

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:08,730

2

00:00:08,730 --> 00:00:11,310

This is the United States  
Holocaust Memorial Museum

3

00:00:11,310 --> 00:00:17,580

interview with Mr. Donald  
Butler on August 21, 2012

4

00:00:17,580 --> 00:00:19,440

in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

5

00:00:19,440 --> 00:00:22,380

The interview will be conducted  
by Peggy Frankston in English.

6

00:00:22,380 --> 00:00:27,120

7

00:00:27,120 --> 00:00:29,580

Good afternoon, Mr. Butler.

8

00:00:29,580 --> 00:00:31,240

Good afternoon.

9

00:00:31,240 --> 00:00:34,830

Would you be so kind as  
to introduce yourself

10

00:00:34,830 --> 00:00:38,670

for the interview, giving your  
full name, your date of birth,

11

00:00:38,670 --> 00:00:41,230

and your place of birth, please?

12

00:00:41,230 --> 00:00:44,600

I am Donald Butler.

13

00:00:44,600 --> 00:00:53,150

I was born in

Pittsburgh 93 years ago.

14

00:00:53,150 --> 00:00:55,710

And--

15

00:00:55,710 --> 00:00:56,210

Donald?

16

00:00:56,210 --> 00:01:01,210

17

00:01:01,210 --> 00:01:05,950

Could you tell me a little  
about your childhood?

18

00:01:05,950 --> 00:01:08,590

What were your parents' names?

19

00:01:08,590 --> 00:01:11,580

Frank and Molly Butler.

20

00:01:11,580 --> 00:01:16,510

And they were married  
not far from Pittsburgh.

21

00:01:16,510 --> 00:01:19,090

22

00:01:19,090 --> 00:01:20,840

And--

23

00:01:20,840 --> 00:01:23,330

What was your  
father's profession?

24

00:01:23,330 --> 00:01:26,511

Well, he was a grocer, grocery.

25

00:01:26,511 --> 00:01:36,350

And, well we did, we  
were involved immediately

26  
00:01:36,350 --> 00:01:40,850  
with helping Jewish  
people everywhere around.

27  
00:01:40,850 --> 00:01:44,300

28  
00:01:44,300 --> 00:01:45,890  
You went to public school?

29  
00:01:45,890 --> 00:01:48,640  
Yes.

30  
00:01:48,640 --> 00:01:51,880  
And you had a Jewish education?

31  
00:01:51,880 --> 00:01:52,610  
Yes, I went.

32  
00:01:52,610 --> 00:01:58,570  
I graduated at a religious  
training college in Pittsburgh.

33  
00:01:58,570 --> 00:01:59,590  
What year was that?

34  
00:01:59,590 --> 00:02:03,760

35  
00:02:03,760 --> 00:02:06,370  
The years are fuzzy with me.

36  
00:02:06,370 --> 00:02:10,150  
If you're 93 years old,  
were you born in 1919?

37  
00:02:10,150 --> 00:02:11,530  
Right.

38

00:02:11,530 --> 00:02:15,580

So you were in school with  
my father and my stepfather.

39

00:02:15,580 --> 00:02:17,110

Yeah, I [INAUDIBLE].

40

00:02:17,110 --> 00:02:20,433

Howard Silverman and  
Arthur Frankston.

41

00:02:20,433 --> 00:02:21,500

Arthur, I remember.

42

00:02:21,500 --> 00:02:24,760

I probably remember Howard, too.

43

00:02:24,760 --> 00:02:26,570

They both went to  
Taylor Allderdice.

44

00:02:26,570 --> 00:02:28,570

Yeah.

45

00:02:28,570 --> 00:02:34,690

So while in the '30s,  
do you remember hearing

46

00:02:34,690 --> 00:02:37,660

about what was  
going on in Germany?

47

00:02:37,660 --> 00:02:40,740

Yes, faintly.

48

00:02:40,740 --> 00:02:47,450

We had just fuzzy  
comments about it.

49

00:02:47,450 --> 00:02:50,910

And I read about  
it in the papers.

50  
00:02:50,910 --> 00:02:54,210  
And we didn't know  
what was going on.

51  
00:02:54,210 --> 00:02:56,408  
Nobody knew.

52  
00:02:56,408 --> 00:02:58,604  
Ostensibly, nobody knew.

53  
00:02:58,604 --> 00:03:01,983  
But somebody must have known.

54  
00:03:01,983 --> 00:03:07,120  
But it was a difficult time.

55  
00:03:07,120 --> 00:03:12,880  
People were concerned  
and had protest meetings

56  
00:03:12,880 --> 00:03:22,690  
and delegations to  
Washington, elsewhere.

57  
00:03:22,690 --> 00:03:27,970  
Same time, Israel was in--

58  
00:03:27,970 --> 00:03:37,500  
the problem in Israel was  
coming to the fore at that time.

59  
00:03:37,500 --> 00:03:43,950  
And Pittsburgh played  
a very important part

60  
00:03:43,950 --> 00:03:50,755  
in the establishment  
of the state of Israel.

61  
00:03:50,755 --> 00:03:54,140

62  
00:03:54,140 --> 00:03:56,590  
Did you belong to any  
Jewish organizations--

63  
00:03:56,590 --> 00:03:57,290  
Oh, yes.

64  
00:03:57,290 --> 00:04:03,200  
--that promoted aliyah,  
going to Israel?

65  
00:04:03,200 --> 00:04:04,670  
Yes!

66  
00:04:04,670 --> 00:04:11,380  
Paul Mizrahi was daily--

67  
00:04:11,380 --> 00:04:16,082  
your daily lives, we were  
involved in everything.

68  
00:04:16,082 --> 00:04:25,510  
And with-- after  
Taylor Allderdice,

69  
00:04:25,510 --> 00:04:29,740  
I went into business.

70  
00:04:29,740 --> 00:04:33,550  
You went right from Tayor  
Allderdice into business?

71  
00:04:33,550 --> 00:04:36,328  
So you must have  
graduated around 1937?

72  
00:04:36,328 --> 00:04:37,276  
'36.

73  
00:04:37,276 --> 00:04:39,760  
'36, OK.

74

00:04:39,760 --> 00:04:42,270

And you went into  
business with your father?

75

00:04:42,270 --> 00:04:43,645

Or did you have  
another business?

76

00:04:43,645 --> 00:04:45,850

I went into business  
with my brother.

77

00:04:45,850 --> 00:04:46,960

And what did you do?

78

00:04:46,960 --> 00:04:48,420

We were in the  
publishing business.

79

00:04:48,420 --> 00:04:54,640

We published the  
playbill in the theater.

80

00:04:54,640 --> 00:05:01,660

All the shows that came to  
Pittsburgh had our imprimatur.

81

00:05:01,660 --> 00:05:04,090

So you had all-- you were  
connected to all the theater

82

00:05:04,090 --> 00:05:05,170

troupes and--

83

00:05:05,170 --> 00:05:09,070

Yes, the Nixon Theater  
and the [PLACE NAME]..

84

00:05:09,070 --> 00:05:13,220

And all the civic live  
operas, the grand opera,

85

00:05:13,220 --> 00:05:17,130

all the cultural  
events in Pittsburgh

86

00:05:17,130 --> 00:05:23,310

was required a program.

87

00:05:23,310 --> 00:05:27,110

And I did special  
work with Pavarotti.

88

00:05:27,110 --> 00:05:34,930

And I just worked with Harry  
Belafonte and even Janis

89

00:05:34,930 --> 00:05:39,003

Joplin, I mean, Joan Baez.

90

00:05:39,003 --> 00:05:41,170

[INAUDIBLE] [? there ?]  
[? was a lot of ?] [? the ?]

91

00:05:41,170 --> 00:05:43,700

[INAUDIBLE] [? involved, ?]  
and they were very,

92

00:05:43,700 --> 00:05:45,670

very interesting.

93

00:05:45,670 --> 00:05:51,670

So tell me, when Europe  
entered the war, when

94

00:05:51,670 --> 00:05:55,630

France and England  
declared war on Germany,

95

00:05:55,630 --> 00:05:58,120

it was September 1, 1939.

96

00:05:58,120 --> 00:05:59,750

Do you remember that?



97  
00:05:59,750 --> 00:06:00,580  
Yes.

98  
00:06:00,580 --> 00:06:03,310  
And where were you?

99  
00:06:03,310 --> 00:06:05,170  
'39?

100  
00:06:05,170 --> 00:06:07,741  
I was in Pittsburgh.

101  
00:06:07,741 --> 00:06:17,980  
And I was to be drafted in '40--

102  
00:06:17,980 --> 00:06:18,810  
I think, '41.

103  
00:06:18,810 --> 00:06:23,816

104  
00:06:23,816 --> 00:06:26,590  
I had enlisted instead.

105  
00:06:26,590 --> 00:06:27,740  
You voluntarily enlisted?

106  
00:06:27,740 --> 00:06:28,240  
Yes.

107  
00:06:28,240 --> 00:06:33,390  
And came into what was  
called the volunteer officers

108  
00:06:33,390 --> 00:06:34,330  
candidate.

109  
00:06:34,330 --> 00:06:37,330

110

00:06:37,330 --> 00:06:49,198

And I left Pittsburgh--

111

00:06:49,198 --> 00:06:49,698

When--

112

00:06:49,698 --> 00:06:51,010

--in February?

113

00:06:51,010 --> 00:06:52,870

In February, '40?

114

00:06:52,870 --> 00:06:55,550

1940, would that be?

115

00:06:55,550 --> 00:06:57,180

Or '41?

116

00:06:57,180 --> 00:06:57,680

'41.

117

00:06:57,680 --> 00:07:00,940

118

00:07:00,940 --> 00:07:03,040

Where did they send you?

119

00:07:03,040 --> 00:07:07,190

Sent me to Camp

Meade, and then later

120

00:07:07,190 --> 00:07:13,437

to Aberdeen Proving

Ground in Baltimore.

121

00:07:13,437 --> 00:07:18,230

And I was--

122

00:07:18,230 --> 00:07:20,560

I became a soldier.

123

00:07:20,560 --> 00:07:22,360

What kind of training  
did you receive

124

00:07:22,360 --> 00:07:25,460

since you were in  
officers candidate school?

125

00:07:25,460 --> 00:07:29,440

I didn't go to officers  
candidate school.

126

00:07:29,440 --> 00:07:33,170

I was in the army seven  
weeks, and it was decided

127

00:07:33,170 --> 00:07:36,040

that I had to win the war.

128

00:07:36,040 --> 00:07:39,180

So I was sent overseas.

129

00:07:39,180 --> 00:07:43,730

That time, they were  
needing people overseas.

130

00:07:43,730 --> 00:07:46,990

So I went to--

131

00:07:46,990 --> 00:07:54,240

I landed in Port  
Lyautey in Casablanca.

132

00:07:54,240 --> 00:07:56,550

Were you sent by plane?

133

00:07:56,550 --> 00:07:57,630

No.

134

00:07:57,630 --> 00:07:58,500

By ship?

135

00:07:58,500 --> 00:07:59,160

By ship.

136

00:07:59,160 --> 00:08:00,750

Do you remember the  
name of the ship?

137

00:08:00,750 --> 00:08:04,120

Yeah, Empress of Scotland.

138

00:08:04,120 --> 00:08:05,610

The Empress of Scotland.

139

00:08:05,610 --> 00:08:07,110

The Empress of Scotland.

140

00:08:07,110 --> 00:08:10,460

That was a British ship.

141

00:08:10,460 --> 00:08:13,300

Well, did you get to Britain  
first, and then from Britain?

142

00:08:13,300 --> 00:08:13,800

No.

143

00:08:13,800 --> 00:08:14,070

No?

144

00:08:14,070 --> 00:08:14,570

No.

145

00:08:14,570 --> 00:08:21,450

We came right to Casablanca.

146

00:08:21,450 --> 00:08:22,410

From where?

147

00:08:22,410 --> 00:08:23,897

Baltimore?

148

00:08:23,897 --> 00:08:24,730

Where did you leave?

149

00:08:24,730 --> 00:08:27,840

What was the port of departure?

150

00:08:27,840 --> 00:08:28,365

New York?

151

00:08:28,365 --> 00:08:28,865

No.

152

00:08:28,865 --> 00:08:32,260

153

00:08:32,260 --> 00:08:43,830

In Norfolk.

154

00:08:43,830 --> 00:08:44,690

Norfolk, Virginia?

155

00:08:44,690 --> 00:08:46,650

Yeah.

156

00:08:46,650 --> 00:08:49,020

Hampton Roads Virginia.

157

00:08:49,020 --> 00:08:51,478

Hampton Roads was where I was--

158

00:08:51,478 --> 00:08:59,310

and I remember it was a

British ship, British crew.

159

00:08:59,310 --> 00:09:07,590

And the interesting

thing is, at that time,

160

00:09:07,590 --> 00:09:13,350

Axis Sally was very

active for the Germans.

161  
00:09:13,350 --> 00:09:15,000  
And they had a radio.

162  
00:09:15,000 --> 00:09:19,080  
She was on the  
radio all day long,

163  
00:09:19,080 --> 00:09:29,345  
coming [INAUDIBLE] used  
to get her tirades.

164  
00:09:29,345 --> 00:09:33,500  
I mean, she would say oh,  
you feel sorry for your boys,

165  
00:09:33,500 --> 00:09:38,670  
how their girlfriends  
is back in the States.

166  
00:09:38,670 --> 00:09:42,845  
That sort of trouble was  
terrible, everything.

167  
00:09:42,845 --> 00:09:48,500  
And the Germans were doing  
the right thing, and so forth.

168  
00:09:48,500 --> 00:09:50,540  
Who was this person  
who was being--

169  
00:09:50,540 --> 00:09:51,790  
Axis Sally.

170  
00:09:51,790 --> 00:09:52,970  
Axis Sally.

171  
00:09:52,970 --> 00:09:57,270  
Oh, she was a voice  
of Axis propaganda.

172

00:09:57,270 --> 00:09:58,850

Yes.

173

00:09:58,850 --> 00:10:02,750

And she was trying to influence,  
in English, Allied soldiers?

174

00:10:02,750 --> 00:10:04,205

Absolutely.

175

00:10:04,205 --> 00:10:06,210

As a matter of fact, it  
was very interesting.

176

00:10:06,210 --> 00:10:10,668

I remember [INAUDIBLE] the--

177

00:10:10,668 --> 00:10:17,680

we came across-- she said, I  
feel so sorry for you boys,

178

00:10:17,680 --> 00:10:27,260

feel terrible, because  
of the English boat,

179

00:10:27,260 --> 00:10:31,460

the Empress of Scotland, has  
just been bombed and sunk.

180

00:10:31,460 --> 00:10:35,110

And we were on that boat.

181

00:10:35,110 --> 00:10:37,710

And too bad, they said.

182

00:10:37,710 --> 00:10:41,236

All American boys were  
lost, and all that.

183

00:10:41,236 --> 00:10:44,330

That was-- we were on that boat.

184

00:10:44,330 --> 00:10:45,740  
So you knew it was a lie.

185  
00:10:45,740 --> 00:10:48,200  
Yeah, of course.

186  
00:10:48,200 --> 00:10:55,180  
And how long did the trip take  
from Virginia to Casablanca?

187  
00:10:55,180 --> 00:10:58,620  
Oh, probably about a week.

188  
00:10:58,620 --> 00:11:02,340  
So you were enrolled  
seven weeks.

189  
00:11:02,340 --> 00:11:03,840  
Did you learn how to use a gun?

190  
00:11:03,840 --> 00:11:05,013  
Yes.

191  
00:11:05,013 --> 00:11:06,180  
So you were in the infantry?

192  
00:11:06,180 --> 00:11:07,650  
Qualified-- no.

193  
00:11:07,650 --> 00:11:14,070  
I was in-- I was  
placed in the ordnance.

194  
00:11:14,070 --> 00:11:15,240  
In the ordnance.

195  
00:11:15,240 --> 00:11:17,570  
Could you explain what that is?

196  
00:11:17,570 --> 00:11:21,468  
Ordnance takes care of all  
the weapons in the Army.



197  
00:11:21,468 --> 00:11:24,940

198  
00:11:24,940 --> 00:11:29,300  
I had had a very good  
friend in America,

199  
00:11:29,300 --> 00:11:41,130  
in Pittsburgh, who knew  
the head man, the head

200  
00:11:41,130 --> 00:11:45,120  
officer in Camp Meade.

201  
00:11:45,120 --> 00:11:46,960  
He said, when you  
got to Camp Meade,

202  
00:11:46,960 --> 00:11:50,440  
you ask to see  
Major [? Frody. ?]

203  
00:11:50,440 --> 00:11:51,381  
[? Frody. ?]

204  
00:11:51,381 --> 00:11:52,764  
Right.

205  
00:11:52,764 --> 00:11:56,350  
And I did.

206  
00:11:56,350 --> 00:11:59,420  
And he was very nice to me.

207  
00:11:59,420 --> 00:12:07,490  
And he asked me what branch of  
service I would like to be in.

208  
00:12:07,490 --> 00:12:10,900  
So of course, [INAUDIBLE].

209

00:12:10,900 --> 00:12:14,788

I said, I liked the Air Force.

210

00:12:14,788 --> 00:12:16,240

So he says, no.

211

00:12:16,240 --> 00:12:18,520

That's pretty full.

212

00:12:18,520 --> 00:12:24,630

We got to put you in  
the service [? here. ?]

213

00:12:24,630 --> 00:12:31,630

And I was put into ordnance  
because that was the closest

214

00:12:31,630 --> 00:12:34,606

thing to being safe.

215

00:12:34,606 --> 00:12:36,920

[LAUGHS]

216

00:12:36,920 --> 00:12:39,905

You were in ordnance for the  
Army, or for the Air Force?

217

00:12:39,905 --> 00:12:40,848

Army.

218

00:12:40,848 --> 00:12:41,390

For the Army.

219

00:12:41,390 --> 00:12:44,540

So you took care to  
make sure that equipment

220

00:12:44,540 --> 00:12:45,740

was in working order.

221

00:12:45,740 --> 00:12:47,990

I didn't take care of anything.

222

00:12:47,990 --> 00:12:49,550

I was just learning.

223

00:12:49,550 --> 00:12:54,240

I was just [INAUDIBLE].

224

00:12:54,240 --> 00:12:59,580

They would put me in the spot, and that's where I was.

225

00:12:59,580 --> 00:13:02,930

Well, why did they take you to North Africa?

226

00:13:02,930 --> 00:13:05,490

They needed me to win the war.

227

00:13:05,490 --> 00:13:08,750

I know, but they had to-- you had to be able to do something.

228

00:13:08,750 --> 00:13:09,911

[LAUGHS]

229

00:13:09,911 --> 00:13:13,780

[INAUDIBLE] hadn't, that time.

230

00:13:13,780 --> 00:13:17,072

But had to have seven weeks of training.

231

00:13:17,072 --> 00:13:22,220

And I was in training, marching and everything

232

00:13:22,220 --> 00:13:25,986

that they do in the Army.

233

00:13:25,986 --> 00:13:30,600

Of course, now as I think of

it, it was a big waste of time.

234

00:13:30,600 --> 00:13:33,500

But I couldn't help myself.

235

00:13:33,500 --> 00:13:36,530

You know, you don't do  
what you want to do.

236

00:13:36,530 --> 00:13:38,063

Especially during wartime.

237

00:13:38,063 --> 00:13:39,230

Yeah, you do as you're told.

238

00:13:39,230 --> 00:13:41,910

239

00:13:41,910 --> 00:13:46,580

But at that time,  
I got involved in--

240

00:13:46,580 --> 00:13:54,510

I used to conduct services  
with soldiers in camp.

241

00:13:54,510 --> 00:14:06,390

And I was not doing  
any ordnance work.

242

00:14:06,390 --> 00:14:09,442

But I was assigned to that.

243

00:14:09,442 --> 00:14:15,750

Then we were in Port Lyautey.

244

00:14:15,750 --> 00:14:19,030

245

00:14:19,030 --> 00:14:21,580

Where were you?

246  
00:14:21,580 --> 00:14:24,310  
You arrived in Casablanca.

247  
00:14:24,310 --> 00:14:26,525  
And we were sent--

248  
00:14:26,525 --> 00:14:30,150  
and I was sent to Casablanca.

249  
00:14:30,150 --> 00:14:33,360  
I went through to  
Fes, Marrakesh,

250  
00:14:33,360 --> 00:14:36,320  
and then ended up in Oran.

251  
00:14:36,320 --> 00:14:38,460  
In Oran, Algeria?

252  
00:14:38,460 --> 00:14:40,550  
Algeria.

253  
00:14:40,550 --> 00:14:41,770  
You mentioned another name--

254  
00:14:41,770 --> 00:14:42,830  
Port Lyautey?

255  
00:14:42,830 --> 00:14:48,420  
Port Lyautey was where  
we landed in Casablanca.

256  
00:14:48,420 --> 00:14:50,755  
We stayed in Casablanca  
just a few days.

257  
00:14:50,755 --> 00:14:53,260

258  
00:14:53,260 --> 00:15:00,970  
But it was a very

interesting experience.

259

00:15:00,970 --> 00:15:03,790

Can you tell us about  
your first impressions

260

00:15:03,790 --> 00:15:08,770

about when you got off  
the Empress of Scotland?

261

00:15:08,770 --> 00:15:10,336

Was it hot?

262

00:15:10,336 --> 00:15:11,630

It was warm, yeah.

263

00:15:11,630 --> 00:15:15,502

It was warm weather there.

264

00:15:15,502 --> 00:15:22,070

It was-- I remember  
all the Arab kids,

265

00:15:22,070 --> 00:15:26,530

for chewing gum, chewing gum.

266

00:15:26,530 --> 00:15:31,025

That was my impression  
upon arriving there.

267

00:15:31,025 --> 00:15:38,530

And later, I went to Oran.

268

00:15:38,530 --> 00:15:40,740

And I came to--

269

00:15:40,740 --> 00:15:44,990

I was billeted in a  
place called Canastel.

270

00:15:44,990 --> 00:15:45,720

Canastel?

271  
00:15:45,720 --> 00:15:48,050  
Canastel by the Sea.

272  
00:15:48,050 --> 00:15:51,064  
That was a very lovely place.

273  
00:15:51,064 --> 00:15:55,562  
That villas, and--

274  
00:15:55,562 --> 00:15:57,860  
Did they requisition  
private homes?

275  
00:15:57,860 --> 00:15:59,470  
Or did you have barracks?

276  
00:15:59,470 --> 00:16:02,350  
No, we had to have  
private homes.

277  
00:16:02,350 --> 00:16:10,400  
In fact, we had the villas,  
because we were billeted in--

278  
00:16:10,400 --> 00:16:12,020  
You were part of--

279  
00:16:12,020 --> 00:16:13,910  
So you lived with the families?

280  
00:16:13,910 --> 00:16:14,710  
No.

281  
00:16:14,710 --> 00:16:17,360  
They-- the families  
had to leave?

282  
00:16:17,360 --> 00:16:20,870  
I was assigned to the  
First Replacement Depot.

283

00:16:20,870 --> 00:16:26,920

That was the depot where  
all newcomers to Africa

284

00:16:26,920 --> 00:16:32,450

were sent to be  
processed, to be sent--

285

00:16:32,450 --> 00:16:36,516

there were [INAUDIBLE].

286

00:16:36,516 --> 00:16:41,800

One sec-- this is a continuation  
of a United States Holocaust

287

00:16:41,800 --> 00:16:47,110

Memorial Museum interview with  
Mr. Donald Butler on August 21.

288

00:16:47,110 --> 00:16:50,560

So you lived in a villa.

289

00:16:50,560 --> 00:16:53,050

And you were one of  
the new recruits.

290

00:16:53,050 --> 00:16:54,790

That's right.

291

00:16:54,790 --> 00:16:56,400

And we didn't train.

292

00:16:56,400 --> 00:17:01,540

We did-- essentially, we just  
waited around to be assigned.

293

00:17:01,540 --> 00:17:05,200

But they didn't give you  
any supplementary training?

294

00:17:05,200 --> 00:17:12,410

Not any more than the usual



marching and carrying loads

295

00:17:12,410 --> 00:17:15,500  
from one place to another.

296

00:17:15,500 --> 00:17:18,579  
Did you have any contact  
with the local population,

297

00:17:18,579 --> 00:17:19,504  
the Jewish population?

298

00:17:19,504 --> 00:17:20,702  
Oh, yes.

299

00:17:20,702 --> 00:17:31,236  
Had very-- had a wonderful--  
after I was back up.

300

00:17:31,236 --> 00:17:37,700  
When I came to Oran,  
it was only five days

301

00:17:37,700 --> 00:17:40,910  
before there was--  
the yellow bands

302

00:17:40,910 --> 00:17:44,010  
were to be distributed  
by Vichy France.

303

00:17:44,010 --> 00:17:46,920

304

00:17:46,920 --> 00:17:49,990  
The yellow bands were  
in them warehouses.

305

00:17:49,990 --> 00:17:55,830  
So we were accepted by a  
wonderful Jewish community

306

00:17:55,830 --> 00:17:57,560  
there.

307  
00:17:57,560 --> 00:18:01,015  
I knew the Grand  
Rabbin [INAUDIBLE],,

308  
00:18:01,015 --> 00:18:03,980  
and I was very close  
with his family.

309  
00:18:03,980 --> 00:18:07,300

310  
00:18:07,300 --> 00:18:08,680  
I remember his name.

311  
00:18:08,680 --> 00:18:10,360  
His name was Ashkenazi.

312  
00:18:10,360 --> 00:18:12,680  
Ashkenazi-- he was  
very well known.

313  
00:18:12,680 --> 00:18:13,180  
Yes.

314  
00:18:13,180 --> 00:18:16,017  
He was the Grand Rabbin  
of Algeria at that point.

315  
00:18:16,017 --> 00:18:16,517  
Right.

316  
00:18:16,517 --> 00:18:19,531  
And I was a [INAUDIBLE].

317  
00:18:19,531 --> 00:18:23,140

318  
00:18:23,140 --> 00:18:30,430  
I immediately got involved

in the Jewish world there.

319

00:18:30,430 --> 00:18:36,730

And I met so many good  
people, so many wonderful--

320

00:18:36,730 --> 00:18:40,590

321

00:18:40,590 --> 00:18:46,420

because afterwards, I  
was assigned in Oran.

322

00:18:46,420 --> 00:18:47,870

They kept me in Oran.

323

00:18:47,870 --> 00:18:49,680

I don't know why.

324

00:18:49,680 --> 00:18:51,446

But I was assigned there.

325

00:18:51,446 --> 00:18:55,340

And I was working with  
the Protestant chaplain.

326

00:18:55,340 --> 00:18:57,205

I was-- the Protestant chaplain.

327

00:18:57,205 --> 00:19:00,030

His name was  
William [? Estes. ?]

328

00:19:00,030 --> 00:19:03,020

He was a Protestant chaplain.

329

00:19:03,020 --> 00:19:10,756

And he was very, very  
good to me, very nice.

330

00:19:10,756 --> 00:19:15,120

He said, this Jewish boy

was a good luck charm.

331

00:19:15,120 --> 00:19:18,660

He started as a First  
Lieutenant and then ended up

332

00:19:18,660 --> 00:19:21,350

as a Lieutenant Colonel.

333

00:19:21,350 --> 00:19:24,730

So he was very, very--

334

00:19:24,730 --> 00:19:27,077

anything I needed, I wanted.

335

00:19:27,077 --> 00:19:30,690

And I had the opportunity  
to be at services.

336

00:19:30,690 --> 00:19:35,420

I used to conduct  
the services in Oran.

337

00:19:35,420 --> 00:19:37,050

Was there a large  
Jewish population--

338

00:19:37,050 --> 00:19:37,550

Yes.

339

00:19:37,550 --> 00:19:39,820

--in that group of--

340

00:19:39,820 --> 00:19:40,560

Soldiers?

341

00:19:40,560 --> 00:19:41,690

--the soldiers who came?

342

00:19:41,690 --> 00:19:42,190

No.

343

00:19:42,190 --> 00:19:43,030

Not large.

344

00:19:43,030 --> 00:19:45,920

There was a substantial--

345

00:19:45,920 --> 00:19:47,210

Enough to attend services?

346

00:19:47,210 --> 00:19:47,880

Oh, yes.

347

00:19:47,880 --> 00:19:58,677

We were-- we used to

get 20, 30 every--

348

00:19:58,677 --> 00:20:01,690

I had services on the weekend.

349

00:20:01,690 --> 00:20:02,860

And how many were--

350

00:20:02,860 --> 00:20:04,750

was it a battalion

that came over

351

00:20:04,750 --> 00:20:07,750

on the Empress of Scotland?

352

00:20:07,750 --> 00:20:08,555

No.

353

00:20:08,555 --> 00:20:12,130

Empress of Scotland was only

the vehicle that brought us.

354

00:20:12,130 --> 00:20:12,670

All right.

355

00:20:12,670 --> 00:20:15,430

But it brought a

group of soldiers.

356  
00:20:15,430 --> 00:20:16,540  
Oh, yes.

357  
00:20:16,540 --> 00:20:19,390  
And it was-- was it a  
regiment or a battalion?

358  
00:20:19,390 --> 00:20:21,046  
Oh, I don't know.

359  
00:20:21,046 --> 00:20:23,980  
OK, so you were in Casablanca.

360  
00:20:23,980 --> 00:20:26,230  
And then you were in  
Marrakesh and Fes.

361  
00:20:26,230 --> 00:20:30,960  
Do you have any memory  
of Marrakesh and Fes?

362  
00:20:30,960 --> 00:20:35,260  
Only the [FRENCH].

363  
00:20:35,260 --> 00:20:37,510  
We traveled on forty and eights.

364  
00:20:37,510 --> 00:20:40,385

365  
00:20:40,385 --> 00:20:42,700  
The baggage cars, actually.

366  
00:20:42,700 --> 00:20:44,250  
They were called [FRENCH]?

367  
00:20:44,250 --> 00:20:45,790  
[FRENCH]

368

00:20:45,790 --> 00:20:47,380  
So you spoke a little French?

369  
00:20:47,380 --> 00:20:50,507  
Yes, I speak French.

370  
00:20:50,507 --> 00:20:52,840  
And that's how you got along  
with the French population?

371  
00:20:52,840 --> 00:20:56,210  
Yes, I-- those  
Jewish people, they

372  
00:20:56,210 --> 00:20:59,560  
were wonderful,  
wonderful people.

373  
00:20:59,560 --> 00:21:03,691  
And I know [INAUDIBLE]  
families that--

374  
00:21:03,691 --> 00:21:05,190  
and particularly there was one.

375  
00:21:05,190 --> 00:21:09,090  
When I was finally  
stationed in Oran,

376  
00:21:09,090 --> 00:21:13,950  
I was billeted at Canastel.

377  
00:21:13,950 --> 00:21:14,870  
And I was coming--

378  
00:21:14,870 --> 00:21:17,280  
I had the freedom of going.

379  
00:21:17,280 --> 00:21:21,080  
And the chaplains actually  
had a great amount of freedom.

380

00:21:21,080 --> 00:21:24,410

381

00:21:24,410 --> 00:21:32,130

So I was go Friday--  
there was Friday night

382

00:21:32,130 --> 00:21:35,420

services every-- and  
there was a synagogue.

383

00:21:35,420 --> 00:21:37,230

And it was packed.

384

00:21:37,230 --> 00:21:37,745

In Oran?

385

00:21:37,745 --> 00:21:39,240

In Oran.

386

00:21:39,240 --> 00:21:45,810

Beautiful, big  
synagogue-- it was built,

387

00:21:45,810 --> 00:21:48,410

patterned after the  
synagogue in Bordeaux.

388

00:21:48,410 --> 00:21:54,390

389

00:21:54,390 --> 00:21:55,860

Then I got involved with--

390

00:21:55,860 --> 00:21:59,910

391

00:21:59,910 --> 00:22:03,370

first, I was assigned  
with Chaplain [? Estes ?]

392

00:22:03,370 --> 00:22:06,420



as his assistant.

393

00:22:06,420 --> 00:22:09,176

I was [INAUDIBLE] to Chaplain--

394

00:22:09,176 --> 00:22:11,160

the assistant had to--

395

00:22:11,160 --> 00:22:14,760

they usually was an organist  
because they would play.

396

00:22:14,760 --> 00:22:17,350

They had a hand organ.

397

00:22:17,350 --> 00:22:19,185

But I didn't play the piano.

398

00:22:19,185 --> 00:22:26,680

But he took me as his  
assistant and had an organist.

399

00:22:26,680 --> 00:22:31,420

So I was very fortunate.

400

00:22:31,420 --> 00:22:35,485

What kind of things did you  
do for the chaplain, Chaplain

401

00:22:35,485 --> 00:22:36,460

[? Estes? ?]

402

00:22:36,460 --> 00:22:37,530

Everything.

403

00:22:37,530 --> 00:22:40,558

I wrote his reports.

404

00:22:40,558 --> 00:22:44,000

And I organized.

405

00:22:44,000 --> 00:22:49,580

406

00:22:49,580 --> 00:22:51,986

I have some pictures of him.

407

00:22:51,986 --> 00:22:55,020

It's right here.

408

00:22:55,020 --> 00:23:01,280

And we had classes.

409

00:23:01,280 --> 00:23:08,770

And we had visiting  
speakers periodically.

410

00:23:08,770 --> 00:23:12,600

411

00:23:12,600 --> 00:23:15,930

There were speakers who  
spoke on a religious subject?

412

00:23:15,930 --> 00:23:19,010

Protestant subject,  
or a Jewish subject?

413

00:23:19,010 --> 00:23:21,580

Protestant [INAUDIBLE].

414

00:23:21,580 --> 00:23:24,760

415

00:23:24,760 --> 00:23:27,110

Course, that was later in Italy.

416

00:23:27,110 --> 00:23:28,050

But in Africa--

417

00:23:28,050 --> 00:23:32,156

418

00:23:32,156 --> 00:23:36,132

I realize I'm a little  
disjointed here.

419

00:23:36,132 --> 00:23:36,840

That's all right.

420

00:23:36,840 --> 00:23:40,120

But we'll-- let's stay in  
North Africa for a while.

421

00:23:40,120 --> 00:23:47,710

So did you arrive after the  
Allies liberated North Africa?

422

00:23:47,710 --> 00:23:48,880

Yes.

423

00:23:48,880 --> 00:23:50,885

You were after Operation Torch?

424

00:23:50,885 --> 00:23:51,560

Yes.

425

00:23:51,560 --> 00:23:54,640

So you probably  
were there in-- you

426

00:23:54,640 --> 00:23:59,740

said you mentioned  
February, March '43, maybe.

427

00:23:59,740 --> 00:24:00,240

No.

428

00:24:00,240 --> 00:24:00,850

No?

429

00:24:00,850 --> 00:24:01,840

That's too early?

430

00:24:01,840 --> 00:24:02,620  
That's too late.

431  
00:24:02,620 --> 00:24:04,900  
I was in Italy already.

432  
00:24:04,900 --> 00:24:06,340  
Oh, OK.

433  
00:24:06,340 --> 00:24:08,260  
So you were--

434  
00:24:08,260 --> 00:24:09,540  
I was '41.

435  
00:24:09,540 --> 00:24:11,600  
You were '41.

436  
00:24:11,600 --> 00:24:14,710  
But Operation Torch was '42.

437  
00:24:14,710 --> 00:24:17,740  
That's when North  
Africa was liberated.

438  
00:24:17,740 --> 00:24:25,900  
So perhaps you were preparing  
to liberate Morocco and Algeria.

439  
00:24:25,900 --> 00:24:29,260  
Did you hear what was going  
on with the German troops

440  
00:24:29,260 --> 00:24:34,270  
in Africa, in Tunisia  
and the Sahara and--

441  
00:24:34,270 --> 00:24:36,254  
Rommel, and so forth?

442  
00:24:36,254 --> 00:24:37,760  
Yeah, we knew.

443  
00:24:37,760 --> 00:24:39,710  
We knew.

444  
00:24:39,710 --> 00:24:45,990  
Montgomery-- General Eisenhower  
was my commanding officer.

445  
00:24:45,990 --> 00:24:48,100  
Eisenhower was your  
commanding officer.

446  
00:24:48,100 --> 00:24:48,980  
Yeah.

447  
00:24:48,980 --> 00:24:50,900  
The Mediterranean Base Command--

448  
00:24:50,900 --> 00:24:52,080  
MBS.

449  
00:24:52,080 --> 00:25:00,040  
Mediterranean Base Command--  
that was his bailiwick.

450  
00:25:00,040 --> 00:25:00,540  
And--

451  
00:25:00,540 --> 00:25:03,306

452  
00:25:03,306 --> 00:25:06,827  
Do you remember hearing  
about the Battle of Alamein?

453  
00:25:06,827 --> 00:25:08,360  
No.

454  
00:25:08,360 --> 00:25:11,775  
That was Montgomery.

455

00:25:11,775 --> 00:25:12,650  
Well, probably.

456  
00:25:12,650 --> 00:25:14,420  
I probably did.

457  
00:25:14,420 --> 00:25:15,390  
But it was a while ago.

458  
00:25:15,390 --> 00:25:16,660  
Yeah.

459  
00:25:16,660 --> 00:25:22,770  
So you were-- you set up a  
routine working with Chaplain

460  
00:25:22,770 --> 00:25:25,870  
[? Estes. ?] And you  
were based in Oran.

461  
00:25:25,870 --> 00:25:28,900  
I had my own little  
office with him.

462  
00:25:28,900 --> 00:25:32,050  
And he was very, very  
nice, took care of me

463  
00:25:32,050 --> 00:25:35,770  
and the Jewish men,  
anything they needed,

464  
00:25:35,770 --> 00:25:42,000  
because the table  
organization for that unit

465  
00:25:42,000 --> 00:25:45,968  
said don't fall for  
a Jewish chaplain.

466  
00:25:45,968 --> 00:25:53,490  
I was told I served under  
[? Estes ?] for the needs

467  
00:25:53,490 --> 00:25:56,380  
of the Jewish men.

468  
00:25:56,380 --> 00:25:56,940  
And then--

469  
00:25:56,940 --> 00:26:05,260

470  
00:26:05,260 --> 00:26:12,600  
How did you-- because there was  
a letter that I learned about

471  
00:26:12,600 --> 00:26:17,908  
that you sent to  
your fiance, Chantze.

472  
00:26:17,908 --> 00:26:20,340  
It's in that book.

473  
00:26:20,340 --> 00:26:24,990  
And that's-- I  
only glanced at it.

474  
00:26:24,990 --> 00:26:26,500  
I'll look at it later.

475  
00:26:26,500 --> 00:26:28,680  
But at one point, you  
went to Palestine.

476  
00:26:28,680 --> 00:26:31,740  
Was that before Italy?

477  
00:26:31,740 --> 00:26:32,670  
Yes.

478  
00:26:32,670 --> 00:26:33,855  
Tell me about that.

479

00:26:33,855 --> 00:26:34,605  
Were you on leave?

480  
00:26:34,605 --> 00:26:37,250

481  
00:26:37,250 --> 00:26:41,520  
I was very close  
to the chaplain.

482  
00:26:41,520 --> 00:26:48,610  
And the base chaplain was  
Protestant chaplain, too.

483  
00:26:48,610 --> 00:26:51,940  
His name was Norman Edwards.

484  
00:26:51,940 --> 00:26:55,852  
He came to visit.

485  
00:26:55,852 --> 00:27:00,920  
And I became very friendly every  
time he would come to visit.

486  
00:27:00,920 --> 00:27:10,390  
And I said-- and the Army  
regulations came through,

487  
00:27:10,390 --> 00:27:14,980  
which I would receive  
in the office,

488  
00:27:14,980 --> 00:27:18,790  
saying that Jewish chaplains--

489  
00:27:18,790 --> 00:27:20,500  
this was after the war.

490  
00:27:20,500 --> 00:27:25,750  
Jewish chaplains could  
go to the Holy Land,

491



00:27:25,750 --> 00:27:31,510  
could go to Palestine,  
on leave for R&R.

492  
00:27:31,510 --> 00:27:37,700  
So I said to Chaplain  
[? Estes, ?] said

493  
00:27:37,700 --> 00:27:38,990  
would I be able to go?

494  
00:27:38,990 --> 00:27:40,050  
Would I be able?

495  
00:27:40,050 --> 00:27:43,930  
No, you'd have to be a  
commissioned officer.

496  
00:27:43,930 --> 00:27:53,700  
So [INAUDIBLE]  
channels and try it.

497  
00:27:53,700 --> 00:27:54,730  
So I wrote the letter.

498  
00:27:54,730 --> 00:27:57,850

499  
00:27:57,850 --> 00:28:02,270  
Ostensibly, [? Estes ?]  
wrote the letter.

500  
00:28:02,270 --> 00:28:03,714  
He signed it?

501  
00:28:03,714 --> 00:28:04,542  
Yeah.

502  
00:28:04,542 --> 00:28:09,900  
And he came, and saying  
that I had family in Israel,

503

00:28:09,900 --> 00:28:14,810  
in Palestine, and I speak  
Hebrew, and I'm fluent,

504  
00:28:14,810 --> 00:28:18,200  
I know Chief Rabbi [INAUDIBLE].

505  
00:28:18,200 --> 00:28:21,600  
And I dropped a lot  
of names and things.

506  
00:28:21,600 --> 00:28:27,080  
And came through the channels.

507  
00:28:27,080 --> 00:28:32,400  
[? It's ?] [? not ?] [? only ?]  
[? them. ?] And I was allowed

508  
00:28:32,400 --> 00:28:32,900  
to go.

509  
00:28:32,900 --> 00:28:35,570  
I was the only enlisted man--

510  
00:28:35,570 --> 00:28:37,940  
I was a Corporal.

511  
00:28:37,940 --> 00:28:45,290  
I was the only enlisted man  
who was given that tour.

512  
00:28:45,290 --> 00:28:46,280  
How did you get there?

513  
00:28:46,280 --> 00:28:48,952  
You left on a plane from Oran?

514  
00:28:48,952 --> 00:28:49,452  
Yeah.

515  
00:28:49,452 --> 00:28:51,100  
From Oran.

516  
00:28:51,100 --> 00:28:53,390  
Well, I had to [INAUDIBLE].

517  
00:28:53,390 --> 00:28:55,630  
I had to hitchhike.

518  
00:28:55,630 --> 00:28:57,500  
You had to hitchhike on a plane?

519  
00:28:57,500 --> 00:28:58,200  
Yeah.

520  
00:28:58,200 --> 00:29:01,400  
What it was, you go to the--

521  
00:29:01,400 --> 00:29:02,510  
Air base?

522  
00:29:02,510 --> 00:29:04,110  
The air base.

523  
00:29:04,110 --> 00:29:10,024  
At that time, the  
air base was on--

524  
00:29:10,024 --> 00:29:12,740  
[INAUDIBLE]

525  
00:29:12,740 --> 00:29:14,670  
Was in Morocco.

526  
00:29:14,670 --> 00:29:18,164  
But-- forgot the name of it.

527  
00:29:18,164 --> 00:29:21,260

528  
00:29:21,260 --> 00:29:21,930  
You go to that.

529

00:29:21,930 --> 00:29:26,270

And then you find  
out your plane going.

530

00:29:26,270 --> 00:29:28,430

And who's going to--

531

00:29:28,430 --> 00:29:31,430

532

00:29:31,430 --> 00:29:32,110

The Middle East.

533

00:29:32,110 --> 00:29:34,141

--the Middle East?

534

00:29:34,141 --> 00:29:36,730

Finally, I got-- so I went.

535

00:29:36,730 --> 00:29:40,013

I remember I went from--

536

00:29:40,013 --> 00:29:46,531

537

00:29:46,531 --> 00:29:49,960

I remember that name.

538

00:29:49,960 --> 00:29:58,230

In Oran, Oran airport to Libya.

539

00:29:58,230 --> 00:29:59,530

Tripoli?

540

00:29:59,530 --> 00:30:00,080

Benghazi.

541

00:30:00,080 --> 00:30:01,600

Ah, Benghazi.

542

00:30:01,600 --> 00:30:03,850  
Went to Benghazi.

543  
00:30:03,850 --> 00:30:09,321  
And I stayed there for a day or  
so, till you get another hitch.

544  
00:30:09,321 --> 00:30:15,379  
And I hitched to  
Payne Field in Egypt.

545  
00:30:15,379 --> 00:30:17,844  
Payne Field, there in--

546  
00:30:17,844 --> 00:30:22,290

547  
00:30:22,290 --> 00:30:24,100  
Where was it near?

548  
00:30:24,100 --> 00:30:26,335  
It's a big city.

549  
00:30:26,335 --> 00:30:26,835  
Cairo?

550  
00:30:26,835 --> 00:30:28,570  
Cairo!

551  
00:30:28,570 --> 00:30:32,160  
Payne Field was just-- that  
was the airport at Cairo.

552  
00:30:32,160 --> 00:30:36,540  
And I came there.

553  
00:30:36,540 --> 00:30:50,484  
And I remember that when  
I came to Cairo, the--

554  
00:30:50,484 --> 00:31:05,980

555

00:31:05,980 --> 00:31:08,330

I mean, you arrived at  
the airport in Cairo.

556

00:31:08,330 --> 00:31:09,080

The airport, yeah.

557

00:31:09,080 --> 00:31:12,130

Were you greeted by somebody?

558

00:31:12,130 --> 00:31:12,920

Only as a soldier.

559

00:31:12,920 --> 00:31:21,020

I reported to the  
American Army base there.

560

00:31:21,020 --> 00:31:25,650

And I was granted--

561

00:31:25,650 --> 00:31:28,240

I wanted to go to  
[? Teletwinsky ?]..

562

00:31:28,240 --> 00:31:34,200

[? Teletwinsky ?] was the Army  
camp in Tel Aviv, the American

563

00:31:34,200 --> 00:31:35,630

Army camp.

564

00:31:35,630 --> 00:31:36,975

[? Teletwinsky ?].

565

00:31:36,975 --> 00:31:39,180

[? Teletwinsky ?].

566

00:31:39,180 --> 00:31:44,260

And I had--

567

00:31:44,260 --> 00:31:48,180  
I don't know if I had  
orders to go there or not.

568  
00:31:48,180 --> 00:31:52,960  
But I would go.

569  
00:31:52,960 --> 00:31:54,430  
See, my original orders--

570  
00:31:54,430 --> 00:31:56,220  
which I still have--

571  
00:31:56,220 --> 00:32:01,500  
original orders  
from Eisenhower were

572  
00:32:01,500 --> 00:32:08,860  
to go by land, sea, or air,  
whichever was available.

573  
00:32:08,860 --> 00:32:13,675  
So I wanted to go to Palestine.

574  
00:32:13,675 --> 00:32:16,440

575  
00:32:16,440 --> 00:32:18,160  
So I remember that I got--

576  
00:32:18,160 --> 00:32:22,485  
they gave a command  
car and a driver.

577  
00:32:22,485 --> 00:32:29,610  
And I rode across the  
desert in the car.

578  
00:32:29,610 --> 00:32:31,420  
And I came there.

579  
00:32:31,420 --> 00:32:34,060

580  
00:32:34,060 --> 00:32:37,810  
And I ended up in Tel Aviv.

581  
00:32:37,810 --> 00:32:40,340  
How many days of travel?

582  
00:32:40,340 --> 00:32:42,450  
Well, probably it was--

583  
00:32:42,450 --> 00:32:47,460  
had a driver, I don't remember.

584  
00:32:47,460 --> 00:32:49,942  
Not too-- not long.

585  
00:32:49,942 --> 00:32:52,910  
It was a day, maybe,  
a day or more.

586  
00:32:52,910 --> 00:32:57,690  
Did they-- did you have cans  
of gas and gasoline in the--

587  
00:32:57,690 --> 00:32:59,682  
That was [INAUDIBLE].

588  
00:32:59,682 --> 00:33:03,140  
I was-- a pawn of  
the army there.

589  
00:33:03,140 --> 00:33:07,350  
I mean, whatever I had I  
have, why, the Army gave me.

590  
00:33:07,350 --> 00:33:07,850  
I know.

591  
00:33:07,850 --> 00:33:12,050  
But they did-- so you sort of  
hitched a ride on a car that



592  
00:33:12,050 --> 00:33:13,234  
was, or a truck--

593  
00:33:13,234 --> 00:33:13,776  
No, I didn't.

594  
00:33:13,776 --> 00:33:15,590  
I was just given that car.

595  
00:33:15,590 --> 00:33:17,330  
I was--

596  
00:33:17,330 --> 00:33:18,340  
Privileged.

597  
00:33:18,340 --> 00:33:23,600  
--assigned to the  
car with the driver.

598  
00:33:23,600 --> 00:33:29,240  
And I remember going  
across the desert

599  
00:33:29,240 --> 00:33:35,090  
and stopping at  
what was called Mt.

600  
00:33:35,090 --> 00:33:38,540  
Sinai at that time.

601  
00:33:38,540 --> 00:33:42,755  
And I remember I brought  
myself some rocks from Mt.

602  
00:33:42,755 --> 00:33:43,255  
Sinai.

603  
00:33:43,255 --> 00:33:46,080

604

00:33:46,080 --> 00:33:50,990  
And they were very--

605  
00:33:50,990 --> 00:33:54,110  
I had no problem.

606  
00:33:54,110 --> 00:33:59,280  
I had-- I was a lucky guy.

607  
00:33:59,280 --> 00:34:00,300  
What do you mean?

608  
00:34:00,300 --> 00:34:02,040  
You weren't attacked by anybody?

609  
00:34:02,040 --> 00:34:04,040  
No.

610  
00:34:04,040 --> 00:34:11,690  
And matter of face, in  
Cairo when I came to Cairo,

611  
00:34:11,690 --> 00:34:12,560  
I stayed at--

612  
00:34:12,560 --> 00:34:15,224

613  
00:34:15,224 --> 00:34:17,320  
what was a fancy hotel in--

614  
00:34:17,320 --> 00:34:29,272

615  
00:34:29,272 --> 00:34:31,869  
It was a fancy hotel  
inside of Cairo?

616  
00:34:31,869 --> 00:34:33,159  
In Cairo.

617

00:34:33,159 --> 00:34:34,540  
I stayed there.

618  
00:34:34,540 --> 00:34:38,190  
And I had the freedom of--

619  
00:34:38,190 --> 00:34:41,670  
I was in Cairo  
for almost a week.

620  
00:34:41,670 --> 00:34:43,873  
And I spent Shabbos there.

621  
00:34:43,873 --> 00:34:45,290  
Did you go to the  
synagogue there?

622  
00:34:45,290 --> 00:34:47,550  
I got involved in the synagogue.

623  
00:34:47,550 --> 00:34:54,610  
And I remember as a kid, it  
made an impression on me.

624  
00:34:54,610 --> 00:35:09,590  
They-- the men with davening,  
and they wore a fez.

625  
00:35:09,590 --> 00:35:15,120  
And they would-- they were  
davening, they were shaking.

626  
00:35:15,120 --> 00:35:17,640  
They just davened just like  
everybody else davened.

627  
00:35:17,640 --> 00:35:22,000  
And the one with the  
tassels was [? shaking. ?]

628  
00:35:22,000 --> 00:35:24,640  
It was very interesting.

629

00:35:24,640 --> 00:35:25,140

And the--

630

00:35:25,140 --> 00:35:29,740

631

00:35:29,740 --> 00:35:33,020

Did you have dinner or go  
to any of the families,

632

00:35:33,020 --> 00:35:33,910

the Jewish families?

633

00:35:33,910 --> 00:35:34,675

Yes.

634

00:35:34,675 --> 00:35:35,710

Not in Cairo.

635

00:35:35,710 --> 00:35:38,867

636

00:35:38,867 --> 00:35:42,166

I was-- plus, I didn't  
know anybody there.

637

00:35:42,166 --> 00:35:47,700

But in Oran, I had  
very, very good--

638

00:35:47,700 --> 00:35:56,130

I had the-- there was  
a woman, very, very--

639

00:35:56,130 --> 00:36:10,040

they [INAUDIBLE]  
consul to some country.

640

00:36:10,040 --> 00:36:13,697

But he had passed away.

641

00:36:13,697 --> 00:36:14,530  
She was older woman.

642  
00:36:14,530 --> 00:36:18,260  
She must have been in her 80s.

643  
00:36:18,260 --> 00:36:21,220  
And she took a shine to me.

644  
00:36:21,220 --> 00:36:23,350  
I mean, very--

645  
00:36:23,350 --> 00:36:24,630  
Madam Toledano.

646  
00:36:24,630 --> 00:36:25,950  
Judith Toledano.

647  
00:36:25,950 --> 00:36:28,120  
Toledano?

648  
00:36:28,120 --> 00:36:31,820  
From a very famous  
family, Toledano.

649  
00:36:31,820 --> 00:36:47,830  
And she had-- in Oran, she was  
a very, very prominent woman.

650  
00:36:47,830 --> 00:36:52,430  
She was a very wealthy  
woman, very prominent.

651  
00:36:52,430 --> 00:36:57,320  
And Judith Toledano.

652  
00:36:57,320 --> 00:36:59,210  
What was her first name?

653  
00:36:59,210 --> 00:37:00,630  
Judith.

654

00:37:00,630 --> 00:37:04,000

Oh, her husband's  
name was Julius?

655

00:37:04,000 --> 00:37:06,260

No, her name was Judith.

656

00:37:06,260 --> 00:37:07,280

Oh, Judith!

657

00:37:07,280 --> 00:37:07,780

OK.

658

00:37:07,780 --> 00:37:08,280

Yes.

659

00:37:08,280 --> 00:37:10,550

Judith Toledano, OK.

660

00:37:10,550 --> 00:37:17,370

And she was the widow  
of a counsel to Algeria?

661

00:37:17,370 --> 00:37:19,330

Someplace.

662

00:37:19,330 --> 00:37:22,605

No, he was-- she was Algerian.

663

00:37:22,605 --> 00:37:25,730

664

00:37:25,730 --> 00:37:28,120

But she had married  
somebody who was

665

00:37:28,120 --> 00:37:29,990

a counsel from another country?

666

00:37:29,990 --> 00:37:40,610

Yeah, very, very, very, very

lovely home, fine linens.

667

00:37:40,610 --> 00:37:44,930

And she was very nice.

668

00:37:44,930 --> 00:37:47,216

She kept a kosher home.

669

00:37:47,216 --> 00:37:52,960

So she was my anchor in Oran.

670

00:37:52,960 --> 00:37:55,120

I would go there for Shabbos.

671

00:37:55,120 --> 00:37:58,540

I would go there periodically.

672

00:37:58,540 --> 00:38:05,200

And it became a

[INAUDIBLE] with her.

673

00:38:05,200 --> 00:38:09,060

I mean, very, very nice.

674

00:38:09,060 --> 00:38:13,330

She was the kind of

woman that, every Friday,

675

00:38:13,330 --> 00:38:22,150

would give her

concierge some money

676

00:38:22,150 --> 00:38:24,850

to distribute to

the poor people.

677

00:38:24,850 --> 00:38:27,620

She was a lovely, lovely woman.

678

00:38:27,620 --> 00:38:30,520

And I got--

679

00:38:30,520 --> 00:38:32,170

I knew the whole family.

680

00:38:32,170 --> 00:38:38,380

And so my time in Oran  
was a very good time.

681

00:38:38,380 --> 00:38:41,800

682

00:38:41,800 --> 00:38:47,260

I got to know all those  
[INAUDIBLE] and [INAUDIBLE]..

683

00:38:47,260 --> 00:38:54,490

684

00:38:54,490 --> 00:38:57,270

Did you stay in contact  
with them after the war?

685

00:38:57,270 --> 00:38:58,080

Yes.

686

00:38:58,080 --> 00:38:58,580

Shortly.

687

00:38:58,580 --> 00:39:01,140

688

00:39:01,140 --> 00:39:06,510

But it was-- lost track.

689

00:39:06,510 --> 00:39:09,860

So when you finally  
got to Tel Aviv

690

00:39:09,860 --> 00:39:14,010

and you got to the  
camp, [? Teletwinsky ?],,

691



00:39:14,010 --> 00:39:19,230  
did you meet up with other  
chaplains who were supposedly

692  
00:39:19,230 --> 00:39:21,500  
in this group?

693  
00:39:21,500 --> 00:39:30,290  
Well, in the first replacement  
depot when we landed,

694  
00:39:30,290 --> 00:39:36,680  
all the new people coming  
into North Africa just landing

695  
00:39:36,680 --> 00:39:40,560  
processed in that camp.

696  
00:39:40,560 --> 00:39:47,500  
And by that time  
when I was there,

697  
00:39:47,500 --> 00:39:50,790  
I was hoping that there  
would be a Jewish chaplain

698  
00:39:50,790 --> 00:39:54,060  
that I would be assigned to.

699  
00:39:54,060 --> 00:39:57,740  
Well, it so happened there were  
five Jewish chaplains arriving

700  
00:39:57,740 --> 00:39:59,760  
at one time.

701  
00:39:59,760 --> 00:40:11,872  
Resnikov, Baumel, who else?

702  
00:40:11,872 --> 00:40:16,170

703

00:40:16,170 --> 00:40:17,560  
They were a part of the--

704  
00:40:17,560 --> 00:40:20,420  
Hochman.

705  
00:40:20,420 --> 00:40:22,140  
Jacob Hochman.

706  
00:40:22,140 --> 00:40:24,780  
They were all part  
of the American army?

707  
00:40:24,780 --> 00:40:25,750  
Yes.

708  
00:40:25,750 --> 00:40:28,830  
They were Jewish chaplains  
in the American army.

709  
00:40:28,830 --> 00:40:35,676  
And they were sent over to be  
distributed in the Middle East

710  
00:40:35,676 --> 00:40:39,435  
and to serve the soldiers.

711  
00:40:39,435 --> 00:40:42,005

712  
00:40:42,005 --> 00:40:46,550  
Now Hochman, it  
so happened that--

713  
00:40:46,550 --> 00:40:48,530  
So I sent the chaplain  
a message saying,

714  
00:40:48,530 --> 00:40:54,020  
will I be able to be assigned  
to one of these chaplains?

715

00:40:54,020 --> 00:40:57,510

Well, I don't know  
who's going to be here.

716

00:40:57,510 --> 00:40:59,580

We don't know yet.

717

00:40:59,580 --> 00:41:07,050

And Jacob Hochman  
was assigned to Oran

718

00:41:07,050 --> 00:41:10,220

and I have pictures of him,  
I have all these pictures.

719

00:41:10,220 --> 00:41:12,770

720

00:41:12,770 --> 00:41:16,260

And Hochman was [INAUDIBLE].

721

00:41:16,260 --> 00:41:21,770

So I remember going to  
him in the early morning

722

00:41:21,770 --> 00:41:28,610

because I was to be  
shipped out to an ordinance

723

00:41:28,610 --> 00:41:35,000

depot as a clerk because  
I typed very well and all.

724

00:41:35,000 --> 00:41:44,600

But a friend of  
mine, a fellow who

725

00:41:44,600 --> 00:41:54,980

became very good friend of mine,  
from Rock Island, Illinois,

726

00:41:54,980 --> 00:41:58,400

he said, why don't you go to

the chaplain and talk to him.

727

00:41:58,400 --> 00:42:02,000

Maybe he can get you  
assigned, get you

728

00:42:02,000 --> 00:42:05,810

scratched from this shipment?

729

00:42:05,810 --> 00:42:10,150

Because I was already  
on orders to go.

730

00:42:10,150 --> 00:42:16,350

So early morning I  
remember very well

731

00:42:16,350 --> 00:42:20,550

I went up to the battalion.

732

00:42:20,550 --> 00:42:22,790

I didn't want to go to the  
officer of the battalion,

733

00:42:22,790 --> 00:42:24,920

but I went.

734

00:42:24,920 --> 00:42:29,970

And I met Chaplain Hochman.

735

00:42:29,970 --> 00:42:32,240

I remember him very well.

736

00:42:32,240 --> 00:42:39,132

He had a steel helmet filled  
with water and he was shaving.

737

00:42:39,132 --> 00:42:40,740

He was shaving in the morning.

738

00:42:40,740 --> 00:42:43,230

Where is this, in Tel Aviv?

739  
00:42:43,230 --> 00:42:44,500  
No.

740  
00:42:44,500 --> 00:42:45,780  
No, in Oran.

741  
00:42:45,780 --> 00:42:47,070  
In Oran.

742  
00:42:47,070 --> 00:42:49,390  
So this was after you  
got back from Palestine?

743  
00:42:49,390 --> 00:42:49,900  
No.

744  
00:42:49,900 --> 00:42:53,250  
This was before.

745  
00:42:53,250 --> 00:42:55,661  
I told you I'd be--

746  
00:42:55,661 --> 00:42:57,180  
It's OK.

747  
00:42:57,180 --> 00:43:00,810  
But as these things  
come to mind--

748  
00:43:00,810 --> 00:43:02,040  
It's important to say them.

749  
00:43:02,040 --> 00:43:03,480  
It's good.

750  
00:43:03,480 --> 00:43:08,040  
So I asked him  
and he said, sure.

751  
00:43:08,040 --> 00:43:11,457

Because I'd been conducting  
all those services.

752  
00:43:11,457 --> 00:43:12,290  
I'd been doing that.

753  
00:43:12,290 --> 00:43:14,190  
Until he got there.

754  
00:43:14,190 --> 00:43:18,330  
Until somebody else came.

755  
00:43:18,330 --> 00:43:27,020  
So he said if I would  
wait till I'm assigned,

756  
00:43:27,020 --> 00:43:32,780  
I will ask for you  
as my assistant.

757  
00:43:32,780 --> 00:43:36,720  
So meanwhile I had to  
get off of that list.

758  
00:43:36,720 --> 00:43:38,850  
Because I was scheduled to go.

759  
00:43:38,850 --> 00:43:40,750  
I was on orders.

760  
00:43:40,750 --> 00:43:44,000  
You were scheduled to go where?

761  
00:43:44,000 --> 00:43:46,710  
An ordinance depot.

762  
00:43:46,710 --> 00:43:48,300  
But where, in North Africa?

763  
00:43:48,300 --> 00:43:50,860  
Yeah.

764

00:43:50,860 --> 00:43:58,160

So I asked the  
chaplain, how can I

765

00:43:58,160 --> 00:44:02,625

get off that list I  
was on in the morning?

766

00:44:02,625 --> 00:44:07,820

767

00:44:07,820 --> 00:44:13,200

He said the classification  
and assignment officers are

768

00:44:13,200 --> 00:44:15,550

the only ones that can do that.

769

00:44:15,550 --> 00:44:19,870

So I said, can you ask  
if they would put me

770

00:44:19,870 --> 00:44:24,350

on detached service  
to be held in Oran so

771

00:44:24,350 --> 00:44:27,320

that I would be here?

772

00:44:27,320 --> 00:44:37,830

So they took me off that list.

773

00:44:37,830 --> 00:44:42,930

And I know the person  
they put in my place.

774

00:44:42,930 --> 00:44:45,240

The name was Clooney.

775

00:44:45,240 --> 00:44:48,280

776

00:44:48,280 --> 00:44:49,840

And I didn't know him.

777

00:44:49,840 --> 00:44:52,470

He didn't know me.

778

00:44:52,470 --> 00:44:56,050

And he was thrilled because  
he wanted that kind of a job.

779

00:44:56,050 --> 00:45:04,670

780

00:45:04,670 --> 00:45:06,820

So you got to stay  
with Jacob Hochman.

781

00:45:06,820 --> 00:45:07,990

I got to stay.

782

00:45:07,990 --> 00:45:12,760

I was put on detached service  
and assigned to headquarters

783

00:45:12,760 --> 00:45:16,160

company in Oran.

784

00:45:16,160 --> 00:45:21,000

In [PLACE NAME], the camp there.

785

00:45:21,000 --> 00:45:28,160

So I stayed, and Hochman  
ordered this letter is signed

786

00:45:28,160 --> 00:45:29,790

and then I came.

787

00:45:29,790 --> 00:45:33,080

788

00:45:33,080 --> 00:45:36,280



I want to show you these pages.

789

00:45:36,280 --> 00:45:40,360

We'll look at them  
afterwards, OK?

790

00:45:40,360 --> 00:45:45,640

Did this happen after you  
came back from Palestine?

791

00:45:45,640 --> 00:45:46,180

No.

792

00:45:46,180 --> 00:45:47,800

It was before.

793

00:45:47,800 --> 00:45:52,360

And was Jacob Hochman  
influential also

794

00:45:52,360 --> 00:45:55,870

in getting you to be  
able to go on that trip?

795

00:45:55,870 --> 00:45:58,283

Because you mention Estes,

796

00:45:58,283 --> 00:46:00,700

Estes was the one.

797

00:46:00,700 --> 00:46:05,388

And I spent--

798

00:46:05,388 --> 00:46:15,280

799

00:46:15,280 --> 00:46:16,880

A week, two weeks?

800

00:46:16,880 --> 00:46:19,170

A week and a half, I think.

801

00:46:19,170 --> 00:46:24,886

I was with Rabbi Herzog at that time, who was the chief rabbi,

802

00:46:24,886 --> 00:46:30,370

and it's all in the book,  
the Palestine thing is.

803

00:46:30,370 --> 00:46:32,810

He was the chief rabbi of  
Palestine at that point.

804

00:46:32,810 --> 00:46:33,830

Yes.

805

00:46:33,830 --> 00:46:38,020

And there were other  
American chaplains with you?

806

00:46:38,020 --> 00:46:39,411

Or were you just alone?

807

00:46:39,411 --> 00:46:41,620

I was alone.

808

00:46:41,620 --> 00:46:44,010

And did you get to travel?

809

00:46:44,010 --> 00:46:45,743

Yes.

810

00:46:45,743 --> 00:46:46,535

How did you travel?

811

00:46:46,535 --> 00:46:49,070

812

00:46:49,070 --> 00:46:51,120

Did you have an Army car?

813

00:46:51,120 --> 00:46:51,620

No.

814  
00:46:51,620 --> 00:46:56,750

815  
00:46:56,750 --> 00:47:00,430  
I probably used  
civilian transportation.

816  
00:47:00,430 --> 00:47:03,450  
Like buses, public buses?

817  
00:47:03,450 --> 00:47:06,220  
Yeah, public buses.

818  
00:47:06,220 --> 00:47:08,020  
I know it's written  
in the book, but I

819  
00:47:08,020 --> 00:47:12,610  
would like to have you say  
some of your impressions.

820  
00:47:12,610 --> 00:47:14,740  
The British army  
was occupying it?

821  
00:47:14,740 --> 00:47:16,810  
Yeah.

822  
00:47:16,810 --> 00:47:20,080  
And how did the  
civilian population

823  
00:47:20,080 --> 00:47:23,570  
feel about that, the Jews?

824  
00:47:23,570 --> 00:47:25,920  
I don' know.

825  
00:47:25,920 --> 00:47:29,140  
In Palestine I talked

mainly with Jewish people

826

00:47:29,140 --> 00:47:34,630

because I had no  
work for the Army.

827

00:47:34,630 --> 00:47:36,080

Well, you were on leave.

828

00:47:36,080 --> 00:47:38,620

829

00:47:38,620 --> 00:47:39,950

I'm was on detached service.

830

00:47:39,950 --> 00:47:42,500

831

00:47:42,500 --> 00:47:43,780

Task service?

832

00:47:43,780 --> 00:47:44,720

Detached.

833

00:47:44,720 --> 00:47:46,880

Detached service.

834

00:47:46,880 --> 00:47:49,967

Did most of the  
people speak English?

835

00:47:49,967 --> 00:47:51,425

Or did you speak  
to them in Hebrew?

836

00:47:51,425 --> 00:47:54,050

837

00:47:54,050 --> 00:48:01,700

Mostly spoke English, but  
I took advantage of they

838

00:48:01,700 --> 00:48:05,030

were always amazed  
Americans speaking Hebrew.

839

00:48:05,030 --> 00:48:11,540

840

00:48:11,540 --> 00:48:17,380

So after this trip  
you went back to Oran?

841

00:48:17,380 --> 00:48:17,880

No.

842

00:48:17,880 --> 00:48:25,425

843

00:48:25,425 --> 00:48:31,430

Prior to that trip, our unit,  
first replacement depot,

844

00:48:31,430 --> 00:48:39,050

was to be moved to  
Florence in Italy.

845

00:48:39,050 --> 00:48:43,410

And I was to go from--

846

00:48:43,410 --> 00:48:49,020

And I would return to my  
unit and go to Florence.

847

00:48:49,020 --> 00:48:51,775

You couldn't stay in  
Oran with Jacob Hochman?

848

00:48:51,775 --> 00:48:53,520

No.

849

00:48:53,520 --> 00:48:55,690

This time you had to go.

850

00:48:55,690 --> 00:49:02,810

I was assigned and Hochman had  
been assigned to another unit.

851

00:49:02,810 --> 00:49:11,470

But the whole camp was moved.

852

00:49:11,470 --> 00:49:12,040

To Florence.

853

00:49:12,040 --> 00:49:12,920

Yes.

854

00:49:12,920 --> 00:49:15,620

So he went with you?

855

00:49:15,620 --> 00:49:17,585

Did he go to Florence too?

856

00:49:17,585 --> 00:49:20,320

I went to Florence.

857

00:49:20,320 --> 00:49:22,430

I returned to my  
unit in Florence.

858

00:49:22,430 --> 00:49:26,090

But Hochman stayed in Oran.

859

00:49:26,090 --> 00:49:28,520

No, I think--

860

00:49:28,520 --> 00:49:29,918

I lost him.

861

00:49:29,918 --> 00:49:34,310

He must have gone--

862

00:49:34,310 --> 00:49:35,910

How did you get from--

863

00:49:35,910 --> 00:49:44,090

I'm trying to think of how I  
got from Palestine to Florence.

864

00:49:44,090 --> 00:49:47,045

865

00:49:47,045 --> 00:49:48,920

You went straight from  
Palestine to Florence.

866

00:49:48,920 --> 00:49:50,580

You didn't go back to Oran.

867

00:49:50,580 --> 00:49:51,860

No.

868

00:49:51,860 --> 00:49:56,470

Because all my equipment,  
all chaplains' equipment,

869

00:49:56,470 --> 00:49:59,140

Estes was wonderful.

870

00:49:59,140 --> 00:50:03,970

He signed on for  
all my equipment

871

00:50:03,970 --> 00:50:10,280

and made sure it got to  
Florence to the new camp.

872

00:50:10,280 --> 00:50:15,880

And I was with him  
again in Florence.

873

00:50:15,880 --> 00:50:17,020

That's good.

874

00:50:17,020 --> 00:50:18,730

I bet you were glad  
to find him again.

875  
00:50:18,730 --> 00:50:20,570  
It was very nice.

876  
00:50:20,570 --> 00:50:23,890  
He was a good man.

877  
00:50:23,890 --> 00:50:32,420  
And it's a little fuzzy,  
as you can understand.

878  
00:50:32,420 --> 00:50:33,740  
That's OK.

879  
00:50:33,740 --> 00:50:37,340  
Let me see if I can  
ask you some questions.

880  
00:50:37,340 --> 00:50:41,120  
When you got to Florence, do  
you remember about what season

881  
00:50:41,120 --> 00:50:43,430  
it was?

882  
00:50:43,430 --> 00:50:44,180  
Summer.

883  
00:50:44,180 --> 00:50:47,090  
It was summer.

884  
00:50:47,090 --> 00:50:50,930  
I remember I thought  
to myself, here I

885  
00:50:50,930 --> 00:50:59,840  
am coming back to the unit  
and I had had a wonderful trip

886  
00:50:59,840 --> 00:51:07,310  
and all these guys were  
living the Army life.



887  
00:51:07,310 --> 00:51:11,780  
So I thought, what  
can I bring them?

888  
00:51:11,780 --> 00:51:15,005  
What can I bring them  
that they would enjoy?

889  
00:51:15,005 --> 00:51:20,510

890  
00:51:20,510 --> 00:51:33,930  
In Cairo, at the officers'  
PX they had liquor.

891  
00:51:33,930 --> 00:51:37,670

892  
00:51:37,670 --> 00:51:44,565  
And I was able to buy a bottle  
of [? Shanley ?] Black Label.

893  
00:51:44,565 --> 00:51:47,540

894  
00:51:47,540 --> 00:51:52,060  
And I thought, I can  
take this by to the boys.

895  
00:51:52,060 --> 00:51:56,110  
So when I came back  
to Italy, I came

896  
00:51:56,110 --> 00:51:57,770  
to my unit who were in tents.

897  
00:51:57,770 --> 00:52:02,345

898  
00:52:02,345 --> 00:52:11,760  
I got those paper

cups, envelopes

899

00:52:11,760 --> 00:52:15,490

they used to drink water out.

900

00:52:15,490 --> 00:52:22,050

I said, you guys, everybody

want to get in bed.

901

00:52:22,050 --> 00:52:28,180

And I remember I stood there and

poured a little bit of liquor

902

00:52:28,180 --> 00:52:30,680

in each of those.

903

00:52:30,680 --> 00:52:38,780

It was a treat because they

hadn't had liquor because they

904

00:52:38,780 --> 00:52:42,590

didn't have any liquor.

905

00:52:42,590 --> 00:52:45,260

Was fighting going on when

you were moved to Florence,

906

00:52:45,260 --> 00:52:47,085

or had Florence

already been taken?

907

00:52:47,085 --> 00:52:51,260

908

00:52:51,260 --> 00:52:53,280

Fighting was over.

909

00:52:53,280 --> 00:52:55,470

So what was your role there?

910

00:52:55,470 --> 00:53:03,294

911  
00:53:03,294 --> 00:53:06,228  
Trying to think of what these--

912  
00:53:06,228 --> 00:53:09,162

913  
00:53:09,162 --> 00:53:13,080  
I didn't do anything  
except help the boys.

914  
00:53:13,080 --> 00:53:16,100

915  
00:53:16,100 --> 00:53:19,280  
Were their services at  
the camp in Florence too?

916  
00:53:19,280 --> 00:53:19,790  
Yeah, sure.

917  
00:53:19,790 --> 00:53:21,140  
What was the name of the camp?

918  
00:53:21,140 --> 00:53:26,980

919  
00:53:26,980 --> 00:53:29,920  
It was outside of Florence.

920  
00:53:29,920 --> 00:53:31,440  
Was it in the mountains?

921  
00:53:31,440 --> 00:53:35,250

922  
00:53:35,250 --> 00:53:39,480  
How long did you spend in Italy?

923  
00:53:39,480 --> 00:53:44,830  
I spent a year and a half.

924  
00:53:44,830 --> 00:53:48,226  
In Florence, or did  
you move around?

925  
00:53:48,226 --> 00:53:51,896  
I moved around.

926  
00:53:51,896 --> 00:53:56,450  
I was sent to Rome,  
the Rome area command.

927  
00:53:56,450 --> 00:54:02,206

928  
00:54:02,206 --> 00:54:07,900  
In Rome I was very active.

929  
00:54:07,900 --> 00:54:09,240  
What were you doing in Rome?

930  
00:54:09,240 --> 00:54:13,000

931  
00:54:13,000 --> 00:54:17,660  
I was assigned to  
the chaplain section.

932  
00:54:17,660 --> 00:54:21,940  
Oh, so you were active in  
your duties as a chaplain.

933  
00:54:21,940 --> 00:54:25,500  
In other words, there  
was no Jewish chaplain.

934  
00:54:25,500 --> 00:54:32,420  
Hochman was the chaplain in Rome  
for a while, but then they--

935  
00:54:32,420 --> 00:54:38,270  
I went to Rome and I had

a marvelous experience.

936

00:54:38,270 --> 00:54:39,850

Tell me about it.

937

00:54:39,850 --> 00:54:50,950

There were so many Jewish things  
in Rome that I had freedom.

938

00:54:50,950 --> 00:55:03,085

And General Brown, who was the  
general in charge of Rome area.

939

00:55:03,085 --> 00:55:06,250

940

00:55:06,250 --> 00:55:10,980

I had an office  
in Piazza Venezia.

941

00:55:10,980 --> 00:55:12,420

In the Piazza Venezia?

942

00:55:12,420 --> 00:55:13,610

Yeah.

943

00:55:13,610 --> 00:55:19,131

That's not very far from the  
Victoria Emmanuel Monument.

944

00:55:19,131 --> 00:55:21,980

And I recall seeing  
them in the hallway.

945

00:55:21,980 --> 00:55:34,700

And I mainly worked there  
with refugee people.

946

00:55:34,700 --> 00:55:41,950

OK, so it may be as late as '44  
at that point, or even later

947

00:55:41,950 --> 00:55:43,380  
'45?

948  
00:55:43,380 --> 00:55:45,620  
'44, '45.

949  
00:55:45,620 --> 00:55:51,736  
Because Roosevelt had died and  
Truman became the president.

950  
00:55:51,736 --> 00:56:05,240

951  
00:56:05,240 --> 00:56:09,470  
What kind of things did  
you do with the refugees?

952  
00:56:09,470 --> 00:56:12,990  
They were Jews who had  
escaped from other countries?

953  
00:56:12,990 --> 00:56:13,490  
Yeah.

954  
00:56:13,490 --> 00:56:16,100

955  
00:56:16,100 --> 00:56:19,340  
Had any of them been  
in concentration camps?

956  
00:56:19,340 --> 00:56:21,350  
Oh, yeah.

957  
00:56:21,350 --> 00:56:27,060  
And you were trying to give  
them some semblance of--

958  
00:56:27,060 --> 00:56:35,060  
I worked with  
UNRRA at that time,

959

00:56:35,060 --> 00:56:40,130  
and I had an arrangement  
with one of the soldiers.

960  
00:56:40,130 --> 00:56:46,530  
A way of going in the Army that  
you can't depend on officers

961  
00:56:46,530 --> 00:56:49,210  
so you go to the enlisted men.

962  
00:56:49,210 --> 00:56:52,470  
The guy that works with you,  
that's the guy [INAUDIBLE]..

963  
00:56:52,470 --> 00:56:55,150  
So I had a connection  
with [? Robert Gold ?]..

964  
00:56:55,150 --> 00:56:58,260

965  
00:56:58,260 --> 00:57:01,400  
There were some displaced  
persons camps in Italy--

966  
00:57:01,400 --> 00:57:04,520  
Dispacia in Spezia.

967  
00:57:04,520 --> 00:57:05,050  
Ostia.

968  
00:57:05,050 --> 00:57:07,560  
Ostia.

969  
00:57:07,560 --> 00:57:11,380  
I'll show you something.

970  
00:57:11,380 --> 00:57:14,830  
We'll look at it a little later  
and we'll take a picture of it.

971

00:57:14,830 --> 00:57:18,100  
You have a picture of it?

972  
00:57:18,100 --> 00:57:24,820  
At that time, Zolli, the Chief  
Rabbi of Rome, converted.

973  
00:57:24,820 --> 00:57:26,215  
He converted to Catholicism.

974  
00:57:26,215 --> 00:57:30,380  
He became a Catholic, yeah.

975  
00:57:30,380 --> 00:57:36,170  
The were a shattered community.

976  
00:57:36,170 --> 00:57:39,690

977  
00:57:39,690 --> 00:57:46,100  
So worked with those people.

978  
00:57:46,100 --> 00:57:51,070  
In Rome I lived in  
Alberigo Oriente.

979  
00:57:51,070 --> 00:57:53,562

980  
00:57:53,562 --> 00:57:54,270  
Alberigo Oriente.

981  
00:57:54,270 --> 00:57:57,170

982  
00:57:57,170 --> 00:58:01,548  
I was right around the corner  
from the Fountain of Trevi.

983  
00:58:01,548 --> 00:58:05,800



984

00:58:05,800 --> 00:58:10,070  
And how did you communicate  
with these people?

985

00:58:10,070 --> 00:58:11,930  
Did you speak Yiddish to them?

986

00:58:11,930 --> 00:58:12,740  
Yiddish.

987

00:58:12,740 --> 00:58:16,700  
I spoke Yiddish with them.

988

00:58:16,700 --> 00:58:18,810  
Some of them.

989

00:58:18,810 --> 00:58:29,690  
But I had so many  
incidences, fascinating.

990

00:58:29,690 --> 00:58:30,215  
For example?

991

00:58:30,215 --> 00:58:33,690

992

00:58:33,690 --> 00:58:37,500  
I was living in the hotel.

993

00:58:37,500 --> 00:58:45,081  
I was rooming with another  
soldier who was never there.

994

00:58:45,081 --> 00:58:47,700  
He was always  
having a good time.

995

00:58:47,700 --> 00:58:55,200

996

00:58:55,200 --> 00:59:01,410

I remember one  
night, late at night,

997  
00:59:01,410 --> 00:59:14,650  
I got a telephone call, Butler,  
a Jewish soldier has arrived.

998  
00:59:14,650 --> 00:59:16,840  
He has no place to stay.

999  
00:59:16,840 --> 00:59:18,096  
Could he stay with you?

1000  
00:59:18,096 --> 00:59:20,620

1001  
00:59:20,620 --> 00:59:22,760  
I couldn't allow that.

1002  
00:59:22,760 --> 00:59:27,590  
I went and I got him  
and I remember I always

1003  
00:59:27,590 --> 00:59:36,140  
had enough money to pass around  
because I would get money

1004  
00:59:36,140 --> 00:59:40,490  
from the soldiers  
who wanted to help.

1005  
00:59:40,490 --> 00:59:41,285  
Jewish soldiers?

1006  
00:59:41,285 --> 00:59:43,140  
Jewish soldiers.

1007  
00:59:43,140 --> 00:59:55,720  
And I gave him some money  
to go to find a place

1008  
00:59:55,720 --> 00:59:58,940

to sleep and come  
to Piazza Venezia

1009  
00:59:58,940 --> 01:00:02,560  
in the morning,  
come to my office.

1010  
01:00:02,560 --> 01:00:11,770  
And then I left  
orders that if anybody

1011  
01:00:11,770 --> 01:00:14,430  
wanted to go to the  
chaplain's office,

1012  
01:00:14,430 --> 01:00:16,250  
they should be allowed in.

1013  
01:00:16,250 --> 01:00:24,030  
Because they weren't allowed in  
because it was Army barracks.

1014  
01:00:24,030 --> 01:00:34,460  
So I remember one, I have  
it written down someplace.

1015  
01:00:34,460 --> 01:00:39,870

1016  
01:00:39,870 --> 01:00:47,150  
I remember a boy  
came, a red-headed kid

1017  
01:00:47,150 --> 01:00:55,850  
came after he slept  
the night, and we

1018  
01:00:55,850 --> 01:01:01,280  
arranged to get a little  
bag from the Red Cross that

1019  
01:01:01,280 --> 01:01:08,460  
had soap, shaving cream, and

toothpaste and toothbrush

1020  
01:01:08,460 --> 01:01:12,780  
that I would get for them.

1021  
01:01:12,780 --> 01:01:19,510  
So this fellow came, a  
young boy, a Hungarian boy,

1022  
01:01:19,510 --> 01:01:25,310  
he had come from--

1023  
01:01:25,310 --> 01:01:27,670  
He'd been in the Poland camps.

1024  
01:01:27,670 --> 01:01:34,200

1025  
01:01:34,200 --> 01:01:40,330  
He came and I had  
had an arrangement

1026  
01:01:40,330 --> 01:01:51,630  
with one of the soldiers,  
Sergeant O'Connor, Sergeant

1027  
01:01:51,630 --> 01:01:58,930  
O'Connor, I remember, that  
if I would send somebody

1028  
01:01:58,930 --> 01:02:04,870  
for help that he would  
give them a certain amount,

1029  
01:02:04,870 --> 01:02:07,300  
give him some money to save.

1030  
01:02:07,300 --> 01:02:09,960

1031  
01:02:09,960 --> 01:02:11,770  
They have a package.

1032  
01:02:11,770 --> 01:02:13,410  
They give them food.

1033  
01:02:13,410 --> 01:02:16,340

1034  
01:02:16,340 --> 01:02:28,870  
I remember I said, you  
go to this address.

1035  
01:02:28,870 --> 01:02:38,950  
You go there and he'll give  
you a package of soap, shampoo,

1036  
01:02:38,950 --> 01:02:45,670  
toothpaste, some  
food and some money

1037  
01:02:45,670 --> 01:02:47,940  
because I had set it aside.

1038  
01:02:47,940 --> 01:02:51,020

1039  
01:02:51,020 --> 01:02:53,720  
I remember there was a  
kid that became enraged.

1040  
01:02:53,720 --> 01:02:57,740  
Said, it's a trick!

1041  
01:02:57,740 --> 01:02:58,600  
It's a trick!

1042  
01:02:58,600 --> 01:03:01,020  
You want to trick me!

1043  
01:03:01,020 --> 01:03:04,910  
I'm going to go  
with this fellow,

1044

01:03:04,910 --> 01:03:07,580

then I don't know  
where I'll end up.

1045

01:03:07,580 --> 01:03:10,850

I'm not going to go to him.

1046

01:03:10,850 --> 01:03:14,710

He was so afraid because  
of his wartime experience.

1047

01:03:14,710 --> 01:03:16,940

He was afraid.

1048

01:03:16,940 --> 01:03:18,240

Did you accompany him?

1049

01:03:18,240 --> 01:03:20,240

No, I didn't.

1050

01:03:20,240 --> 01:03:22,650

But I urged him to go.

1051

01:03:22,650 --> 01:03:29,090

1052

01:03:29,090 --> 01:03:30,990

I helped him [INAUDIBLE].

1053

01:03:30,990 --> 01:03:35,210

1054

01:03:35,210 --> 01:03:44,710

I remember when Roosevelt died  
people streamed to our office.

1055

01:03:44,710 --> 01:03:48,330

1056

01:03:48,330 --> 01:03:50,795

Like a shiva call.

1057  
01:03:50,795 --> 01:03:52,900  
They came and cried.

1058  
01:03:52,900 --> 01:03:58,452

1059  
01:03:58,452 --> 01:04:05,090  
And I always had my folks  
who always sent me food.

1060  
01:04:05,090 --> 01:04:09,540

1061  
01:04:09,540 --> 01:04:13,710  
My mother always sent  
cookies and candy,

1062  
01:04:13,710 --> 01:04:21,830  
and I was able to give these  
people some dulce, long some--

1063  
01:04:21,830 --> 01:04:24,260  
Sweet.

1064  
01:04:24,260 --> 01:04:29,360  
So you stayed in  
Rome helping UNRRA.

1065  
01:04:29,360 --> 01:04:37,100  
And do you remember May 8,  
1945, the day that peace was

1066  
01:04:37,100 --> 01:04:38,960  
declared, victory in Europe?

1067  
01:04:38,960 --> 01:04:41,480  
Was I in Europe?

1068  
01:04:41,480 --> 01:04:42,320  
Were you there?

1069

01:04:42,320 --> 01:04:45,570

1070

01:04:45,570 --> 01:04:50,140

I came back in February.

1071

01:04:50,140 --> 01:04:51,765

February of '45?

1072

01:04:51,765 --> 01:04:55,720

1073

01:04:55,720 --> 01:04:58,900

You were discharged.

1074

01:04:58,900 --> 01:05:02,710

You came back to Pittsburgh.

1075

01:05:02,710 --> 01:05:06,250

And did you take up  
your playbill business

1076

01:05:06,250 --> 01:05:07,420

with your brother again?

1077

01:05:07,420 --> 01:05:08,800

Yeah.

1078

01:05:08,800 --> 01:05:11,123

And you married your fiancée.

1079

01:05:11,123 --> 01:05:13,290

Yeah.

1080

01:05:13,290 --> 01:05:21,322

I was a fiancée at  
that time and we

1081

01:05:21,322 --> 01:05:24,801

kept in touch the whole time.



1082

01:05:24,801 --> 01:05:40,970

And so much so  
that I tell her, I

1083

01:05:40,970 --> 01:05:47,805

says, so much has been  
written and not written.

1084

01:05:47,805 --> 01:05:50,200

There is that much  
more to be told yet.

1085

01:05:50,200 --> 01:05:55,840

1086

01:05:55,840 --> 01:06:01,210

So do you have anything you want  
to add about your experiences

1087

01:06:01,210 --> 01:06:03,910

during the war or in Palestine?

1088

01:06:03,910 --> 01:06:06,310

Do you remember  
following the War

1089

01:06:06,310 --> 01:06:10,405

of Independence for the  
creation of the state of Israel?

1090

01:06:10,405 --> 01:06:12,544

Yeah, sure.

1091

01:06:12,544 --> 01:06:16,540

I'll tell you an  
anecdote, and it's true.

1092

01:06:16,540 --> 01:06:21,360

1093

01:06:21,360 --> 01:06:35,840

Back the 18th anniversary

of Israel, every year

1094

01:06:35,840 --> 01:06:42,976  
in Pittsburgh we had  
a big celebration.

1095

01:06:42,976 --> 01:06:49,520  
And it used to be at the  
YMHA, Kauffman Auditorium.

1096

01:06:49,520 --> 01:06:55,535  
And I was the chairman of that  
the 18th anniversary gala.

1097

01:06:55,535 --> 01:07:04,330  
So-- What did I  
want to tell you?

1098

01:07:04,330 --> 01:07:13,560  
Oh yeah, so this  
incident is related,

1099

01:07:13,560 --> 01:07:19,454  
but one of the speakers  
at that celebration,

1100

01:07:19,454 --> 01:07:26,740  
I was the chairman, and then  
it was Rabbi Maurice Landis.

1101

01:07:26,740 --> 01:07:28,075  
Maurice Landis.

1102

01:07:28,075 --> 01:07:32,600  
He was a rabbi  
here in Pittsburgh.

1103

01:07:32,600 --> 01:07:35,216  
He was one of the speakers.

1104

01:07:35,216 --> 01:07:38,520  
The main speaker at that  
time was Herschel Schechter.

1105  
01:07:38,520 --> 01:07:39,720  
Herschel Schechter.

1106  
01:07:39,720 --> 01:07:42,090  
He was a very good  
friend of mine.

1107  
01:07:42,090 --> 01:07:48,490

1108  
01:07:48,490 --> 01:07:58,400  
It seems that working for  
the establishment of Israel,

1109  
01:07:58,400 --> 01:08:04,380  
who before the vote came,  
which I remember very vividly--

1110  
01:08:04,380 --> 01:08:05,270  
At the UN.

1111  
01:08:05,270 --> 01:08:05,770  
UN.

1112  
01:08:05,770 --> 01:08:15,340

1113  
01:08:15,340 --> 01:08:22,720  
We tried every help possible  
way to get the opinion

1114  
01:08:22,720 --> 01:08:29,470  
right so when the vote comes out  
those words would be correct.

1115  
01:08:29,470 --> 01:08:31,979

1116  
01:08:31,979 --> 01:08:42,359  
Well, at that time Haiti  
was the swing vote.

1117  
01:08:42,359 --> 01:08:45,770

1118  
01:08:45,770 --> 01:08:55,200  
And Pittsburgh had a newspaper  
called the Pittsburgh Courier.

1119  
01:08:55,200 --> 01:09:00,569  
It was the premier black  
newspaper in country,

1120  
01:09:00,569 --> 01:09:03,490  
in the world let's say.

1121  
01:09:03,490 --> 01:09:10,863  
It was owned by a man  
by the name of Van.

1122  
01:09:10,863 --> 01:09:14,729

1123  
01:09:14,729 --> 01:09:16,665  
He was the owner.

1124  
01:09:16,665 --> 01:09:24,460  
And Van had been  
appointed by Roosevelt

1125  
01:09:24,460 --> 01:09:28,600  
to the Solicitor General's  
office, the first black

1126  
01:09:28,600 --> 01:09:32,578  
to be appointed.

1127  
01:09:32,578 --> 01:09:40,261  
But his wife, Gussie?

1128  
01:09:40,261 --> 01:09:45,131

1129

01:09:45,131 --> 01:09:48,080

I forget her name.

1130

01:09:48,080 --> 01:09:53,170

She became the  
owner of that paper.

1131

01:09:53,170 --> 01:10:04,890

She was a very good friend  
of the ambassador to Haiti.

1132

01:10:04,890 --> 01:10:13,650

So Mayor Lawrence at that time  
was the mayor of Pittsburgh

1133

01:10:13,650 --> 01:10:17,550

who was very friendly with the  
black community and very good

1134

01:10:17,550 --> 01:10:19,780

with the Jewish community.

1135

01:10:19,780 --> 01:10:24,380

He was a Rooseveltian  
politician.

1136

01:10:24,380 --> 01:10:28,490

He attended every  
dinner, every luncheon.

1137

01:10:28,490 --> 01:10:35,070

He was very friendly with  
the black community too.

1138

01:10:35,070 --> 01:10:41,560

So he talked to  
Charlie Rosenblum--

1139

01:10:41,560 --> 01:10:44,860

Charlie Rosenblum come to him.

1140

01:10:44,860 --> 01:10:47,230

Do you know the name  
Charlie Rosenblum?

1141  
01:10:47,230 --> 01:10:50,560  
Very philanthropic.

1142  
01:10:50,560 --> 01:10:54,880  
Charlie Rosenblum  
got to Mayor Lawrence

1143  
01:10:54,880 --> 01:11:03,320  
and asked him to  
talk to Mrs. Van

1144  
01:11:03,320 --> 01:11:10,715  
to get to the  
ambassador from Haiti.

1145  
01:11:10,715 --> 01:11:14,560

1146  
01:11:14,560 --> 01:11:28,300  
Rosenblum financed a trip  
between Mayor Lawrence

1147  
01:11:28,300 --> 01:11:36,330  
and Charlie Rosenblum  
and Alex Orenthal.

1148  
01:11:36,330 --> 01:11:40,780  
Alex Orenthal was associated  
with Charlie Rosenblum,

1149  
01:11:40,780 --> 01:11:44,670  
but he was a very,  
very hardened Zionist.

1150  
01:11:44,670 --> 01:11:51,750  
The three of them flew to New  
York to the Waldorf Astoria,

1151  
01:11:51,750 --> 01:11:57,940  
where the ambassador was living.

1152  
01:11:57,940 --> 01:12:06,420  
And Mrs. Van went to bat  
trying to convince him.

1153  
01:12:06,420 --> 01:12:10,710

1154  
01:12:10,710 --> 01:12:17,980  
At the voting when they called  
to Haiti and Haiti voted yes,

1155  
01:12:17,980 --> 01:12:20,490  
we knew it was in.

1156  
01:12:20,490 --> 01:12:21,863  
I'll never forget that.

1157  
01:12:21,863 --> 01:12:24,430  
That's a true sorry.

1158  
01:12:24,430 --> 01:12:28,780  
That was because of  
the concerted effort

1159  
01:12:28,780 --> 01:12:30,050  
of Pittsburgh--

1160  
01:12:30,050 --> 01:12:34,360  
the mayor, Charlie Rosenblum,  
Lawrence Longfellow,

1161  
01:12:34,360 --> 01:12:37,270  
and Jessie Van that  
they could convince--

1162  
01:12:37,270 --> 01:12:40,200  
I don't remember that  
her name was Jessie.

1163  
01:12:40,200 --> 01:12:44,010  
It was the wife.

1164  
01:12:44,010 --> 01:12:47,380  
And I was involved  
with the experience.

1165  
01:12:47,380 --> 01:12:55,780  
It was a fascinating  
experience that we knew that--

1166  
01:12:55,780 --> 01:13:01,550  
That's a story that very  
few people have heard.

1167  
01:13:01,550 --> 01:13:05,670  
I've told it to a  
number of Pittsburghers.

1168  
01:13:05,670 --> 01:13:10,580  
I didn't know that Haiti  
was a swing vote in that.

1169  
01:13:10,580 --> 01:13:13,801  
I don't know that it was a swing  
vote, but it was a good vote.

1170  
01:13:13,801 --> 01:13:16,630

1171  
01:13:16,630 --> 01:13:21,850  
So is there anything else you  
would like to add about some

1172  
01:13:21,850 --> 01:13:25,474  
of your experiences?

1173  
01:13:25,474 --> 01:13:29,358  
The experiences I  
had were magnificent.

1174  
01:13:29,358 --> 01:13:32,310

1175



01:13:32,310 --> 01:13:37,740  
Did some of the people you  
were in contact with emigrate

1176  
01:13:37,740 --> 01:13:42,470  
when Algeria declared  
independence?

1177  
01:13:42,470 --> 01:13:43,410  
They left.

1178  
01:13:43,410 --> 01:13:49,140  
I think when Ben Bella took  
over, everybody [INAUDIBLE]

1179  
01:13:49,140 --> 01:14:01,610  
and then go to Marseilles, and  
then, I knew all these people.

1180  
01:14:01,610 --> 01:14:04,550  
Wonderful, wonderful people.

1181  
01:14:04,550 --> 01:14:06,740  
They were very good to me.

1182  
01:14:06,740 --> 01:14:11,230  
And I had the whole kosher  
home so I could go to to eat.

1183  
01:14:11,230 --> 01:14:19,270  
And the synagogue  
was my second home.

1184  
01:14:19,270 --> 01:14:22,130  
It was a beautiful synagogue.

1185  
01:14:22,130 --> 01:14:30,370  
I remember Friday evening  
the rabbi [INAUDIBLE]

1186  
01:14:30,370 --> 01:14:37,930  
there's Yiddish expression,  
[SPEAKING YIDDISH] What

1187  
01:14:37,930 --> 01:14:42,166  
the Christian community does,  
the Jewish community does too.

1188  
01:14:42,166 --> 01:14:52,510  
The rabbis wore a hat  
so they [INAUDIBLE]

1189  
01:14:52,510 --> 01:14:56,540  
and the turned  
collar and all that.

1190  
01:14:56,540 --> 01:15:09,940  
But the Friday night  
sure would be packed.

1191  
01:15:09,940 --> 01:15:11,420  
A lot of kids would come.

1192  
01:15:11,420 --> 01:15:14,276

1193  
01:15:14,276 --> 01:15:20,640  
And the synagogue was  
built so there was

1194  
01:15:20,640 --> 01:15:25,540  
a balcony where the rabbi sat.

1195  
01:15:25,540 --> 01:15:33,650  
And everybody would go to kiss  
his ring, just like a Catholic.

1196  
01:15:33,650 --> 01:15:34,720  
Just like the pope.

1197  
01:15:34,720 --> 01:15:35,220  
Yes.

1198  
01:15:35,220 --> 01:15:37,790

1199

01:15:37,790 --> 01:15:42,460

So this concludes the United  
States Holocaust Memorial

1200

01:15:42,460 --> 01:15:48,070

Museum interview with Mr.  
Donald Butler on April 21 2012

1201

01:15:48,070 --> 01:15:50,200

in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

1202

01:15:50,200 --> 01:15:52,350

Thank you very much.