

# **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum**

**Interview with Judith Heimann**  
**November 21, 2011**  
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## PREFACE

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## **JUDITH HEIMANN**

### **November 21, 2011**

Question: This is a **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum** interview with Mrs. **Judith Heimann**, taking place on November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2011, in **Bethesda, Maryland**. Good afternoon, Mrs. **Heimann**. Thank you so much for agreeing to talk to us.

Answer: It's a pleasure.

Q: And I will start the interview as I explained at the beginning. I would like to know when you were born, where you were born, who your parents were, who your family was, and we'll take it from there.

A: Okay. Well, I was born on August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1920, which my grandson says I was always old. As far as he's concerned, I was always old. And I was born in **Frankfurt**; both my parents were from **Frankfurt**. My mother was Jewish, my father was not. My father comes from an old farming family.

Q: What was his name?

A: **Peter Bartmann**.

Q: **Bartmann**?

A: Yes. **B-a-r-t-m-a-double n**.

Q: Okay.

A: And all his ancestors were dairy farmers, including my grandparents, whom I did not know; I did not know his parents. My mother, on the other hand, came from a banking family, and her maiden name was **Hahn, h-a-h-n**. And my great-grandfather, I think it was, **[indecipherable]** is hanging there on the wall, established a banking house. Of

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course, like all Jews, they originally lived in the ghetto in **Frankfurt**, and they were moneychangers, I guess. That's, you know, how most of them started. And then, I think my grandfather's grandfather – that's my grandfather, and that's my great-grandfather.

Q: Those two pictures up there –

A: Yes.

Q: – and their – mm-hm?

A: And on my mother's side. And he started a bank, which was called **L.A. Hahn**. And all their initials were **L.A.** And it later became a public – publicly traded bank which was called **Deutsche Effecten-und Wechselbank**.

Q: **Deutsche Effecten-und Wechselbank**?

A: Yeah. And, in fact, the house is still standing and it's a historic – has a historic designation of the bank, but –

Q: So the ba – the bank's building and facility?

A: Yes, the bank's building. It's really just the outside, because the rest was destroyed during the war, but the outside is still standing. So anyway, they had a bank. And of course you may know that in **Frankfurt** there were lots of mixed marriages.

Q: Well, I wanted to ask you about that, you know, how was it that your parents even met? What brought the – brought their worlds together?

A: I really just don't know, but – but my father was – my grandparents ha – on my father's side had three boys, and my father was the youngest. Clearly the apple of my

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grandmother's eye. And he is the only one who went to university, and he had a law – he got a law degree. And I think he was very society minded. And he – I – I'll show you later upstairs, I have a – an old program from something at the [indecipherable] opera, where he danced with some lady. And I have a feeling that that's how they met, because he was really very interested in getting up there somehow. He was also a champion tennis player. He was German master in 1910, which was a different tennis game from what it is now, but nevertheless.

Q: It's still something, it's an achievement, you know, in competition with others in your area.

A: Yes, yeah, I – I have all the trophies upstairs. And he also played the piano very well, and he used to accompany singers or play in small trios. So I'm – I am sure that's how they met somehow, in – in a dance, or whatever.

Q: What kind of personality did he have?

A: My fa –

Q: How would you – mm-hm, how would you describe it?

A: My father should have been a diplomat. He was one of the most tactful people I've ever known, and really was charming. I mean, everybody just loved him. And he – he just – he ended up being a banker, because he finally took over my grandparents bank. But he – he should have been a diplomat. He – he was not very strict, but you know, I – I grew up at a time that my parents weren't home that much, and I had a – a wonderful – I don't

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know, now you call it nanny, I guess, but it wa – she was just a young woman whom they hired, and who took care of the kids, and did other stuff, too. And she is really the one who – who raised me, more or less. Not that I didn't see my parents, I mean, I saw them quite a bit, but – we always had meals together. We always ate – we used to get the – and you know, in **Europe** yo-you eat your main meal at noon, I mean.

Q: That's right.

A: And so we always had that together, but I don't – in the evening they were often gone. But, you know, he was a very nice person.

Q: Now, were you the oldest child?

A: No. My sister was two years older.

Q: And what's her name?

A: Her name was **Ruth**.

Q: **Ruth**. And you then were born in what year?

A: **Ruth**.

Q: Ah, no, **Ruth** – what year were you born in?

A: I was born in 1920.

Q: 1920. And –

A: And she was born 1918.

Q: 1918. And what I had forgotten to ask earlier, your mother's maiden name, and her name.

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A: My mother's name was **Marguerata(ph) Helena Hahn, h-a-h-n.**

Q: Okay, **Marguerata(ph) Helena.**

A: But she was called **Margar(ph).**

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And so then they – you know, my father, I remember, he is – at the time I had allergic eczema, which of course, when I was a child they didn't know it was allergy. And I remember my father always at night bandaging my arms, so that I wouldn't scratch, you know. But you know, I don't really know if it was so often. It just – your memory just plays tricks on you. Anyway, it was – it was very nice. I grew up – well, my family, I guess they had a lot of money, but I didn't really know that, you know? I – it never occurred to me that I lived different from a lot of other people.

Q: Well, what do you remember about your home; both as a physical structure, and about the kind of life that you and your f – your parents and your sister; and whoever else was there, the – the young girl who was part of your household; what was that like? So let's talk about all of it. Describe it a bit.

A: Well, we lived – and later when we've finished I'll show you the pictures, because I have pict – pictures on the wall of – of my – I grew up in what used to be my grandparents dairy farm.

Q: That is your father's parents?

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A: Yes. And it was a regular farm in a U-shape, with the main house on one side, and then what used to be the barns in a U-shape around it. In the middle was a – a well. And of course we didn't have any animals any more – I mean, we had dogs, but – and chickens, but not the cows and stuff. So we used the barns mainly for garages.

Q: For what?

A: For garage.

Q: Oh yeah.

A: And also for our bicycles and – and tools and stuff.

Q: Did it still look like a farm, or did it look like a villa in the outskirts of town?

A: No, it looked like a farm. And it [indecipherable] three acres. And it actually, when I grew up, was no longer on the outskirts of – of town, it was in town.

Q: I see, in **Frankfurt** itself.

A: Yes. So it – you know, the streetcar was a half a block away. So it – then I took the streetcar to go to wo – to go to school. So it – it was really in the middle of town. And the one thing I really regret, it – it has been razed now, and I regret that because if historic preservation had come into life sooner, that thing would have stayed, because it's very unusual to have a farm in the middle of –

Q: Of course.

A: – of town.

Q: Of course.



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A: But, you know, in any ca – in any case, where – the main house, when you faced it, sat on the left, and it was really very beautiful. It was big house, and –

Q: How would you describe its style, its architectural style?

A: Hm?

Q: How would you describe its architectural style?

A: Well, it was just –

Q: [indecipherable]

A: Twenty – turn of the century.

Q: Okay.

A: A stucco house.

Q: Okay, okay.

A: And it had a – a gate in the front, which usually was open because we had cars, but you could close the gate, and then it had a driveway, long driveway, which led you into the courtyard. And next door was a boys' school, which was kind of nice when I grew up. But it was really just beautiful, and we had a large, just garden for – to enjoy, and then we had a lot of vegetables, and we had chickens. A-And – and we did have a lot of help. I-I think we probably had three maids, and – and there was, from the – across the courtyard from the main house, there was th – at the end of the last barn there was another little house, and the – I don't know what the guy's name, it was sort of a – like a – a super in

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an apartment building. He and his wife lived there, and you know, he would tend the furnace, and do stuff like that.

Q: So the ka – kind of housekeepers.

A: Yeah. And – and then we had a gardener who lived in the same place upstairs, and I – I think we had three maids and a cook, but I can't – yeah, I think we had three maids and a cook. So I sometimes wonder what my mother did all day, but –

Q: Well, tell me a little bit about her. If I asked you about what your father's personality was like, what was hers like?

A: My mother enjoyed ill health.

Q: Oh gosh.

A: Well, she – she was – I'm sure she had some ill health, but if she – if she did, I know, had a stomach operation early in her marriage. I have a feeling it all – it had to do with nerves too, you know? And then she, in 1929 she had a major operation, I – I don't know if it was a hysterectomy, or something like that. And what is very unfortunate, she had a surgeon who was addicted to morphine, and he got her addicted.

Q: Oh dear.

A: And she was addicted the rest of her life.

Q: Oh dear, what a tragedy.

A: And that was very unfortunate, because she was really a very wonderful person. But of course, I was only nine when this started, so I never really knew what a wonderful

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person she was. I knew it mainly through other people, who told me about it. She was, you know, she had – of course had not gone to college, but she was pretty smart, and she had a lot of common sense. And she was very – she had a lot of empathy. And I'll tell you a little story, during the depression, you know, in – starting in 1930, I guess, when there was so much poverty in **Germany**, she started a soup kitchen at our house.

Q: Wow.

A: And it's one of my most vivid memories. We – the kitchen door was on the side, and the kitchen door had – had sort of a window you could raise up to the outside. And we would have, every day, about 20 people who came. After a while, we started giving out little slips to people, to say which day they could come, and – with their name. And I know I used to write those slips, which is why I remember it so well. And then they would come starting at noon, and our cook would have a big soup, you know, something substantial, and bread. And we had benches in the courtyard. And if it was raining, we put them in the – one of the barns. And then the people would eat their lun-lunch, or main meal, I guess. In fact, we had one couple that found each other and got married. And then on Christmas, she always had everybody come, and she – they got – the men got shaving cream and stuff like that, and the women got some other stuff. He – they – they all got the little bag with goodies. So she really, I mean, and that was entirely my mother's make – doing.

Q: That's a very kind thought.

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A: And she really, I mean, that's the kind of person she was. But, of course, the addiction was dreadful, because you know, a-an addiction to morphine is the same as – as a heroin addiction, or any other. It's unpredictable. The mood can be – one day you think, oh, she's wonderful, and then you talk a lot, and then the next day she's gone again, you know. And – and she did go into rehab twice in **Germany**, and then it was better for a while, but it never lasted. And then when she came to this country – you know, I don't know where she got her morphine. That's sometimes the curse of having money. And – but a – it was the same in – in **Tucson**, where she lived, I mean, she – and in the end, it wa – was just awful. But you know, tha-that is – that was very sad, really.

Q: Yeah. And hard for children.

A: But, you know, it – the one thing I – I – I have told this to my kids from the day they were born, in order to make sure that they stayed away from all drugs, because I told them how horrible this is.

Q: Well, the price that people pay. The price that the family pays, the price that the person pays.

A: It – it's – it's – it's really very sad. But, you know – and – and I know – I mean, we all know it was – it was her surgeon who got her addicted, and he was addicted him – a lot of doctors are addicted, I think.

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Q: Well, before that happened, you would have been nine years or less, but you mention that your parents would go out in the evenings. Did they – did they enjoy each other's company?

A: Yes, they did. And – and, as I think I want to – I mean, they got divorced in '38. I think it had na – it had absolutely nothing to do with the fact that my mother was Jewish, and my father wasn't. My sister and I saw that divorce coming for years. Which doesn't mean they weren't friendly. They were very friendly, they always talked to each other and – and – but, you know, I – it's very hard to look at your parents and think about sex.

Q: That's true.

A: But I think it was very – they were incompatible. That's what I think, you know, and I think that my father wasn't that interested in it, and my mother was more interested in it, and do I think that was the basis for the divorce. Because she got married again, but – to the guy that she'd been going with for years, anyway.

Q: Did you all know about that?

A: Oh, yes. Kids always know everything. Kids know everything.

Q: Yeah.

A: You know, you just – you think your kids don't know? Kids always know.

Q: Yeah.

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A: No, we – we both knew – my sister and I both knew it. But – and – but you know, that's the way it was, and I know my father knew it. But you know, tha – it didn't seem – that's why I think that that was the basis.

Q: I see.

A: And they were – when my mother died, six months before my father, and the one who grieved the most was my father. So, you know, they were –

Q: There was a bond.

A: Yeah, that wa – they were just always – and he came over here and visited with her and her husband, and –

Q: This is after the war, yes?

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah.

A: And – and during – and after the war she went back to **Germany** once and stayed with my father, you know, so – I mean, they were very good friends, they really liked each other. It's just, I think in bed they didn't mesh. So, you know, I mean, yeah, you don't think about that when you're a child.

Q: Did you – as you were growing up, were you upset by these things, were you hurt by these things?

A: No, we just knew that it was going on.

Q: I see.

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A: You know, and – and that this guy, I mean, I could never stand her second husband, but – and I think partly, perhaps because I felt he interfered, but I'm not sure I just didn't like him anyway. But, no, he – he – he was a friend of the family and he – they traveled together, all of them, and you know, it – it was – was just one of those –

Q: Your grandparents on both sides, the in-laws, the larger, extended family, did they like each other? Did they get along?

A: When my – I – my father's parents were dead when I was born.

Q: Okay.

A: So I don't know anything about that.

Q: What about your uncles, his brothers?

A: His brothers, they were odd. Neither one of them got married. His older brother, the oldest one I think was gay. I'm pretty sure he was gay. In fact, I'm sure he was gay. And he lived not very far from where we lived, and he had a little – sort of a – in **Germany** you know you – you sometimes have these little yards, that you can bring – where there are little houses that you [**indecipherable**]. Well, he had one of those little houses on our property, which of course was where he grew up, and he would come and – and – in the summer with his friends, and so on and so forth. But – and his other brother I really never knew. He died in 1921.

Q: Ah. Yeah, so, you to –

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A: And so I – I never knew him. But the fa – th-the older one, I knew quite well. He died in '31, and –

Q: What was his name?

A: But we – **Heinrich**(ph).

Q: **Heinrich**(ph), mm-hm. Uncle **Heinrich**(ph).

A: And the other one's name was **George**. But neither one of them ever mar – well, the one was gay, I mean, I'm sure he was gay. He lived with his friend in an apartment not very far. And my grandparents on my mother's side, adored my father.

Q: Well, I was thinking that, because a bank is a huge business.

A: Yeah. They adored my father and – and in fact, when my grandmother died – she lived to be 89 – I can't remember exactly the date. That – that's my family tree.

Q: Oh, I see.

A: And I can take it off, and you can look at it. When she died, she left my father money. And she left a letter saying he had always been wonderful, and – and all this kind of stuff. No, she – they were very fond of my father. They also didn't much like my mother's second husband, which is interesting because my mother's second husband was a Jew. But they didn't like him much either. But – and okay, so th-they – and we saw my grandparents, my mother's parents, a lot un – 19 – until 1933. They had a summer house in **Königstein**, which is –

Q: Where is that?



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A: – nowadays it – it’s almost a suburb of **Frankfurt** now because people live there and commute in. But at the time you – you took either a car, or a train, and it took about an hour to get there, I mean, at that time.

Q: Yeah, yeah.

A: And we would spend s-summer vacation sometimes and always fall vacations there with my grandparents and with my mother’s sister and her family.

Q: Did your mother have only one sister?

A: My mother had two sisters. One was older. Sh-She is the one who – who made those two charcoal drawings of my grandparents, the grandfather and great-grandfather. She was quite talented that way, but she was really a bitch on wheels.

Q: Oh dear me, really?

A: Yeah, she was, and she collected people, important people. That was her aim in life, she collected important people. And she was also a manipulator. But, you know, sh-she did have talent, I mean, those pictures are very nice.

Q: They’re very well done.

A: And I have a little picture of myself upstairs, when I was a child, that she did. She was good.

Q: Was she nice to you, as her nieces, or not very?

A: Yeah, she was fine. I mean, you know, she was just – we saw them a bit – those two women didn’t get – I mean, they didn’t have much in common. And then she had a

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younger sister, whom I never knew, because she died, I think, in 1922. She must have been very smart. And she was – of the three girls, she went to the university. And she wrote poems. She also was a – I don't know, she was a very good Jew; the only one in that family. But she, and some of the po – my grandmother had the poems printed after she died. And I don't know if I – I know I gave **Steven** one of the copies.

Q: **Steven** is your son.

A: But –

Q: Yeah. Just to make that clear in the interview, okay.

A: And she died, she must have been 21, I think.

Q: What was her name?

A: Her name was **Lucy**. She was called **Luchs**(ph).

Q: **Luchs**(ph).

A: And she was my godmother, and I don't know for sure what she died of. They said it was typhus, but I'm – I'm not really sure, you know, in 1921, you can't be sure.

Q: No.

A: I know sh – that she was in the hospital, she was supposed to go somewhere for the summer, and she got terrible intestinal problems and – and died.

Q: And your other aunt, the one who was – I won't use that expression, but I love it – the one who collected people.

A: Yeah.

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Q: What was her first name?

A: **Nora**.

Q: **Nora**, okay.

A: Yeah.

Q: She was older than your mother?

A: Yes, she was a – my mother was a middle child –

Q: I see.

A: – which was always hard.

Q: Yeah, yeah.

A: But – and I think some of the problem stemmed from the fact that she was the middle child, because the youngest one, who was 10 years younger than my mother –

Q: Ah yeah.

A: – was obviously my grandmother's –

Q: Favorite, huh?

A: Yes. And – and the older one was a manipulator and knew what to get, and my mother was just in the middle.

Q: Yeah.

A: And I'm sure that that was part of her problems. But, in any ca – my aunt had two children, a boy and a girl. The boy was called **Erish**(ph), and the girl was **Anina**(ph), like **Steven's** youngest daughter. And the boy died when he was 21.

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Q: Oh.

A: They always said he died of appendicitis, but actually he died of syphilis, because he didn't take care of it, and then got sepsis.

Q: Ay-ay.

A: But, you know, that you couldn't –

Q: One doesn't say those things.

A: You couldn't say that, so it was appendicitis, but we all knew what he died of. And he had been my aunt's favorite, and my cousin often stayed with us, the boy – the girl, because my aunt didn't much care for her. But after the boy died, of course –

Q: She's the only one left.

A: She was the only one left, and then so – but I was on very good terms with my cousin who died probably five years ago in **Switzerland**.

Q: This – this is his sister, right?

A: Yeah, the – the sisters – my mother's sister's daughter.

Q: Right. And her name is?

A: Her name was **Anina**(ph) **von Malk**(ph).

Q: Ah, yeah [**indecipherable**] yes, that's right.

A: As a married. She was – you know, there – there's some people in my family you should have interviewed rather than me, because my cousin **Anina**(ph) married a man

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called **von Malk**(ph), who was also a Jew, and my – I will say my aunt arranged that marriage. And they – he was working in what was then **Palestine**, in **Haifa** –

Q: Oh my.

A: – for a British company. And then they came to **England** and lived in **London**, and then when – during the war, when everybody got worried about being occupied by **Germany**, they took a boat, which they thought would take them to **Mexico** or to the **United States**; however, it only took them to **Antigua**.

Q: What was the name of the boat?

A: Hm?

Q: What was the name of the boat?

A: I don't know. It wa –

Q: Because there was that famous –

A: – it wasn't the **Saint Louis**.

Q: – **Saint Louis**, okay.

A: No, it wasn't the **Saint Louis**.

Q: Okay.

A: But in any case, they got to **Antigua**, where they spent the rest of the war, about five years. And then they went to **Mexico City**, and her husband was a – a amateur chef, however they – they opened a restaurant in **Mexico City**. First they did some catering,

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and then they opened a restaurant. And they did very well, I think. And then they went back to **Switzerland** and got a divorce, but –

Q: That's a different story.

A: But that's a different story. But anyway, that was sort of an interesting life –

Q: Yes, yes.

A: – you know, to – to have been stranded in **Antigua** – there again, they had money, which helped.

Q: Yeah.

A: You know. But –

Q: Well, you know, when you think of – according to, you know, the – the purpose of why we do these interviews, they're Holocaust related. And you can say that okay, how much of the actual Holocaust does someone experience in **Antigua**, but their lives were affected by these policies.

A: Oh, absolutely.

Q: There's no question about that, so.

A: There's no – there's no question. I mean, you know, I can – I said to somebody the other day, and I said, you know, I've now been in **Washington** – oh, how's my – how old's my daughter? Fifty-six, so I've been here 56 years, in **Washington**. In the state I've been longer. But I said, you know, normally, I should be in **Frankfurt**, with my entire whole family together, but everybody's someplace else.

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Q: Yeah.

A: You know, the family is – was absolutely –

Q: Scattered.

A: – scattered everywhere. And that – that is an impact to – I mean, it is not, of course, a concentration camp or anything like that, but – but it does affect you.

Q: Yes. Well, tell me about your grandparents. Of all of the pieces of the puzzle now, that we've had a –

A: Yeah, my mother's parents.

Q: Your mother's parents.

A: Well, they –

Q: What were they like? Who were they and what were they like?

A: Well, they – my grandmother was about probably three inches taller than my grandfather. Very tall, erect person. I'll show you pictures later. And my grandfather was a very nice man, rather short, like my husband too, and we are all short. And his – his nickname was **Bubish**(ph).

Q: **Bubish**(ph).

A: Yeah. But his name was **Ludwig, Ludwig Arnold**. All the **Hahns** were **L.A.**

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And – because that's what the fa – firm was called. And –

Q: But did the **L.A.** in the firm stand for **Ludwig Arnold**?

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A: Well, I think originally it stood for **Louis Aldous**(ph), or something like that, for a great – they were all **L.A.s**.

Q: Okay.

A: And – but he he was **Ludwig Arnold**. And they lived – they had a house in **Frankfurt**, not far from the bank. And in fact, it was close to the elementary school I went to, and I sometimes went there after school, you know, in – in **Germany** school is only til lunchtime, and – or used to be. And then they had that house in **Switzerland** – in – in **Königstein**.

Q: Correct, mm-hm.

A: And – where they spent time – they traveled a great deal, and they had a lot of money. I wish some were left, but – but that –

Q: Well, did you feel it when you were with them, in how they lived, or –

A: No.

Q: No.

A: No, none of my family lived like they had a lot of money.

Q: So, they weren't ostentatious.

A: Nah. But, I mean, okay, they had – they had a car, and a sofa, you know, but – but so did other people, I mean that – but they were – didn't live in a mansion –

Q: Okay.



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A: – they lived in a – in a house, and they had that other house in **Königstein**, but – and they traveled a lot, but you know – and I never knew that we had money. I met a woman here, no – a few years ago again, that I went to high school with, by chance, and she said to me, well, you were the rich girl. I said, I was? And she said, well, you had a car.

Q: Yeah.

A: So, you know, but that just didn't register. And you know, you don't pay attention. Unless you live ostentatious, you don't pay attention.

Q: Yeah.

A: I mean, we – I had to take the streetcar to – to go to school, or my bicycle. I mean, no – no chauffeur took me to school, and – or picked me up, or anything like that. We had no sofa, my parents, and my mother got a car early, a **Peugeot**, in 1929, I think. And she was a good driver, and my father was not a very good driver. But she was a good driver. And I know it was one of the early cars in **Frankfurt**, and – but anyway, my grandparents no – and then – I can't quite remember, but in – I think it was in 1929, when my grandfather was 70, we all stayed – went to **Locarno** –

Q: In **Switzerland**.

A: – and we all stayed in a hotel, and – and – to celebrate my grandfather's birthday, my sister and I had to do a little sketch that my aunt had written. Terrible. But – and I think it was at that time that they looked at property in – in the – in **Ticino**, on the –

Q: And **Ticino**, is – is in **Switzerland** as well.

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A: Yes, on the **Laco Maggiore**. And my mother's cousin, **Albert Hahn** –

Q: Moment. You can't leave, beca-because of the mike.

A: No, oh. Okay. Well, I'll show you the book later.

Q: Okay. Yeah, uh-huh.

A: **Albert Hahn**, who was also at the bank, was a – a well-known economist.

Q: I see.

A: He was my grandfather's nephew, and he bought a house right there, at – near  
**Ascona**.

Q: Can you tell me – you mentioned this place before; was it on the – **Ticino** on a lake?

A: Ah, no, **Ticino** is – it's the county.

Q: I see.

A: And the lake is the **Laco Maggiore**.

Q: Uh-huh, that's what I was – **Laco Mazora**(ph)?

A: Yeah. And the **Laco Maggiore** is half in **Italy** and half in **Switzerland**.

Q: I see.

A: And **Ticino** is the Italian county or whatever they're called, in **Switzerland**. You know, **Switzerland** is – is three parts, you know –

Q: Right.

A: – Italian, French and German. And **Ticino** is the Italian part. And I think my mother's cousin bought the house there in ninet – when we were all there.

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Q: In 1929.

A: And the first time we went there for vacation, I think, was in 1932, but we stayed at my cousin's, at my uncle's house. And at that point, I think my grandparents bought a house there, but I'm – I'm not sure of the date when they bought it, but they – it was – by 1933 they had a house in **Switzerland**, on the lake. And I think it was the end of '33, or early '34 that they left **Germany**.

Q: And you mentioned in what you wrote to us there, they also had Swiss citizenship.

A: Yeah, they –

Q: How did they come by that?

A: Well, they had dual citizenship. I'll tell you, this goes back, I think, maybe to the war of 1848, or something like that, or maybe the 1870 war. I'm not sure which war, but some war, where you could not serve if you had different citizenship, and you could buy the Swiss citizenship.

Q: Ah.

A: Which is what one two – great-grandfather of – I can't – I don't know who, but one of the great-grand – my – either my great-grandfather on my mother's side, or my great-grandfather on my mother's side, bought the Swiss citizenship. And from there on, they were all – they all had dual citizenship.

Q: Who knew that that could be so useful?

A: Right. It was extremely useful.

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Q: Yeah.

A: And so i-it was, I think, in '33, or '34 that my grandparents decided to move to **Switzerland** permanently. And as I wrote to you, they gave up that German citizenship at the consulate in **Lugano**, I think, and the consul asked why.

Q: And what did they say?

A: And my grandmother said, three guesses. Well, it –

Q: Well, tell me a little bit about – oh, if you wanted to say something, I don't want to interrupt you.

A: No, no, that – it was just – it was just very fortunate.

Q: Of course, of course.

A: You know, I mean, that really – all of that – you know, relationships in families are very important, and make a lot of difference. And I'll tell you why I say this. The bank, I told you, was in – was a company with shares, I mean –

Q: Right.

A: – public. However, it was – all the shares were family held. And my grandfather and this nephew that I was talking about, were chairmen, or whatever.

Q: **Erish**(ph)?

A: No, **Albert**, the –

Q: Oh, **Albert Hahn** the economist.

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A: Yeah, yeah. They – they were – **Albert Hahn** also was a professor at the university in **Frankfurt**, but I mean, his main job was at the bank. And then, of course, in '33, it all became more difficult. My mother's sister's husband was also at the bank, but he was not very competent. Was a nice guy, but not very competent. And my father at that point, was working at a different bank that belonged to my grandmother's brother. And then, in '34 or so, I think, they asked my father to leave that bank and come to the **Deutsche Effecten Wechselbank**. But of course, all of that, I mean nu – and – and my grandfather left, and the nephew left. But of course, it still was a bank with a lot of Jewish connections.

Q: Yes.

A: And the – the se – many – much of the shares were held by the family. When my grandmother had a – a cousin – I – I'm never quite sure what the relationship is, but it's sort of a cousin, or a nephew, or whatever, who had been the black sheep in the family, and had been exiled by the family to **South Africa**, where fortunately, he went into diamond mines.

Q: Oh my.

A: And he did extremely well. In fact, he was knighted by the Queen of **England**.

Q: Oh my goodness.

A: And because they did a lot of charity work then.

Q: Mm-hm.

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A: And nobody in the family had been friendly with him, but my grandmother was always friendly with him. And I remember the guy very well, because he used to come bring me big boxes of chocolates. And I also have a very beautiful diamond brooch that he gave my mother. So anyway, they kept up very closely, and of course, he was British by now, and his family acquired the shares. So that during the Nazi time, the shares were all in British ownership, which made an enormous difference, of course, because they couldn't really –

Q: Touch them.

A: – reach the bank.

Q: So the money was saved, and s –

A: It was – it was more or less saved, yes. And –

Q: And did your family relations say – stay intact, with these kinds of changes?

A: Yes, yes.

Q: Which is also quite an achievement, you know.

A: Yeah. And I know – I mean, I remember, this guy's name was **Max Michaelas**(ph), and – and **Lady Michaelas**(ph), I remember her, you know. And – and after the war, my niece went to stay with their kids in **England**, you know, so – I mean, I've lost track of them now, but it's, you know –

Q: Yeah.

A: – it's a long time ago. But at – that must –

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Q: So, if I can back up to understand this better, it meant that during the time right when the Nazis come to power in 1933, your grandfather has these family connections, where they have some foresight as to they see where things are going, and they transfer the ownership –

A: Well, they bought them, or whatever.

Q: – or they bought them, or whatever, to the other branch of the family that was, by now, British.

A: Right.

Q: And that way, because it was British holdings within **Germany** –

A: Right.

Q: – the government couldn't go after it.

A: I mean, they tried their level best to get the bank to close. And I know my father had many headaches. But then, of course – and they were supposed to merge with the – with the bank called **Frankfurter** Bank. Well, fortunately, the **Frankfurter** Bank was destroyed by an air raid. So that went out –

Q: Was the – can I ask also, the bank that your grandparents had, was it a very large bank within **Frankfurt**?

A: It was a private bank, like a lot of private banks in **Frankfurt** were. I think it was well respected and pretty big. Not – but not like the **Bank of America** or anything, it was simply a private bank.

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Q: By private, does that mean it wasn't a consumer bank, it was a corporate bank, it was a –

A: No, it was, you know, you could have your account there, and people –

Q: Okay.

A: – and they have tellers.

Q: And they have branches?

A: Yeah – no, no branches, what – just one.

Q: One. One building.

A: But they had tellers and – and they had a seat on the stock exchange, and all the rest of it.

Q: Mm-hm, okay.

A: So, it –

Q: Did it conta – and when your father was invited to come into the family bank –

A: Yes.

Q: – as it were, did he then become the director of the bank?

A: Yes.

Q: Because he was Aryan?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay.

A: Yes.



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Q: And –

A: And actually he and – and my aunt's husband was also Aryan. He –

Q: I thought he was Jewish, the aunt –

A: No, my aunt – my mother's sister –

Q: **Nora.**

A: – no, her husband won – her daughter married a Jew.

Q: Oh, I see, it was – it wa – okay.

A: But her husband was not a Jew.

Q: I see.

A: And so the two of them.

Q: I see.

A: But as I said before, her husband was not so bright. He was a nice guy.

Q: Uh-huh. Okay.

A: But – but was what – best I can say.

Q: Okay.

A: And – and so anyway, tho-those two and he – but he retired during the war. So then my father was it.

Q: So pretty mu – so in other words another significant, what I would say fact, is that they family business did not get destroyed during the war, it remained throughout the war to the end. Is that correct?

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A: Right. I mean, the building was pretty well – not destroyed, but was pretty damaged. But it's in the middle of **Frankfurt**, and as you know, **Frankfurt** was 80 percent destroyed.

Q: Yeah.

A: So, you know, it – it had a lot of damage, but they –

Q: But as a business.

A: But – yeah, as a business they stayed. And of course, how banking, you know, it was altogether different. What was very nice – you know, **Frankfurt** was occupied in nine – in March of 1945, a couple of months before the end of the war. And I think the day after we were occupied, this **Jeep** drove up and asked for my father, and he was there, because at that point nobody went anyplace. And they took him in the **Jeep**, and left. And we were a little worried, you know.

Q: Yeah.

A: I mean, they were Americans, of course, but you know –

Q: Yeah.

A: – we were a little worried. And then he came back, which pleased us.

Q: Yes.

A: And he said he had been asked to reopen the banks in **Frankfurt**.

Q: All of them?

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A: Well, to – to open the trade again. Because obviously **OSS** knew exactly who we were.

Q: Oh my goodness.

A: There was no question.

Q: Oh my goodness.

A: So that was very nice.

Q: Yeah.

A: And then he said yes, the Americans had that – this and that and the other, so I said to him, as long as you're talking to the Americans, ask them if – I could work there as an interpreter, and I did. So – but it was a scary minute when they came with the **Jeep** and picked him up and we didn't know what was going on.

Q: And you didn't know why, and –

A: No.

Q: – and it had just been occupied.

A: Right.

Q: Of course. Well, this is – it's an interesting part of the story, but we have jumped over a bridge.

A: Right, right.

Q: Let's go back to the 30s, and let's see if I can ask one last question about your grandparents. Grandma's taller than Grandpa. His – his nickname is **Bubish**(ph) –

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A: Yeah.

Q: – **Bubish**(ph). And did you enjoy being around them?

A: Yes. Well, you know, of course, it was a different time.

Q: Yes.

A: And I certainly didn't have the relationship with my grandparents that I have with my own grandchildren now.

Q: Yeah.

A: Because they were people of respect, you know, and so –

Q: It's more formality.

A: Yeah. It wasn't a ra – I liked them and they liked us, but it wasn't a close relation – I mean, I – I would not go and tell them a story, or anything like that. But – and my grandparent – my grandfather had a – a favorite thing. When my parents called, if we were in – in one of their houses in **Königstein**, and my parents called and say how are the kids, and my grandfather would say, they are so nice when they're asleep. But that was a favorite saying.

Q: Of course, of course.

A: But you know, they were nice, and – and I enjoyed them, but I can't say I had a close relationship with them. But we enjoyed each other. And then they – my grandfather died in **Los Angeles**.

Q: After the war?

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A: No.

Q: When?

A: In 1945, I think.

Q: Oh my.

A: Well, in 1941, my mother and my aunt were at that point both in the **United States**. My mother lived in **Tucson**, and my aunt lived in **Santa Monica**. And my grandparents decided to come and spend Christmas with them in 1941. Which was not a good idea, because that way they couldn't get back.

Q: No.

A: Because you know what happened in 1941. So they were stuck in **Los Angeles**. So they spent the war in **Los Angeles**.

Q: On the other hand it's a very good idea.

A: So then my fa – and my grandfather died there. I mean, he was 89, but you know, he – he died there, and my grandmother went back to **Switzerland**.

Q: Yeah.

A: After he died. She went back in '47.

Q: So a – yes, it's – **Switzerland** was safe, but still, **Los Angeles** was a bit safer.

A: Oh yeah, it was. But they – I think they were sorry they were not in their home.

Q: In **Switzerland**, yeah.

A: You know.

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Q: What is it that I wanted to ask you now? Ah, at the very beginning you mentioned that there were many mixed marriages in **Frankfurt** –

A: Yes.

Q: – when your parents got married. Tell me a little bit about identity, if one can. Was your family, your mother's side of the family very Jewish?

A: No, apparently not. I mean, I –

Q: And how does one define not being very Jewish?

A: Yeah, I – I don't know. I mean, I all – I always knew that my grandparents were Jews, and that my mother was Jewish by heritage. Which, I know a lot of other girls I knew who were in the same boat did not know, and were absolutely shocked in '33.

Q: Really?

A: Yes. I knew several of them, where they just never knew that they had any connection to Jews. My grandparents, I don't know that they ever went to synagogue, but I know Yom Kippur seemed to fall mainly during farm vacations, and we often spent our farm vacations at my grandparents' house in **Königstein**, and my grandmother always locked herself into a bedroom on Yom Kippur, and said she was fasting. Now, my cousin, and we always said, well, she's got the cupboard full of cookies, and she's probably not fasting, but I don't know.

Q: Yeah.

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A: She may well have been fasting. But that is all I know, that – that was the only Jewish thing.

Q: In the house.

A: Yeah. So they – as I said, my mother's youngest sister, I think was a devout Jew, but I never knew her. And now –

Q: So the fact that your parents came from different – now, was your father's family Lutheran, or Catholic?

A: German Reformed.

Q: Oh, German Reformed, okay, so Protestant.

A: Which is much better than Lutheran, and has nothing to do with Catholic.

Q: No, it has nothing to do with Catholic.

A: I – I tell you, German Reformed was a small group in **Frankfurt**, which had been persecuted in the late 1800s.

Q: Really?

A: Yes, and we – our church – and I was brought up in that church – our church had – you couldn't see from the outside that it was a church, it just looked like a house. Had no stained glass windows, no tower, no bell, no nothing. But inside there was a real church. And it was a small congregation. My father was very active in it after the war, I don't know. He and my sister got into religion, and I don't know why, but – which is not where

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I got. And so there were a lot of old **Frankfurt** families that belonged to the German Reform. There's also French Reform, but – which came from the Huguenots, you know.

Q: Ah, okay.

A: There were a lot of Huguenots that came from **France** to the **Frankfurt** area, and there – you find a lot of French names there. But this was German Reform. Now, we always had Christmas, and my mother's birthday happened to be on the 25<sup>th</sup> of December.

Q: Oh, the poor thing. No double presents.

A: Yeah. And my daughter's on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. And I remember that my grandparents used to come for her birthday, and we always got Christmas presents. I mean, there was nothing of Hanukkah, anything like that. So, at – somehow they – they had sort of embraced my fam – my father's family, and – and I don't know, and I think a lot of those mixed marriages in **Frankfurt** were that way. And I knew a lot of people who were in mixed marriages. I – I think it was, if you pardon the expression, more the upper crust, you know.

Q: Yeah.

A: But, it – it just was nothing unusual.

Q: It's interesting to know that.

A: Yeah.



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Q: You know, it's interesting, because I had interviews with people at other parts of **Europe** –

A: Yes.

Q: – where there was a mixed marriage, and it was highly unusual, highly unusual. Be – it was different societies, yeah.

A: Yeah – no, in **Frankfurt** it was every day, you know.

Q: Did you see yourself as Christian? Did you have any feeling of being Christian?

A: Well, I tell you, I grew up, of course, since – since we seemed to be more on my father's religion, I went to confirmation class, I was confirmed in the German Reform church. And then I married my husband. And he didn't want to have anything to do with religion, period, because he said he can't believe that any God would allow what happened, you know. So, he said, you do whatever you want to do. So since I grew up that way, I had both my kids baptized, which is more than my son has done, or – and it didn't mean anything to me, it was – I did it more to please my father, because at that point he and my sister were very engaged in that church. And so I had them both baptized – they both went to – I joined briefly the **Westmoreland** Congregational Church here, because I was looking for a church that wasn't too churchy. And so that was fine, and the kids went there for – for Sunday school, til they were about nine or 10, and then they said we – all we do is draw pictures. And they both went to **[indecipherable]** Friends, which of course, the Quaker school. Somehow I tend more to Jewish stuff now. It's not that I

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would join a synagogue, or do anything on that order, but I find it more interesting. And you know, my daughter married a Jew, and – the family is interesting. I mean, my daughter married a Jew, **Steven** is in – belongs to the Episcopal church. His wife is a lapsed Catholic who won't cross any church's door. The kids were not baptized, but my daughter's three boys were – had a Bar Mitzvah. They – they –

Q: And try and figure out the identity, yeah.

A: Yeah, they belong to the synagogue, and now her two older boys – the middle boy is never going to – interested anything.

Q: You're talking about your daughter's children?

A: My daughter's three boys. The middle boy – the two older ones are in college, and my daughter has said to them, you know, you are Bar Mitzvahed, and you do what you want to do, and it's your choice – call now. The older one claims that he kept the high holidays. The younger – the middle one will have nothing to do with any of it. The youngest one, who is still in high school, is very interested. So, you know, I think since my son's three children were baptized, but that's about it. And I don't think they ever go to church or do anything. It – you know, families are interesting.

Q: Yeah. And it also is a reality that somehow or other, you know, gets pushed into an area – you know, political forces. Because now I want to bring back to how somebody defines themselves, is from the inside, and how you are defined by others from the outside.

A: That's right.

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Q: So what I would like to talk about is – we didn't mention this yet – your school years, when you went to public school. Not only di – yeah, so not only did kids see you as the rich girl –

A: Well, I went to private school first.

Q: Okay. So let's talk about that.

A: The same one that my mother went to, my sister went to, and in fact, my nieces – my niece went to. A little private school in **Frankfurt**. Now, for reasons that I cannot fathom, my sister had – who is two years old – who was two years older, as I told you, had changed to a public school, when she got into high school, I guess.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And that public school was on the other side of the river. I don't even know why, but it was supposed to be so good, you know. Which was fine. That was in 1931. Now, my time came in 1933.

Q: That's a very crucial time.

A: Which is a different time.

Q: That's right.

A: And for reasons that I cannot fathom, my parents decided I would go to the public school.

Q: Hang on just a second here. We're going to end this track.

A: Do that. I'll have a cigarette.

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Q: Okay – of our interview, and go onto another track in – shortly. So this is the end of track 13 of our interview with **Judith Heimann**, by the **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum**.

**End of File One**

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**Beginning File Two**

Q: Good afternoon, this is track 14, and a conua – continuation of our interview with Mrs. **Judith Heimann**, in **Bethesda, Maryland**, on November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2011, and we were talking about schools –

A: Right.

Q: – and your experience in school, and you were saying that when you started pub – public school, it was 1933.

A: 1933.

Q: And so what do you remember about that time?

A: Well, that was a very unfortunate choice that my parents made, I – I – I mentioned earlier that my mother was not well.

Q: Yes.

A: And in early '33, she had a nervous breakdown, which I think was related to **Hitler's** taking o – my mother is one of the very few people that I know, who had read “**Mein Kampf**,” and knew what was coming. And so I think she had a nervous breakdown, and therefore didn't really think about my school. I mean, I do – I don't blame her, you know, when you're sick, you're sick. So anyway, they sent me to public school, and of course in 1933, you shouldn't send a half-Jew to public school who – when you have a private school where you've been.

Q: Yeah.

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A: The explanation was that that private school would require Greek for graduation, and they didn't want to have me do that, but you know, I-I – I think that's a lame excuse, because you know, other kids could learn it too, so why couldn't I have learned what I needed to learn? But in any case, they sent me –

Q: Do you think they just weren't thinking?

A: I think nobody thought much, because I think it was a horrible time. A-And you know, you change schools in **Germany**, or you didn't; in any case, I don't know what it's like now; on Easter, after Easter, that's when the new year starts. And that was pretty soon after **Hitler** took over, and I think they just never thought. In any case, I went to that school, and there was one a – one more half-Jewish girl in the class, and one girl who was a full Jew, and the rest were not. The other half-Jewish girl, unfortunately her last name was **Solomon**, which of course, a much more Jewish name than **Bartmann** was. And we had a classroom teacher who was really a Nazi. And some of the other teachers were too, and of course, some of the girls were. And it was not always pleasant. There – I – I did have two or three friends, or four sa – more even. In fact, one of my high school friends is still alive, like I am. She lives in **Frankfurt**, and my niece takes care of her, because she never married, and she's alone, and so my niece takes care of her. But – and she was my friend. I'll tell you about her in a minute, because she is also an interesting case. But, you know, like on Saturdays, for instance – you were always on the outside – on Saturdays, anybody who belonged to the **BDM**, you know, **Bund Deutscher Machen**(ph) –

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**Q: Bund Deutscher Mädel.**

A: – was off. But those of us who didn't, had to come to school. And there were about 10 of us in the class, six or eight who had to come to school, and then we had meaningless classes, because we had to have meaningless class, because the others weren't there. But, you know, you were an outsider. I mean, you weren't part of the group. And –

Q: Did the teachers treat you differently? Were they – was – was your teacher, for example, did she treat you differently?

A: Well, we had this one teacher – they were mostly men, their – the classroom teacher was our Latin teacher also, and I don't know, I got terrible grades. I was very poor – I-I wouldn't say I was – I never did homework, which didn't help. And – and I was a little heavy at the time, and quite busty. And he would always say, you seem to be leaning on the table like a pudding.

Q: Oh, that's very cruel to say.

A: Which is not really what you like to hear, you know?

Q: No.

A: And in any case, from him I got horrible grades. I think he taught Latin and French.

Q: How does one say that, by the way, in German?

A: Hm?

Q: You're leaning on the table like a pudding. **[speaks German]**

A: **[speaks German]**

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Q: That's very cruel to a 13 year old.

A: Oh, it's horrible.

Q: Yeah.

A: And I got really terrible grades, and – and the more – I think he tried psychology on me, but it didn't work. And the more he did this, the worse I got in school. And a – one semester he was not there, and I got very good grades from some other teacher. So, I mean, I – I think a lot had to do with that. In any case, I went there for three years, and I really – I mean, I wasn't unhappy, but it was just not a good experience. It – it was stupid.

Q: So – but you felt the – you felt the atmosphere, I guess that – that's what –

A: Absolutely, absolutely. Now, for instance, we had – the school had sort of a summer place, or a – a place in the country where they would take the – each class for – for a week at a time, or something. Now, the girl who was a full Jew was not allowed to go. And the other one who wa – whose name was **Solomon**, they debated for a long time whether she could go. Now, they didn't say anything to me, because my last name was –

Q: **Bartmann**, yeah.

A: – different. But, you know, you always weren't sure, were you go – were you gonna be able to do this, and of course, you want to do this when –

Q: Of course.

A: – go with your class, you know.



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Q: Of course.

A: And there were many things like that, that you felt people are looking at you in a different way.

Q: Was this – are you say-saying now, not only in school, but in general, when you were –

A: Well, that came later.

Q: Okay.

A: That was not in school, I didn't notice that so much. But somehow it was – it was very unfortunate. And then my sister had gone to boarding school in **England**, in 1935, I think. And in 1936 – I-I'm trying to get the dates right, yes, I think it was 1936, they decided I would go to – to a – a boarding school in **England**. And I ha – I didn't know this til almost the end of the school year – of course, that was the time nobody asked you if you want to do this, you were just simply told, that's what you're doing. And so I said to that classroom teacher, I said, I'm leaving. Whereupon he said to me, if you had told me sooner, I would have given you the grades you really deserve, but I didn't know you weren't coming back. Which was very interesting, you know. So he said, you really deserved better. But anyway, you know –

Q: [indecipherable]

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A: – you – you just don't know. So I went to boarding school in **England**, which I absolutely hated. My sister loved it, I just absolutely hated it. But part of it, I think, was because my mother had left **Germany** at the end of '34, I think.

Q: Is that when she left the home?

A: Yes. That's when she went to **England**.

Q: Okay.

A: And it may have been early '35, like I'm not a hundred percent sure of the date. And my sister had gone to boarding school, so I was home alone with my father, who was very lenient, and I did what I wanted to do. Not homework for sure, but – but everything else. I just had a good time. And then I went to **England** to this boarding school, where every minute of the day is programmed.

Q: Oh. It's like prison.

A: I mean there – yeah. I mean, there is no escape. You leave your – at that time, you – you leave your bedroom, which, well the bedroom was for all the girls, at 7:30 in the morning for breakfast, and you're not allowed to come back til the evening. You have to take everything you have to have, with you. Well, I hated the whole place, and I was there for one year. Nobody had asked me if I wanted to go, but I went. And then, after the year, they decided I would go to **Switzerland** to learn French. Now there, I will say, they gave me a choice of two different schools, which I went, inspected with my father. And one of the things I had hated in that boarding school, among other things, was the

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bathrooms, which you shared with a million kids. So I chose the little school, where you had a bathroom where you could lock the door. So I went there, and there were only about 40 of us, maybe 35 kids. I really enjoyed that. It was very nice, I was very good in French, which I don't remember at all any more, but it was – it was really very nice, and there were many girls from **England**, probably about 10 or 11 girls from **London**, and there were three Americans – no, there were four Americans. And then the rest was different. One girl was from **Haifa**, she was an Arab, and there were some Italians and a couple of Swiss. It was interesting – and that's a sideline that I knew there was a big kerfuffle at the beginning, in the American room – they – they stupidly, they – there was one other German girl, and I don't know why they would put us together in a room with – with a Greek girl and an Italian girl, and they put all four American girls into one room. And I knew there was a big kerfuffle, but I never understood – I mean, we just didn't know. And it was only after I was in this country for a while, and looked at the pictures that I realized that one of the girls was black. Very light black, but she was black. And I'm sure that's what the kerfuffle was all about. She was from **San Francisco**, her name was **Georgia Naifi**(ph). I – I got invited to her wedding, but of course it was during the war, so I didn't go.

Q: Yeah.

A: But, you know, it didn't dawn on me. I never even saw that she was black when I was over there. I'd never seen a black girl, and she was very light, and you know, what did I

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know? I never knew she was black, but when I looked at old pictures, I suddenly thought, now I know what went on there.

Q: Now, I come back to the same question that I had earlier, of how you perceive yourself, and how other perceive you. In that school, in the school in **Switzerland**, were you seen as a German girl, or a Jewish girl, or both, or –

A: I – I think as a German girl.

Q: And in **London** – or in **England**?

A: In **England**, a German girl.

Q: A German girl, okay.

A: No question.

Q: Okay.

A: And in – now, in that school in **Switzerland** we had a couple of Jewish girls. I mean, I know one of the American girls was a Jew from **New York**, and we had an interesting British girl, **Naomi de Rothschild**, whom I visited in **London** with a butler and a elevator in the – a really – now they really lived, you know. But it was – no, I – I mean, I would look the par – I don't know about the other German girl. She was clearly an Aryan. If she was a Nazi, I'm not – I really can't tell, because at that point we – we don't talk about that, you know.

Q: So, outside of the country, what was going on politically didn't have muc – in school life, didn't have an im-impact.

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A: No.

Q: Inside **Germany**, you had felt it.

A: Oh yes, no question.

Q: Okay, okay.

A: I felt it clearly.

Q: Now, at home, you said your mother had read “**Mein Kampf**,” that she had a nervous breakdown when the Nazis came to power.

A: Yeah.

Q: Had there been political discussions in your home about what’s going on in the country?

A: There were dis – political discussions, yes, and I know, you know, as I said before, we had – there were maids, and they were all Catholics, and they all asked my parents how to vote always. And so we – we heard all these things, you know. And there were the discussions on – you know, at that point I can’t remember, you know, the Nazis killed off one of their own, I can’t remember what his name was, but – and –

Q: The Brownshirts, you mean?

A: Yeah.

Q: Down in **Munich**?

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay.

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A: And so, all this kind of stuff, we – we did discuss at home. I mean, we knew what was going on. There was no question.

Q: And from the household staff, were there any – was there anybody who distanced themselves?

A: No.

Q: No.

A: They were all very loyal.

Q: Okay.

A: Yes. No question. And the – the woman who was hired when she was, I think 24, when I was born, died in **Tucson**, because she came – she stayed in **England** at my mother's house all during the war –

Q: My.

A: – and then came to a – to this country, and she died in **Tucson**. But – and the other maids also were really very loyal. And then the maid that we had that my friend says I'm always quoting, she came to us during the war. In fact, I hired her. She had been a maid with a Jewish family in **Frankfurt** who left, and she was extremely fond of them, and then was very happy with us too. So we were lucky in – with these people. But anyway, then after that year in –

Q: **Switzerland.**

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A: – **Switzerland**, it was decided that I would go back to **England** and live with my mother and her husband, and go to school. And I went to **Saint Paul's** Girls' School, which was – I went there as a day student, and I mean, they also had a boarding thing, but I was a day student. And I graduated from that school, and I took – I can never think of it, if it was **A** levels or **O** levels, I can't remember. But in any case, it was a level to – that immediately –

Q: Gets you into university.

A: – it took me into the university.

Q: Mm-hm. I think they're **A** levels. I think.

A: I ca – I can't remember. But I still have the certificate somewhere, but anyway, that was in 1939, and I went home for the summer.

Q: Oh my.

A: And that was the end of that.

Q: Oh my. So after that, you go home for the summer, and then there's August 23<sup>rd</sup>, which is the **Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact**, and September first with the invasion of **Poland**.

A: Yes.

Q: And how did – do you remember where you were and ho – what you thought, what you felt?

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A: Well, I remember exactly where I was on the first of September, because I was at the public swimming pool in **Frankfurt** with a guy I knew, and we were lying on the grass, and we heard it on the radio. And I said well, I guess by the time – by this time next week, we won't be lying in the grass any more, we'd be bombed. Well, of course, took another two years to get any air raids in **Frankfurt**, but I don't know, I think, in retrospect, I think I probably could have left in time.

Q: That summer?

A: Yeah. From **Frankfurt** to go back to **London**.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: It was not what I had planned, I – my parents had given me a trip to **America** as a graduation present. Now, here's the irony. We were suppo – my father and I were going on the **Bremen**. We were supposed to leave August 22<sup>nd</sup>. My father had a important meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup>, so we changed the tickets to September third.

Q: Oh my.

A: And the **Bremen** –

Q: Of course. Didn't go.

A: Was the end of that. So that's the irony. I would have been in this country. Of course, my father might have been unhappy.

Q: Yeah.



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A: But it would have been interesting. Or, I might have been able, you know, if I had foresight, and my parents had foresight, I mean, I don't know, I mean, I might have been able to get on a train and go to be – go back to **London** in time. But, on the other hand, I was very fond of my father.

Q: Was he the po – parent you were closer to?

A: I think because of my mother's illness, you know. And of course, I didn't like her second husband, as you know, as I said before.

Q: Yeah, yeah.

A: And I would have had to go back and live with them, and I – I don't know. And you know, you're 19, you don't pay attention. You know, you – you live every day as it comes along, and – and –

Q: You live in a different way.

A: Yeah, you figure everything's gonna work out just fine, you know.

Q: Yeah.

A: And – and I will say, all of us thought, at home, that the war would last a year, or maybe two, because **Germany** would be defeated.

Q: Did you fi – okay, let's go back to another part of the identity. Did you feel yourself to be German?

A: Yes.

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Q: And, when I came in earlier, you know, one of the things that you said before we started recording, is the irony and the sadness of hoping that your own country –

A: Yes.

Q: – loses. Gets occupied.

A: It was sad, you know, it is sad. I was clearly, I – I was German, you know, and – and – and just think – I mean, it's a different story, but just think when this country, we lost **Vietnam**, which was annoying, to put it mildly. But, you know, when it's – when you're in the country, and you know the only way this country can really survive, and you can survive, is if that country –

Q: Loses.

A: – loses the war. I knew if the – if we didn't lose the war, we were goners, you know, there was no question in my mind. So, for very selfish reasons –

Q: Yeah.

A: – you hoped that the country will lose the war. But it's hard when it's your own country, because I was clearly German. There wasn't any question in my mind. So it – it wasn't easy.

Q: It's heartbreaking. It's actually quite heartbreaking.

A: Yeah, it – it –

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Q: I wanted to ask – I mean, we – one of the – as I said – bless you – one of the unusual parts of your experience is that you were able to hide in plain sight throughout the war.

Have a drink, have a drink. Sure, hang on just a second. [break]

A: Right.

Q: This is a continuation of our interview with – the **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum** interview with Mrs. **Judith Heimann**. Okay.

A: Okay, so anyway, it – it was – it was very hard for my sister, because you know, she had that baby, and she had to go back to work. And I worked – oh, I haven't told you about my work.

Q: No, I wanted to ask.

A: I – I – well, when I go back a little bit to '39, because I told you we only thought the war would last very short. So, my father decided that I should go to **Berlin**, to a household school, you know, e-economy.

Q: How to run a household.

A: Yeah. Which is really stupid. So, we went to **Berlin**, we got a room, I got a room. We went – I went to this school where there were mainly young women who were planning to get married very soon, you know. So I wasn't planning on that. And you know, that was very interesting because you know, I was in a strange territory, nobody knew me. I wasn't about to say anything about my heritage, or anything else. And there was one girl who at one point said to me – I was friendly with her, and she said to me, you know, I

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have to ask you a question, and I don't want you to take it the wrong way. And I said, so, what is it? He said, are you half Jewish? And I said, why are you asking this? And she said, where I come from there's a family by the name of **Bartmann** and they're Jewish. And I said, well that happens to be my Aryan side. And I said, yes I am. And she said, so am I. And, but you know, neither one of us had said anything to anybody else, and in fact, I was friendly with one woman who I'm sure never knew, and I wasn't about to tell her.

Q: Well, it could be dangerous.

A: Yeah, well, I mean, you know, there wasn't any point. And the – this one girl who was half Jewish also, got married to a Norwegian, and we all went to the wedding. It was very nice, but you know, that – that was interesting, but of course, the war wasn't over, you know. And so I came back, and then I ha – I don't quite remember this, but somehow I think I went someplace to learn Spanish, which I have never mastered in my entire life; I've taken three more Spanish classes, I just can't do – seem to do it. But anyway, and then I had to go to work. And you know, the – the thing that completely disrupted my life, is that I had always wanted to go to medical school, from probably the time I was 12 or 13. And of course, in **Germany** I was not permitted. And in **England** I had been – you know, I had started – I was gonna go to the University of **London** Medical School, but you know, so that was out. And so I felt, well, maybe I could work at a doctor's office. And we knew a guy who was a radiologist, who also had some Jewish connections, and

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he said, well, I'll ask some of my colleagues, you know. So this doctor called, and said, would I come and be interviewed. He had joined the Nazi party in 1933, which is early.

Q: Very early, hm.

A: He had a practice, a medical practice in the blue collar area in **Frankfurt**, near the main railroad station. His main patients, all his patients were what here you would call Medicare patients, you know, on – on –

Q: Assistance.

A: Yeah, on – in – a – a lot of them were railroad workers, and – and the other were blue collar workers. And he interviewed me, and he said yeah, I think it's fine, and you look right, you know. And then he – for some reason they have to go to the **AMA** – I mean, the equivalent of the **AMA** in **Germany** to say they are hiring, and they told him he couldn't hire a half-Jew. And he said – now, this Nazi said to them, that's fine. Then I'll close my practice. And of course they couldn't afford that, because he had all these blue collar workers and those regular workers. So they said okay, hire her. And I will tell you, they were the loveliest people. They had an apartment – two apartments put together, and one was the practice, and the other was the – where they lived. He and his wife, they had two sons and a daughter. It was hard work, because we had to be there – I had to be there at eight o'clock in the morning, and then we worked til about 1:30 or so, and then there were two hours off, and then I was back at 3:30, and then we worked til eight o'clock at night.

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Q: That's quite long.

A: I mean, you know, they had a lot of patients, and there weren't that many doctors, and I did everything. I mean, he taught me everything. I did the insurance, I did the lab work. I mean, the guy taught me everything. He had a horrible temper, and would yell. And the first time he yelled at me, I got up and said, when you're done, I'll come back here. And from then on, when he was in a bad humor, his wife would say to me, Miss **Bartmann**, you deal with it. And he was – he was – they were just the loveliest people. I mean, I can't begin to tell you how wonderful they were. And you know, every day in – about for – five o'clock, she would open the door and say come in, have a cup of tea, you know. And they – they were – and their kids were nice, and I mean they were ab –

Q: Do you think he joined the party because of a purely career move?

A: I can't – I can't – I have no idea, I never asked him.

Q: So that never came up in conversation?

A: No. I never asked him, and it just – we never talked about those things. He certainly was no Nazi at that point. And, you know, I think he had no idea what he was joining. And he – unfortunately, at the end of 19 – no, early in 1944 – late in 1943, or early in four – in '44, they were bombed out. And they moved to **Schlangenbad**, which is not far from **Frankfurt**, where he opened a practice. And they asked me to come with them, but at that point my niece was born, and I – and my sister was working, and I felt I had to stay home. And also, I really didn't want to leave my father. So I said, no, I – I think I

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won't. And so he said, well, we'll see that you find another place that we know. And some woman doctor first hired me, and then she was bombed out. And then this guy who lived not very far, like from here to where you turn to **Mass** Avenue, you know –

Q: Right.

A: – not terribly far. He had his practice there, and he hired me. Now, his wife was a quarter Jew. She in fact, had been in school with my deceased aunt, my –

Q: **Luchs**(ph)?

A: – mother's youngest sister. I knew exactly who she was. He was the biggest Nazi you ever want to meet. He treated me like a piece of dirt. You know, at that point none of us knew the – the phrase sexual harassment, but the first week I was there, he chased me around the desk and kept saying, sit, come sit.

Q: On his knees.

A: Yeah. And I said no, you know, and that was the end of his treating me as a person. I mean, after that – and of course, I knew I couldn't leave, because it was a job, and if I left the job, I – I risked being deported someplace.

Q: So, is this the reason why – cause I was trying to figure out earlier, when you said that if you had household help at home, you had to go to work.

A: Right.

Q: I didn't know why you had to go to work if you had household help at home, and you have money, why?

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A: No, no. If you da – if you had no help, one of you could stay home to do the house.

Q: That's how intrusive the party was, in other words.

A: Yes. And if – but if you had help, you couldn't stay home. And being a half Jew, I would have been sent someplace –

Q: I see.

A: – if I didn't have a job.

Q: So they would have found work for you someplace.

A: Yes. What was precisely what he knew. And he knew I couldn't leave. And I had said to him, all is fine, I just would like when we have an air raid, I would like to ride my bicycle home, because my niece – our maid had the baby, and I said I would like to be there with the baby during the air raid. And he said, fine. Well, he was a big shot in the [indecipherable] you know, and so as soon as there was an air raid siren, he put on his uniform and departed. And he said, take all the files in the basement. So, I – before anything else, I had to take the files in the basement. And there were many a day when I ri – rode my bicycle home while the bombs were falling, because there wasn't any other way to do it. And it was dark, and you know, and you couldn't put a light on your bicycle. But I always made it home, and we – we were very lucky, we were not bombed out, although around us – I mean, sometimes you just don't know why y-you were there. I mean, we ha – we had incendiary bombs in the attic once, but we were able to –

Q: Get rid of them.



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A: Yeah. And – but he was really – oh, he was so awful, I mean, and he kept – he had what he said was an ulcer. So he got extra food stamps, you know –

Q: Rations.

A: – for – yeah, for – for butter and stuff. Do you think he shared it with his wife? No. It was all just in front of him. And then he had private patients, and had others, you know, like Medicare. And the private patients always got treated very well. The others kept – you know, I always said, if they have diarrhea, they were told to take **Kaopectate**, and if they had something other, take three aspirins and go home, you know. I mean, and – but the private patients –

Q: Different – different class, different treatment.

A: I – I mean, he was just awful. And I'll tell you, the best thing in my life – not the best thing in my life, but a nice thing in my life, we were occupied – I mean, you know, we were occupied in March. And we knew it was coming, and you know, there was dead silence for two days. I mean, so silent that you could hear a pin drop everywhere. I mean, there was nothing. And I had gone to work, and he said to me, go to the police department and get an armband, a Red Cross armband for me, or something – which was on the other side of the river. So I got on my bicycle, and went to the other side of the river, and got to the police department, where people knew me through my brother-in-law. And they said, what are you doing here? And I said, I need to get the – well, they said, you better get home they be – they're blowing up the bridges. And so I te – I

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snatched that thing, and went home, went to his place and threw it there and went home. Never went back to his practice. And the house next door to us – we lived on a cul-de-sac – and the house next door to us had been empty and was immediately occupied by American soldiers. I don't know how they knew it was empty, but there were American soldiers in there right away. And my sister and I were outside, and you know, we both spoke English, of course. And we were chatting with some of these kids. And this **Jeep** comes, and they have my doctor in that **Jeep**. So he says to me, he fe – he spoke no English. He said to me, you speak English and German? I said yes. And he said, just tell them that I'm a very nice guy, and I, you know, mean no harm. So I just said to them, I don't know who he is. And they took him. I mean, they let him go right away after 24 hours –

Q: Yeah.

A: – but, you know, he was wearing his stupid uniform, you know. But I just decided I'm not going to say he's a nice guy, just that I don't really know who he is.

Q: Do you think he figured it out?

A: Oh, I don't care. You know, after I worked for the military government right away. And his wife came to see me, maybe after a month or two, and asked me for what – what's called – you may know or not know that expression, **Persilschein**.

Q: **Persilschein? Persilschein [German]**

A: **Persil** is a detergent.

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Q: Ah, **Persil**, yeah, of course.

A: **Persilschein** is a piece of paper saying you were okay. And it was called **Persilschein**. So she asked me for one, for him, and I – I refused. I said, I really can't give it to you. I only met him after – when it was so clear the war was over, or was going to be lost, that whoever would have been a Nazi. I said, I can't give you anything. And I didn't give him any. And her – both her so – both their sons died in the war, and when the war was lost, she said to me, the world is coming to an end for my girls – they had two girls. And I said, well, that's your problem. It didn't have to be that way.

Q: Yeah.

A: But oh, they – you know, for – for – for a while when we lived in **Tucson**, I wouldn't go into one supermarket because the guy there looked like – like this guy. My husband kept saying, but you know it's not him. But he was really awful. And you see, this is the kind of thing you run into. And of course, there were a lot of people who didn't know you any more.

Q: Yeah.

A: You know, who used to be your friend, and –

Q: And then not.

A: – just didn't know you. And believe me, I didn't know them after the war, either. I mean, I'm not that forgiving. And we did have some very good friends, who would always come and no matter what, and they would come and – and visit, and come for

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dinner, or coffee, or whatever. And there were several – but I know that for some of them, it was risky.

Q: Here's a question. You mentioned earlier that – you know, when we were talking about your own country being the one that you want to lose because – for a variety of reasons –

A: Right.

Q: – but one of them is that you're a goner if they don't.

A: Ri-Right.

Q: Okay. Did you feel physical – I mean, we're talking about things that are highly unpleasant, but did you feel physical danger that you could be eliminated? Did you feel that kind of fear?

A: We felt fear at times that we would be deported someplace. Not always. You know, it would go in waves. There were times when it was very quiet and you felt pretty good.

Q: Mm-hm. And then other times –

A: And then – and then all of a sudden you'd feel they were looking again, and they were planning to do, and it was un – it was – now, I will also add that I was young, and when you're young, you live with this, but you also have boys on your mind.

Q: Of course.

A: And – and you know, and you have a life, so to speak. So, there are distractions. It was much harder on my father, of course. Of course, for him was the second war already, you

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know, he'd been – he was wounded in the first one, so – which is already dreadful, you know.

Q: But you see, here – here's a – here's something that sounds like it's a difference being half Jewish and full Jewish.

A: Oh, absolutely.

Q: That, if you are full Jewish, you –

A: Well, I couldn't have stayed.

Q: Yeah.

A: No.

Q: Yeah.

A: I mean, that would have been impo – now, I'll tell you about my girlfriend, because it falls into the – now she, who is still alive in **Frankfurt** [indecipherable] at 91. She's a full Aryan.

Q: Okay.

A: But her own mother died when she was five, and her father married a Jew, a fi – girl from **Frankfurt** who was a Jew, who my girlfriend always regarded as her mother, because she was only six when my – when her father married this woman. So, for all practical purposes, that woman was her mother. However, for the Nazis, it made a big difference, because she had no Jewish blood.

Q: Right.

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A: They lived in an apartment, in a very nice apartment, and they had to leave that apartment. And they were billeted, so to speak, with another Jewish family in a house, who were awful to them. However, my friend, who was a full Aryan, didn't have to live there, so she got herself an apartment across the street from where her parents were billeted, and her parents mainly slept over there, and spent the rest of the day –

Q: At the – her dau – their daughter's apartment.

A: At – at their daughter's apartment. However, the women then had – was taken to work in a factory in **Frankfurt**. She tried to commit suicide, which didn't succeed, and then she was deported to **Theresienstadt**, which of course happened – would have happened to us if we'd been full Jewish. And it would have happened to us if the war had lasted a little longer. But, she was surprised. She came back, and lived to be 91. But it was not a pleasant experience, you know.

Q: Of course not.

A: I mean, she was in **Theresienstadt** a year and a half.

Q: That's long enough.

A: Yeah.

Q: That's long enough.

A: And of course, the transport itself was so horrible. But she was a tough bird, and she always did exercises she told me, even in **Theresienstadt**, she did her exercises. And she came back.

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Q: So, in other words, you knew, even though you didn't have this face of di – I'm trying to get a sense of the degree of knowledge of what was really going on, because it sounds like there was no knowledge about the camps, there was no knowledge about – but there was knowledge that there was – so this is why –

A: Well –

Q: – I don't want to put words in your mouth.

A: – oh no, I mean, I think we knew all about concentration camps.

Q: Okay, that's what I'm trying to get a sense.

A: Oh yes.

Q: Okay.

A: That – early on, probably in '35, the father of a guy – well, this were the family in **Frankfurt**, he was taken – actually, he was not a Jew, but it was sort of a Jewish family. And he wa – he was a director of a very big outfit, and I don't know why they took him. They took him, and they put him in a concentration camp, and after a half a year, they wrote his wife and said she could have the urn. So, we knew. Anybody who tells you they didn't know that there were concentration camps, and what went on, I think is lying.

Q: Okay.

A: I – everybody knew. We knew full well what was going on. And – and you know, and that is something that was always in the back of your mind. You know, it – it's a stupid thing to say, but in some ways the air raids, and the disruption of everything, is what

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saved us, because there was lit – the communications weren't any good any more, and you know, things weren't going – if the war had gone better, we would have been a goner long ago. So –

Q: Do you think your father had to bribe people?

A: I don't know.

Q: Did the thought ever cross your mind?

A: Yes, I – the thought has crossed my mind many times, but I – I just don't know. He never said so. But he also, even, you know, we always said we are very unfortunate, because people were trading stuff, you know; you have eggs, you have this, but we only have money, because we are the bank. And nobody wanted money.

Q: But they wanted eggs.

A: Yeah, nobody wanted money. But he – he also had a way with people, you know, that he could remind them of earlier times and all that, which I think, all of which helped. I think the fact that he was a very good person who was an old, old family in **Frankfurt**, I think helped to some extent. But of course, it wouldn't have helped in the end. I mean, you know, in the end, nothing helps.

Q: Yeah.

A: And – and – and everybody knew what was going on, and I don't know, you're not a Catholic, are you? You –

Q: Not a good one, but I am, yes.



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A: Well, I'm sorry to say, I think your cur-current pope is lying, because you current pope claims he was forced to join the **Hitler** youth, and I have never heard of anybody who was forced to do that. I mean, maybe there was peer pressure.

Q: That's different.

A: That I don't believe.

Q: That's different.

A: But that's not forced. The guy is a liar. But, you know, that's the way that goes.

Q: Well, that's – that's one of the reasons I wanted to hear it from you, so that –

A: Yeah.

Q: – you know, that ye – it's hard to know – it's – it's that old question of, what did they know, and when did they know it?

A: Yeah, that is always the question. I'll tell you, in – I was talking earlier about my public school, and the fact that there were about six or seven of us who were not – who had to appear on Saturdays. Well, of course, there were only three of us who had some Jewish connection. The other five or so had chosen not to join the **BDM**. So –

Q: The **BDM** is the ger – association for young German women.

A: **Bund Deutscher Machen**(ph).

Q: **Bund de Deutschen**(ph) **Machen**(ph)?

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah. The association of young German girls.

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A: It's the same as the **Hitler** youth for boys.

Q: Yeah.

A: And – and they had chosen not to join, so obviously you didn't have to join. But, you know, I'm sure there was peer pressure.

Q: But it's a different word than using forced.

A: But forcing was not true.

Q: Yeah.

A: But abso – I get mad every time I read this. But, you know –

Q: I can understand that.

A: He was probably a Nazi, and why not, you know? He was from **Bavaria**, where they were all Nazis anyway.

Q: Well, tell me this: when the war ended, and you got news of what happened to all the Jews – I mean, how did you find out about the scope of the Holocaust? Were you still in **Frankfurt**? How soon was it?

A: Well, the scope, of course we found out, I'm sure, when we started getting American news, and stuff like – you know, I worked for the military government, so already I knew a lot of stuff. But, you know, we knew there was **Auschwitz**, we knew that – I mean, I knew my girlfriend and her mother, I knew she'd gone to **Theresienstadt**, you know, so there wasn't any secret about this. And I knew people who had been deported to **Auschwitz**. So, you know, I can understand, perhaps, that there were people who had no

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connection with Jews, that they didn't know. You know, they maybe knew there was something going on, you know, but they weren't really sure. But, you know, I know – must have been 1934 – I was just telling the kids about this – my – it was an Easter vacation. We took a – a trip to **Unterfranken**, you know, where **Nuremberg** is, and place like that. And the first place we started – we went to, there was a sign about this wi – big at the entrance to the town. **Juden sind hier unavinst**(ph).

Q: Jews are not wanted here.

A: Yeah, and my mother was in the car, and so we turned around, and we did not go to **Unterfranken**, we went someplace else, we went to the Lake **Constance** instead, which was not in **Bavaria**. So, you know, people just – just knew. But you know, there was always anti-Semitism, and there always will be anti-Semitism, there's no question in my mind. I me –

Q: Why?

A: Why?

Q: Why. Why do you thi – why, in three parts. Why do you think it always was? Why do you think it always will be, and why is it not a question in your mind?

A: Well, Jews have always been persecuted. I think part of it is that many of them are very successful, which people never like. And – you know, and they have tended to be – well, they were moneychangers because that was the only pir – trade they were allowed to be. And so they have their hand in the till. And people didn't like that. You know, all

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you need to do is read **Shakespeare**, and they were always wandering everywhere. I mean, you look at the entire history of Jews, they were enslaved, and they were evicted. The – and they were in **Germany** for a while treated very well, then they became not treated well, they were all put in the ghetto, then that went. So th – and this went o – there will always be people who – who are anti-Semitic, and there are today. And you know, I know, when I was living with my mother in **England**, I had this – I knew all these girls from the friend – from the school in **Switzerland**. And this one girl asked me frequently to – for a weekend to her house. And she said, we'll go and play Bridge with these old ladies. So, we went. And of course, nobody knew who I was. And this one lady said, well, you know, we're taking in so many Jews. I don't really like them. I didn't say anything. I mean, what can you say? But you know, that's –

Q: Yeah.

A: And – and that is true in the entire world, and – and it will always be that way. And you know, and it – first of all, people always have to have somebody they can hate. You know, if it's not the Jews here, it was the blacks for a long time. That's gotten a little better, but anythi – I mean, you know – fortunately the Holocaust Museum has made no bones about the fact that **America** was not very good during the war, and didn't take in too many Jews, and all of that, you know. I – I was very pleased to see that; it – it's a good exhibit. I've been through twice. But it's – it'll always be that way. But you know, I guess it's the fate of Jews, I don't know. But –

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Q: It's kind of sad. I mean wa –

A: You know, when I got my – when I married – when I wa – started going with my husband and I married him, our maid, who I told you about, so fond of the family, she said to me, don't marry a Jew. And I said why not? And she said, always means trouble.

Q: Oh. And I'm sure she meant it for –

A: Oh yeah, I me –

Q: – out of protection, a sense of protection –

A: Yeah, yeah, yeah, no, I mean, she had nothing against them in general, she just felt, don't buy trouble.

Q: Yeah. I want to turn this around in a certain way, because you have a relationship still with **Germany** that many don't. I mean, I – it starts from when **Steve** and I, let's say, we met in **Bosch**, he had very close relations with – with – I mean, his wife is German.

A: Yeah.

Q: And you still go back. And so many people who experienced any part of the Holocaust said never again. I do not want to see this country again. I do not want to know it.

A: I wa – no, I'm not one who beared the grudge easily. As I said to you, my nieces and my nephew live over there. I still have friends over there. And, you know, it's the country where I was born, and where I'm from. And you know, it was a horrible time, but it's gone. And I – I would not put it past any country to experience things like that. I mean,

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you know, fortunately, this country is so big, that it's almost impossible to have anything like that happen. But think about **Huey Long** and **Louisiana**, which wasn't a sterling experience. And you know, think about **Selma, Alabama**. There are many things in this country that happened, and it can ha – I mean, it goo – okay, it didn't happen with the Jews, but it certainly happened with the blacks. And now there is much resentment against Latinos.

Q: Yes, there is.

A: So, you know, I am not putting it past any country. I mean, th – it was a little extreme in **Germany**, and you know, you don't – I mean **Hitler** was just a wa – was a – you came – you know, every day, if you want to, you can watch on **TV**, they always have stuff about this, which I don't watch. But you know, basically, it's where I'm from, and I don't see any reason to give that up. I mean, you can look around here.

Q: Yeah, there's **Frankfurt**. There's **Frankfurt**.

A: You know, it – there's **Frankfurt**, everywhere is **Frankfurt**. And you know, it's my hometown. So, you know, it was a horrible 12 - 13 years, but it's gone. And you know, okay, my family is – is scattered, and my life is different, and I did not get to study medicine, which is what I really wanted. I did get a degree in bacteriology from the University of **Arizona**. But here I've dealt in so – planning and so on, and – so, you know, your life takes a different –

Q: Turn.

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A: – route, at times, and I don't regret any of it. I mean, I'm sorry I didn't get to be an **M.D.**, that's what I would have liked, but you know, it's gone.

Q: Your – I think we're coming close to the end. I just wanted to take a few last words and ask you about your husband. He was a Holocaust survivor as well, wasn't he?

A: Well, I'll tell you; that's what my nephew claims. My husband was very into the – I wish you could have interviewed him, but he's been dead 40 years, so it's a long time.

Q: Yeah.

A: He came to this country at the very last minute.

Q: That would mean which year?

A: August '39.

Q: That is the last minute.

A: Yes. I think he was on that **Bremen** that I didn't get onto. Now, he – it ba – it's very interesting, his mother died when he was 11. His father was a lawyer in a small town, in **Flaybish(ph) gemund(ph)**, and I think his father was incapable of having this – of doing anything with the family, you know, he – he had these two boys, my husband and his older brother, who was, I think, five years older. And, so when my husband was, I think – first of all, his father and his mother were in a concentration camp for a week. You know, was one of the – maybe **Kristallnacht**, I'm not sure when – my husband happened to be in the hospital having his tonsils out at that point, which is why he was taken. But, in any case, they sent him to **Gross-Rosen**, which is in **Schlesien**, where they had a farm for

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kids who wanted to emigrate. It was specifically geared to that. And all the kids who went there, did emigrate. Now, my husband was clearly one of the youngest, because in 1939, he was only 18, and – and he – and they sent him there, I think, when he was 16, or something like that. So he learned this farming, which is not what he really liked, but it was the only way to get here. And then he did get a visa. Now, there was a – and I don't know how much you know about this: there was a family in **Richmond**, the **Tarnheimers**(ph), which had a big department store. And they had a farm near **Richmond**, which was called **Hyde**(ph) **Farmland**, which they established precisely for these kids. And that's where my husband –

Q: Went?

A: – got a visa for.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: So he came – his brother was already in **New York**, but he came at the very last minute, in 1939, and went to that farm, **Hyde**(ph) **Farmland**, which, unfortunately was run only by those kids, who didn't really know much about farming, and it went – well, about eight months after my husband got there. And at that point, of course, there were all these kids, you know.

Q: What do you do with them?

A: Well, the Quakers in **Philadelphia** came through, and my husband went to **Philadelphia** and was housed with some Quaker family, I don't know who they were, on



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the **Main Line**. And he drove a milk truck. As he always told me, the tips he got, he used to buy a radio. And so he drove a milk truck for a while, a year or so, and then he got a job with a woman called Mrs. **Summerall**(ph), who had a nursery in **Media, Pennsylvania**. And he also – she had a room where he could sleep. And she really loved him. And she said – she said to me later too, I always said to him, if your hands were as good as your mind, then you would make a good **[indecipherable]** but your hands are not as good –

Q: As your mind.

A: Right. And he –

Q: What a sweet way of putting it.

A: And – but she kept him, and even though he wasn't really very good. I mean, it was just not him to – to be working the earth. But he saved enough money to go to **Penn State**, of ill repute. Well, my – **Steven's** son just graduated from **Penn State** last year.

Q: Let me make a point at this point of the interview, we're talking about a current news item, in November 2011, about a scandal at **Penn State**, dealing with the football team.

By the time somebody would hear this in the future, that scandal will be long gone.

A: Right.

Q: All right. So –

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A: So anyway, he saved enough money to go to **Penn State**, and he had thought he had saved enough money for four years, but he didn't realize that as a non-citizen, he had to pay out-of-state tuition. So the money lasted for a year.

Q: Oh, the poor man.

A: And, of course, it was a working – stuff. I mean, he worked in the, I don't know, cafeteria or something. But fortunately, by now it was the end – early '42, and he got drafted. And one thing I have never understood in this country lately, is when he was drafted, they naturalized him. They naturalized all the boys right away. Now how we can have all these kids now in the military who are not citizens?

Q: It's very strange, yeah.

A: I just don't understand.

Q: Yeah, yeah.

A: I mean, I just don't understand why they don't naturalize those kids, who are good enough to serve in the military.

Q: And die for the country.

A: Yeah, so I don't – I – that I don't understand, because I know that my husband was naturalized, I – I can't remember what the – it was in **New Jersey** in some fort, whatever the name of it is. So anyway, he was – he was naturalized, and then they sent him to **Champagne**, to learn more German. But he – he was assigned to some infantry and then to the military government, was all, you know. Anyway, it wasn't the Battle of the Bulge.

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But I think – you know, it was very interesting that he was able to have this experience in **Gross-Rosen**, which he hated, but you know, nevertheless, it gave him the chance to come here.

Q: Yeah.

A: And I was told that somebody had made an exhibit of this **Gross-Rosen** –

Q: Uh-huh.

A: – experience, which was exhibited at **Rutgers University**, and I always thought the Holocaust Museum should get it.

Q: Wa – wa – I will ask about it, you know, I will ask, because I –

A: My – my daughter **Marli**(ph) knows who the guy is.

Q: Ah, I see.

A: Because whe-when the – my nephew in **New York**, my brother-in-law's son, he saw the exhibit at **Rutgers**.

Q: I see.

A: And he wrote us, or called us and said, you know, I saw a picture of my husband in **Gross-Rosen**. I have those pictures. And – and then my daughter got in touch with the guy who – who has that – put that exhibit together, and then it was somewhere in **New Jersey**, more towards the coast, I don't know where. And we were gonna go and see it, and then there was snow and we couldn't go and see it, but in any case, I don't know where it is now. But, you know, it's an interesting thing, because that was established –

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Q: Well it – yes, very little known.

A: – and a lot of the kids, I think, went to **South America** from there.

Q: I see.

A: But quite a few came here.

Q: And he went back to **Germany** then as part of the **U.S.** military?

A: Yes. He – he was sent to – I don't know, hi – first to **England**, I think, and then he came over, he was – he was in **Belgium** during the Battle of the Bulge, but, you know, he was not fighting, he – he was just there, and – and he said it was very unpleasant. I'm sure it was. And then he – then he wa – actually, I met him when he was discharged, because, you know, a lot of **G.I.s** took a discharge in **Europe** and then took a contract with what was then called the war department. And he had a contract with the war department to work at the military government in denazification, and I happened to be in that department.

Q: And that's how you met?

A: And he took my desk, and I didn't like it. But, you know, that's an old story.

Q: So –

A: That – that – that's all we needed, this guy here.

Q: Right. So your children at least know how their parents met –

A: Yes, they do.

Q: – even if you don't know how your parents met.

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A: Yeah, they do – they do know. We met at the military government.

Q: Okay.

A: Yeah, it's such a –

Q: All right. Is there anything that you think we haven't talked about?

A: I think –

Q: Is there anything that you'd want to add about let's say, the new da – denazification department? Or do you think we pretty much covered it? Your dog is impatient, she wants some attention.

A: Well, it was interesting to work at the military government, you know. I've worked first [indecipherable] I worked first in a different department. When we were first hired – I mean, was right away. I mean, as I told you, my father –

Q: That's right, was asked.

A: – was there, and I said, let's see if we can't – if I can't get there, because I wasn't going back to that doctor.

Q: The one you don't know.

A: Right. And so he said yes, yes, yes, they said come and see, and so I was hired right away, and with another girl whom I didn't know, but whom I met. And then, just as the war ended, they fired us all, because they got Belgian girls, who were, of course, allies, and so all German girls were fired, and four weeks later they go and hired us back, because the Belgian girls, they didn't work out. So, you know, I was home for four weeks

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and then they – they called and said, would I come back, you know. So I went back, and I worked first in supply, which was very interesting because the sergeant in supply, his name was **Valna**(ph) **Hirschman**(ph), and he was from **Frankfurt**, which he didn't really want to tell y – tell you. But he was – he was a nice guy, I mean, and we – we worked mostly in the warehouse, where they had, you know, staples of supplies, like food and stuff, and rats, too. But he was very nice, because every Friday, he gave us a package, a care package to take home. And believe me, the time right after the war was the most difficult one, as far as food and – and heating goes. I mean, there wasn't any food, and there was no coal to heat. So it was – fortunately [**indecipherable**] the military government, and met somebody who had coal, so we were able to get some coal, but it – the food was really very, very short, and I got lunch every day at the military government. They had a canteen and they fed all of us. Lot of creamed corn, and – but that's okay, I mean – and **Spam**. But, you know, when you're hungry, you're happy to eat anything.

Q: That's right.

A: So I worked there in supply for quite a long time and – and I also went with this one sergeant; he had to inspect all the boats on the **Main** river. So we went – I – I always remember, we had a very nice trip, he was a nice guy, I really enjoyed him. And once we went someplace to inspect the boat, and we came to a military sentry or something, and

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he said, she's my interpreter. And they said, and if they were **Jesus Christ** you couldn't get – you couldn't take her in. It was some secret stuff, you know –

Q: Right.

A: – so we had to go someplace else. And then, after that I was transferred to the denazification.

Q: I see, okay.

A: At – the same thing – in the same building, but it was different department. And I worked for a Captain **Morrison**, who gave me a very good reference, that I was very good in shor – good in shorthand, and I never ha – knew shorthand, but that's all right, I had a good memory.

Q: Yeah.

A: And then **Morrison** left and my husband came.

Q: And what was your job there?

A: It was mainly translation.

Q: And translation of interviews, or translation of documents, or –

A: Translation of documents, and – no, not interviews, I didn't do any interviews. It was mainly documents and – and writing letters, and you know, secretarial stuff type – thing.

So, it was – I can't remember why I didn't apply, but –

Q: It's a good place to be.

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A: It was a very good place to be. It was a very good pla – and I met – met a lot of **G.I.s**, and I had a very good time, is all I can say. But, you know, it was enjoyable. And it was like we – it was the first time I heard a lot of amer – new American music, which I didn't know, you know, never heard of **Glenn Miller** before, but then all of a sudden, all that came back. That was nice.

Q: Okay.

A: And I left in '47.

Q: Were you e – married?

A: I came here in '47.

Q: Were you married then?

A: No. I came here in '47 on a visa. My mother gave me the affidavit, of course.

Q: Okay.

A: And I came here ostensibly to go live with my mother, but I knew I was getting married, so – my husband was – his contract was – I came the first of May, and his contract wasn't up til July. So he came later, and I'll tell you, I – I left **Frankfurt** on the first of May and flew directly to two – I mean, I spent one night in **New York**, and then went on to **Tucson** in a fur coat, and it was a hundred and five.

Q: Oh my, oh my, oh my.

A: And I – and I didn't think I was gonna live through that summer.

Q: Yeah.



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A: But I si – we stayed there seven years.

Q: You get used to places, no matter how different.

A: Actually I – I really loved **Arizona**.

Q: Did you? Yeah.

A: And then we lived in **California** for six years, and I would never go back to **California**. But I loved – I really liked **Arizona**. It grows on you, you know, and so I really enjoyed it. But you know, I – we stayed there because he went to law school there, so –

Q: Well, I thank you.

A: Well, it was –

Q: Thank you so much for –

A: – it was fine, and if my kids ever want to hear this –

Q: We're going to give you a copy – send you a copy for exactly that purpose.

A: Okay.

Q: And then your – and hopefully they will find it of interest, and –

A: I hope so –

Q: Yeah.

A: – but you never know.

Q: Well, I think they will. I think they will. I think you have a lot of insight –

A: Now, when is the la – well, we can turn this off.

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Q: Okay. So, I'm going to say, this concludes our interview, th – of the **United States Holocaust** memure – **Memorial Museum**, with Mrs. **Judith Heimann**, on November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2011. Thank you again.

**End of File Two**

**Conclusion of Interview**