

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Interview with Sylvia Green
January 11, 1996
RG-50.030*0466

PREFACE

The following oral history testimony is the result of a taped interview with Sylvia Green, conducted by Arwen Donahue on January 11, 1996 on behalf of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The interview is part of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's collection of oral testimonies. Rights to the interview are held by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

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

SYLVIA GREEN

January 11, 1996

Beginning Tape One, Side A

Question: This is Arwen Donahue. I am here with Mrs. Sylvia Green, on January 11th, 1996 at her home in Winchester, Kentucky. This is a U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum interview. This is side A, of tape number one. Okay, Mrs. Green, will you please tell me your name as it was at birth and your date of birth and the place where you were born.

Answer: My name i -- was Sylvia Farber. I was born in Karlsruhe on Rhine, April the 14th, 1924.

Q: And Karlsruhe --

A: Karlsruhe on Rhine --

Q: -- was in Germany?

A: -- yeah, in Baden, yeah.

Q: Uh-huh, uh-huh. And will you tell me something about your -- your parents, and ge -- let's start with your father. What was his family background?

A: He was one of seven children and they were married in 1919. They were married in Poland and then they moved to Germany right away. And they lived in Stuttgart. And my brother was born in 1920 in Stuttgart. And I don't know when they moved to Karlsruhe, I was born in Karlsruhe in '24. So between '20 and '24 they moved. I don't know the exact date.

Q: And your father's -- your father's family, were they middle class, or --

A: Yeah, my -- my [indecipherable] what I have been told -- I didn't know too many of them except the ones who were living in Germany, some stayed in Poland. He was the baby, and when my dad was born, his oldest brother already had children the age of my father and they were in the United States. And some of them moved to Karlsruhe, some of them -- his sister lived in

Nuremberg, and she would come and visit. And they had a dairy store. Dairy, eggs and butter.

And my dad, that was my dad's job in Karlsruhe. It was lucky, my mother always said I was the lucky child because the day I was born my dad got that job. He was the manager of the dairy department in the wholesale grocery store. And he had this job until he was deported to Poland in 1938, and on the same day my brother came home with a horseshoe, and that's supposed to be luck also.

Q: So your father was born where?

A: In Dukla, in Poland. And I never been there, I don't know.

Q: And he moved to Germany in?

A: Well, in 1919, when they married.

Q: Did they marry before they had come to Germany?

A: 19 -- yeah, 1919.

Q: Oh.

A: They married in Sianów where my mother was from. And I think it was a match, probably, arranged.

Q: Uh-huh, I see. What -- what was your mother's family background?

A: They were very poor. There were 10 children and my grandfather had the tailor shop, tailoring shop. And there hardly was any food on the table and my mother was the second oldest girl, the first one was a boy. So my mother had to raise all the younger children, so she never had a childhood. She said she never played with children. They had the cradle made out of wood and she would look out the window. And children bear on the sidewalk playing hopscotch, and she participated then, she was in the apartment upstairs and many times the cradle was turned upside down because she got so excited. But she never had time to really play with children, raising the

rest of the family. My grandfather, I only saw him once or twice in my life. To me he was a big man with a long beard, Orthodox. And my mother said that he never held any of the children on his lap. But the grandchildren he did. That one time we went to visit I was on his lap and I braided his beard. And my mother just stood there, she didn't believe that he let me do that.

Q: Was your family very religious?

A: Yeah, they were Orthodox, but modern Orthodox. My dad was clean-shaven and my mother did not wear a wig. They were modern Orthodox, but very observing, Sabbath and all the holidays. When my dad worked -- well, the name was [indecipherable], he never had a vacation all his life because he didn't work on any Jewish holidays and we got a lot of holidays. So this was taken off as vacation. So my mother used to take us places, or also we children always -- every summer you had to get out of the city, like, otherwise you would die, it seems like it. The New Yorkers do that too, don't they?

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And well, it was camps we used to go to, and also I was very athletic and on weekends we used the train. And then I also belonged to the Mizrachi, which is a Orthodox Zionist organization. And I think I was about five or six when I joined, and we had camps for about two weeks, and then we had conclaves.

Q: And you ha-had one sibling, is that right?

A: Two. My brother, who is four years older, and myself. My mother always said she only wanted two children, she raised such a large family before that that's all she wanted, and that's all she had was two children.

Q: When was your brother born?

A: June -- wait a minute. June the second, because my son was born June the fourth. June the second, 1920. And he was born in Stuttgart.

Q: Were you close with him?

A: As children we were close in a way, but boys were raised entirely different than girls. A girl just had to smile and look pretty, that's all that mattered. And my brother had to be educated. So he didn't have a childhood. My dad wanted him to be a rabbi. Is that all right, the way I'm holding it now?

Q: Mm.

A: My dad wanted him to be a rabbi, my mother wanted him to be a college professor. So he was educated for both. So I was school -- we had school, you went to school from eight til 12, and you went back in the afternoon from two til four or from eight til one and three til five.

Whenever he got out of school he had to go to Hebrew school, every day. So he didn't have much of a childhood either, in the -- it was really interesting, after we met again after the war, he was married and I was married, and so we talked about our parents and about our childhood and the interesting part was, the way I talked about our parents was not the same way he talked about his parents, which were our parents, you know? So he told me, he said, "I was so jealous of you." And I said, "Why?" I said, "I was so jealous of you, you were so brilliant." And he said, "I had to be, I had to study all the time. I had no childhood, and you had friends." He didn't have any friends. You always had friends, you always were playing or going places, doing things. And it was really interesting. We were jealous of each other.

Q: Mm.

A: But it worked out well, I mean, we got it out of our system and we didn't carry any grudges.

Q: So do -- your parents didn't -- weren't particularly interested in -- in your education?

A: I was not a dumbbell. I didn't have to work very hard, and I brought home A's and B's without any sweat. And he had to bring home A's, B's were not good enough. And well, that's what I said, all you had to do was smile, and you had to associate with the people they approved of. And you couldn't go with children they didn't approve -- especially my mother. My dad was a hardworking man.

Q: You said -- mentioned that you had a lot of friends?

A: Yes. I always had a lot of friends.

Q: Were they friends from school, or from --

A: Well, at the beginning I had Gentile friends, but then when Hitler came to power, they got sparse, less and less friends. And that's really interesting you're asking that. I still remember Fritz Erlow, we were raised together. And I loved Fritz as much as I -- I liked my brother -- loved my brother, Bernard. And then when Hitler came to power, he disappeared. If we passed on the street, he wouldn't see me. If I passed on the street when it was dark -- at that time used to go out in the evening -- at the beginning, later on we didn't go out too much in the evenings, he would look, stare at you like no recognition, but then he would take his hand and wave at you in the back, so he wouldn't be seen. So -- but that really hurts, because in a way I knew that the reason for it, because I was a Jew, but it's very hard for children to accept. You -- you take it personally, because I would cry. I came home and I saw some of the girls I used to play with, and they run away. Why doesn't she like me any more? I haven't done anything to her. It -- it's hard.

Q: Mm.

A: And they probably went home and talked to their parents also, how bad they felt, you know?

Q: Do you remember what was -- were those the first incidents that made you realize that you were somehow different than these other children?

A: When we were kicked out the school.

Q: When was that?

A: I think it was the beginning of the fifth grade, because I supposed to have gone to the gymnasium also, like my brother did. But there were articles in the paper that they built in a new school for handicapped children in Frankfurt-au-Main, and this was a very dilapidated school. I mean, nowadays, it be condemned. And that's the school they gave us. And that's --

Q: What year would that have been?

A: Let me just think, I was born in '24, I started school in '30, it might have been in '35. Oh, that -- the dates are getting dimmer. They really are. I mean, what happened you remember, but to remember the exact dates, because I started at such a young age and so many things happened until '45. And nothing was good, really. So -- but what they didn't know, we got a much better education than we did in public school, because they wouldn't let Jewish college professors teach, so we got the college professors to teach us. So we benefited from it, we really did.

Q: How far did you have to travel to go to school every day?

A: It's -- didn't have to travel, it was within walking distance. In [indecipherable] of so many miles, they had a school close by. And we weren't bused at that time.

Q: Was your family afraid when Hitler came to power?

A: Well, I saw Hitler many times. I was a nosy child. And whenever he came, I would not go down to see him in my neighborhood because everybody knew I was a Jew. I would go blocks and blocks out of my way. And -- where they didn't know me. And I was standing in the front row, I was -- I was just fascinated by him, it was just like he hypnotized people. But you know, I

usually talk with my hands [indecipherable]. That's all -- I'm sorry. Well, I would always be in the front row, many blocks away from where I lived. And I would stay on the front row with everybody else, and everybody yelling, heil Hitler here. He always came in a convertible, and naturally he would hold his hand on the belt. I can close my eyes and see him. Heil Hitler, heil Hitler, and people just went crazy screaming, you know. And they all were running and I was right there with them. And he wouldn't let them get too close, and then he just would take his hands slowly, and everybody would go back. It just like you were hypnotized, you know? So this was '33. But really, '32 already it started. There were Communist parties, Nazi parties, Socialist parties, and they always scheduled marches about the same time and there always -- somehow there was a shooting going on, and they're yelling and they used to hit each other. And my mother always used to grab my hand and let's go upstairs, let's go upstairs. No, I want to see what goes on. In '32, you know, I was eight years old, I was nosy.

Q: What did you think when you were watching these -- these speeches and Hitler --

A: I don't know. I really don't, I just was fascinated by that whole thing. It was just like everybody was hypnotized. And his speeches were in -- he didn't say anything. He said three, four words and then yell, everybody yelled, heil Hitler, heil Hitler. I don't know, as a child -- the one thing I remember, he's always, when he came to Karlsruhe, it was a pretty good size town at that time, the size of Lovell, he would stay in the Hotel Germania, and every time I passed that hotel, I was going to stay there someday.

Q: So you admired him a little bit?

A: I don't know. You're kind of fascinated, until, you know, then I didn't admire him any more. I mean, what came afterwards. My mother always said, it can't get any worse, it can't get any worse. Like when they deported my dad to Poland in '38.

Q: Why don't you tell me a little more about that.

A: One night we were home, Mother wasn't feeling well and she already was in bed, and the doorbell rang. They always were very noisy and always yelling and always rushing. And they always rushed, you know, and they were yelling, open that door, open that door, and they kicked the door. So my dad went to the door and they came in and they said, empty your pockets. And my dad said, "Why? I haven't done anything." He was at work that day, came home from work. Well, just empty your pockets and you do as we tell you, and your sooner you do it, your sooner you be home. And they took my dad away. Th-They pocket all his belongings and his favorite watch. I don't remember who gave him that watch, it was a gold watch. It was a pocket watch, that was the style at that time.

Q: Were you there when he --

A: Yes, I was there, I was there.

Q: And your mother?

A: My mother was there and that night my brother came home from Würzburg, it was a teacher's college. And we had the whistle, and I don't remember it now, that when we whistled downstairs we knew it was one or the other. I mean, my parents knew, my mother knew. Middle in the night we heard that whistle, and it was my brother came home. That was in '38. So after they deported my dad to the Polish border, they had some kind of agreement that if any Jew in Germany was not in Poland for the last 10 years, that they gonna make them staatenlos, that you didn't belong anywheres, you had no -- no country. And Germany did not want to get stuck -- your back hurts? It's okay? Germany did not want to get stuck with the people without a country. So that's why they pushed them to the border, and the Polacks were shooting and the Germans were shooting and somehow they came to an agreement. Now, I was not there, this was told to me afterwards

by my dad, that then they finally let them there -- let them in. So then, after '38, this was October, in November they had Crystal Night.

Q: Before we talk about Crystal Night could you just tell me a little bit about how your mother and you and your brother dealt with the -- the absence of your father immediately after he was deported? How did you find out where he had gone, and --

A: Do you know, I don't remember ho --

Q: -- did you expect him to come back?

A: No, I didn't expect him to come back because they called a meeting to all the wives of Polish citizens, and my mother was sick in bed. I think this was sometime in '39, that was already after Crystal Night, and we were told to be at the police station that there is going to be a meeting and we have to be there. If we not gonna be there, then they were gonna arrest us. So my mother was sick, and she sent me. So I went there and when they called my mother's name, I stood up and apologized that my mother couldn't be here, but I'm here and I will give her the message, whatever the meeting is about. He yelled at me to come forward. He yelled so hard, and I was a child. You know, I was 15 years old, and we were children at 15, not -- not the children 15 seemed like they're very grown up, but we were not, we were children. I was shaking from head to toe. He gave me a pencil to sign my mother's name that we had to leave Germany by August '39 or we were going to be arrested. Well, I couldn't hold the pencil, my hand was just shaking. So he took his gun out and put it to my temple. And I really don't remember whether I signed the name or I put the X mark -- he was satisfied, so maybe I signed the name. I don't remember what I did, he seemed to be satisfied. And we left, we left in August of '39, beginning of August, and they followed us. September, beginning of September, second World War started. It's when they came, invaded Poland.

Q: So after your father was deported --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- you -- you weren't really sure where he had gone?

A: Yes, we knew that he -- he -- that they deported him to Poland and my mother had the sister in Kraków and we were pretty sure that's where he was headed.

Q: And what happened in -- in those months before -- before you left, when you weren't with your father? Did you have any word, or what -- what did you and --

A: I don't remember how my mother found out, I couldn't tell you that. There was so much going on with me also. Like, the Jewish welfare office was trying to get one child out of every Jewish family, and I was designated to go to England, they found foster homes. And -- but then they were going to round up the young man, and my mother made me go to the Jewish welfare office, and she told me to really make a scene and cry that I don't want to go to England, I want to go with my mother. And evidently they bought it, and -- I really was scared, you know? I was crying, I was scared, also. So then they sent my brother instead.

Q: Was that what your mother wanted?

A: That's what my mother wanted, because they were not -- they were not doing anything to the girls, but they were already taking the young men to Dachau, so she wanted him out of the country.

Q: What do you remember about Kristallnacht?

A: Crystal Night, it was wild. We didn't go out, and excuse me -- got the hair right behind the eye. I'm looking at you -- okay. They banged at the door and my mother yelled, "We don't have any man here in the house, you deported my husband." And my brother hid in the apartment at a -- I think in the closet or something, or the bathroom. And we didn't open the door. And we

screamed and they screamed and then they went away. Several times they came that night, and then later on we found out they burned the synagogues, they burned the Torahs, they took the rabbi and set his beard on fire. And this was afterwards, ab -- I didn't go -- we did not go out, we were too scared to go out. This was November '38. It was horrible, it really -- it was horrible when they took my father away, but they just went crazy, they really did. We lived on Main Street and there was so much yelling going on, I stood behind the curtain just to see something. And then they broke all the glass in the Jewish stores, and there were quite a few Jewish stores on Main Street. They went berserk.

Q: Did your mother have any plans to leave Karlsruhe at the time?

A: Well, you need an affidavit to come to the United States and my Aunt Minna, the one that I came to the United States with had a brother-in-law in Lexington, Kentucky. And after -- we were in Poland, we lived in the same apartment house my aunt lived in. And we talked, if somebody was going to survive that, to get in touch with Leon Erbach, and there was a street, but I didn't remember it when I wrote to them. And that's how we were going to be re -- reunited. So -- what was the question you ask?

Q: I asked if your mother had plans to leave Karlsruhe.

A: Yeah, yeah, Erbach sent us an affidavit, but it was already too late, because Hitler went into Austria. That was in '38, and the Austrian quota -- did you see a -- there was a quota, German citizen, Polish citizen, Austrian citizen. You had to wait, you got the number. So they raised the Austrian quota for the Jews get out of Austria. So we couldn't get out. If -- maybe another six months, we could have made it. But I guess it wasn't meant to be.

Q: And you didn't have any contact with your father at all until --

A: Until we met again -- we were reunited in Kraków. We had to leave in '39, August '39, and we were reunited with my dad. And they rented a small apartment and --

Q: Let's go back t-to a -- just after you had found out that you were -- you and your mother -- you had signed a form and you knew that were to be leaving --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- Germany.

A: Yeah.

Q: What -- what did you do? How long did it take for you to be deported? What happened?

A: I worked in a Jewish welfare office, I was like a gopher, you know, taking papers. There were Jewish offices in different --

End of Tape One, Side A

Beginning Tape One, Side B

A: -- can you understand it? I talk with a very heavy accent.

Q: Yes, yes, that's fine.

A: You can understand?

Q: This is tape one, side B of an interview with Mrs. Sylvia Green. And Mrs. Green, if you would just repeat that from the beginning, the question about what you did after you had signed that affidavit?

A: I worked in the Jewish welfare office, and -- like a gopher, you know, taking papers. They had offices in different parts of town, and also, when the switchboard operator went to lunch, I would take over for a very short time. That was one job I hated. Was a nervous wreck. Always thought I was going to connect the wrong people. So, I don't know, that's just about all I remember what happened. I don't know how else I passed the time.

Q: How long did it take until you actually had to leave Germany because of that paper that was signed?

A: There was a -- well, we had to leave or -- I think they gave you a few months to get ready. And well, my brother, he -- we had a like an overseas trunk and -- and he packed everything, and it was shipped to Poland. And the bedroom was shipped to Poland. We didn't get it. So, we left by August, beginning of August you just had to leave.

Q: Were you on a train?

A: Yes, yes. We stopped by -- we stopped off in Berlin. My brother went to England the same night my mother and I caught the train to Poland, but we stopped off in Berlin. My mother wanted me to talk to the American consulate. And she thought I could s -- do better, you know, to talk to -- that maybe we could get out and come to America. I didn't even get to see the consulate in Berlin. I just talked to the secretary or somebody at the front desk. Maybe some other people had the same idea, too.

Q: How long did the trip take?

A: I know it was an overnight trip, but I don't know exactly. It's very hard to remember everything, it was such a long period of time. Like I told you when I talked over the telephone to you, I started right from the beginning with him. Look, that was '33 until '45, that's 12 years. That's a long time.

Q: Did you know where you were headed?

A: Poland, yes. We were headed to Kraków.

Q: By choice?

A: Well, we had to leave Germany. Yeah, by cho -- by cho -- choice, excuse me. After we've crossed the border, it was our choice to go to Kraków, because my aunt lived in Kraków. If we

had somebody in Warsaw, maybe we would have gone to Warsaw, but we didn't know anybody.

My mother was born in a little town near Kraków.

Q: So she -- you mentioned that she thought that was where your father would be.

A: Yeah, yeah. And I don't remember whether she knew or she thought he would be there.

Because my aunts -- my aunt lived in Kraków.

Q: Was that your father's sister?

A: No, my mother's sister.

Q: Do you remember what happened when you arrived?

A: Yeah. We went -- we went on the vacation. My Aunt Minna was in the vacation -- vacation in Jordanów. It was a vacation place, and we went there for a whole week. I even got a picture of that. And my dad came, or he was there also. And it was great, I -- I just thought well now, everything is going to go get back to normal and since they rented an apartment, that everything is going to be okay now. We were together, and my brother was in England, so -- but we were wrong. We really were wrong.

Q: Do you remember meeting with your father again, being reunited?

A: Well, not exactly. I don't know whether -- on the picture he was in Jordanów with us, so I don't know whether he was on vacation with my aunt, or he came to Jordanów. It was not very far from Kraków. It was a vacation place.

Q: Where did you live in Kraków?

A: First we lived with my aunt. Can't remember the name of that street, but as soon as they stopped bombing Kraków, we were in the basement and the house across the street got bombed in middle in the night. We just took sheets and dumped stuff in there, clothes and whatever. And

we walked all the way to Sepastiana number nine. That was a place where we rent an apartment afterwards. I don't remember the first address.

Q: So it was the -- you and your mother and your father --

A: My father, all three of us. And then, we were not the only ones, because my aunt lived in that apartment, and then some other sisters came from the country. And at the beginning we all stayed at my aunt's place. And the children slept on the floor, and the adults used the beds, and my mother wouldn't let me sleep on the floor, she thought I was too good to sleep on the floor, and I was just dying to sleep on the floor with the other kids. Seems like such a silly thing to remember, you know? But I guess it must have made an impression on me that time.

Q: What did you do with your days?

A: Well, this was '39, September '39. In 1940, just a few months, then we had to sweep the streets. We had to wear armbands, that was 1940. We had to -- even if it rained we had to sweep the streets. We had to clean barracks. We scrubbed the barracks on our knees. We carried railroad tracks all in 1940, but we still lived in the apartment. We had to meet in the mornings. And my trouble was, I was very tall, I was five-eight. And they would line us up, the tallest in the middle and then the shorter ones and shorter ones and I really got the heavy load. And they were not very kind to us when we cleaned the barracks. I mean, they would yell and scream, or kick, or scare us they were going to shoot us. But in the evening, after we went back, my mother always have a hot meal for us, and yeah, I can hear my mom say, "It's not going to get any worse. It's not going to get any worse." And all during the war I can hear her say it's not going to get any worse, but it did.

Q: So you were working with other children?

A: With other children, yeah. That was '40, I was 16.

Q: Was -- did your mother and father work?

A: No, no, they didn't work. I don't know whether they didn't ask them to work, I don't know. I have no idea.

Q: And did you have any sort of education, even informal during that time?

A: No.

Q: How -- how many hours a day did you have to work at this point?

A: I don't know. From morning til it got dark. But that hot meal sure tasted good. It really did.

Q: Did you have weekends free?

A: I don't remember. I don't think so. I don't remember. Do you know, it came to a point you were well, like a zombie. You only did what you supposed to do, more later on, even. And you didn't question it, you just did it. Worse thing really happened to me was, my parents and my aunt always said, "Sylvia, if Germans are around, never speak German. You don't want them to know that you German." So I spoke Polish, naturally with an accent. And there was a German -- we were carrying the railroad tracks and loading them on trucks, so I did not know and I was talking German to another German Jew. He came up, and he said, you speak with a bade -- a Badensa -- Baden. It's like the state of Baden, like Kentucky, you know? Badensa accent. You speak exactly like I do. And he was the meanest thing, he would scream, he always sit on top of the truck and yell at us. And we never did anything right. And always had the gun, was gonna shoot. And he said, "Where you from?" And I had to tell him. I said, "Karlsruhe on Rhine." I'm from Karlsruhe on Rhine. You come on and you sit on the truck and he gave me his lunch. And he made everybody watch. I couldn't swallow. I could -- I mean, my throat closed up, you know? And he was yelling at me, "You eat, you eat." I don't know whether he wanted me to

have his lunch, or he did it out of meanness, or maybe he thought he was helping me, I don't know. But I sure couldn't swallow. It just got in -- got stuck in my throat.

Q: Did you have to march a long way?

A: Ye -- oh yeah, yeah. You marched there, y-you had the meeting point and you marched, and you marched home that night. And you had to wear your armband. And I don't understand, some people say they -- they wore a armband with a yellow star which said Juden there. We had the blue star, a white armband in Kraków. That's what I remember.

Q: Do you remember -- did you -- were you able to make any friends or was there just no time?

A: Well, we really couldn't talk too much, because we bet -- watched so closely. You made friends and you didn't make friends. One day you had friends, the next day they were gone. I was fortunate that I was with my aunt constantly, and we talked a lot, and specially at night, you know, after we got together, we talked a lot. But you couldn't have friends because --

Q: Did you find any ways to have fun?

A: Huh? Fun?

Q: Fun.

A: Yeah. You know how I had fun? To aggravate the Germans. That was our fun. We would laugh so hard where we felt like crying, and they could not understand. And then we -- we would tell jokes, and we would laugh. Really, we didn't feel like laughing, but we did laugh. And that just about killed them. My God, you should be crying there, what are you laughing? You know. But if they got closer to you, you really shut up and you didn't look at them. You turned your head.

Q: Did you ever see them hit any o -- anybody?

A: Oh yes, yes. I saw them hit people, I saw them kill people, a -- I saw them kill babies, and ...for no reason. Really, sometimes you wonder how they could live with themselves, I don't know. I think a lot of them were drunk. I really do. I did not realize that until I saw "Schindler's List." Then I saw there, I mean, they were drinking. I knew Goeth. Well, I'm getting ahead of myself already. But th-they must have been drunk, because they were yelling, yelling, yelling, my God.

Q: So you kept on working like this until --

A: Like that day after day, whatever they ask me to do, I did. And then '41 was the ghetto. We were notified we had to leave, so like in "Schindler's List," we grabbed a -- a bedsheet again, we dumped everything in there, in the suitcase, and you walk. And like I told you on the phone, when I saw that "Schindler's List," I was looking for myself in there because it was so real it -- to me it was a documentary, it was not just a movie. I was looking for my relatives, I was looking for my parents, I was looking for myself. And that was no picnic, five, six people in a little apartment where you barely had room even to sleep on the floor.

Q: Was it just your family, or did you --

A: My family and my relatives. And then that got smaller all the time. I mean, one day -- well, I'm getting ahead again, is -- no, we did the same thing there, we -- they -- we would march to work outside the ghetto, and did the same thing. We shoveled snow, we washed the streets. And the same yelling. There were different faces of -- watching us, but it seemed like they were all the same.

Q: So you were doing the same --

A: The same thing, until '42, we got the job, my aunt got the job in Kabelwerk, and we marched from the ghetto to Kabelwerk every morning, it's -- was a cable factory. And there were different

departments there. I had to cover cables, I was in charge of 10 machines. And my aunt, they made -- what did she do? Oh, I can't think of that word, you plug it in. You know what I'm talking about, a cord you plug in, those -- what you call them?

Q: [Indecipherable] extension cord.

A: Huh?

Q: Extension cord?

A: Yeah, something like that, but you plug it in in outlets.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: Like -- what's that called?

Q: Plug.

A: Plug? Okay. Well, she put those together, my aunt. It was a different department she worked in. And for morning we marched with the O.D. man, that was the Jewish police -- police and then we went back again. And then I think it was towards end of '42, then we were concentrated in Plaszów, Potkish Plaszów, the concentration camp. And we went to work to Kabelwerk from Plaszów. And I only saw my parents twice.

Q: Be -- before will -- you tell me about Plaszów, will you describe your -- your living quarters to me? I know you -- you said you were in very cramped conditions. Was -- was it cold, was it --

A: Well, it was always cold, and I don't know what I looked like. There was no mirror, you know, but I looked at my aunt and I knew what I looked like, a skeleton. We were always cold, so all we wa -- wore are prison garb, and it was in the wintertime. Naturally you got cold, and Poland is cold. And then you had to stand appelle, they would count you and count you. They wanted to make sure that a half a person wasn't missing or something. Sometimes it was for hours, just of meanness, til they got bored with it. The quarters, they were barracks, and with

wooden slats, and you just -- there were bottom one, I think there were like a bunk, like a bunk -- you couldn't call it bed.

Q: This is in -- in pla --

A: In Plaszów.

Q: Plaszów.

A: Potkish Plaszów.

Q: What about in the -- what about in the ghetto?

A: In the ghetto it was apartments. Still apartments, but overcrowded. Because the ghetto, at one time, people lived there. Before the ghetto, there were homes, you know. I mean, apartments.

Q: And you -- you -- did you manage to get enough to eat during that time that you were in the ghetto?

A: Probably I did, I don't know. We got the meal in Kabelwerk. The interesting thing was that the first time -- I always ate kosher, and when I start working in Kabelwerk they served us meals, and it was the same meal the Gentile workers got. So that wasn't that bad, because had lots of vegetables in there. I don't remember about meat now, maybe it did. And I wouldn't eat. I came home and I barely dragged. My dad said, "What's the matter?" We still were in the ghetto at that time. What's a matter? I said, "Dad, I can't eat that, they're serving traif." So it must have had meat in there also. And he said, "You have to eat. You have to have strength to survive this, you have to eat." So the next day I ate and I couldn't keep it down, I was throwing it all up. I came home and I dragged again. I told my dad, I said, "I can't keep it down." He said, "You have to eat, you have to force yourself." And the third day I was glad to get it. So from that on, I start eating traif, and was lucky enough to get it, you know, at that time.

Q: Were your parents working at Kabelwerk?

A: No, no. Just my aunt and I, and I was promised that I -- if I would work in Kabelwerk that my aunt -- my parents would be safe in the ghetto. But naturally it was broken promises. So the liquidation of the ghetto was March the 13th, 1943. And my father got killed in the hospital -- schpital. What happened was, every so often in the ghetto, they were rounding up people to send them to concentration camps, and he -- they rounded him up on the street in the ghetto and he jumped out the window. And he fell -- he was going to run away and hide somewhere in the ghetto. And he fell, he broke his leg. So this was a makeshift hospital and they had some Jewish doctors who practiced -- I mean, they were doctors before the war. And he was in traction and -- his leg was in traction, was the last time I saw him. And he was shot in the hospital, because my cousin saw him, he was in the clean-up crew, and he saw him laying there on the sidewalk. And there were pictures of my mother, and of me and my brother around him. But I didn't know until I saw "Schindler's List," that they gave them poison. The nurses gave them poison. I did not know that, and I was thankful. Did you see it? They were grateful. The patients were grateful to get it, they were even smiling. Because you heard them downstairs already, yelling and screaming. And about the time they came up they start shooting, and they didn't even notice that they were already dead. And I don't know what happened to my mother, I thought my mother might have ended up in one of the concentration camps, but she might have been shot in the ghetto, because they would just shoot left and right.

Q: Were you with her up until that day --

A: No.

Q: -- up until the day of deportation?

A: No, no, no. I was in the Kabelwerk at that time. I mean, I was working in Kabelwerk and after the liquidation of the ghetto, then they build barracks in Kabelwerk, and we were there. We were not walking to Plaszów any more. We were concentrated where the factory was.

Q: That was yu --

A: That was til about September. This was, I think, May -- March '43, until I think September '43. We were concentrated in the factory where we worked. And that wasn't that bad. The only upsetting thing I still remember is they supposed to have somebody come from Switzerland, a Red Cross representative come from Switzerland. And we had to clean the barracks, and we all got a care package, which we had to open but not touch. So when the representative from Switzerland came, he looked around, the barracks were clean and we all talked to him on the side, how bad it is, you know? And he was not very sympathetic. He said, "The barracks are clean. Look at the nice care package. What are you complaining? People are getting killed, there is a war going on, you got it good here." So we told him, we said, "We ha-have to return those, we can't even touch it." The order was to open it up but not to touch it. And they took those care packages away. But it was so upsetting to us that he didn't believe us, the representative from the Red Cross.

Q: Before the ghetto was liq -- liquidated and you left, do you remember the last time you saw your mother?

A: The last time might have been maybe a month before. My aunt knew the O.D. man, the one used to march us from one place to another, and he had to be in the ghetto. And my aunt asked him whether he would take me along. So I marched with him, and he was yelling at me just because there were Germans around, you know, even going from one place to another. Now you walk straight, you know? And it might have been about a month before, I went to the hospit -- I

went first and saw my mother. And my mother told me my dad was in the hospital. So I went to the hospital and I only had a very short time, I don't remember exactly, maybe a whole hour or a half an hour, I don't remember that. And my dad said -- he was so happy to see me, he was just smiling. And he had this leg in traction. So he said, "I want you to meet my doctor, he is such a nice man." I said, "Dad, I have to go, I have to go." They just gave me so much time, and I says, "I got to go," and we hugged, and I kissed him and I was walking out and the doctor just walked in. And my dad said, "This is my daughter I have told you about." I was dad's little girl, always. And --

End of Tape One, Side B

Beginning of Tape Two, Side A

Q: This is tape two, side A of an interview with Mrs. Sylvia Green. And Mrs. Green, I'm -- I'm going to ask you to repeat the story that you were telling about your vit -- your last visit with your father in the hospital in the Kraków ghetto.

A: Ghetto -- yeah. Do you want me to hold it -- or you holding -- ah, the last visit, I went into the ghetto, an O.D. man had to go to the ghetto and he was a good friend of my aunts, and so my aunt asked him to take me along so I could see my parents. And so we marched and he was yelling at me. I knew he was just doing that, you know, for the other Germans around, the ones who would walk. And as we entered the ghetto, I went to my mother's place first and then she told me that my father was in the hospital, and I went to see my dad and he was so happy to see me, because I always was daddy's little girl. And we talked for awhile, and he had his leg in traction and he told me what happened, how he broke the leg, that he jumped out the window because they were rounding them up to send them to gas chambers. And well, we talked for awhile, and then I said Dad, I have to go -- well, I called him Papa. We called the father Papa. I have to go because so and so, the O.D. man, I can't remember his name now, I have to go back with him. And he said, "Oh, I wanted you to meet my doctor so badly." And I start walking out and the doctor walked in. And my dad smiled, "This is her, this is Sylvia. I have told you so much about it." And the doctor said, "I'm so glad to meet you, he's talking about you all the time." And we exchanged pleasantries, I don't know exactly what, and my dad and I, we hugged, and we kissed. And I walked out and I met the O.D. man and this was the last time -- might have been maybe a month or a few weeks before the liquidation of the ghetto, and I'm really happy I had the chance to go there to see my parents.

Q: And your mother? Do you remember --

A: I -- I don't know what happened to my mother. I saw in the paper that the Red Cross has a new list, they found it somewhere, some -- in Russia, which they kept under cover for years and years. And I went to the Red Cross here in Winchester and she asked some background information and I gave it to her, and she said, maybe you be lucky that you can find out what happened to your mother and then my aunt's husband and my aunt's daughter. And they haven't found out. I got the -- she couldn't find out anything and then I also got the letter from Baltimore, they could not trace what happened to my mother. I always thought she ended up maybe in Auschwitz or Treblinka or somewhere. But after I saw "Schindler's List," I saw they were shooting like crazy. I mean, it's not what your looks was, they was just shouting and shooting, going crazy, so I don't know whether she was shot in the ghetto, what happened to her, I don't know.

Q: Do you remember the last time you saw her, or close to the last --

A: That was the last time, when I saw my dad that was the last time, about a month or two weeks before the liquidation of the ghetto. The ghetto was like --

Q: She was there, too.

A: Yes, yeah, I went to her place first and she told me my dad was in the hospital. I was looking for him, you know, when I went there, I thought I was going to see both of them. So that was the last time. And that was '43, and my mother was born '87, that would make them 53 years old. And you know my dad never even had a cold? I don't remember ma -- he had -- he only missed work one time I recall. He had an abscess on his chest and my brother cleaned it out and it got infected. My da -- my dad thought he was dying, he never was sick. He didn't know how to

handle it, you know? He went to bed. He never was sick and he got killed, and he only was 53 years old. Nice looking man.

Q: Are you -- you had mentioned the -- the O.D., the -- those were the Jewish police.

A: Jewish policemen, kapo, O.D., Jewish policemen. Some of them were pretty mean also if they thought they would get a better treatment when they mistreated us. Some were pretty rough.

Q: Did you ever get beaten yourself by Germans or --

A: No. I got beaten one time, 25, by -- that was in Plaszów, Potkish Plaszów, the concentration camp. It was in a barrack and it was the one who was in charge of the barrack, and I got 25 paddles. There was a bad odor in that neighborhood where -- where I was on the double decker wooden thing where were laying, and somebody had their period or something, and they put some -- it wasn't pads, it was something, and pushed it over where I was sleeping, and she said it was mine, it didn't happen to be mine, I got 25 paddles. But that, I think was the only time. My aunt always told me, don't walk erect. Make yourself shorter, you know, that you wouldn't stand out. And I always knew, wherever I went I just walk like that. So at so -- some -- some girls got raped. And I was pretty fortunate, but I wasn't much to look at, because all those years already took its toll at a very young age. And I was still in the developing age, you know, when the war broke out.

Q: Do you remember the deportations that happened before the ghetto was liquidated?

A: No, I was not in the ghetto when it was liquidated. So I don't know anything, it's just what I heard, that all was hearsay. And my cousin was in the clean-up crew and he saw my father there, and he told me that.

Q: You mentioned that wa -- as you were working at Kabelwerk --

A: Kabelwerk, yeah.

Q: -- you were in charge of 10 machines.

A: 10 machines, yes.

Q: And were you supervising other workers at that time?

A: No, no. I was in charge of all 10 machines and there was another person, another 10 machines and then in the back of you there were 10 machines and they had to be in operation at all times.

If not, a si -- the thing was it was a very fine but strong thread but if something went wrong and it skipped a stitch, you had to cut that open and -- and do it again. I mean, you really had to watch it so it'd be evenly covered. And there for awhile, I just worked daytimes. But then, you worked one week 12 hours, daytime and the following week 12 hours nighttime. And they did this on purpose, because you never could sleep. I mean, there was no way to get adjusted from one to another. So, well, we were sent back to Potkish Plaszów, September '43.

Q: When you say sent back, you meant -- you had been there before?

A: Yeah. I was in Plaszów -- I was in Plaszów and we walked from Plaszów to Kabelwerk, from Plaszów. And then they concentrated us in Kabelwerk for a short time, and then -- but -- but the time we s -- were sent back to Plaszów, we did not work in Kabelwerk any more. This was September '43. And when I got there, well, we had to work in the concentration camp. We had to open graves, pull out gold teeth. And the people who were in charge of this place were prisoners, German prisoners. And they were completely out of control. I mean, they were murderers, they -- they were in prison because they were murderers from way before the war, and they let them out to -- to oversee us. And the guy's name Hammond, oh wow, he was crazy. He really was crazy. I saw Goeth many times and as soon as we heard he was walking through the camp, I was running away, because we knew he was target shooting, he didn't care what you looked like. He was just target shooting. He wanted to see how close he could shoot or how far he could shoot.

And Schindler was with him many times. And they were drinking buddies. And I really don't think Schindler -- well, he saved a lot of Jews, and like they say, who saves one life, saves the world. But I can guarantee you this man did not start out to save the Jews. He started out to -- to fill his pockets. And somehow, I think towards the end, he found out that it's a losing war they fighting. So he changed his mind. But thank God he did, because he saved a lot of Jews. But this was terrible, I mean in the Plaszów, whether we had to go outside and load railroad tracks again, or in -- if we worked inside, then we had to dig -- I mean, open the graves and pull out the golden teeth, or we carried barracks. They were always building barracks and we had to -- to carry that stuff. And really my legs are my weakest, my -- my health problem are my legs. You can't work like dog -- like a man and not come out scarred. So we were there until -- oh, I didn't tell you about my cousin, Janek Kalbenstok. When we came back in September '43, people were telling me about my cousin Janek. He and a little boy were walking in the concentration camp, and evidently Goeth was walking towards him, and my little cousin Janek had a habit, he drove his mother crazy. When he was upset, he would whistle. He didn't even know he did this. And somebody told me that he was whistling -- whistling that -- it was a Russian song, or -- or a French anthem, I don't know, I wasn't there. And they arrested him right there, in '43. And they built a gallow to hang him, all night long. And the next day they brought him out to hang him. They made his father sit in the front row, my oncl -- Uncle Henek Kalbenstok. And the rope broke. So he sent somebody for new rope and my poor little cousin must have been just scared to death and he was crawling up to Goeth's foot and kissing his boot. And they said that he was just hissing. Goeth took the gun out and shot him right there. My uncle saw it and he had a complete stroke. Never came back from it because when I went up there, I went to see him in Plaszów, in that concentration camp where it all happened. He was just a vegetable.

Q: How old was your cousin?

A: He was younger than I am. I really don't know exactly, maybe four or five years younger.

This was in '43, I was 19, he might have been 15 -- 14 or 15, I don't know exactly.

Q: Had you known him?

A: I did not know them very well, because I was born and raised in Germany, and I was not in Poland, I think maybe about a couple times. My mother went to visit, but she didn't take us children. Somehow you take children more now than you used to, it seems like it.

Q: What kept you going?

A: Well, this is interesting question. I don't know really what kept me going. The only thing my aunt and I, we talked all the time, and other people, too. Somebody had -- had to survive to tell the world. We did not know that the world knew about it. We thought everybody was just ignorant about it, you know, they did not know. And I don't know if -- don't ask me whether -- people say you must have been very healthy. I wasn't any healthier than the ones who died next to me, because I had typhus for two weeks, I don't remember anything. I was so sick and we had to stand appelle, and they would drag me out, which I did not know, and they -- they stood me up, holding me up. The only thing I can think of is, my time was not up. Somebody still had some purpose, and also, I don't know, maybe it was a strong will to live, to tell the world. But my world crumbled pretty quick after I came to the United States, when I found out the world did know, and didn't do a thing about it. And maybe it was lucky I didn't know, because I am pretty sure I would have given up. My aunt would have given up. My aunt was just like my mother. We were just constantly together. Really, by yourself you could not survive. You had to have somebody to care for. Your back's hurting now? Okay? You had to have somebody to care for, and she did. The ration of bread we got, she want to share with me her portion. "I'm really

not very hungry Sylvia, why don't you take this?" I just couldn't eat it. I said, "Minna, I don't want it." I said, "You just want me to have it because you know I'm so hungry." "No, no, no, honest. I just can't eat another bite, I'm just not hungry." That was my aunt, God bless her.

Q: Did you have faith at the time?

A: I didn't have much religion all during the war, and after the war, oh God, I was bitter. I blamed God what happened, and why. And I still got a lot of whys. Thank God, I got over the bitterness. The bitterness doesn't work, it eats you up alive. And it's -- it doesn't harm the people you hate. It -- I couldn't even talk German after the war, a complete blank. I blocked it out. And my brother told me, "Sylvia," he said, "the German language is beautiful." I said, "The German language?" I connected it with Hitler, it's not beautiful, it's terrible. And then to meet people who had anything to do with Germany or German descent, I had to run away. And this kind man helped. He was so kind, because I just wanted to shut the door and that's it, not think about it, and -- when I got married. And even after, I was an atheist, I didn't believe in anything. I really didn't. And -- so after I got married, I still did not talk about it to anybody. It was like I was ashamed of it, like some of it was my fault, you know? And I knew it wasn't, but somehow I just couldn't talk about it. And then it was a small town, with not many Jewish people. I already had one monkey on my head to be a Jew in a small town. And -- but the door would not stay shut, when I got pregnant. And then it all came back, the nightmares, and waking up screaming -- not waking up -- oh, excuse me -- screaming in my dreams. Sobbing wet. Jake would wake me up, and we would come in and we sit for hours and I had to start talking. And this man sat next to me. I don't know whether he listened what I said, or what, but his ear was there and that's what I needed. So I was pretty lucky to have a wonderful husband. And the children are great, they really are. They loving, very loving. I h -- said that in the documentary, I did not want to raise

them full of hatred. In fact, they didn't know much about the Holocaust til I made that documentary. I want them to -- want to raise them healthy, happy and -- physically and mentally. And they got problems, I mean everybody's got problems, but the problems are not connected with my past, because I did set myself a goal that if I failed, then Hitler had won out, and he didn't, because they're loving children, they really are big hearts.

Q: Let's go --

A: But well, September -- January. January '44. Naturally we had to line up, we had to be counted. And they were telling us we were going to a wonderful place. There's going to be clean beds and plenty food. You're gonna work hard, but you're gonna have it good. And my aunt said, "Wow, it sounds like paradise," you know. And then we were crammed into cattle wagon. And Kraków -- Auschwitz is not that far from Kraków but it tuck -- took such a long time because the train stopped every few feet because the planes were bombing. And before we got into the cattle wagon, they gave us some bread, and that was all. And there was a container with water, and one container for the bathroom. And they stopped, and gosh were we pray -- praying. Yeah, they jumped out the -- the -- the trains, and they were hiding in ditches, the German. And we were laughing, we really were laughing. There was a little window up in top those cattle wagons, the old ones. And we would get on each other's shoulder to lift them up to see so we could get a good laugh, cause they were so scared. And we yelled, "Bomb us, bomb us, come on." You know, we didn't care. We really didn't care, as long as they would have gotten killed. And then we went a little bit longer. To me it seemed like we went the whole week, but we didn't. But you see, a time was -- didn't seem important at all. It was just running into a day or night, til the cattle wagons stopped, they opened the doors, and they were yelling. Out, out, out,

out, out. Kicking and dogs, and we were running. And then we looked and we knew where we were, because we saw the chimneys burning.

Q: You had heard about Auschwitz?

A: Oh yeah. Everybody heard about Auschwitz. And you could smell it, the smell of human flesh. So, you know how they kept the records so neat, you know, they had to have orders. They didn't have any orders. We arrived without orders, they didn't know what to do with us. So we were sitting there or standing there, between the ovens, near the gate when they opened. And on the other side were the barracks. And you sat there for 48 hours. And they were running like crazy. They couldn't get any orders, they didn't know whether we end up in the -- should end up in the gas chamber, or at the camp. And we just sat. And it was cold, it was January. And finally, there still were no orders, but then we took a -- I guess they were afraid to send us to the ovens if the orders came that we should not be killed, they couldn't bring us back after they once gassed us, you know. So then they told us to go into showers, and we took the shower, naturally there's never enough water. And then we walked out in the nude in January in Poland, shivering. And then we got prison garbs. And they gave me wooden shoes, and they made me wear those shoes. I couldn't walk in that -- in the shoes. It seemed like the shoes had a mind of their own. And then they put us in barracks. And about -- well, we didn't do anything. You just laid there, or you stood there. And we were there about 12 or 14 days, too many.

End of Tape Two, Side A

Beginning Tape Two, Side B

Q: This is tape two, side B of an interview with Mrs. Sylvia Green. Did they -- did they give you a tattoo when you arrived at Auschwitz?

A: No, no, in Auschwitz -- and I found that out later on, that you had to work there before they tattooed your arm, and we didn't work there. We just were there 12 - 14 days, and we didn't do anything. One time we got black coffee, whatever it was, it was awful, in the morning. And we had to carry -- they were heavy kettles. And in the evening you got the water soup. So I remember that very well, it was my turn to go. And some other girls also went and coming back and we were almost our barrack and those stupid wooden shoes wouldn't stay on my feet, and I dropped the kettle and our whole supper was there. Really was scared that the people gonna kill me, the hungry people, you know, but they didn't. We just all lay down and we licked the floor, whatever fell there.

Q: Did they shave your hair?

A: Already, partially, every so often it was shaved, the hair. It was already very short before we went in Auschwitz, and then in Auschwitz they shaved it again and delouse them, they sprayed you. And they deloused you, yes, was some kind of powder they did, they -- they sprayed you with.

Q: Were you still with your aunt?

A: Yeah. We were liberated together. Let's see, after about 12 or 14 days in Auschwitz, we were shipped back in the cattle wagon to Bergen-Belsen. And when we got to -- I think it was still January '44, because we were, pretty much, one of the first ones there. When we came to Bergen-Belsen they had nothing but tents. And then there was a big storm one night and it was quiet. There was no shouting and it was very quiet in comparison to Auschwitz, there was so commotion constantly. It was very quiet and my aunt said, "You know, Sylvia, in comparison to Auschwitz, this is a vacation." But we didn't know that was -- there was no gas chambers, but it was starvation camp. They just starved you to death. So there weren't that many people, but then

we had a big storm and it knocked all the tents down and they moved us to barracks. And they were looking for somebody who spoke a lot of languages, so I applied for it. I spoke German fluently. By that time already I spoke Polish fluently but couldn't read or write it, because when you're young you pick up languages. They said I spoke it with a heavy accent. So I applied for it, and I -- I knew about three words of French, or maybe five words and two words of Russian. So I got the job, not very long though, but enough that I had the foot in the kitchen. And so I could steal food so my aunt wouldn't be hungry. So there were Jewish people working in the kitchen and some Russian soldiers working in the kitchen and there were three Frenchmen. They were college students and they worked with the underground Gentiles and they got caught. So they were funny, they were so funny. They all spoke German and wouldn't let the German know that they spoke German. And they would sing, and they would sing the French anthem. And they would laugh, and they made us laugh. But the Russian people, we had to stay away from them. When we stole food, we didn't tell on each other, but the Russians told on us when they saw us stealing food. They kept to themselves pretty much. We were afraid of them. So, well, I got typhus in Bergen-Belsen and Paul LaPietra, one of the Frenchmen stole food and send it to the camp. So by the time I got the food, there wasn't that much food left because she shared it with other people, but evidently it must have helped some. And when I got better after two weeks, I noticed that I -- I didn't have any shoes, I don't know what happened to them, my shoes. And I told the girl, I said, "I can't go back to work in the kitchen without shoes." So Paul LaPietra stole some man's boots and send it to the camp with a friend of mine. And after I went back to the kitchen, those three Frenchmen hoisted me up on their shoulder and they were marching and they were singing la mar -- what is that? La Marseille, th-the French anthem. Oh, the German, I'm

telling you, they would get so red and yell. And we say, your gonna have a stroke, he's gonna have a stroke, but no, not such luck. And we were liberated April the 14th.

Q: Before --

A: '45. It was really strange. By that time I wasn't working in the kitchen any more, nobody was working anywheres, because there was no food. And they already knew that they were in bad shape because the guards were disappearing there. And they came back. There was no place for them to go. We didn't know that, they were surrounded by the Russians, by the British and by the Americans, and there was no place to run around. So they were digging ditches. And oh, they were angry. I'm telling you, you couldn't even set the foot out. If not, you got shot. So we stayed pretty much indoors, and everybody was sick. No energy, no water, no food. And then I got dysentery problems again. I went out one night to relieve myself and felt something cold I was sitting on, and I looked and it was a body, and I just moved over. I mean, you got -- evidently you got conditioned to that. I mean, just thinking about it, it blows my mind, you know? And I crawled back in. So one night, it was between 14th and 15th the night, or was early in the morning, we heard the -- heard a lot of tanks, rolling and rolling and rolling. We didn't know what was the matter. And it was morning and somebody came running in, we are liberated, we are liberated. And they said, by the British army, we are liberated. Well, I crawled out there, and my aunt went out there, too. I said, "What are you talking about?" The German commandoes, they were standing in front of the tanks. They tied them down there evidently, I don't know. And they -- with no medals, they stripped them of all the medals, but I didn't see that. I still saw the Nazis. I said, "What you talking about, here they are." And then we found out we were liberated, and I stood up and I start singing the British anthem, God Bless the King. I remember that from school. And oh, there was such, so much commotion going on, they were so wonderful. And

they gave us care packages. We didn't know how to handle those care packages, we ate everything. And that's why so many died. On that starvation diet for so many years and then you drank cocoa, I mean the powder, and coffee, smoked cigarettes, chocolate. All at one time and sardines. They meant well, I mean, they didn't mean any harm. But I think the ler -- that the world learned from that. Whatever prisoners come back, they kind of condition them slowly with food.

Q: Let's go back a little bit to before liberation, and you mentioned that -- that you had typhus. And I remember earlier you had said that you -- you -- you had to go out to roll call every day and other people were holding you up.

A: Yeah, I don't -- I didn't -- I don't remember two weeks, I don't remember. I don't remember anything. They told me -- you see, the thing about it is, they had to have a certain amount. They had the number there and that number had to satisfy them. Well, they dragged me out, and somebody called, you said, one, two, three, you know, you -- you called your own number, so somebody must have called a number for me. If not they'd be still standing there today. I mean, it had to be like to say 550, it had to 550. If not, they went back in the barracks [indecipherable] they counted the dead. So they told me that they dragged me out every day and when it came -- I mean, that's a lot of people, that's you know, lined up, that probably when it came to me, they just held me up.

Q: Do you know if you were in a hospital that time?

A: No, I was not in the hosp -- there was no hospital there. After the war they made a hospital where Himmler's palace was in Bergen-Belsen. He had the palace there, and they made this into a hospital. The ones who were so sick, they took them there. But by that time I was -- I wasn't that sick any more.

Q: How did you get better?

A: I don't know. I don't know, the grace of God, I don't know. I told you my time wasn't up, I guess I had to have those beautiful babies.

Q: And your aunt, was she working?

A: In the camp, no. I stole food while I was in the kitchen. But then, there were times we just laid there. She had typhus before I had it, even. My aunt. Everybody had typhus. It's a dysentery, but to get well, it's hard to explain with any antibiotics or anything, because now you hear about typhus, e-everybody died. It was like cholera, you know, long time ago people died, not many survived.

Q: Did you have the sense around that time that -- that the end of the war was coming close and that you were going to survive?

A: No. That'd be too much thinking, I didn't have the energy. I think I told you that early in that interview. You did what you supposed to do and you did it, and hour went into hour, into day and night, it -- there was no difference. No, I never did, I -- the only thing, like sometimes we would sit around and be miserable, and then somebody would say, you know on Shabbas, Friday night? Boy, my mother set a table fit for a king. What did she cook? Well, there was fish and chicken soup and chicken and roast beef and vegetables and dessert. And somebody would pop up, that's enough food, I can't eat another bite. Do you know really, I'm not kidding, we could taste that food.

Q: Did you have other fantasies?

A: No. Just blank. Just a zombie. And I don't think I was the only one, I think everybody was that way. I was so conditioned from the time I was nine years old, until the end of the war, that -- the only thing many times you ask yourself why, why, why. I still ask myself now, why? I said,

when my time comes, I'm gonna have a list that long. And I'm -- when I get upstairs I'm gonna ask him, maybe he can -- why this, why that, you know. But you know what's very upsetting to me? The world didn't learn anything by it. If the ler -- the world just would have learned something by it. Look that ethnic cleansing now. They're killing babies. So I feel like that whole thing was a waste. At least if people would have learned by it. But they didn't.

Q: Do you remember at liberation, and you -- you suddenly saw -- realized that you were liberated --

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: -- and you were inspired to just sing.

A: Yeah. Oh yeah, at the national an -- th-the British, God Save the King. I met a British soldier and I still remembered, whoever lives gonna get in touch with Erbachs in Lexington, Kentucky. So I told him about -- I had about two years of English, and I didn't do too well, but I still have the letter here. I've -- I was going to pull it out and show it to you. I wrote to Erbachs in Lexington, Kentucky, but we couldn't mail, I mean there was no mail going between Germany and -- and America at that time, and I gave it to that British soldier I met, and he sent this letter to his mother in England, and his mother, or his parents forwarded that -- that letter to America, to lex -- Erbachs, Lexington, Kentucky. And at that time Lexington, Kentucky was small. There were about 65,000 people. So everybody knew each other, so it got there, just Leon Erbach, Lexington, Kentucky, United S -- U.S.A.. So my brother was in the American army. He ga -- Erbach sent him an affidavit from England to come to the United States in 1940, and he was drafted in '41. So, he was still serving in the American army, he was with Intelligence, he spoke seven languages fluently. And Erbachs got in touch with him. And he came to Bergen-Belsen and I think I told you that previously, when they came running in telling me that my brother was

out there, and I run out and all in a sudden I just stopped. I thought my dad was there, because they look so much alike. So then he took us to Munich, he was stationed in Munich. My brother was stationed in Munich. And he sent the ambulance after us. I think was around October '45. When he came to the camp, he brought oranges, food. And oh, we -- we just had a party. And my brother said, "I just bought that for you and Aunt Minna." I said, "I can't eat that by myself, not sharing it, what you talking about?" He didn't understand. You know, you're hungry together, you party together. So it was good food, it really was. And he rented an apartment in Munich.

Q: When you saw him and he arrived at Bergen-Belsen and you -- you thought it was your father --

A: It was scary. That's why I -- I t -- I couldn't talk. I just stood there like paralyzed. Even had -- had the moustache like my dad, at that time.

Q: Did you have a feeling of -- of s -- of sadness, or of joy?

A: I had no feeling, I just looked. I t -- I knew my dad was killed and I thought my dad was standing there. It wasn't sadness, I just couldn't understand it, you know? They look so much alike, almost like twins. And then I was very happy. You know, we just grabbed, and we hugged, and -- he went through his own hell, because he went in my place to England and all during the war that was on his mind. He told me, he said, "I'm so happy that you are alive. I don't know how I would have managed to -- to live, to know that you got killed and I'm alive."

Q: Had you thought about him much through those years?

A: Yeah, my mother would talk. I wonder how Bernard is getting along, you know, but that's -- we didn't know. I hope he's doing okay. But we knew at that time he was in England, we didn't know he came to America. But we felt like he was safe.

Q: So you went to Munich.

A: We went to Munich and he could have -- he was discharged about -- we came in June, he was discharged about two or three months before and he could have come to the United States. So he signed up as a civilian for another six months, because he wanted us -- he wanted for us to get out of Germany. He was afraid that we weren't pushy enough, probably, you know. And so he stayed and he took care of all the papers, and we got out but -- ba -- June, we arrived in New York.

Q: Would you stay -- say you were still feeling numb about everything that had happened?

A: Well, you come to a strange country, you scared. People you didn't know -- all right, the Erbachs were related to my aunt, but they were no relations to me. No, I was -- wasn't feeling numb then. I was angry. I was full of hatred. I think it brought -- I brought this up before.

Q: I'm sorry, how long had you been in Munich?

A: From October '45, until June '46.

Q: And what did you do while you were there?

A: Go crazy, go wild. Eat, drink, bleach your hair blonde. Peroxide my hair. We didn't know whether to walk on our heads, we didn't know whether to walk on our feet. I mean, all of that freedom, all in a sudden, listen, that's -- that's overpowering. And my brother brought a lot of food home from -- oh, what you call that? A mess hall or something. Is it called mess hall, I think? Brought a lot of food, and all his friends brought food. I guess they felt so sorry for us, you know?

Q: And you didn't have to do any work?

A: No. No, no, he took care of us. Well, the strangest thing. He got that apartment f-for us, and he just told the Germans to get out. And they were crying and they were crying, that's our apartment, how we c -- we been living here. And he was not very sympathetic. He told them they

had to get out, and some of his friends also. We got the apartment. So while we already lived in -
- in that apartment, they came, ringing the doorbell. We want to move back. This is our
apartment. So, I was so angry, I said, "What are you talking about? I like to see my parents, too.
What did you do to them?" I wasn't -- we weren't very sympathetic.

Q: And they just left?

A: Yeah, they left, and they came back two, three days later on. Looking back now, I'm -- I
mean, they were -- it was theirs, you know, but look what they did t-to us. I mean, the one they
killed, you couldn't bring those back, could you? And this was only material things. But I told
you I was angry. It was just all bundled up, you know, and all in a sudden it just had to explode.
But Munich was great, really was. We went to museums and we went to concerts, we went to the
opera. [tape break]

Q: So when -- when you were in Munich you -- you -- you were angry, but you were also having
fun.

A: Oh, I was having fun, and I'm not the only one, I mean, everybody had fun. Somebody said,
oh y -- I used to be a blonde as a child, kind of golden blonde. Oh, you got brown eyes. Blonde
hair and brown eyes is unusual. How about bleaching? So it -- they used peroxide. And I came to
the United States as a blonde. And then there was a museum, was kind of meeting place of the
survivors. And once in awhile you would meet some which you knew. I mean, you met people
all the time, so you couldn't remember everybody, you know? But sometimes you run across
somebody and oh, you are here, you are here. You know, you survived that. And we grabbed and
we hugged, and we were wild.

Q: You made new friends?

A: In Munich? No, not really. I mean, people a -- was together. Then I was with my brother a lot. My aunt was with us constantly. You see, the -- my aunt was my best friend. There was nothing I couldn't tell her, and she knew exactly how I felt about things. She was my best friend, she was my psychiatrist and I helped her. But my brother was very good to us. He really took us places, and his American soldiers, his friends were very nice. Yeah, we did make some friends [indecipherable]. He came back to Munich after the war, and he opened a store they had before the war. And he got us some material and we had some raincoats made. At that time a lot of things were custom made, you just couldn't go in the store. Maybe housedresses they would sell in the store, but not like you go and you can buy suits and all that. Those things were custom made a long time ago.

End of Tape Two, Side B

Beginning Tape Three, Side A

Q: This is tape three, side A, of an interview with Mrs. Sylvia Green. Mrs. Green you were just talking about your -- your stay in Munich.

A: Yeah.

Q: And you spent almost a year there, and --

A: No, not quite a year.

Q: There --

A: From October until June.

Q: October until June.

A: Mm-hm.

Q: So a little over a half a year.

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah. And -- and during this time, did you reflect much on what had happened to you before in [indecipherable]

A: No, not too much. I had a lot of living to do, because I didn't live before. That's -- everybody felt that way. We ate too much, we drank too much. We just felt like a -- a bird coming out the cage. It's very overpowering, all -- all that freedom. You were not told what to do, you could walk, you could go to bed when you wanted. Had nice beds and sheets. I mean, things you take for granted.

Q: Did you think much about the future? About what you would do?

A: Well, I knew that we were coming to the United States, this we knew, because my brother filled forms out all the time, you know, and then we had to go for examinations. And you had to get passports, and finally the day came when we left Germany, and I think we were -- we came

over on the ship Marine Perch, and -- from Bremerhaven. And I think we were on board about 11 days, because they had to stop, there were some mines and they didn't tell us they had mines in the water until they deactivated it. They didn't tell us, we probably would have been scared to death. But I would say there were about 800 passengers, maybe with the crew also. Was a very small ship, and it was not equipped, it was not a luxury liner. We had one little room, but from the 800 people, there might have been about 40 - 50 who didn't get sick, most of them got sick, seasick. And my aunt was seasick. They -- the younger people they put in the bunkbeds, and was a great, big room, and the food was served buffet. And that -- but my aunt, she was over 40, and she had, I think it was a semi-private room, they just gave it to her. After -- up to a certain age. And they ate at a table, they were served, and my poor aunt was in bed all the trip. I went down every day to see her, and I want to bring her some food, and she said, "Get out of here, get out. I can't look at that food." So we had a good time, we entertained ourselves that -- the 45 - 50, and it was just amazing to us, when we got to New York, all in a sudden those people start pouring out the ship, you know, you haven't seen them. How did you get on? I didn't see you. But so many were sick. Then we had to wait that you had relatives, somebody had to pick you up at the pier, they wouldn't just let you go loose. And my aunt and I, we waited and waited, and my cousin in New York supposed to pick me up. I did not know those cousins except one cousin. He was in Karlsruhe, and he was just like my brother. At that time first cousins were like brothers and sisters, very close. And he's supposed to pick me up, and he just didn't show up, and my aunt and I, we were the last ones, and oh God, were we scared. I start crying, and all in a sudden a woman came up to me and she said, "You're Sylvia Farber, aren't you? From Karlsruhe?" I said, "Yes." And she said, "I don't know, do you remember Bernard Weismann?" I said, "Yeah, I went to school with him." The -- the Jewish school. He had a speech defect, and the children

were not very kind to him, and -- children can be cruel. So she said, "Well, I really didn't have you on my list, but I looked at the list and I saw Sylvia Farber, and I wanted to greet you. So I switched with somebody and I want to say welcome to America, and thank you for being so nice to my son Bernard." A-And that kind of felt good, that people remembered you, you know, and he was such a nice boy, but the kids just didn't give him a chance. He was very intelligent. His father was a doctor, I don't know what happened to him, lost contact. So while we were talking, my cousin came with other cousins. The other cousins -- but I didn't know the other cousins, they were waiting for that one cousin, he had to sign for us. And he came, and he looked like a Farber. He looked like my dad, he looked like my brother, and we just start hugging and kissing, you know? It seemed like the Farber, the looks goes through the family. It's amazing.

Q: Was your brother with you?

A: No.

Q: No.

A: My brother didn't come until September. You see, he signed up six more months to make sure to get us out. And I really loved New York, I wanted to stay there, but my brother wouldn't let us. My brother said, "Listen, we gonna make a home in Lexington, Kentucky, it's a beautiful little town, and that way we can be together, we don't have parents." And I listened to him, and I stayed in Lexington. Do you know where he ended up? New Jersey. He got his undergraduate degree from University Kentucky. He got his master's degree from Chicago, University of Chicago. He was working on his Ph.D. in cuk -- at Columbia University. And he stayed there. Then when he got married, they moved to New Jersey.

Q: This relative of yours in Lexington, ha -- will you describe how he was --

A: They really were not related to me. The very -- the -- the one -- Leon Erbach was my Aunt Minna's brother-in-law. My Aunt Minna's husband Alec, and Leon Erbach were brothers. And I was related to my Aunt Minna through my mother. You see, so they really were not related, but they were wonderful. They really were wonderful.

Q: And so your brother had been living with Leon Erbach?

A: Yes.

Q: I see.

A: When he came in '40, he lived with Leon Erbach, then he went to Lovell. And they grabbed him right away in '41 for the army. So they really were wonderful people, and they treated me better than the daughter, the daughter said. Because I was older than their daughter, five and a half years, and I could stay out longer on a date. And she resented that. She said, "They love you more than they love me." They really were great people. But we didn't stay very long. My brother came in September and we rented an apartment, and we lived on my brother's army pay, 90 dollars a month. 45 dollars rent. Water bill was cheap, two dollars electric bill. And we made it, can you imagine? And we only had hamburger on Sundays. But we wanted to be independent. Er-Erbachs didn't want us to leave, but we wanted to get started. So my brother start teaching languages. He -- he was working on this undergraduate degree, and he was tutoring in French and German. And sometimes he didn't go to bed until two, three o'clock in the morning because he had to do his own homework. And he caught the flu, he couldn't get over it and the doctor said, "Something has to give, you need sleep." So I went to work, for 18 dollars a week, but that was money.

Q: Did you speak English?

A: By that time a little bit. Erbachs -- you see, we came in June and I went to work, I think it was Christmas or right after Christmas. And they were nice enough to give me a job. It was [indecipherable], they were Jewish people. And I think they gave me a job they felt sorry for me, and then I was a novelty. [tape break]

Q: This was in the paper?

A: Yeah. That's me, a young Sylvia Farber.

Q: And you have blonde hair.

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: And there's your aunt --

A: Do you know it --

Q: -- and your aunt is --

A: -- stayed blonde --

Q: -- on the left.

A: -- in perox -- yeah, that's my aunt. Ah --

Q: The headline says, Polish ref --

A: Polish refugees -- that was students. They kind of messed it up a little bit, they didn't get it straight. Some of it --

Q: Will you read it -- the entire headline?

A: Yeah. This was 9-27-46, and it was the Lexington Leader, Polish refugee ex-prisoners, now at Henry Claire High School. We ju -- we just sat through English classes, American government classes. And then some of the students gave up their study hour to help us learn how to read. I thought it was very nice of them. And then also, when I was working, I audited some classes at the University Kentucky from eight til nine in the morning. And Joe Wall's niece, who went to

University Kentucky, picked me up and took me to work so I would be there by nine o'clock.

And they were very nice, because I should -- supposed to been there 10 minutes to nine, but I talked to him and then he said that's all right.

Q: Were you interested -- very interested in getting an education?

A: It was not the education as much what I wanted. I wanted to learn how to speak English. It's very hard to think in German and then have to translate everything. It's not easy. I mean, were you ever in a foreign country, where you walked around with a dictionary? And my problem was that I always would put the buggy before the horse somehow. Th-The sentence construction was very difficult. And English is a very hard language. And the spelling, my God, there's so many words they sound alike. Now I wish I would have gone on to get an education. I really wi -- but the education at that time wasn't that important.

Q: What were you doing in your job?

A: I started out as wrapping packages, and -- but at April, I just felt like, you stupid. You can do better than that, you know? So I start sneaking out and waiting on customers, and the customers loved it. Because I was a survivor, which they never met another one. And that publicity, I mean, everybody knew about me. So I remember Joe Wall said to me, "What are you doing on the floor?" I said, "I'm not stupid. I can do better than that, just wrap packages. And well, normally a clerk couldn't have said that. But then, I didn't have the clothes I was supposed to wear, I was supposed to wear dark clothes, navy blue, or gray, or black. I didn't have it. He told me, "You wear what you got." So he really made -- made allowances for me. In fact, people must have talked about this, a Holocaust survivor in another department store, Martin, the buyer -- I don't remember, I don't think she came into [indecipherable]. She must have waited outdoors or something, she came up to me, and she said, "I really would like for you to work for Martin's.

How much money do you get at [indecipherable]?" And I said, "Eighteen dollars a week." She said, "We can do better than that. We can pay you 25 dollars." So I said, "Let me think about it." So I went to Joe Wall. I thought that was the right thing to do, because he gave me the chance. The factories wh-where I ap-applied in Lexington wouldn't hire me because I couldn't speak English fluently. Now you could sue them because you discriminated, but at that time you didn't know about suing people. So I told him, I said, "Listen, they approached me at Martin's and they would pay me 25 dollars a week." He said, "Well, if Martin's can pay you 25, I can give you 25." I did feel guilty because the people I worked with, s-some been working there 10 - 20 years and didn't make more than 25 or 27 dollars. But I told him, I said, "You know, we need the money." He said, "I know." So people in Lexington were very nice and very decent.

Q: When did you meet your husband?

A: Jake?

A2: [indecipherable] I think you would wind this up, three hours is enough.

A: -- open through his cousin. We met his cousin. We lived on Macdowell Road, Chevy Chase area, I don't know whether you know that area there. Okay. And Martha Steinberg, and she said, "I know a young man I would like for you to meet." And I was going with that Hungarian fellow I was telling you I met on the boat, from Budapest. And he proposed before we got off the boat, he wanted to get married. But my aunt said, "No way. He is scared. He doesn't want to be alone to get into a country, not knowing anybody." So we corresponded, and we talked on the telephone sometimes. So I was telling Martha, I said, "Well, I'm dating a fellow in New York." But we had the understanding that we could date other people also, since we were that far apart. And she said, "I really would like to." And my aunt said, "Well, you have nothing to lose." So they fixed up a date. They fixed up a date, Martha and Jake for eight o'clock a certain day. It was

8:20 - 8:30, quarter to nine, no Jake Green. I got undressed, I put my slack suit back on, I was madder than a hornet. I wasn't used to be stood up. Doorbell rings there, "I'm Jake Green." And I said -- he said, "If you don't want to go out with me, I will understand." I said, "What happened?" He said, "I got lost." Well, where we lived it was like Macdowell Road, and then there was a circle. And the next road Irvin, there was a circle, and he drove around in circles in the dark, and he went downtown to a gas station, and they gave him directions. And this really made sense, it's really hard, because many times we drive by now where I used to live, to see the changes in the apartment house and it's very easy to get lost. It's like a cul-de-sac, you know. It's a -- in circle. So that's how I met my husband. And we went out dancing, and -- I don't know, the evening passed by so fast, and I ask him now, I said, "How could you understand me? I couldn't even understand myself." He said was very easy. I learned a little Jewish, Yiddish, and he knew a little Yiddish, and some German, and some English. We had a marvelous time, and we both liked to dance. And we dated about a year and a half and we got married January the 16th, 1949, which is gonna be 47 years. Long time. My brother said, "It won't last." I said, "Why?" He had nothing against Jake, he just said, "Nobody could live with you any longer 10 days to three weeks."

Q: Why did he say that?

A: Huh?

Q: Why did he say that?

A: Well, you know how brothers and sister -- he meant well, but he was so strict with me. Now, you wouldn't even listen to a brother, but at that time you did. And I just listened to him. When I had a date, even before Jake, they had to come inside the house, they had to talk to him. He had to look him out -- over, whether they were good enough for his sister. But I wasn't a child. I

already was 23 -- 22 - 23 years old. But he just took it on himself like he was my father, like I told him, "You're stricter on my like Dad would be." But then after we got engaged and everything was all right, he said, "Oh well, it's not so bad. I'm not losing a sister, I gained a bathroom." You know, one bathroom in apartment, two bedrooms. And I had a problem after the war. I took an awful lot of baths. We didn't have a shower, I just felt dirty. Three, four times a day, but everything turned out all right. They were kind of worried about me, because all that time, you know, you had lice in the camps, and you were itching, and -- and it was terrible. And you were dirty all the time. And even if they gave you water on purpose, they would give you soap, but never let you wash off the soap, they just turned the water off. They got their kicks that way, I guess. So I did have a problem, so he probably was happy, he gained a bathroom.

Q: Okay, we have a tape -- a -- a photograph here of yourself with your family before the war.

And will you da --

A: I think --

Q: -- just describe the people from left to right and say something about oo --

A: Well, this was taken in a garden. That's a botanic garden. And I remember when that was taken except my brother had this blown up and at that time you didn't have color picture, he -- he had to tint it. The pictures were just black and white. And I kind of feel bad. This was a blue dress, and he had to tint it green.

Q: You [indecipherable]

A: So I got the picture and I thanked him so much for it. I said, "Bernard," I said, "the dress was blue." He said, "No, it was green." I said, "No, it was blue." And he kind of felt bad about it, but I really shouldn't have told him that.

Q: So this, on the left.

A: This is my mother. This is -- well, her name was Selka, which -- it's a Polish name, and then she all -- and they would call her, Selie. And then after she came to Germany, she couldn't be called Selie, because it's -- she would spell it C-i-l-l-y. It would be silly, you know? S -- and she was a big woman, and like I told you, I was Daddy's little girl. And I always said, "I look like a Farber. I am a Farber." Look, I'm the image of my mother.

Q: You're almost as tall as she is.

A: Yeah. Mother told me she grew very late in life. About 17. They used to call her shrimp, because she didn't grow. Very slow, she got her period very late, then she start growing. And she ended up about five six, or five six and a half.

Q: And you --

A: And this is -- I always was called Klina Sylvia because from all my cousins, I was the youngest. And I remember the dress, it was a very pretty dress, and you call that [indecipherable]. I don't know what do you call this in Engli --

Q: The -- the bodice, I believe.

A: Yeah.

Q: The bodice.

A: And th-that was all made. And this -- this is work because you have to pull the threads out and then finish it.

Q: How old were you there?

A: I think I was about -- in 1933, I think I was maybe about nine. And my mother said I was skinny. Being heavy was stylish, because many times when we walked down the street and we would see a chubby girl passing by, she's -- we'd say, isn't she beautiful? Then she look at me, hm. I don't -- I am not skinny.

Q: You look thin.

A: Huh? Nah!

Q: You look thin.

A: No. I mean, I --

Q: Very healthy.

A: Yeah, I was healthy. I was a healthy child. Next to me is my brother in his Bar Mitzvah suit.

This was custom made and he had short pants and long pants, but the short pants weren't real short, they come about -- just up to the knees, a little above. And he's wearing his gymnasium cap, and every year they would change the band different colors. And this is my handsome dad.

And I think this picture must have been taken about '33 because in '36 my mother went to Poland, and she had some modern suits. I just go by the style. This was in '36, she had some made in Poland, and she brought them back in '36, and they were double breasted suits, so this --

Q: This is a single breasted suit.

A: This is a single breasted suit, but --

Q: And he's --

A: -- he's wearing a vest.

Q: He's wearing a vest --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- and a tie, and --

A: But not only that, I don't see the spats. Maybe he wore spats in the wintertime. I remember his spats, and at times he would carry a cane, just for the fun of it. It was a style, I guess. He has a very kind face.

Q: Yes.

A: Do you notice this?

Q: Yes.

A: Nice smile. He had black eyes, and my brother inherited his black eyes. [doorbell rings]. And mine are dark, but not as dark as theirs. Mine -- my mother's eyes got a little mingled in there in -- in mine.

Q: Do you have any --

A: Yeah, we smoked cigarettes also.

Q: Do you have any closing comments you'd like to make today?

A: Oh, didn't think about that. My life certainly has been interesting. It -- I divided it up. This was then, and raising the children I really enjoyed. I didn't work outdoors, they were my whole life, my children. But I wanted to, I enjoyed it. And well, they wonderful, we love them dearly, they love us dearly, but they got their own life, and it was a good life. And altogether the only thing, I thought, well, everybody has to go through some kind of hell. And I always thought, well, I went through it early in life, and the rest of the life be -- I got smooth sailing. But I guess it wasn't enough, because then this came up with my husband's illness. But we holding together. The -- certain things I would love to do, I would love to travel. I used to travel by myself, because Jake wanted to work. And he really could have gone with -- but no -- with me, but in that respect, he was a small town boy, and he really didn't want to. But I went to New York, I went to visit my brother. I went to Israel in '85 by myself, and that's -- was a highlight in my life because I always wanted to go to Israel when I was a member of the Mizrachi, I was -- at that time I was going to Palestine. At the time I was five or six and I was going to build it up single-handed, I really was a Zionist. And I always said someday, someday I was gonna go. In '85 I

said well, you feel pretty good now and that someday has to be now because you don't know what's ahead of you. And I went for two weeks.

End of Tape Three, Side A

Beginning Tape Three, Side A

Q: So you ha -- ha -- had an opportunity to travel, and a -- this --

A: Not a whole lot. We would go -- after my grandson was born in Chattanooga, we would go Chattanooga about every three to four months. And we would drive. And he enjoyed that, Jake, he really did. But just stay over a weekend. But even before then I would go to New Jersey by myself. Now he did go with me to the Holocaust reunion in '83. I could have gone to Israel at that time, but he wouldn't go with me and I was afraid to go to myself. I did not know how I was going to react, because I was not in touch with survivors. And after we got to Washington in '83, all the survivors -- and I just thought it was me made the children her life, almost every survivor made the children their lives, and enjoyed taking care of them. So, it was good to -- to -- to talk to other survivors. Now some of them were very bitter and I really felt sorry for them. I mean, I feel like if you're that bitter, you wasting your life. I mean, what you got left, you should make -- make it as comfortable for yourself, because hatred just doesn't work.

Q: Thank you very much.

End of Tape Two, Side B

Conclusion of Interview