

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Interview with Rebecca Fried

July 24, 2012

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PREFACE

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Transcribed by Donna Ranta-O'Bryant III, National Court Reporters Association.

REBECCA FRIED

July 24, 2012

Question: This is the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with Rebecca Fried conducted on July 24, 2012. The interviewer is Rachel Wagner. She is in Washington, D.C. Rebecca Fried is in Brooklyn, New York. Rebecca, can you please state your name?

Answer: Yes. Rebecca Fried.

Q: And what was your name at birth?

A: ____ Weiss (ph).

Q: Weiss with a "W"?

A: Yes.

Q: And where were you born?

A: In Brat (ph).

Q: In what--

A: ____, Czechoslovakia.

Q: Okay. And what was your date of birth?

A: May 1st, 1928.

Q: Wonderful. So we are going to focus today on your time on the Exodus?

A: Yes.

Q: Can you tell me where you were when you first heard about the Exodus?

A: I was in--in Hamburg. In Germany.

Q: Okay. And did you hear about--who did you hear about it from?

A: From the Haganah.

Q: And did you have friends in the Haganah? I mean who--who--who communicated this to you?

A: No, because we were a lot of people there. We were, I think, 4,000, or 5,000, I think--

Q: Okay.

A:--for the ship to go with.

Q: And you all were assured a spot, or was there something that you needed to do to assure a spot on the boat?

A: No. No. We wouldn't do nothing.

Q: What did you--did you know--what did you think about boarding--

A: We know they taking us to Israel.

Q: And--and that was where you wanted to emigrate to?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you have any friends or family that went on the voyage with you?

A: I had friends. But I don't know nobody no more that is alive or maybe they move to their children. They moved away. Nobody I know. I don't know.

Q: But when you were in Hamburg--

A: Yes.

Q:--there were--

A: Oh, we had a lot of friends because I belonged to a kibbutz.

Q: Okay. In Hamburg.

A: Yes.

Q: Okay.

A: We came from Lansford, we came.

Q: Okay.

A: The name was Mi Lansford Hausboten. So we came to Hamburg.

Q: What was the mood like when you boarded the ship?

A: Well, we were happy that we going to Israel.

Q: And were you assigned a bunk? What was it like when you got on the boat?

A: Bunk, no. It was--it was a wooden boat, and everybody was sitting wherever we found a place on the deck. And there wasn't too much place downstairs. So I was sitting on the deck.

Q: And did you--do you remember, or did people talk about fear of not being able to get into Palestine, or were you--

A: Yeah, we were, yes. We were afraid. Because a lot of people they went to the Cyprus. They send them to Cyprus.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Usually with families. They had already children, you know. Married people.

Q: People who had had children in the DP camps?

A: No, after--after.

Q: In the--in the displaced person camps and other places.

A: And we--we were single and--sorry, I don't know if there were other more people, you know, that they were married. But they were--we were a lot of people, young people. In my group of ____ about 200 people.

Q: Okay. And did you know how long it was going to take?

A: No. We didn't know.

Q: Okay. So what was an average day like on the journey over?

A: You mean on--on the way?

Q: Mm-hm. Did you have a job? Or, you know, what were you doing during the--the voyage before the British intercepted you?

A: I believe the men were ____--we girls we didn't do nothing, no.

Q: Okay. What--were there facilities? Were there--was there ample food?

A: Very little. Very little. But we were happy with--with everything.

Q: And when did you first note that the British had, you know, had--had come--come close or when did you realize that it wasn't going to be?

A: When we were almost in the port. In Haifa's port. So they were shooting. So we didn't have with what to shoot back. So--

Q: So--

A:--what we do. We had like vegetables, tomatoes. We was--nothing, you know, to throw on them, you know?

Q: Uh-huh.

A: We didn't with what to fight. And they didn't let us down. They kept us--I don't remember how many days. There were three ships.

Q: So let's go back before we get to the three ships--are you saying there were three British ships?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay. So did you see the British ships before you heard the shooting, or was the shooting the first thing you heard?

A: We saw the ships. But we didn't think that--that's for us, you know, prepared not to let us in, to take us someplace else.

Q: So were the ships around for a day or two before the shooting, or was it--

A: No, no, no. As soon as I--as I--they see that--us. So they start to shoot already.

Q: So when the--were you on the deck when you saw the British ships?

A: That I don't remember.

Q: Okay. Do you remember where you were when you heard the shooting?

A: Between all the people, I don't remember was downstairs or upstairs. The whole ship was shaking, you know. Because it wasn't really a ship it was a _____ to put--they put together a ship.

Q: Okay. Did you--how did you know it was shooting and not some type of other noise?

A: We heard. We heard the shooting. And they said we not going to go down. They not let us go down. And we bet we will, you know. But we didn't.

Q: When you say wouldn't let you go down, do you mean on the ship?

A: No, down on--we on the ship, yeah.

Q: Okay.

A: And they didn't let us go down.

Q: Was there any communication that you know of between anybody on your boat and the British boat, or was there yelling? What--what other noises besides the shooting?

A: That I--I don't know. I was too young. There was, you know, maybe Haganah crew there, or--you know, some other organizations that they talk. I don't know.

Q: How old were you then?

A: I think I was 15.

Q: Okay.

A: 15 or 16. Yeah, 15.

Q: What language were you speaking on the boat?

A: ____+.

Q: Yiddish?

A: Yiddish, yes.

Q: And were there--and--and were there leaders on the boat? Like who was in charge?

A: We had leaders from Germany from Lansford Hausboten because we were children when we came there. So they were our leaders, you know. The owner used to send us food and--I--let's say, like me, I worked in the kitchen. You know, everybody had some work. They also teach us all kind of--somebody like us would be--something to work, you know? To--when you come to Israel, you should have something in your hand to go to work, you know.

Q: And this was when you were on the kibbutz in Germany.

A: Yes.

Q: But you weren't doing any work on the boat. Y'all were just on the boat; correct?

A: No, I didn't do no work. No.

Q: Okay. What happened after the shooting?

A: After the shooting, then we stay there, and they came then three ships. We call them the ____, you know. Like warships, not just ships. War. Like--and they took us on their ships.

Q: So --

A: Threw our stuff, you know, we had. The clothing and everything. Somebody was lucky. They didn't fall in the water. Mine fell in the water. Just what I had on, that's what I had. That's it. I have to change. No nothing.

Q: So there was the one--there was the shooting you all--you mentioned, before you end up moving on to the other three ships, that you didn't really--y'all did not have ammunition--

A: No.

Q: But did y'all try to fight back?

A: Besides the cans that we had and vegetables that we had, food that had, we threw that. We didn't have nothing, no.

Q: Did you--did you throw things, or where were you when that was happening?

A: ____+. I really don't remember that.

Q: Okay. Did they take the boat somewhere for y'all to disembark to get on the three ships? Where did that happen, or how did that happen?

A: We didn't see that they took away the ship because it happened in Haifa port, you know. And they took us from our ship to their ships.

Q: So you were at the Haifa port--

A: Yes.

Q:--when you moved--

A: Yes.

Q:--over to the other boats. Yes? Hello?

A: And then they took us on their boat and they--whoever was lucky stayed with their clothes, and who wasn't. So it fell in the water. And that's it.

Q: Your stuff fell in the water.

A: Yeah, mine clothes are in the water. And they said they take us back to Hamburg from where we came.

Q: So do you know which of the three boats you were on?

A: No. I don't know.

Q: And when they told you were going--they--when did they tell you you were going back to Hamburg?

A: When we went on the ship.

Q: So very soon after you got on the ship?

A: Yes, yes.

Q: So before they told you that, did you think you would be going somewhere else?

A: No, we didn't think. We--we just felt that we going to really to come to Israel, you know, they--they think over, and they going to let us in.

Q: And how did you feel that day?

A: Terrible, terrible. We all felt terrible. Because that was our--we didn't have no home, no nothing.

Q: Right. What--do you remember any conversations you had or how--you know, what people were saying?

A: No. But we ____, you know, we said we are ready to fight. You know, we ____ talk. And we want to go, you know, to Israel, and that's--that's going to be our home and just that, you know. Nothing. We don't believe it, that they don't let us in. You know, those things. But fighting things, we didn't, no. We are ready to fight we said, but we didn't have that ____.

Q: I want to clarify. You just said something I couldn't tell. You said you didn't think they were going to let you in, but you thought that they would eventually let you in?

A: No, we--we felt that they wouldn't. They--they--how they talk to us, you know. We didn't understand really what they--what they saying. But they told us they wouldn't let us in.

Q: When they boarded the Exodus and you were being transported to the new ships, were they speaking in English, or how did y'all communicate?

A: In English. In English, they was speaking but not to us. Somebody was there who translated for us, you know.

Q: So you didn't speak English at that time.

A: No, no.

Q: So did you have any interactions with any of the British soldiers?

A: We didn't have, no. No. No.

Q: Okay.

A: No.

Q: So you're in Haifa, and you are now on this new boat, which you said it's--it's not a--was it a wooden or was it more of a--was it metal?

A: It was Exodus boat. Theirs was a war boat, you know, like--

Q: Like a war boat.

A: Yes.

Q: Okay. So metal. Not wood.

A: Yeah--no. But Exodus was wood. You know, when we went out from Hamburg that--that was a wooden boat. But when we came to Haifa--I don't know what happened to that boat. I really mean it. I don't know what happened to it. In the museum someplace.

Q: Probably. When you are on this--this British boat and they say that you're going to go back to Hamburg--

A: Yes.

Q:--what was the attitude? We talked about how y'all felt that day. But how was the attitude on the journey back?

A: Terrible, terrible. Ones--we got crying. There was one woman died.

Q: On the journey back?

A: Yes.

Q: What did--how did she die?

A: Just a heart attack.

Q: Okay.

A: Yes. She died, and they put her in a--a sheet. They threw her in the water. And one beautiful girl, she got--you know, she got crazy. She couldn't believe--she really got crazy and she run around there on the boat and she talk things like, you know, beautiful girl.

Q: Was she with y'all the whole time on the boat?

A: Yes. She was with us on boat the whole time, yes. We tried, you know, with her to--to be nice and everything, but it didn't help. She was singing a lot and talking--just ____ and talking. And me, I didn't have clothes to change.

Q: What were the conditions like on the boat? Did you all--

A: Very bad. Very, very bad.

Q: Worse than the Exodus?

A: Yes. Sure. That's--was a sign we went with, you know, that we going to Israel. Here we were very bitter that they taking us back. And, like me, I didn't have to change. So let's say I had to go in the bathroom. Yes?

Q: Uh-huh.

A: There was a tall man. I remember him, his face. I ask him, "Can I have your jacket just to go in the bathroom?" Because he was tall, his jacket was good for me, you know. So that's how I--I went to bathroom and I--I--I came back and I sat there on the--on the deck.

Q: So you--you didn't have any clothing.

A: Nothing. Just what I had on me. And the salt water started to, you know--to eat it up to--to fall apart on me. And so from the--the--from the--not the beach--how you say it? On the water.

Q: The salt water?

A: The salt water, yeah.

Q: So were you ever in the water or was just the environment?

A: No, no, no. We went three months we on the water. Three months.

Q: So how long were you in the boat on the way to Palestine?

A: Long time. I don't remember. That I don't remember. This I remember. We were three months.

Q: On the way back?

A: On the way back.

Q: Okay.

A: We went to other--lot of other countries. I remember we went--they gave us biscuits with worms to eat.

Q: They gave--okay. So what--so you didn't have any clothing. Where did you sleep? What was the food like?

A: ____+. There was no food really. Just biscuits and water. They give me--they give us biscuits with worms in it.

Q: So where--where did you sleep?

A: There where we were sitting.

Q: Were you able to move around the ship freely, or were you confined to a space?

A: No, no. Wasn't that you went around there. I couldn't go around and a few more that we lost our clothes, you know. So we were sitting.

Q: But had you had more clothing, would you have been able--would you have been allowed to move around the boat, or were you restricted?

A: Yeah, we were allowed to move around, but it wasn't such a lot of place.

Q: Okay. So you're on the boat for three months. You said that you went to a lot of different countries or different places. So where do you remember that you stopped?

A: I--I remember France--that there. And they--they gave us bread. You know the long bread? The French bread?

Q: Baguette?

A: "Children, don't go down. Don't go down. Stay on the ship--on the boat."

Q: They told you--the French told you to stay on the ship.

A: Yes.

Q: Did you see the French people or interact with them, or did you just hear about it?

A: We--we saw the people. We saw the people, yes.

Q: Did you talk to any of them?

A: I don't remember. I--but a few people came running with food and bread. And they said--you know, they put their hands in the bag. And they told us, "Don't go down. Stay on the ship."

Q: Do you know why they told you that?

A: I don't know. They wanted maybe we should--if not, they--they going to kill us maybe--the English. I don't know. They would never let us in.

Q: So the French told you to stay on the boat.

A: Yes. And they--maybe they knew that they taking us back to Hamburg.

Q: When you talked about the bread with worms, did you ever participate in any hunger strike?

A: Oh, we did, yes. When we came to the France--to France, we told them that. That's why they brought us food.

Q: So you had not been eating on the way back.

A: On the way back, really very little, very little.

Q: Okay.

A: Water, we had. Water, yes.

Q: Now, after you are in France, where was the next stop?

A: The next stop was Hamburg.

Q: Okay. So how--so when you were in France, before y'all left to go back to Hamburg, did any of you think about trying to get off the boat, or did you think about getting off the boat? What were your thoughts?

A: No, no. Because we kept together. We still thought in Hamburg we will go back to Israel. We are going to try to go back.

Q: Did y'all talk about that and make a decision as a group?

A: No. Everybody talked about it. There wasn't really groups. We were because we came there together, you know, the first time before we went to Israel before we went on the Exodus. So we had a few that we know each other. We got to know a few people. But not all of them, you know.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: But we--we talked to--we going to try again and again because we didn't have where to go some place else.

Q: So your thought--did you think if you were going to go back to Palestine, going to Hamburg was the best idea?

A: Yes. We didn't know that because when we came there, you know, like in Germany, they had like--how you say in English? I don't know. You understand Yiddish?

Q: Not very well.

A: You know like--like they went up there and to look who--if somebody does run away. I don't know how you call that.

Q: Like a lookout?

A: Lookout. Yeah, lookout. And they looked, you know, if somebody was able to run away or what. English.

Q: Well, Like a guard tower or a --

A: Yeah. ____+ so we had them for a few days. But then they disappeared. We don't know how, when they disappeared. Maybe a few people left. I don't know. And then came the--I don't know--not the Haganah, maybe another organization, you know, from Israel. And they taught us how to shoot, how to go and--to jump from a window out, you know?

Q: So this is when you were already back in Hamburg.

A: Hamburg, yes.

Q: So let's back up just a minute. How did it feel when you--you get to the port at Hamburg?

A: Oh, it was very--what can we do? We knew that--that's--that's it. We have no other way.

Q: Did they--did you know where you were going once you got to Hamburg? Did they say where you--

A: No. We didn't know where we going to--no,

because--told they going to take us to Cyprus because a lot of people, they went--they took to Cyprus. So we didn't know exactly where they going to take us.

Q: So when you get to Hamburg, what happens when the boat gets to the port?

A: So we--we all went down from there from the boat. Everybody went out. They told us to go out. And they watched us. We shouldn't run away, you know, we (?should?) go someplace else.

Q: And did they tell you, when you were coming off the boat, where they were taking you?

A: They said, "We going to take you back from where you came."

Q: And where did you end up going to?

A: That was--that was in Hamburg. That's all.

Q: But what was--were you in a DP--or what was the name of the kibbutz or the DP camp? Where were you located?

A: I was in Auschwitz-Birkenau. They didn't say that. Nothing. They didn't talk about the--the camps, no.

Q: No. But when you--no, I mean the displaced persons camp. When you--when you get off the boat in Hamburg, where do you go in Hamburg?

A: I don't know. We stayed in Hamburg. We didn't go no place.

Q: So were you in a displaced persons camp? Where were you being held? Were you allowed--could you leave?

A: I don't remember if we stayed in the city or we--we--or they took us--I don't remember. I think we stayed in the city some or--I don't know. That I don't remember.

Q: Were you allowed to leave you, or are were you still under--

A: Some people left. When they left, you know, they didn't watch us anymore. So some people left. Some people, I think, stayed in Germany, too. I don't know. I don't know. I was--we wasn't thinking, you know. Too young to think.

Q: So how long do you think you were in Hamburg at that time?

A: A few months, I think. Two months, maybe.

Q: And where did you go after that?

A: Back to Israel.

Q: So did you go straight from Hamburg back to Palestine?

A: We came to Hamburg from Israel the first time in 1947.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And then when we went back to Israel was '48.

Q: So were you in Hamburg the whole time?

A: Yes.

Q: And--

A: But--

Q:--you mentioned before they were teaching you how to do things. Was this in Hamburg?

A: Hamburg, yes. They--was told to climb on the rope, you know? The Haganah--the Israelis.

Q: Uh-huh. So did you--

A: They were.

Q: You were--were you just waiting? You just wanted to wait until you could go back to Palestine? Or what were you thinking at the time?

A: We said we were going to fight. We going to fight ____+ our land, our Israel.

Q: How did you secure passage to Israel the second time?

A: I think--I don't know if I was 16 years old. I don't know exactly. I don't remember really. I don't remember. I really don't. Maybe I was 17 ____+

Q: When you were going back the second time, did you have the confidence that this time you would be allowed in, or were you scared that the same thing would happen?

A: No, we are--we were allowed to go in already because the English left. In Israel, maybe there was Arabs. I don't know. But we--Ben-Gurion--then Ben-Gurion became the--you know, came in and was Israel, you know.

Q: But--

A: Oh, no. They was still fighting. We were still fighting. I remember they took blood from us, you know. They brought us to Hadara, and they wanted we should go to war, you know.

Q: So you were able to secure legal passage to go back to Palestine--

A: Yes.

Q:--in '48.

A: Yes.

Q: What was that trip like? Or was the boat similar to the Exodus? Or what were the details?

A: I--I really don't know. I really don't remember because I didn't move. Once ____+---I couldn't move because I didn't have clothes. My clothes was really--almost fell--you know--

Q: This is on the second trip back?

A: Yeah. The second trip--no. I had already. My brother--I had two brothers. They found me after the war. They found me.

Q: Right. So let's go back. So you were in Hamburg, and this is after the Exodus. And now we are in '48.

A: That was--that I think--we came--yes, we were in Hamburg, yes.

Q: And so you get on another--a second boat to try to go to Palestine.

A: Yes.

Q: So that was what I was asking about. What was that boat like?

A: That was okay. But not luxury, you know. Plain, plain boat.

Q: So was it like the Exodus in a wooden boat, or was it metal?

A: I think--I don't know.

Q: Okay.

A: But it was better than on the Exodus.

Q: And how did you feel--did you feel confident that this time you were going to get in?

A: Yes, yes.

Q: Okay.

A: On the way already we had that year, you know--it's Palestine. Still is Palestine--that they going to let us in.

Q: And did you have enough supplies and food?

A: We had food, yeah. The Haganah gave us food. And then like we had to wash our--they give us--my brothers gave me clothes, and we had where to wash our clothes.

Q: Were your brothers on the boat with you?

A: No, no. They found me in Czechoslovakia after the war in ____--not ____, Prague.

Q: So you mentioned, though, they helped you get clothes. But did you see them in Hamburg--

A: No.

Q:--between trips?

A: No, no.

Q: So when you got back to Hamburg--when you come back to Hamburg and you have no clothing--

A: Yes.

Q:--how--

A: They sent package.

Q: Oh, a package. Okay.

A: ____+.

Q: So you're on this--do you know the name of this boat?

A: I don't remember, no.

Q: Okay.

A: No.

Q: And on the way--or what--where do you arrive in--in Palestine?

A: We arrive to Hadara.

Q: And how did you feel?

A: They said we have to go and fight. They still was fighting, you know, and we were already taught how to fight. They took blood from us right away, and we should be ready to go to war.

Q: And how did you feel about that?

A: I didn't feel so good about it because they told us on the way the--the men--there was a few men also and women older than me, and they told us, "If you go in the army, you going to have a baby." And I didn't understand. Because it's not like now the young people know everything when they are 10, 11, 12, you know?

Q: Right.

A: I came from a very religious family. So I said I'm not going in the army to have a baby. What I'm going to do with a baby? So they took blood from me. But I was hiding. Three nights I was sleeping under--three couples were in a room, and I was hiding at night under their bed. They didn't even know that I am there. And so after the third day--they came from a kibbutz ____+. And they ask who wants to go in a kibbutz. So me and other two people we went there. So there was no men there. They should do the work in a kibbutz, you know. I was worked there very, very hard. For a year I stayed in kibbutz.

Q: What did you--what was your job?

A: There all the--every time they changed. First, was from the bananas to--to take down the leaves, the big leaves, you know, with a big knife. The--the sun should come to the bananas. They would get ripe. And then the second was I--I worked in the kitchen because I knew--I told them I know how to work in the kitchen. And the third job was to wash the diapers from babies. And no money. They didn't--they just give you short pants, long pants, khaki. You know, for khaki? And sandals. And that's it. And food. Okay. We were happy. We had food. We had where to sleep. And I was there for a year. A year's time.

Q: Did your brothers emigrate or--

A: My brother, after year, one came to America, and one is still now in Israel. He is--God bless him--he is 90 years old.

Q: So you--but you came to Israel first.

A: Yeah, I came to Israel. Yeah. I came first, yes.

Q: Well, Palestine at the time--sorry--actually.

A: Yes. All the same Israel but still fighting. And there I got to know my husband, also, in 1950.

Q: And how long were you in Israel?

A: 11 years.

Q: And why did you come to the United States?

A: I don't know. We had a friend. He came before us, and he said, "You come to America. Your husband is going to make a lot of money" and you this-and-that. And we came, and I'm sorry to the day.

Q: You wish you would have stayed in Israel?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you--after the journey on the Exodus, were you--did you stay in touch with people that you had gone through that experience with?

A: That we went together to--on the Exodus?

Q: Well, if they were on the Exodus with you, this was the same group of people when you went back to Palestine.

A: Yes. You know what? When we came back to Hamburg, we--everybody--every girl has to wash clothes for three guys, you know, because the men didn't know how to wash clothes. So everybody had to--every girl had three boys to wash for them clothes. And we did that, you know. We were very close, one with each other, but not, you know--we were always together.

Q: And did you stay in touch with them when you lived in Israel?

A: Yes, yes. Yes. They--even one of them, too, wanted to marry me. But--we were still young, and we didn't--we didn't know what we want, you know. We didn't have nothing. We didn't have no money. We didn't have our home. We didn't have nothing. So that's why everybody lived for himself, to see from what we can live.

Q: And looking at the Exodus experience, sort of as a whole, how did you feel when you were experiencing that as a concentration camp survivor?

A: Very bad. Very bad. We thought that's it. We finished in concentration camp because I saw when they burned my--my parents, my brother. And the other brother two weeks before the war was over, they killed him. They shoot him. So I know that's it.

Q: But--my question is when--because of what you had experienced in the camps, when you were on the Exodus, did you--how did--I mean how did you feel having this experience, as a Holocaust survivor, after what you had already survived?

A: ____+. But we were happy that we going to a land that was going to be ours. We were going to fight for it.

Q: Did you think of the British in the same way as you thought of your European captors, or what were your feelings on--on the British?

A: Well, we--we didn't got to know them. We--we didn't see nothing. We didn't know about the British. We didn't know--we didn't know, no.

Q: Okay. Are there--are there any other details from that experience and being on the boat that you can think of that we haven't covered?

A: No, I don't know. I really don't know no more. I don't--I don't. It was--it was terrible, a terrible thing. And even when--when we were in Israel already was very hard and--because we didn't have no homes, no nothing. We had to go--not only me, even people married. They didn't have--you know, they lived in other ____ houses that they found, you know, they find something empty. It was very hard. Very, very hard.

Q: When you went on the kibbutz in Israel--

A: Yes.

Q:--were you assigned your own room or bunk or--you know, where were you living?

A: No, no. We are a few girls in a room.

Q: Okay.

A: Yeah.

Q: Any of them from the Exodus?

A: Yeah.

Q: So you were really with the same group the whole time.

A: I had a cousin. I don't know if she's still alive. She went from Brooklyn to Florida to live because of children and this. We were in touch not for a long time. I don't know now. I don't--I lost the--the--lost touch with her.

Q: But she was with you on the Exodus and at the kibbutz?

A: Yeah.

Q: What was her name?

A: She wasn't in touch with me anymore, but we found each other in Brooklyn.

Q: What was her name, or what is her name?

A: Dora Lebovitz (ph). But she was--the Lebovitz was after her husband. The first name before, I don't know her name. But Dorry (ph). We call Dorry. But Dora. That's Dora.

Q: Dora Lebovitz.

A: Yes.

Q: Okay.

A: And she has two children. One is a doctor in Florida. Very, very nice people, yes. It was hard. It was hard. Then I got married. I was with children.

Q: And did you talk about your experience?

A: Oh, yeah. We always used to talk about it. Some people didn't believe that the English did that to us. Even now they don't believe there was an Exodus. A lot of people. I think so.

Q: So you--you--you--actually--you talked about your specific experience on the Exodus.

A: Yes, yes. A lot. But, you know, when we came--when we came--then right away to war. They got killed. I knew a boy--we were--we were, you know, on the ship, were also together talking and that he died the next day when he went to war.

Q: You--you mean in--in Palestine.

A: In Palestine. He was 17 years old. And a lot of--of--a lot of people got killed right away.

Q: And how--how did you feel about that, as a survivor who had already survived so much, then participating in fighting?

A: They said they have to fight. They have to fight because we suffered so much and they killed our--our parents, our families. So we had to fight. And the Haganah told us, it's going to be ours, you know. So we going to have a home here and we going to live here and that's what we felt. And everybody who didn't go, we worked hard, you know. Because--the men mostly. In every kibbutz and in every moshav, they went to war. So whoever could went to help them, you know. I didn't go because for one purpose because they told me I was going to have a baby, you know. So I said ____+ what am I going to do. So I didn't go. A lot didn't go away. Girls, not men. All the men--all the younger boys went. And a few survived. And we got in touch. And I was sick anyway. Because they hit me in the--in the concentration camp, they hit me on the head, and I was fainting a lot from that.

Q: You were fainting a lot?

A: Yes.

Q: Did this happen when you were on the--

A: Oh, also, on the Exodus, yes. It was--I had--I had convulsions.

Q: Did--

A: ____+.

Q: Was there any medical staff, or who helped you when you--

A: Oh, my friends did. My friends. Even I worked here. I worked. And I used to just for a second, you know, I was ____+ custom jewelry. So they first took away my health and ____+ and they laid me down for a half an hour and then I came back and I was working again. And the same thing happened in Israel. I worked very hard.

Q: So--but there was no--I mean were there doctors on the boat that helped take care of you, or what was the situation like?

A: No. No, not really. No, no. Maybe there was. I don't know. They didn't help me.

Q: Okay. I think that covers--I'm trying to think if there's anything else that we didn't cover because you've already done another oral history where I think we have all the information. We just didn't get everything about your experience on the Exodus.

A: Yes. I--I--yeah, from Spielberg. I was interviewed for two hours, yes.

Q: Yes, I watched it. But it--but it was good that we did this today because the--we didn't cover a lot on the Exodus.

A: Thank you.

Q: In that interview.

A: Thank you.

Q: So is there anything else you would like to add?

A: I would just like to add that I'm sorry that I left Israel.

Q: You're sorry that you left Israel. I'll make sure that that makes it in. Well, I appreciate your time. And I'm sure--you know, stay in touch with the museum. But I appreciate you taking the time to cover the history today.

A: Thank you very much. I got pictures from the Exodus. My--my grandson gave it to me. I don't know from which museum they send it to me. Very nice. The whole ship.

Q: I saw that you had one that you showed in your other oral history. There was a photograph.

A: Yes, there was a photograph. I--I saw it--I was sitting by doctor's _____+ in the office. And I used to--now I cannot see. I have macular degeneration. So I don't read so much. So I--I see a magazine there, and I take a look at the Exodus. So I tear it out, and I took it home. So that's why I--I had from the Exodus, the picture. But he send me now a bigger picture, and I going to frame it.

Q: Yeah, we have many in the photo archive. So if he ever needs to, to check with the museum. We definitely have photos of the--of the ship.

A: Photos of the ship. I'm sure. He wants--my--my grandson wants to come go in the museum there and see me there and to read about the Exodus if you are going to put it on some, you know.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: I don't know there are more people that they talking about the Exodus.

Q: That I don't know. I would--we would have to do the research for you. But, you know, I have not met another Exodus survivor.

A: Oh, I see. I see. If--if you--you find somebody, I would like you to send to me.

Q: Okay.

A: Okay. You have my address.

Q: We have your information. Well, I want to thank you again for taking the time. And I know it's a difficult subject matter to--to talk about.

A: It is. It is very much, really.

Q: But it's--it's great that we can document it.

A: Thank you very much.

Q: Thank you very much. I hope you have a great day.

A: Thank you. You, too.

Q: All right. Thank you, Rebecca. Bye-bye.

Conclusion of Interview