, but I think that it has helped me a great deal in remaining sane, keeping my sanity and keeping my wits about it. I just don't go to pieces.

Q: Were you aware of other people who were in Le Chambon other than the people who were with you, did you ever have opportunity to go into town and mix and . . .

A: No. I'm not going into town and mixing. About the closest that I might come to mixing with others was in school. I knew that some of these classmates also were Jewish refugees hidden from Germany or wherever their origins were but I didn't know where they lived. We didn't exchange addresses, if you will and we would meet in school but there too, they basically kept us busy. Okay, they kept our noses to the grind stone and there wasn't that much dialog going on and when it came to any kind of recreational activities and so forth, we pretty much did it within our own group in the house in which we lived. We played with and we stayed together, that group. So there wasn't that much contact with other groups. We knew of other houses or homes and we knew that there were other kids living there but we didn't know who the kids were or what kid lived in what home so, and there were no organized

activities to bring the kids from one home together with the kids of another home.

Q: You had occasion to meet Andre Trocme' and his wife also?

A: I met Andre Trocme', well first of all Andre Trocme' came and visited at Les Grillons on several occasions. At that time, again, I certainly was not aware of what a splendid individual this man was and he was just one of the older people who were looking after us. I met Mrs. Trocme' about ten years ago or so after the war when I went to Le Chambon and so she appears in that movie I mentioned, Weapons of the Spirit, and so, but the Trocme' family is remarkable. Daniel Trocme' by the way is one of the very very few people that was arrested by the Germans and sent to a concentration camp and killed because the Germans simply could not believe that an Arian, a non-Jew would do what Daniel had done and so he is one of the very few people that was arrested in Le Chambon and died. Andre Trocme' was also arrested together with the principal of the school, someone named Theis and they were locked up for thirty days until for some reason the Germans released them after thirty days. They came back to Le Chambon and continued their good deeds, their good work. It's a fascinating . . . that village is truly a fascinating story. I think it has a lot to do with the fact that the French Protestants of course, had been severely persecuted back in the 15th century and these were descendants of the original French Protestants, the Huguenots they are called. Many Huguenots fled to America to what later became the United States. But the French, basically the French Catholics were out to exterminate them and the ancestors of the people of Le Chambon managed to clamber up on this mountainous plateau and it was the beginning of the winter and the pursuing French soldiers probably said, well let him croak up there. Nobody can live up there anyhow. But they survived and in their church services and in their, what do they call it, they have a song that they sing which is sort of reminiscing or singing about their origin and their past suffering and so on. Whenever they get together, they like to sing that song. It's like an anthem or a hymn to them, if you will. It mentions, it talks about teaching the children about the past, the need to teach them, to let them know what their forefathers went through.

Q: Were you aware of any of that at the time?

A: No.

Q: No?

A: No.

Q: You mentioned that you had good friends who became ill and you were fourteen that

year. Did you have any girlfriends while you were there? Did you have that . . .

A: Well, I think I fell in love with a couple of girls but I don't think that I had any, I mean, I never expressed my love and there was no kissing or hand holding or what have you. I think I was considered much too young at the time and so I never . . . I just think that this was my first love, you know, but there was never any physical contact or a relationship there. I think we were all pretty young and pretty square in those days. You just didn't do those sort of things.

Q: But it was a group of people that pretty much stayed together the whole time you were there, the ten months?

A: Yes.

Q: So you knew these people pretty well by then.

A: Yes, but even there, even in a small group like this, the people tended to form clicks, groups and the age range also was quite broad. I think the youngest one in our group was probably ten or eleven and the oldest must have been sixteen or seventeen so although an age difference of four or five years, let's say may not be much when you're fifty, sixty or seventy. When you're a teenager, one year of age difference or two years, that's like a generation apart and so you had on the one hand the older kids that would stick together with the older kids and then you had a further breakdown of people gravitating to one another by language group. The Czechs, okay, there were three or four of them that were Czechs. Well they would get together and speak Czech. There were three or four German origin and they would get together and speak German. The Spaniards and so forth. So you had these clans of groups that would form. I was a loner. I really didn't click with any group and this French boy, Amede Dutoit was his name, he was even more of a loner than I was than I was and I think that's why the two of us got together and we got along quite famously. But he was an orphan and I think he was very sickly and he was probably brought up to Le Chambon because they thought that the mountain air would be good for him and in those days people with TB were sent to sanatoria in the mountains and so forth and so that's probably what brought him up there.

Q: How were you to find out that you were to leave there?

A: I think that my being sent away came in conjunction with Daniel Trocme's arrest. I think when the German's arrested Daniel Trocme', a) there was nobody else to take over at that point and they had to disperse the kids and I think b) they also were concerned that since Daniel was in charge of Les Grillons, anyone at Les Grillons

might be easy prey and I think the decisions must have made, I'm assuming here, that we better disperse these kids and close down Les Grillons. I think Les Grillons supported, if not totally financed, it was supported by the Quakers. The Quakers had very close ties with Pastor Trocme'. Trocme', before the war, had been a pacifist and draft resistant. He refused to serve in the French armed forces and urged other people to refuse to serve in the military and that's one of the reasons why they assigned him to Le Chambon, which was a forlorn, God-forsaken place up there and they figured he wouldn't get headlines as he was getting in whatever parish he had before. That he was in a larger city and the Protestants felt that his vociferous and noisy speeches about draft resisting and so forth are not helping their cause. So they assigned him to Le Chambon parish and got him away from the headlines from the journalist and then he became the moral leader of Le Chambon. He never told people what they had to do. He never told them you must hide people or you must take them in and there were, this is another one of the puzzling and remarkable things. It wasn't managed where somebody says, okay, we're sending this guy here and that guy there and the next five who come in are going there, no, this was all spontaneous. The people just knew what they had to do and did it. In his sermons on Sunday, went back to the old testament to fundamentalist ideas and concepts. If someone is sick, you go and visit them. If someone is hungry, you give them something to eat. If someone is homeless, you provide them with a shelter. So, that was basically what drove these people.

Q: Do you remember seeing Germans in Le Chambon?

A: I remember seeing Germans. I know that there were some German soldiers who came on convalescent leave so it was sort of a R & R rest and recuperation place and I don’t remember how many but there have been about forty or fifty or so who occupied one or two buildings there and if I remember correctly, they had all been wounded on the Russian front and so forth and they basically just wanted to get well and they didn't want to have trouble with anybody. They pretty much kept to themselves and some historians who have looked into the past, into the history of Le Chambon, think that that may also be one of the reasons why there was no problem. These soldiers had gone through hell on the Russian front. They didn't want to start hunting Jews or anybody else, just leave me alone. Everyday that I can stay away from duty on the front somewhere, so much the better. So, I had no trouble.

Q: Did you ever go to the place where they were making all the false documents? Did you see the operation?

A: Not that I know of. No.

Q: They provided you with what you needed to leave there?

A: Right. Basically, the false names, the false identities that they gave us generally were the first name would start with the same letter as your real first name. The last name would start with the same letter that your real name was. Your birth date would remain the same. The place of your birth would be changed so that they would drill into what's your name? Okay, and make sure that you don't come up with your real name but that you come up with your new identity. That, however, if your initials or if you were to start writing, you would naturally start writing the first letter of your first name P and hopefully by then you realize that it's not Peter or Pierre but it's Paul, okay?

Q: Who did this?

A: Apparently, according, from the film, the Weapons of the Spirit, there was a particular individual was quite adapt at producing and forging documents at creating official stamps and so forth and he apparently was the primary individual who did this. But he must have had help, that's true.

Q: Do you remember someone coming to you and telling you what your new name was?

A: Yes. I remember being given a new identity and the papers and they were making sure that I understood that I was born in Luca, France, okay, the last place of residence was with my parents. I was born in Auch but my birth date was still the 1st of March, 1929, and they took me through this repeatedly and made sure that somebody asked me what my name is, that's what it was.

Q: Did they come to the place you were living and did this?

A: Yes, at Les Grillons. But, again, I mean, some of these things, you know, later on when I went to Figeac, I was going to school. I had to take German, a mandatory course and I was first in class and I was correcting the teacher. The teacher's German was atrocious. Of course, in retrospect, it was stupid of me, okay, but it never occurred to me at time and to this day I still have a copy of my school transcript in my report card and the German teacher wrote down in the comments, very good student but must be careful not to fall asleep on very easily gained laurels or very easily acquired laurels. He knew perfectly well that German had to have been my mother's language, okay? I mean, that must have been obvious to him. So, I was very lucky.

Q: You left Le Chambon in the winter?

A: I left Le Chambon, I think it must have been in December of 1943 or January of 1944, so I had about ten months in Le Chambon and in Figeac at the school there, the College Champollion, there were, I think, three or four other kids who had also come from Le Chambon with me. I think two of them I knew from Le Chambon. Two of them was in the same house as I was. Another one, the other two came from another home. So, again, here you have a situation where undoubtedly the principal or whoever was in charge of that public school knew perfectly well that he was accepting some students of questionable background but they also protected us. The interesting thing about the Figeac episode is that I became involved at that point in resistance activities. The Germans used the schoolyard as a parking lot and at night a couple of other guys and I, we would scrape together whatever sugar we could find in the cafeteria, in the canteen and so on and we would pour it in the gas tanks of the German trucks and the next morning, we just loved to watch them try to get the engines started and started, and if they stayed in the courtyard long enough, and after about fifteen minutes or so of idling, all of sudden the engine stopped. The engine was all gummed up. We enjoyed it even more when this happened and then they drove out of the courtyard right away and we knew that about a half a mile down the road, they're going to get stuck. We would slash their tires and force them to change wheels and so forth on the vehicles. Somehow the Germans didn't enjoy this very much and they started to play pretty rough in school and started to round some of the kids up and so forth and some of the teachers must have been in contact with the Maquis of the French underground and I was called out a few times to help them with translation, translating German letters or documents that they found. At a certain point also, the Maquis attacked the only major factory in town, which was a propeller factory making propellers for German fighter planes. The Allies had tried to bomb that factory repeatedly and they could never succeed because it was geographically in a very awkward location. It was in an elbow of a river, a bend of a river and there were mountains on both sides so they couldn't attack it by dive bombing and they could only try to hit it from high altitude and they never could and it was a critical factory because it was the only research factory in the world at that time that were producing those kind of variable pitch propellers. So, the Maquis was asked to go and blow it up and I tagged along with the group the night that they went into the factory and I think it was ten or eleven plastic explosive charges that they planted on the equipment used to make those propellers and destroy it. Shortly after that the Germans then came into town and rounded up all the male citizens between the ages of sixteen and fifty-four, I believe it was, and shipped them off to a forced labor camp. Now, I happen to have learned just last summer that because I went to a commemoration of a round up in Figeac last summer, I found out that the division that came and rounded up everybody in Figeac, it was the same division that two

weeks later destroyed the town of, I can't think of the name of it, a mental block, anyhow it will come back to me, they rounded up all the people, shot them and of the people that survived, they were mostly woman and children and babies. They were bundled off into the church of the village and they then set the church on fire and then burned them alive and three or four of them tried to escape through the window and they were shot as they tried to come out. It was Oradour, Oradour Sur Olane. Okay, and it was 638 people who were killed and massacred there.

Q: The same division?

A: The same division, the division Das Reich. Figeac is in the Department du Lot. It's near the Rhone valley. I think it's south of Lyon, southwest of Lyon.

Q: Oradour is north?

A: Oradour is further . . . no, Oradour is also south. It's in what was Vichy, France at the time. My wife and I drove through it and we suddenly saw that, the road sign, and we stopped in there and visited. The French decided to leave it as a memorial and didn't touch a thing in the village and it was left just the way the German's left it at the time.

Q: But they came and they rounded up . . .

A: So they rounded up all the male citizens.

Q: And you were just below the date?

A: No. I was just below. This was 1944. I'm now 15 but I wasn't going to take a chance and when they came, I made a bee line for the adjoining church where I had gone before and I had been an alter boy and so forth and I used that as part of my cover.

Q: Adjoining it?

A: It was literally adjoining. I mean it was sharing a wall. Okay. So I was able to climb on the roof of the school and from the roof in the school, I was able to slide over onto the roof of the church and from there I made my way through the beams in the church into the church steeple and I spent the next 24 hours in the bell tower just waiting. I could see from there, the troops and the Germans and I waited until they cleared town and then I came back down again.

Q: How did you hear about this round-up? They were in the town and the word spread?

A: The word spread immediately. The word came out. I mean, everybody immediately was alerted to it and at first they didn't know why but everybody was told to report to the city hall. All the males within 16 and 54 were ordered to report to city hall by 1 o'clock or something like that, but especially some of us Jewish refugees who had heard stories of round-ups and raffles and so forth. We knew it wasn't to give us medals or hand out checks. I wasn't about to take a chance. Again, selfish but I looked out for number one. I disappeared in the church rafters and that was it. And fortunately, I knew the layout in there, having been in the church as an alter boy you get to, you have the free run of the church and you know the layout and where the stairs are and ladders that go upstairs and so forth.

Q: Now what happened after that?

A: Well after that, when the dust settled, I came back down and now it becomes a jumble. There's an organization named Haias and the UJF, which was a French-Jewish organization, and again the Quakers, there were a number of refugee assistance organizations whose names I kept hearing and someone visited me then in the school and told me that I was to get ready, that I may have to leave, they didn't say where yet. Then I think, the departure date was set for me about three or four days later and it was cancelled and then it was postponed to another day. Ultimately, I was given a railway ticket. I was told to pack a backpack and to only carry what I could put into the backpack to sew my birth certificate and the Baptismal certificate in the lining of my jacket that I had and told to go to the railway station, take a specific train and get off at a specific station and that there someone would approach me and they would tell me what to do next and that's what I did. I took the train, got off at a small stop somewhere near the Swiss border, it turned out, right near the Swiss border, was approached by a young man about 25 or 30 years old or something like that who told me to follow him and he was a, what the French call a passeur. A boarder passer. Usually they did it for money. Maybe this guy did it out of personal conviction, I don't know. Normally the passeur, you hired them to guide you and help you finally spot with little risk of crossing the border illegally.

Q: We'll just break again. Let's pick up here on the next tape.

A: Fine.

End of Tape #3

Tape #4

Q: . . . it has been sent there, you have new papers, you have a new identity -- what's your new name? What is your new name?

A: Under the false name that I had been using? It was Fesson, Pierre Fesson. And it's with, with the identity, with that false identity that I traveled with in France, with my birth certificate, with my real name, and baptismal certificate, which was basically a stamp on the back of my birth certificate, sewn in the lining of my jacket. And I had been instructed that when I get to Switzerland to produce the real papers. So the name of the train station I don't recall. It's in my diary. I wrote it down. And last summer, in 1994, my wife and I, in fact went to that place, to that very same town. And the railroad station is still there. It looks still the way it did at the time. And I retraced the steps leading towards the border. Anyhow, at that time in, we are now in May of 1944, about two weeks or so before the Normandy landings, late May, 1944 there were other people on the train, there were kids on the train, in the same boat that I was in. And they somehow failed to get off the train at the station that we were told to get off. So problem number one was that I got off, they didn't. I wasn't going to tell them. I had no way of knowing whether they were told to get off at the same station, or another station, or what have you. But the first thing that the passeau, after he identified me, said to me, he said, "These stupid kids failed to get off at their station. We have to wait until they get off at the next station in order that they're brought back here." So ultimately, we were rejoined by these other kids. It was a couple of hours or so later. And there were, we were about ten or eleven all told. And he marched us first through open fields, then through woods. It was drizzling.

Q: Did you have, were you taken from the train station?

A: From the train station, right. It was drizzling, the ground was wet. And he explained to us that he was going to walk us to within a couple 100 feet or so of the Swiss border, that once we're there, that spot, that he would designate we are to lie down on the ground and we should wait until the changing of the guards, and the changing of the guards would be, we could tell because we will hear whistles blowing and chances are we will hear some dogs barking and there will be some commands exchanged, but when they change, when the guard change takes place then you go straight from the barbed-wire fence, climb up over the fence, and when you're on the other side you come down and you are not in Switzerland, you are in what is called the "no man's land", so don't stop, continue. Go across the "no man's land" to the second row of barbed-wire fences, then up that fence, and on the other side. Once you're there, then your safe and you're in Switzerland. So he disappeared, he left us there. And as I said, it was cold, it was wet, it was drizzling, we were just freezing

and waiting there.

Q: Were you hiding in the stall?

A: We were lying in the, on the grass, on the, whatever was on the floor of the, on the ground of the forest, pine needles, brushes, and so forth.

Q: There were trees?

A: There were trees, yes, lots of trees around. And we could see the, you could just make out the border, the barbed-wire fence. And periodically we could see soldiers walking in one direction or the other. And so around 1:00 o'clock, I think, afternoon, activity, the whistles, could hear some dogs barking, we said, that's it. And we jumped up, and we started to head for the barbed-wire fence. I upped first friends into "no man's land". Half way through the "no man's land" I hear people screaming, I hear some shots ring out. I don't stop, I keep going to the second fence, and I go up. Just about to start the second fence, I see this outline, this silhouette of a soldier standing there wearing a field, field-green, field-gray uniform. My first reaction was, it's a German. And then I looked again and I said, no. The, his helmet looked different and he was carrying his rifle in a fashion I had never seen a German carry a rifle. This man was cradling the rifle in his arms like a baby. So I, up on the second fence and over it and he was motionless until I was on the other side and touched the ground. Then he just motioned to me and said, "Get behind the building," in French. There was a building there. And now I knew I was in Switzerland. Well, apparently, what had happened is that some of the other kids, one a girl, got over the first fence and she saw the soldier who I had seen, and she thought it was a German. So she thought she had made a wrong turn, or something was wrong, and she began to scream, "The Germans are there, the Germans are there," and she turned around to head back to where she had come. She became totally disoriented. And two other people, equally confused, didn't know what to do. And during that period, the Germans started to open fire. So, I think, out of a group of about 10 people, seven of us, we made it across. I have no way of knowing what happened to the other three. And once we were all safely behind the building, then the Swiss soldier went inside, picked up his telephone, called, and we waited there and a Swiss Army truck came out about a half of an hour later, loaded us onto the truck and took us to a refugee center first. And I remember the drive into Geneva. There were grocery stores and so forth, and they had displays on the sidewalk outside the store. And I saw things I hadn't seen in four years, things called bananas and oranges and, I mean those, we didn't know, we had forgotten what they were practically because those are grown in tropical areas and during the war years they just didn't come into France. And so I was in Schlaraffenland, which is what you call it in German. It was, you know, the

land of milk and honey all of a sudden. And we, we were interrogated by the Swiss authorities and they were going to ship us back. But during my interrogation, I pointed out that my father had had business friends, business contacts in Switzerland, and I remembered the name of one family, and I gave the name and told them, "I remember the name of the company in Bern," and I gave them the name of the company. So they contacted that firm apparently. And the family said, "Oh, yes. We know Mr. Feigl." So they decided to take me in. So that enabled me to stay in Switzerland at that point. So I was given refugee status in Switzerland and was sent to Bern, stayed with that family, they sent me to high school. I was undisciplined at the time, created problems in school, was disruptive. After a year the school wanted to get rid of me. With the school wanting to get rid, get me out, expel me, the family had had enough of me, they didn't want me anymore. So I was turned over to the Swiss Red Cross. They placed me in a children's home for about two months until they found another place for me. I was sent to another school in Switzerland called Ecole D'Humanite', which was another school that was run by a saintly man who had studied in India and was a friend of Rabin Pra Nath Tagore, a famous Indian philosopher. He tried to apply some of his learnings, what he had learned in India, to the school. Again, I was being rebellious. I wouldn't comply with the rules. So after three months I got thrown out of there. I was then sent to Geneva to a Ort school where they would teach me some mechanical trade. They found a Catholic family to, with whom I could live in Geneva. And after 60 days they couldn't take me anymore and they begged the Red Cross to get me out of their home and find some other place for me. I then wound up in a children's camp, there were about 40 of us living in this large house. And I, during that period I was going to the Ort school. And this is also the period during which, I guess when I was still in Bern in 1945 probably, or 1944, late 1944, early 1945, I first was able to reestablish contact with my relatives through the International Red Cross. They had been searching for me and for my parents through the International Red Cross. And so I think I first heard from my relatives in England, the Kleczewers. And shortly after that I heard from my relatives in the United States, from my grandmother, my uncle, and my aunt. And they then told me that they would enable me to get a visa to come and join then in the United States. And ultimately, in 1946, in July of 1946, I did make it to the United States. My uncle in England insisted that I pay for my own ticket. Since I couldn't pay for it, he advanced the money. But I had to sign a promissory note to reimburse him for the cost of the ticket, the voucher and the ship fare, which I repaid. And I arrived in the United States in July of 1946 with the same backpack that I had when I crossed the border and I had seven dollars on me and a change of clothes. And my English, basically, consisted of "The door is open," "The window is shut," "John is a boy," "Mary is a girl," with a heavy French accent.

Q: Let me ask you a couple of questions about . . .

A: Sure.

Q: You never mentioned being a discipline problem before. What was going on?

A: I think it was just rebelliousness, it was just that, I'm now free, okay? And you can't tell me what to do. What do you mean I'm not allowed to take a girl into the rowboat on the lake? And I'm not allowed to smoke here? You don't know what I've gone through. I've been smoking for years, okay? You're going to tell me not to smoke?. Another house rule was you don't drink water during a meal. You only drink after a meal. That was part of the Indian teaching, okay? You eat your fresh fruit, you start the meal with fresh fruit, when the stomach is empty and absorbs the greatest amount of minerals, and vitamins, and so forth, and extract them from the fresh fruit and, well, that's not for me, okay? I eat my apple whenever I want to, and I would make a great display of getting up in the middle of the meal and going out into the kitchen and coming back with a glass of water. And I would take a girl out on the rowboat on the lake alone, and smoke a cigarette with her in the boat. So I, he just put up with it for so long. And then, ultimately, he said, "This is too much. Get rid of him." That was a very interesting school, by the way. It was school that was created by this man, Paulus Geheeb. He was a German. He started the school in the 1920s, a very liberal school, unstructured basically, let the children learn as quickly as they are able to absorb it, let them spend more time on the subjects that are of more interest to them, and so forth. And he started the school in Germany. It was called the Oden Waldschule. And when Hitler came to power Geheeb immediately felt that such a liberal school would not be tolerated in Germany. So he packed up his school, he was, he was Aryan, he was Christian, packed up his school and established it in Switzerland. And many German, many children of German leaders were sent for their education to Switzerland. And when the war started, Paulus Geheeb decided that 50 percent of his students would be destitute, refugee children who he was going to take in. And he also further decided that the parents of the other children would have to pay the tuition for the destitute children. And I went to school there with the, I think they were the children of the, or the nephews of Field Marshall Von Brachitz, a German general. He had two of his sons there. And they were in that school together with Swiss children from wealthy families and other kids like myself, Jewish refugees, and so on. So we got along quite well. It's just that I just wasn't ready to, to settle down at that time. And there's no question I was very difficult. And in some ways, I am still very difficult today.

Q: And what this school? Tell me about coming to New York.

A: Well, coming to New York, it was very exciting to see the Statue of Liberty, and

coming into the port and into the harbor. And my uncle, my aunt, and my grandmother waited at the dock for me. And they decided to take me on a sight-seeing tour of Manhattan, and they pointed out the Empire State Building, and the Chrysler Building, and Wall Street, and Broadway, and Times Square. And they were, I also disappointed them greatly, because I just said, "Okay. Okay." I mean, I had seen it in the movies. So what's the big deal, okay? I mean, I knew what the Empire State Building looked like. So then they decided that what this young, emaciated kid needed was some rest. It was summertime. So they decided to take me into the Catskills. And they were going to a lovely farm there, very nice and quiet, and little cabins and fresh air. And I wanted no part of it. I wanted to get into the big city and live it up, the big lights, big Broadway, you know, what am I doing up here in the woods? I spent enough time in the woods. So that was another big disappointment for them. And they wanted, then they said, well, I have to, I must go to school. And as far as New York State was concerned, they had a board of regents, they evaluated the few school records that I had with me, which weren't many. I had one, one report card from my, from the school in Switzerland where I spent one year and I had one left over from Figeac with the false name on it. And the Board of Regents said, well, before we can give him credit for anything that he studied in Europe he must first pass a test of four years of American history and nine years of English. It was absolutely out of the question. I mean, I knew nothing about American history and my English was atrocious. I couldn't have passed a two-year English test at that point. So my relatives then wanted me to continue either with the school work or learn a mechanical trade, or any kind of a manual trade. That was part of the refugee baggage, if you can call it that. By now, everyone had, everyone had learned that when you arrive in a concentration camp they would ask you what your occupation was, what your trade was. And if you were a tailor, or if you were a sheet metal worker, or a mechanic, they put you to work. If you were an intellectual you went to the gas chambers. So they wanted to make sure that for the next time that this happens that I would be prepared and I would be among those who would be selected to work. I didn't want that either. I, because I wanted to earn money. I wanted to have my own money and buy things, meet girls, take them out for a milkshake or what have you. And so against their advice I got my first job in downtown New York in a dye and tool making place, based on my experience and the school. And they hired me as a, as a apprentice machinist. I objected in my lousy English at the time and said, "I do the same work as the man next to me. Why am I being paid as an apprentice, and he's getting full union wages?". And so he promised me a raise. And I waited for six weeks. And when the raise didn't come, oh, he, after six weeks he finally decided, okay, here's your raise. And it was five cents an hour. And I asked him, I said, "Is that my raise?". And he said, "Yes." I said, "Forget it. I don't want this job." And I took my coveralls off and I left. And again, my relatives were very upset about this. And I said, "Oh, don't worry. I'll find another job." And

three days later, I had a job at Montgomery Ward as a mail clerk. I was earning 10 cents an hour more than I was getting at machine tool shop, and it was a white collar job. I didn't get my fingers dirty, and I didn't come home with metal filings in my, in my skin, and that launched me on a white collar career. And from then on, I waited until I was 18, and on my 18th birthday I decided to join the Air Force. And I wanted to be a pilot. Remember when they were being attacked and shot at by airplanes and German dive bombers? I wanted to be a pilot. So I went into the Air Force and, once I was in, learned belatedly that since I was not a citizen I could not become a pilot. Because to be a pilot you had to be an officer. To be an officer you have to be a citizen. So I was stuck in the Air Force. And I was given the opportunity to go to any Air Force school that I wanted to, except cryptographer. Because, again, I wasn't a citizen. And to get into cryptography, code breaking or code making, you had to, you had to be a citizen. So I picked three schools. And after I finished my basic training everybody lined up and received their assignments to school. And I said, "Hey, Sarge, how about me? You didn't call my name." He said, "Oh, you're a lucky bastard. You don't have to go to school." So I was sent to Air Technical Intelligence at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base because I spoke French and German fluently, okay? So I became a translator. And that really was the blessing in because I had a lot of time. I spent three years translating or abstracting captured German documents that covered every branch of science you can imagine, from propellants to oil refineries to aerodynamics, meteorology, and so on and so forth. And with each new document I had the time to go to the library, immerse myself in the vocabulary and the language of the field and I learned a lot that way. I mean, a lot of it rubbed off. And after three years in the Air Force I came out and had a difficult time at first finding a job, this is now 1950, and ultimately got a job with American Express Company as a translator at a ridiculous $35 a week. But I had a policy. My policy is as soon as you have a job in hand immediately start looking for a better job. And I no sooner starting working at American Express than I was looking at ten, twelve different other places trying to get another job. And six weeks after I started with American Express I get a response to one of my job applications to do the same work I was doing in the Air Force for a civilian contractor back in Wright Field paying me $75 a week, going from $35 to $75 a week. That was pretty good. So I moved to, back to Dayton, Ohio, in 1950. And I did that for about two years. I warned my boss at the time that he wasn't looking after the business properly, that he's going to lose the contract. That is exactly what happened. And the day it happened, we were driving back into town and I saw a sign that said, "Your City needs policemen." So now, I'll become a cop, and took the Civil Service Test and wound up at the top of the list, and in spite of the fact that I was six pounds underweight they decided that because of my good test scores they will take me. So I became a cop for a year. I saw a lot of things that I didn't like there. First of all, they put me on the Vice Squad because I was unknown and I was a fairly handsome kid. So they thought that they'll

use him to entrap people and what have you. And I saw a lot of things going on in the Police Department that I didn't like. I mean, this was a time, this was in 1952. Most of the policemen in those days had a ninth grade education. They were dishonest, they were drunkards, a lot of, that was too much for me to stomach. And after eleven months I had a run-in with my captain, police captain, and he told me, "You don't make arrests in this place, you stay out of that place, and leave these people alone." I said, "Hey, wait a minute. I took an oath to enforce the law equally, no matter who it is." And if I did make an arrest, he would destroy my evidence so I had no case when it came to Court. And I finally said, "The hell with this. I don't need this. I quit." And I became, my next job was as a, what is called an assistant manager for a personal finance corporation. That's a small loan company. The assistant manager really is a collector, people who don't pay their loans. Well, I did that for about three months and I couldn't stomach waiting for people to come home with their paycheck and squeezing five bucks, or two bucks or what have you out of them. So I was looking for something else at the time and managed to get myself a job with Chrysler Aiv-Temp as an assistant engineer. And don't ask me how I wound up as an assistant engineer and made now twice what I was making on the Police Department. About this time, the Chief of Police called me and said, won't I please come back? If I read the paper tomorrow, I'll find that captain whatever his name is has decided that his health isn't so good, he's going to Florida to retire. And I said, "Thank very much, Chief. But I'm now making twice what I was making before. And I'm not working swing shifts. I'm working on a regular schedule. Thank you very much." And then I got together with a fellow who I worked with as a contracted translator. And we decided to try to get the contract ourselves, form a company and see if we couldn't get contract, the translation contract. So I found an organization, an existing corporation in Newark, New Jersey, and convinced them that they should back us financially. And they did. And they established a subsidiary. And I became the general manager of the subsidiary. And I was now making $100 a week. And we got the contract. The Air Force felt that they had been pressured in giving us the contract, and they killed us with kindness. After one year the thing collapsed and I went looking for another job. And I decided that there is no future in the translation business. I got to get out of this. So finally, I got a job with Curtiss-Wright, which was an aircraft engine manufacturer at the time. And I became, what the heck was it, I guess it was a, I know, engineer, engineering, a spare parts engineering liaison department, and it was analyzing engineering change orders. Anyhow, I told them that I was prepared to take a pay cut if they'll give me a chance, watch what I'm doing and if in six months I am performing as expected then I would expect them to raise my money back to my salary, back to what I was earlier earning before, if not I'll leave and forget about it. And four months later, they raised my salary back to the $100 a week and promoted me. So everything was fine. I was with them for about four years, meantime looking for another job.

Q: Let me ask you a question here. Clearly you made rapid success . . .

A: Yes.

Q: . . . in business.

A: Can't complain.

Q: You did. And I mean, you had confidence . . .

A: Yes.

Q: . . . sounds like. You had your, always had your eye on something better.

A: Better.

Q: What does that have to do with your experience growing up?

A: I think all I can say is that the war years had taught me to stand on my own two legs. And I think my mother probably gave me some inspiration too, stand up for your rights. She used to have a motto, "Wenn man dir gibt, nimm. Wenn man dir nimmt, schrei," which means, translated it means, if someone is giving you something, take it. If someone tries to take something away from you, holler. So, but I think, basically I think I had become self-reliant long before and realized if I don't do it, it's not going to get done. And I was very lucky. I mean, my wife keeps reminding me that luck plays some part in it too, possibly. Looks probably also has something to do with it. I had more hair in the past. And I was tall, which also helps generally when people hire. Apparently, subconsciously, they tend to gravitate towards a taller person, projects more authority or whatever. And so at Curtiss-Wright I next was offered a job with an aviation export company in downtown Manhattan, downtown New York. And they needed a technical director, oh in the meantime I had paid, out of my own pocket, I had paid for pilot lessons and I had learned to fly. I had gotten my pilot's license. And the technical director was also supposed to be responsible for aircraft sales and he had to have a pilot's license. So they offered me the job. I spoke French, German. It was all international marketing. When I told Curtiss-Wright I was leaving, they made, they asked me how much I had been offered by the company in New York, I told them. And they said, we will match it and add $1,000 to it. We want you to stay. I went back to the man in New York and I said, I'm sorry. You won't believe this. But they just matched your offer and added another $1,000 a year to it. And he said, "Look, I want you." If you promise that you will come to work for

me I will match what Curtiss-Wright has offered you and add another $1,000." I said, "You got me." So I left Curtiss-Wright. I spent the next four years with Aviquipo, a company in New York. And during that time, again, I was looking out for something better to do and so forth. This, by the way, this job involved a tremendous amount of traveling overseas where I got to use my languages and so on. I traveled all over world selling airplanes and ground support equipment for jetliners that were then coming onto the scene. And finally I was offered a job as a director of international marketing for, by a helicopter manufacturer up in Connecticut. And he offered to pay me 50 percent more than what I was getting in the previous job. So that didn't take long, and I accepted. And fortunately, I had a wife who went along with this. And it wasn't easy for her, moving place to place. But, so we moved to Connecticut. And I was there for three years. And after three years of traveling all over the world again I came to the conclusion that this manufacturer, Comman Aircraft (ph), wasn't ever going to sell another helicopter. So I went, I talked to the president of the company and I told Charlie Comman, I said, "I'm sorry. But as I see it now I don't think you have a Chinaman's chance of selling another helicopter. You might as well take the money you spend on international marketing and flush it down the toilet. It'll have the same effect." He said, "Well, I appreciate your candor. But you're telling me I don't need you anymore." And I said, "Well, I hope that maybe you can use me on the domestic side or something." He said, "Well, I'll keep you on the payroll until you have another job." So I went to Washington. Of course, we're selling helicopters, military helicopters. There were contacts in Washington. And I called up an Air Force colonel I had been dealing with to find out whether the Air Force had succeeded in, it was Iraq's, getting the Iraqis to buy our helicopters, and he said, "No." And he said, "What else are you doing in town?" I said, "Well, to tell you the truth, I'm looking for a job. But I don't know how to go about it." I said, "I figured that with my knowledge of languages and the traveling I've done, there must be something I can do, either in the commerce department as a commercial counselor at an embassy or in the State Department. What, how do you go about it?". And he said, "Would you consider working for the Defense Department?" I said, "Defense Department? Doing what?". And he said, "Well, we have a GS15 opening." And I said, "What's a GS15?" He said, "Oh, that's the equivalent of a full Coronal. I said, "That still doesn't tell me. Money. How much does it pay?" He said, "Oh, it's about $14,200." And this is 1963 now. And I said, "Well, that's a little less than what I'm making now. But I'm at a dead end. So, yes, I'm interested." So he said, "Well, I'll set up an interview for you." So the next day I was interviewed by a Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs. And after an hour of interview he said, "Welcome aboard." So I went to work for the Defense Department. And I stayed there, well until all of my clearances and everything had come through, by the way, I was told, "Welcome aboard," the day before Kennedy was assassinated, and it was on the next day that I was flying back home to

Connecticut when I heard Kennedy was shot and my first thought was oh shoot. There goes the job. But no, I was kept. And I, we moved to Washington, my wife and two daughters in February of 1964.

Q: Let me ask you a question. This was now almost 20 years . . .

A: Yes.

Q: . . . the past, almost, which is less. Did you have any way at that time of even knowing what had happened to your parents and where you came from . . .

A: No.

Q: . . . trying to find out all this time . . .

A: No. The, through the International Red Cross I had learned back in the, I think it was the late 1940s, that the assumption is that they were transported from Drancy to Auschwitz. The German . . .

Q: You found that out when you accomplished the States?

A: No, I, yes, I think I was already in the States. In the 1950s I applied for, the Germans had a program for restitution. And for the restitution program the Germans, or someone had to establish a death date, the date of death for my parents. And the German Government arbitrarily declared that they died in a concentration camp on May 8th, 1945, which was the last day of the war, the date of war. But I didn't really find out what happened until about three and a half years ago, four years ago, when I was living, when I moved to Florida. And we became friends with a French couple. Well, he's French. His wife is Belgium. And he had been hidden in France during the war years by a Frenchwoman. And he had accumulated a lot of information about the war years and what happened to Jews during the war. And he showed me a book which the Klarsfelds had put together, which was list of every convoy that left Drancy to Auschwitz, and I went through it and I found my parents' names in there. So I know that they left Drancy on a convoy on September 2nd, 1942, and they arrived September 4th at Auschwitz. And according to the record there of the 1,000 people, I think all but 60-some were immediately gassed. So I'm sure that my parents were in one of those that, died on September 4th.

Q: Yes. It would have been just about a month after you last saw them?

A: Yes. It would have been a month after, yes. So, but that's in the record. I mean the

Germans are very orderly and they kept detailed lists with every name, place of birth, date of birth and so forth.

Q: Yes. Have you been to Auschwitz?

A: No, I have not yet been. I do want to go. And I'd expect I'll be going, probably next year I'd like to go.

Q: Do you have children?

A: Yes. We have two daughters.

Q: And have you told a lot about your experience to them or to other people?

A: I guess I have told them, and I'm sure my wife has also told them never, I don't think, in a chronological order as we have just done it here during this interview. How much my children have remembered I don't know. How much they can put together and sort out chronologically I don't know either. If there is one thing that I've learned, I discovered what is meant by "generation gap." And just as I could not understand what my father was talking about when he was talking to a nine, or a ten, or an eleven-year-old and retelling his exploits on an Austrian submarine on the Danube, that when he was in military service and he's Admiral Horthy, what's an Admiral, okay? I mean, it didn't mean anything to me. And I would hear the stories time and time again. And I guess, subconsciously, I was saying to myself, here the old man goes again telling me about his stupid submarine, okay? So I realized that, you haven't lived it. It's very, very hard to identify with it, to become involved in it, to get emotionally involved in something. And the best example I have there is that with all the food shortages and so forth that I've experienced in my life it goes against my grain when I see people leaving food on a plate, which is also why I'm getting fat, because I've got to finish what's on the plate. And if there is some left in the pot that has to be eaten too because you can't throw it away. And so we used to tell the children, "Eat the food on your plate. There are people starving in the world. There are people hungry in China. There are people hungry here and there." And then one day I realized, how on earth can we expect the children to know what hunger is when after every dinner they have a very important decision to make: Do I now eat two scoops of vanilla and one scoop of chocolate ice cream or should it be two scoops of chocolate and one of them vanilla? So it's totally unreasonable to try to expect the other generation to understand this. Now, perhaps as they get older, our children are now, the oldest one just turned 38 and the younger one is 34. They're four years apart. Maybe, as they get older, they might reflect and think back about where their parents were, what they did, and so forth. I did find, last summer, when we were in

Austria I found the grave of my grandmother, my father's mother, and of his father. And I had it restored. So, but that's also something that I wouldn't have given a second thought to 20 years ago.

Q: Why now?

A: I guess it's, my days are numbered I guess. And if someday our children do want to know where do they, where are their roots, where do they come from, there's something for them to go to. I mean, fortunately, there's nothing for them in Auschwitz.

Q: Your grandmother lived in New York?

A: She lived in New York, right.

Q: And your aunt and uncle?

A: They also lived in New York. They just lived five blocks apart. And my grandmother, who must have been in her 70s, she had to eke out a living of sorts too. So she ran a bridge club in the apartment. And everyday people came to play bridge. She served tea and cookies and so forth and charged them so much, the setups and so forth. I had to pay her half of what I was earning for rent. I lived with her for the first seven, eight months that I was in the States until I went into the Air Force. And so I paid her half of what I was earning for room and board. And I also had to repay my uncle in England for the fare to come to the States. And I started with nothing. But, little by little, especially after I got married, we worked our way up, my wife and I. We first, well, she first started to move into my bachelor apartment which was a one-room studio apartment in Greenwich Village. And I was already living in style at that time because that was expensive real estate. I mean, and, but it was a furnished place and there was one room. And from there we moved to Newark, closer to where my new business was, the company that I helped set up. And we lived in a furnished apartment there. And then we moved into an unfurnished apartment to another place in New Jersey and bought our first stick of furniture. And then we bought our first house. And little by little, we got there. Of course, very often, it was tough, especially tough for my wife. Because each time I would uproot her and the kids, if we moved from, we lived outside of Princeton, New Jersey. I used to commute every day into Manhattan. That was a long commute. But we couldn't afford anything nice nearer New York. So when I then got a job in Connecticut, of course, it meant uprooting and moving to Connecticut. When I got a job in Washington, first we came down here, lived in Alexandria in an apartment building. Then we moved closer to the Pentagon in Arlington. I was putting in very long hours, Saturdays and Sundays. And

I decided I didn't want to be more than a mile away from the Pentagon, which was very selfish on my part. But the family went ahead and moved again. And then, subsequently, we did buy a townhouse in Arlington less than six miles away from the Pentagon. And I could shoot down there in 10 minutes time. So that's, and really, the Washington, D.C. area is the area where we lived longer than anywhere else. We lived here from 1964 until 1990.

Q: I think we're coming close to the end. And I would like for you to, I know it's maybe not even a fair question, but if you could summarize in some way how your, the first 17 years of life? How you think of it now? How do you, do you still have questions about it? Are you still, do you still analyze it? Do you still wonder what was happening? Or do you, have you accepted it and moved on beyond it?

A: I have accepted it and moved on beyond it. I mean, this goes back to what I told you earlier, that I consider it an act, some people may think it's a curse. But it's an act that drives my wife up the wall. The ability that, for instance, some of these companies I've worked for, the company stood on the verge of bankruptcy, okay? I would leave the office on Friday, 5:30 p.m., and I would kind of switch up there in the brain and it was out of my mind and I wouldn't think about it again until the next morning. Not while I was driving to work. When I entered the office, then the switch was turned on again and then I started to worry about the problem, what to do next.

Q: And that's what you've done with the first . . .

A: And that's what I've been able to do, I think. I just, unpleasant things, I just shun them aside and that's it. It may be good, it may be bad. I don't know. I haven't discussed it with a psychiatrist. Every so often my wife says maybe I should go into analysis. Then I say to her, "Well, if I do, and supposing I discover that I can't live with myself, what do I do then? I'm quite happy now."

Q: Okay. Here's some stuff that came up. Now what I'd like . . .

A: We're looking at a postcard that was taken probably in the late 1930s of a house which is marked Pension De Famille. It was a boarding house or a bed and breakfast, if you will. And that house, a solid house built of rocks, the Les Grillons, the home where I lived from the time that I arrived in Le Chambon in the beginning of 1943, until I left in late 1943, it was called Les Grillons. And Daniel Trocme' was the den father, I guess you would call it, who looked after us in that house. I've visited that house, by the way, recently. And not much has changed. It looks pretty much the same as it was, including the water trough that you see to the far right of the picture. Here is a group shot taken in front of Les Grillons. You can see the building in the

back. This is a picture probably of all the kids who were housed there. You can see that there are some very young ones in the front row. One of them was the daughter of the cook. And one of them, the little blonde girl in the front with the bow in her hair, she was a sister of the Czech boy who was there. In the picture also, in the back row, in the center, the man with the eye glasses, that is Daniel Trocme'. And to the left of Daniel Trocme', or to his right, you see another adult. And that is pastor Theis, who was the assistant Pastor at the Protestant Church in the Le Chambon. I am just barely visible. My face is obscured by the shadows, the shadow cast by the tree. I'm just to the right of the person on the, the last person on the left there. You can just barely make out my face. Here is a page from my first diary. This is a diary I'd begun the day I learned my parents had been arrested in Auch, August, 1942. The page that you're looking at on the right, it says, in German, Neu Johr, New Year, 1943. Since I lived in France, throughout my diary, there are notations in German, which I thought was a language that the French wouldn't understand. So if I wanted to say something that I didn't want the French to know I would write it down in German. The two photographs are of my mother and my father. They are passport photographs. I remember where they were taken. They were with an amateur camera. We couldn't afford to go to a photographer at the time. And it was taken in our backyard in Auch, where my father kept his rabbits and chickens and a vegetable garden. And they just sat in front of the, that wall. And those pictures were necessary to apply for all kinds of official documents, visa applications, travel documents, and so forth, which my parents never ceased to fill out and file for. The original of this diary has been donated by me to the Holocaust Museum. It's in the archives now. I also made one translation of the diary back in, I think it was in late 1978, 1979 or early 1980. I also provided a copy of that translation to the Museum. About 10 years later, I went through this diary a second time through a translation. And I then remembered many abbreviations that I used that I, originally, couldn't decipher. I didn't know what they meant. But in the second translation which I made and which I have also given to the Holocaust Museum I have translated or explained what these abbreviations mean. And also, throughout, I gave additional amplification or explanations in square brackets of things that might not be understood by a casual reader. This is one of the photographs that was taken of me at Le Chambon. It's one of the passport pictures that was used by the document forgers to come with a false document, false identity papers and so forth. And as I mentioned I think before, we were all given copies of these photographs. And whatever number of pictures we didn't actually use we then started to dedicate them to our friends and exchange them. And that is how I came into possession of some 30-some photographs, these passport photographs, from the other people hidden at Les Grillon in Le Chambon. And my entire collection of these photographs I have also dedicated to the Holocaust Museum in Washington. As you can see, I had a lot more hair then.

Conclusion of Interview