

1
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:00,870

2
00:00:00,870 --> 00:00:04,230
This is a United States
Holocaust Memorial Museum

3
00:00:04,230 --> 00:00:14,340
interview conducted with Dr.
Edward Darell on June 20, 2017,

4
00:00:14,340 --> 00:00:19,680
by audio between Washington,
DC, and New York City.

5
00:00:19,680 --> 00:00:22,500
Thank you so much, Dr.
Darell, for agreeing

6
00:00:22,500 --> 00:00:25,060
to speak with us today.

7
00:00:25,060 --> 00:00:28,890
I am very eager to be able to
learn more about your story

8
00:00:28,890 --> 00:00:31,410
and the story of your parents.

9
00:00:31,410 --> 00:00:35,100
What we are going to do is start
from the very basic questions

10
00:00:35,100 --> 00:00:38,410
and develop
everything from there.

11
00:00:38,410 --> 00:00:41,460
So my very first question
to you is, can you

12
00:00:41,460 --> 00:00:43,830
tell me the date of your birth?

13
00:00:43,830 --> 00:00:44,580
Yes.

14
00:00:44,580 --> 00:00:48,390
January 5, 1946.

15
00:00:48,390 --> 00:00:49,000
OK.

16
00:00:49,000 --> 00:00:51,770
And what was your name at birth?

17
00:00:51,770 --> 00:01:02,990
At birth my name was Edward
Wolf, as in the animal,

18
00:01:02,990 --> 00:01:07,880
Emmanuel E-M-M-A-N-U-E-L.

19
00:01:07,880 --> 00:01:09,860
OK.

20
00:01:09,860 --> 00:01:13,130
It's pronounced Dombrowski,
but it's written Dabrowski.

21
00:01:13,130 --> 00:01:18,230
D-A-B-R-O-W-S-K-I.

22
00:01:18,230 --> 00:01:19,250
OK.

23
00:01:19,250 --> 00:01:22,228
You were Edward Wolf
Emmanuel Dabrowski.

24
00:01:22,228 --> 00:01:22,895
Is that correct?

25
00:01:22,895 --> 00:01:23,810
Yes, correct.

26
00:01:23,810 --> 00:01:25,820

And where were you born?

27

00:01:25,820 --> 00:01:27,690
Munich, Germany.

28

00:01:27,690 --> 00:01:28,190
OK.

29

00:01:28,190 --> 00:01:33,450
And when you say, excuse me, can
you repeat, was this 1946 or--

30

00:01:33,450 --> 00:01:35,030
Yes, 1946.

31

00:01:35,030 --> 00:01:37,430
January 5, 1946.

32

00:01:37,430 --> 00:01:40,040
Were you born in a DP camp?

33

00:01:40,040 --> 00:01:40,870
No.

34

00:01:40,870 --> 00:01:42,200
OK.

35

00:01:42,200 --> 00:01:44,720
Just wanted to know.

36

00:01:44,720 --> 00:01:47,850
What is your father's name?

37

00:01:47,850 --> 00:01:52,850
My father's name at
birth was Moishe,

38

00:01:52,850 --> 00:02:02,510
M-O-I-S-H-E Lejb
L-E-J-B Katz K-A-T-Z.

39

00:02:02,510 --> 00:02:03,020
Wow.

40

00:02:03,020 --> 00:02:06,470

How did you get
Dabrowski from Katz?

41

00:02:06,470 --> 00:02:11,270

Well, that's a major point
in my family story, which

42

00:02:11,270 --> 00:02:17,030

is that my father
made the decision

43

00:02:17,030 --> 00:02:22,760

to stay in Warsaw with my
mother and hide in plain sight,

44

00:02:22,760 --> 00:02:27,860

essentially, because he
was not likely to be taken

45

00:02:27,860 --> 00:02:31,050

for Jew unless he
had to drop his pants

46

00:02:31,050 --> 00:02:34,700

and be seen that
he was circumcised.

47

00:02:34,700 --> 00:02:41,690

So he, through my
mother, he managed

48

00:02:41,690 --> 00:02:50,420

to obtain the forged birth
certificate of a Gentile pole.

49

00:02:50,420 --> 00:02:53,930

And that person's name,
last name, was Dobrowski?

50

00:02:53,930 --> 00:02:54,720

Yes.

51

00:02:54,720 --> 00:02:55,460

Got it.

52
00:02:55,460 --> 00:02:56,180
OK.

53
00:02:56,180 --> 00:02:58,940
We can talk about
the details of this

54
00:02:58,940 --> 00:03:02,390
later, at the point where
your father did this.

55
00:03:02,390 --> 00:03:05,540
But for right now, to
establish everybody's identity,

56
00:03:05,540 --> 00:03:07,070
that explains it.

57
00:03:07,070 --> 00:03:07,730
Right.

58
00:03:07,730 --> 00:03:11,970
Can you tell me your
mother's name, please?

59
00:03:11,970 --> 00:03:14,550
Including maiden name.

60
00:03:14,550 --> 00:03:15,050
And what?

61
00:03:15,050 --> 00:03:15,550
I'm sorry.

62
00:03:15,550 --> 00:03:16,980
Including her maiden name.

63
00:03:16,980 --> 00:03:20,030
Her maiden, OK.

64
00:03:20,030 --> 00:03:25,442
Her name-- well, if you
want her birth name,

65
00:03:25,442 --> 00:03:26,900
or do you want her
birth name, or--

66
00:03:26,900 --> 00:03:28,530
Yes, birth name.

67
00:03:28,530 --> 00:03:36,920
It was Hedwig,
that's H-E-D-W-I-G.

68
00:03:36,920 --> 00:03:37,900
OK, Hedwig.

69
00:03:37,900 --> 00:03:39,230
Günther.

70
00:03:39,230 --> 00:03:46,400
G-Ü-N-T-H-E-R.

71
00:03:46,400 --> 00:03:48,560
Günther was her last name?

72
00:03:48,560 --> 00:03:50,930
Günther was the last
name, that's correct.

73
00:03:50,930 --> 00:03:54,530
And when she married your
father, did it become Katz?

74
00:03:54,530 --> 00:03:59,180

75
00:03:59,180 --> 00:04:03,710
They were married very shortly
before the Germans invaded

76
00:04:03,710 --> 00:04:08,120
Poland, and I don't have
the exact chronology.

77
00:04:08,120 --> 00:04:13,490

But to my knowledge,
they were married--

78
00:04:13,490 --> 00:04:19,579
she was married as Jadwiga Katz.

79
00:04:19,579 --> 00:04:22,490
J-A-D-W-I-G-A.

80
00:04:22,490 --> 00:04:25,380
Well, Jadwiga sounds like
the Polish version of Hedwig.

81
00:04:25,380 --> 00:04:28,550
She used the Polish version,
because they were living

82
00:04:28,550 --> 00:04:30,530
in Łódź or Lodz.

83
00:04:30,530 --> 00:04:33,140

84
00:04:33,140 --> 00:04:36,020
We'll start from each parent,
but tell me a little bit

85
00:04:36,020 --> 00:04:37,765
about their backgrounds.

86
00:04:37,765 --> 00:04:39,140
And let's start
with your mother.

87
00:04:39,140 --> 00:04:41,780

88
00:04:41,780 --> 00:04:45,060
What nationality
was your mother?

89
00:04:45,060 --> 00:04:49,370
My mother was a Polish citizen.

90

00:04:49,370 --> 00:04:50,510
Always?

91
00:04:50,510 --> 00:04:51,260
No.

92
00:04:51,260 --> 00:04:53,630
OK, where was she born?

93
00:04:53,630 --> 00:04:58,070
Well, I guess I'll try to
just say it very simply.

94
00:04:58,070 --> 00:05:02,530
While living in Poland, she--

95
00:05:02,530 --> 00:05:05,480

96
00:05:05,480 --> 00:05:11,030
OK, to backtrack, Lodz, her
birthplace and my father's,

97
00:05:11,030 --> 00:05:16,910
after the Germans invaded,
was made part of the Reich.

98
00:05:16,910 --> 00:05:18,410
I'm going well before that.

99
00:05:18,410 --> 00:05:20,780
Something I didn't explain
at the very beginning

100
00:05:20,780 --> 00:05:22,860
is, one are the
things that I try

101
00:05:22,860 --> 00:05:27,500
to establish before we talk
about the war years is what was

102
00:05:27,500 --> 00:05:29,510
a person's pre-war life like.

103

00:05:29,510 --> 00:05:32,210

In this case, since you
were born after the war,

104

00:05:32,210 --> 00:05:34,100

that's not as relevant.

105

00:05:34,100 --> 00:05:37,820

But what still is relevant is
the background of your parents.

106

00:05:37,820 --> 00:05:40,310

So long before the
war starts, when

107

00:05:40,310 --> 00:05:45,440

we think of her childhood
and her family of origin,

108

00:05:45,440 --> 00:05:48,090

that's what I'm
interested in finding out.

109

00:05:48,090 --> 00:05:48,590

OK.

110

00:05:48,590 --> 00:05:51,930

Was she born in Lodz or was
she from someplace else?

111

00:05:51,930 --> 00:05:54,240

Yes, she was born in Lodz.

112

00:05:54,240 --> 00:05:55,920

OK.

113

00:05:55,920 --> 00:05:58,590

As a German?

114

00:05:58,590 --> 00:06:00,920

As an ethnic German.

115

00:06:00,920 --> 00:06:02,310

That's correct.

116

00:06:02,310 --> 00:06:09,660

She was of French Huguenot descent, going back 300 years.

117

00:06:09,660 --> 00:06:10,380

Wow.

118

00:06:10,380 --> 00:06:13,020

OK.

119

00:06:13,020 --> 00:06:22,986

She had a sister and a brother, both older than her.

120

00:06:22,986 --> 00:06:26,760

Her mother was basically a housewife.

121

00:06:26,760 --> 00:06:27,660

OK.

122

00:06:27,660 --> 00:06:32,310

Her father was in some form of business.

123

00:06:32,310 --> 00:06:33,690

So I don't know exactly what.

124

00:06:33,690 --> 00:06:36,780

125

00:06:36,780 --> 00:06:40,140

He-- I don't know if this is the right time to say,

126

00:06:40,140 --> 00:06:44,650

but he passed away in about 1945 before I was born.

127

00:06:44,650 --> 00:06:45,420

OK, that's fine.

128

00:06:45,420 --> 00:06:46,980

No, this is OK.

129

00:06:46,980 --> 00:06:50,400
What I'm interested is to find
out what kind of a childhood

130

00:06:50,400 --> 00:06:54,300
your mother had and what kind
of a home she grew up in.

131

00:06:54,300 --> 00:06:55,830
What language did they speak?

132

00:06:55,830 --> 00:06:58,890
What were their identities?

133

00:06:58,890 --> 00:07:03,240
I really very rarely talked
to somebody whose family

134

00:07:03,240 --> 00:07:05,730
was ethnic German
from Poland, which

135

00:07:05,730 --> 00:07:07,290
there are many people who were.

136

00:07:07,290 --> 00:07:10,200
And after the war, there
was a great repatriation

137

00:07:10,200 --> 00:07:14,560
and sometimes revenge
taken on Germans in Poland.

138

00:07:14,560 --> 00:07:17,430
So do you know
how her family got

139

00:07:17,430 --> 00:07:21,190
to Poland, how many generations
they had been there?

140

00:07:21,190 --> 00:07:27,000
I would say, probably, I

can't count it in generations,

141
00:07:27,000 --> 00:07:33,190
but I would say about 300 years.

142
00:07:33,190 --> 00:07:34,493
That's a long time.

143
00:07:34,493 --> 00:07:35,260
Mhm.

144
00:07:35,260 --> 00:07:36,180
OK.

145
00:07:36,180 --> 00:07:38,010
So in other words,
they maintained

146
00:07:38,010 --> 00:07:42,540
a German identity within
let's say a Polish geography.

147
00:07:42,540 --> 00:07:43,500
Would that be correct?

148
00:07:43,500 --> 00:07:44,200
That's correct.

149
00:07:44,200 --> 00:07:44,700
OK.

150
00:07:44,700 --> 00:07:45,420
That's correct.

151
00:07:45,420 --> 00:07:51,480
My mother went to a
German school in Lodz

152
00:07:51,480 --> 00:07:53,780
from grade school
through high school.

153
00:07:53,780 --> 00:07:56,670

154

00:07:56,670 --> 00:08:03,330

At the time that she was
in that same high school,

155

00:08:03,330 --> 00:08:09,810

which had a very significant
percentage of ethnic Germans,

156

00:08:09,810 --> 00:08:12,010

can't tell you
exactly at that time.

157

00:08:12,010 --> 00:08:17,170

But over the preceding
century is as high as 60%.

158

00:08:17,170 --> 00:08:18,400

That's a lot.

159

00:08:18,400 --> 00:08:18,900

Yeah.

160

00:08:18,900 --> 00:08:21,390

It sure is.

161

00:08:21,390 --> 00:08:27,280

So she, to my knowledge,
had a very happy childhood.

162

00:08:27,280 --> 00:08:32,010

She loved her father and
continued to mourn him up

163

00:08:32,010 --> 00:08:34,409

until her own death.

164

00:08:34,409 --> 00:08:38,159

She would cry whenever
she thought about him.

165

00:08:38,159 --> 00:08:39,659

What was his name, by the way?

166

00:08:39,659 --> 00:08:40,260
I'm sorry?

167
00:08:40,260 --> 00:08:42,159
What was his name?

168
00:08:42,159 --> 00:08:45,870
His name was Adolf Günther.

169
00:08:45,870 --> 00:08:46,650
OK.

170
00:08:46,650 --> 00:08:49,950
And do you know the names
of your aunt and uncle?

171
00:08:49,950 --> 00:08:51,720
The sister and brother?

172
00:08:51,720 --> 00:08:53,430
Yes.

173
00:08:53,430 --> 00:09:00,468
The sister Anne, A-N-N-E, like
Anne, and the brother was Hans.

174
00:09:00,468 --> 00:09:01,010
Did you know?

175
00:09:01,010 --> 00:09:02,560
H-A-N-S.

176
00:09:02,560 --> 00:09:03,060
OK.

177
00:09:03,060 --> 00:09:05,010
And what about your grandmother?

178
00:09:05,010 --> 00:09:07,030
What was her name?

179
00:09:07,030 --> 00:09:14,430
Her name was-- prior to
marriage was Cervcka.

180
00:09:14,430 --> 00:09:19,890
C-E-R-V-C-K-A.

181
00:09:19,890 --> 00:09:21,250
That doesn't sound very German.

182
00:09:21,250 --> 00:09:22,250
That sounds more Polish.

183
00:09:22,250 --> 00:09:26,130
No, it was a
modification, apparently,

184
00:09:26,130 --> 00:09:30,030
of the Huguenot name
which is sort of

185
00:09:30,030 --> 00:09:31,590
in dispute in the family.

186
00:09:31,590 --> 00:09:36,630
But she says it was
Cersy, C-E-R-C-Y.

187
00:09:36,630 --> 00:09:39,330
Which is a very
common Huguenot name.

188
00:09:39,330 --> 00:09:40,080
Highly interest.

189
00:09:40,080 --> 00:09:42,150
And that became Ceretsky.

190
00:09:42,150 --> 00:09:46,170
Because you may know
that in Polish, women,

191
00:09:46,170 --> 00:09:50,400
an A is at the end when
it's -ky, so she was -ka.

192
00:09:50,400 --> 00:09:51,840

Of course.

193

00:09:51,840 --> 00:09:52,560

Of course.

194

00:09:52,560 --> 00:09:54,390

What was her first name?

195

00:09:54,390 --> 00:09:55,075

Wanda.

196

00:09:55,075 --> 00:09:55,575

Wanda.

197

00:09:55,575 --> 00:09:58,440

W-A-N-D-A.

198

00:09:58,440 --> 00:10:02,160

So did you know her as well
as your aunt and uncle?

199

00:10:02,160 --> 00:10:03,790

Yes, very well.

200

00:10:03,790 --> 00:10:07,860

So it was only your
grandfather who passed away

201

00:10:07,860 --> 00:10:10,110

before you were born.

202

00:10:10,110 --> 00:10:10,830

Yes.

203

00:10:10,830 --> 00:10:14,080

And do you know if he
died of natural causes?

204

00:10:14,080 --> 00:10:19,080

Apparently, he had some kind
of chronic illness and died,

205

00:10:19,080 --> 00:10:20,880

I believe, of a heart attack.

206
00:10:20,880 --> 00:10:21,870
OK.

207
00:10:21,870 --> 00:10:24,463
OK, so it's not as
a result of the war.

208
00:10:24,463 --> 00:10:26,130
Well, a heart attack
could happen, but--

209
00:10:26,130 --> 00:10:33,150
I mean, the problem
is that I really

210
00:10:33,150 --> 00:10:38,080
don't know much about
his life during the war.

211
00:10:38,080 --> 00:10:38,580
Got it.

212
00:10:38,580 --> 00:10:41,910
Up until about
1945 when he died.

213
00:10:41,910 --> 00:10:45,420
Did your mother
ever talk about it?

214
00:10:45,420 --> 00:10:46,380
No.

215
00:10:46,380 --> 00:10:49,080
She never talked about it.

216
00:10:49,080 --> 00:10:51,240
As I mentioned, the
only thing I knew

217
00:10:51,240 --> 00:10:55,050
was that she was
very devoted to him.

218

00:10:55,050 --> 00:10:59,220

And I never asked
those questions

219

00:10:59,220 --> 00:11:01,980

because my mother
didn't bring it up

220

00:11:01,980 --> 00:11:03,550

and it just didn't happen.

221

00:11:03,550 --> 00:11:07,680

So that's kind of a lacuna in
my knowledge of the family.

222

00:11:07,680 --> 00:11:11,130

It's about that, my
maternal grandfather.

223

00:11:11,130 --> 00:11:17,370

And what about the other
members of her family, her aunt,

224

00:11:17,370 --> 00:11:20,580

your aunt, your uncle,
your grandmother?

225

00:11:20,580 --> 00:11:23,970

226

00:11:23,970 --> 00:11:25,470

Were they storytellers?

227

00:11:25,470 --> 00:11:28,410

Did they ever talk
about their own lives,

228

00:11:28,410 --> 00:11:33,450

or the lives of the family,
or any stories of the family?

229

00:11:33,450 --> 00:11:39,330

You know, I would say
that they seemed--

230

00:11:39,330 --> 00:11:44,670

and bear in mind that
my contacts with them

231

00:11:44,670 --> 00:11:49,920

ceased when I was
about maybe 13.

232

00:11:49,920 --> 00:11:51,600

OK.

233

00:11:51,600 --> 00:11:54,990

Because I used to go to
Germany to visit them

234

00:11:54,990 --> 00:11:57,030

on my summer vacation.

235

00:11:57,030 --> 00:12:01,890

So they were not
storytellers and they did not

236

00:12:01,890 --> 00:12:05,504

share anything with me.

237

00:12:05,504 --> 00:12:06,990

about the history.

238

00:12:06,990 --> 00:12:09,840

239

00:12:09,840 --> 00:12:12,090

What kind of feelings
did you have about them

240

00:12:12,090 --> 00:12:15,210

until you were 13?

241

00:12:15,210 --> 00:12:19,200

I liked them very, very much.

242

00:12:19,200 --> 00:12:23,700

I have extremely happy memories
of my trips to Germany.

243

00:12:23,700 --> 00:12:26,040

Sometimes I would stay
for several months.

244

00:12:26,040 --> 00:12:33,810

And my aunt was a very
kindly woman, a little rigid,

245

00:12:33,810 --> 00:12:36,750

and a little especially
rigid about table

246

00:12:36,750 --> 00:12:39,180

manners, which mine
weren't always that great.

247

00:12:39,180 --> 00:12:41,274

But in general, she
was a wonderful woman.

248

00:12:41,274 --> 00:12:43,440

Most children aren't.

249

00:12:43,440 --> 00:12:47,130

I mean, up until I
was in my 30s, which

250

00:12:47,130 --> 00:12:51,210

is kind of around the
time, you know, she died,

251

00:12:51,210 --> 00:12:55,410

she made some comment
about my table manners.

252

00:12:55,410 --> 00:12:59,880

So what I remember is
having a wonderful time,

253

00:12:59,880 --> 00:13:02,310

her being very kind.

254

00:13:02,310 --> 00:13:06,990

She would buy me, on

alternate days, a sausage--

255

00:13:06,990 --> 00:13:10,990

those German sausages, or
whipped cream in a cone.

256

00:13:10,990 --> 00:13:11,490

Oh my.

257

00:13:11,490 --> 00:13:12,900

Sort of alternated.

258

00:13:12,900 --> 00:13:15,840

Talk about an indulgence.

259

00:13:15,840 --> 00:13:17,250

Whipped cream and a cone.

260

00:13:17,250 --> 00:13:18,000

Wow.

261

00:13:18,000 --> 00:13:24,930

And I still love whipped cream,
and my family laughs about it.

262

00:13:24,930 --> 00:13:29,100

And did you have
contact with your uncle?

263

00:13:29,100 --> 00:13:32,820

My uncle is deceased.

264

00:13:32,820 --> 00:13:37,890

And he died somewhere
around 1970.

265

00:13:37,890 --> 00:13:40,350

OK.

266

00:13:40,350 --> 00:13:43,680

So oh, and one last, a
factual question on this.

267

00:13:43,680 --> 00:13:47,940

Where in Germany would you visit
them when you were growing up?

268

00:13:47,940 --> 00:13:53,280

They lived in a small town
called Bad B-A-D like that

269

00:13:53,280 --> 00:13:56,430

Soden, S-O-D-E-N.

270

00:13:56,430 --> 00:13:57,990

Could you repeat the second one?

271

00:13:57,990 --> 00:13:59,100

Bad Soden you said?

272

00:13:59,100 --> 00:13:59,820

Yes.

273

00:13:59,820 --> 00:14:02,430

So it's pronounced Oden,
but it's like Soden.

274

00:14:02,430 --> 00:14:06,660

S-O-D-E-N.

275

00:14:06,660 --> 00:14:09,730

OK, was that in Bavaria?

276

00:14:09,730 --> 00:14:10,230

I'm sorry?

277

00:14:10,230 --> 00:14:12,120

What part of
Germany was that in?

278

00:14:12,120 --> 00:14:16,140

Oh, very close to Frankfurt.

279

00:14:16,140 --> 00:14:18,450

OK, all right.

280

00:14:18,450 --> 00:14:22,320

Frankfurt am Maim, because

there are two Frankfurts.

281

00:14:22,320 --> 00:14:24,060

Yes.

282

00:14:24,060 --> 00:14:30,360

And when you would visit, again,
up until the time you were 13,

283

00:14:30,360 --> 00:14:33,930

did they ever talk, if
not about their own selves

284

00:14:33,930 --> 00:14:37,080

and about the family, did
they talk about the war?

285

00:14:37,080 --> 00:14:38,760

Did they talk about their own--

286

00:14:38,760 --> 00:14:41,730

about what they thought
of the war, or issues

287

00:14:41,730 --> 00:14:43,500

that resulted as the war?

288

00:14:43,500 --> 00:14:45,990

Absolutely not.

289

00:14:45,990 --> 00:14:47,310

Interesting.

290

00:14:47,310 --> 00:14:48,210

Yeah.

291

00:14:48,210 --> 00:14:50,160

So it was sort of
like stunden null.

292

00:14:50,160 --> 00:14:54,720

It's all, it's everything that
happens beforehand is just

293

00:14:54,720 --> 00:14:55,980
not mentioned.

294
00:14:55,980 --> 00:14:59,790
Right, that's how it was.

295
00:14:59,790 --> 00:15:02,070
Do you ever remember them
saying anything about Jews?

296
00:15:02,070 --> 00:15:06,810

297
00:15:06,810 --> 00:15:08,880
Let's see.

298
00:15:08,880 --> 00:15:12,580
I was-- no, I don't, I do not.

299
00:15:12,580 --> 00:15:13,540
OK.

300
00:15:13,540 --> 00:15:16,050
OK.

301
00:15:16,050 --> 00:15:20,160
And let me catch my
thought for a minute.

302
00:15:20,160 --> 00:15:24,540

303
00:15:24,540 --> 00:15:28,330
Oh, and can you tell me
then, when you say contact

304
00:15:28,330 --> 00:15:30,150
ceased, that sounds
like a decision

305
00:15:30,150 --> 00:15:34,380
was made at some point,
and a conscious decision.

306

00:15:34,380 --> 00:15:36,900
Is that the case?

307
00:15:36,900 --> 00:15:40,620
Now, could you refresh
my memory on the context

308
00:15:40,620 --> 00:15:41,670
in which I said that?

309
00:15:41,670 --> 00:15:45,900
You said that your contact to
them ceased when you were 13.

310
00:15:45,900 --> 00:15:55,740
Oh, that was only because
we had emigrated to the US

311
00:15:55,740 --> 00:15:59,890
when I was 12 and 1/2.

312
00:15:59,890 --> 00:16:00,390
I see.

313
00:16:00,390 --> 00:16:03,270
So it was a geographical thing.

314
00:16:03,270 --> 00:16:05,730
I couldn't really
afford to visit anymore.

315
00:16:05,730 --> 00:16:07,350
OK, but it wasn't--

316
00:16:07,350 --> 00:16:09,780
it was not like a
rupture in the family.

317
00:16:09,780 --> 00:16:11,100
Oh, not at all.

318
00:16:11,100 --> 00:16:12,030
OK.

319

00:16:12,030 --> 00:16:14,250
So there were letters
still back and forth.

320
00:16:14,250 --> 00:16:17,280
And did you ever see
them after you were 13,

321
00:16:17,280 --> 00:16:19,330
after you came to the US?

322
00:16:19,330 --> 00:16:25,050
After I came to the
US, I saw my aunt Anna,

323
00:16:25,050 --> 00:16:27,962
who came to my medical
school graduation.

324
00:16:27,962 --> 00:16:28,970
Ah, OK.

325
00:16:28,970 --> 00:16:34,140
But I didn't see my
uncle Hans after that.

326
00:16:34,140 --> 00:16:35,880
OK.

327
00:16:35,880 --> 00:16:40,170
But for them, if we fill in
a little bit of that blank,

328
00:16:40,170 --> 00:16:44,940
is that after having lived
as a family for 300 years

329
00:16:44,940 --> 00:16:50,370
in Lodz, in Poland,
they move to a place

330
00:16:50,370 --> 00:16:55,330
called Bad Soden near Frankfurt,
which is a new place for them

331

00:16:55,330 --> 00:16:57,550
after the war.

332
00:16:57,550 --> 00:17:00,720
Do you know why
they moved there?

333
00:17:00,720 --> 00:17:01,290
Yes.

334
00:17:01,290 --> 00:17:10,650
I have a letter that my cousin
Hans, who was their son--

335
00:17:10,650 --> 00:17:12,660
Whose-- which one son?

336
00:17:12,660 --> 00:17:15,540
Oh, Anna and Hans
senior, let's say.

337
00:17:15,540 --> 00:17:16,290
OK.

338
00:17:16,290 --> 00:17:18,089
In other words, yeah.

339
00:17:18,089 --> 00:17:20,640
She married someone named Hans?

340
00:17:20,640 --> 00:17:22,329
She married someone named Hans.

341
00:17:22,329 --> 00:17:24,060
Then the son was named Hans.

342
00:17:24,060 --> 00:17:26,970
And I saw a lot of them
during my visits to Germany.

343
00:17:26,970 --> 00:17:29,070
He is about five
years older than me.

344

00:17:29,070 --> 00:17:30,350
OK.

345
00:17:30,350 --> 00:17:30,900
OK.

346
00:17:30,900 --> 00:17:34,080
And anyway, perhaps it's--

347
00:17:34,080 --> 00:17:35,580
I don't know if
it's relevant, but I

348
00:17:35,580 --> 00:17:39,450
did want to mention that my aunt
and uncle that we're talking

349
00:17:39,450 --> 00:17:42,780
about were first cousins.

350
00:17:42,780 --> 00:17:43,560
Really?

351
00:17:43,560 --> 00:17:46,530
You mean so you're
saying that there was--

352
00:17:46,530 --> 00:17:50,820
your mother had a brother
Hans and a sister Anna,

353
00:17:50,820 --> 00:17:53,950
and her sister Anna marries--

354
00:17:53,950 --> 00:18:01,710
No no, I'm sorry, my mother's
brother was named Oskar

355
00:18:01,710 --> 00:18:06,076
O-S-K-A-R Eugen like
Eugene without the g,

356
00:18:06,076 --> 00:18:08,700
E-U-G-E-N Günther.

357

00:18:08,700 --> 00:18:11,100

Oh, I see, Hans was your--

358

00:18:11,100 --> 00:18:15,250

The husband of-- my
mother's sister's husband.

359

00:18:15,250 --> 00:18:15,810

OK.

360

00:18:15,810 --> 00:18:19,650

So there was only two Hanses
in the family, that is,

361

00:18:19,650 --> 00:18:22,080

Anna's husband and Anna's son.

362

00:18:22,080 --> 00:18:22,800

That's correct.

363

00:18:22,800 --> 00:18:24,180

OK.

364

00:18:24,180 --> 00:18:24,780

OK.

365

00:18:24,780 --> 00:18:28,470

And Oskar Eugen, did
you ever see him?

366

00:18:28,470 --> 00:18:29,130

Yes.

367

00:18:29,130 --> 00:18:29,700

OK.

368

00:18:29,700 --> 00:18:34,380

I saw him probably twice
during my visits to Germany.

369

00:18:34,380 --> 00:18:36,780

OK, so not such a close contact.

370

00:18:36,780 --> 00:18:37,470
No.

371
00:18:37,470 --> 00:18:38,790
OK.

372
00:18:38,790 --> 00:18:44,460
And I saw him
considerably later.

373
00:18:44,460 --> 00:18:47,880
I saw him at a time
when, at age 21,

374
00:18:47,880 --> 00:18:50,700
I kind of did a
grand tour of Europe

375
00:18:50,700 --> 00:18:56,440
and visited the family, a
number of members of the family.

376
00:18:56,440 --> 00:18:58,860
So actually, it's
not exactly accurate

377
00:18:58,860 --> 00:19:02,310
that I lost complete
contact with my aunt

378
00:19:02,310 --> 00:19:04,320
and uncle and the family.

379
00:19:04,320 --> 00:19:07,560
There was that one contact
at age 21 that was brief.

380
00:19:07,560 --> 00:19:08,060
OK.

381
00:19:08,060 --> 00:19:11,250

382
00:19:11,250 --> 00:19:13,920
So you were saying

that your cousin, who

383

00:19:13,920 --> 00:19:18,300
was about five years older than
you, Hans junior, I take it.

384

00:19:18,300 --> 00:19:20,520
Wasn't designated
that way, but I just

385

00:19:20,520 --> 00:19:22,170
said it for clarification.

386

00:19:22,170 --> 00:19:22,710
OK.

387

00:19:22,710 --> 00:19:23,370
OK.

388

00:19:23,370 --> 00:19:26,910
So he would have
been born in 1941?

389

00:19:26,910 --> 00:19:27,640
Yes.

390

00:19:27,640 --> 00:19:29,010
All right.

391

00:19:29,010 --> 00:19:30,900
And he's the one
who explained to you

392

00:19:30,900 --> 00:19:32,760
how they got to Bad Soden?

393

00:19:32,760 --> 00:19:33,420
That's correct.

394

00:19:33,420 --> 00:19:34,020
Yes.

395

00:19:34,020 --> 00:19:35,050
And what was the reason?

396

00:19:35,050 --> 00:19:36,180

How did they get there?

397

00:19:36,180 --> 00:19:39,360

Or why did they go there
rather than somewhere else?

398

00:19:39,360 --> 00:19:41,520

OK.

399

00:19:41,520 --> 00:19:42,990

I'll summarize it for you.

400

00:19:42,990 --> 00:19:48,640

401

00:19:48,640 --> 00:19:57,140

In January of 1945, the Soviet
army started bombing Lodz.

402

00:19:57,140 --> 00:20:01,060

The windows of their
apartment were destroyed,

403

00:20:01,060 --> 00:20:04,900

and so they moved to a village.

404

00:20:04,900 --> 00:20:09,130

They had a country house
in the Polish village

405

00:20:09,130 --> 00:20:11,948

about 15 kilometers from Lodz.

406

00:20:11,948 --> 00:20:13,490

And what was the
name of the village?

407

00:20:13,490 --> 00:20:15,370

I'm sorry I interrupt
with such questions.

408

00:20:15,370 --> 00:20:17,320

Oh no, I, absolutely.

409

00:20:17,320 --> 00:20:19,900
There's no-- I want to give
you as much information

410

00:20:19,900 --> 00:20:21,310
as you wish.

411

00:20:21,310 --> 00:20:23,290
Yeah, the village was called--

412

00:20:23,290 --> 00:20:24,160
I got to spell it.

413

00:20:24,160 --> 00:20:25,900
It's called Babiczai.

414

00:20:25,900 --> 00:20:26,660
Babiczai.

415

00:20:26,660 --> 00:20:27,160
OK.

416

00:20:27,160 --> 00:20:36,130
Yes B-A-B-I-C-Z-A-I. And
again, 15 kilometers or so from

417

00:20:36,130 --> 00:20:37,630
the center of Lodz.

418

00:20:37,630 --> 00:20:38,480
OK.

419

00:20:38,480 --> 00:20:39,220
All right?

420

00:20:39,220 --> 00:20:47,050
So they had to go on foot to
that place because there were

421

00:20:47,050 --> 00:20:51,620
Russian troops present who were
very hostile to ethnic Germans.

422
00:20:51,620 --> 00:20:52,120

,

423
00:20:52,120 --> 00:20:52,960
Yes

424
00:20:52,960 --> 00:20:56,410
And anybody who seemed to
be fleeing or whatever.

425
00:20:56,410 --> 00:21:04,870
And, in fact, my uncle,
my aunt, and Hans

426
00:21:04,870 --> 00:21:09,640
were shot at by a Russian
tank, which missed them.

427
00:21:09,640 --> 00:21:10,640
Wow.

428
00:21:10,640 --> 00:21:11,920
Wow.

429
00:21:11,920 --> 00:21:13,038
So they sought sh--

430
00:21:13,038 --> 00:21:14,080
As they were on the road?

431
00:21:14,080 --> 00:21:16,850
As they were on the
foot-- on the road, yes.

432
00:21:16,850 --> 00:21:23,320
But the tank missed, and they
sought shelter in a farmhouse.

433
00:21:23,320 --> 00:21:26,770
Then they left the
farmhouse, and a tank

434
00:21:26,770 --> 00:21:29,140

shot off the farmhouse's roof.

435

00:21:29,140 --> 00:21:29,710
Oh, wow.

436

00:21:29,710 --> 00:21:32,600
[CHUCKLES] So they
had a close call.

437

00:21:32,600 --> 00:21:38,170
So they lived in [? Babice ?]
uncertain about their fate,

438

00:21:38,170 --> 00:21:39,700
as Hans put it.

439

00:21:39,700 --> 00:21:52,090
And they were somehow driven
out of their house in--

440

00:21:52,090 --> 00:21:55,762

441

00:21:55,762 --> 00:21:59,760
let's see, in the second
half of February of--

442

00:21:59,760 --> 00:22:00,480
'45?

443

00:22:00,480 --> 00:22:01,350
--'45.

444

00:22:01,350 --> 00:22:02,295
Uh-huh.

445

00:22:02,295 --> 00:22:09,930
Now, my cousin
refers to his uncle--

446

00:22:09,930 --> 00:22:11,460
oh, I'm sorry, to his father.

447

00:22:11,460 --> 00:22:14,790

448

00:22:14,790 --> 00:22:19,380

Hans, in his instance,
was short for Johann.

449

00:22:19,380 --> 00:22:25,604

So perhaps it would be better to
designate him as Johann Günther

450

00:22:25,604 --> 00:22:28,296

though he was called Hans a lot.

451

00:22:28,296 --> 00:22:31,980

So you're talking about
the father or the son here?

452

00:22:31,980 --> 00:22:33,090

Hans's father.

453

00:22:33,090 --> 00:22:36,890

OK, so Johann would have
been the husband of Anna.

454

00:22:36,890 --> 00:22:37,390

Yes.

455

00:22:37,390 --> 00:22:38,790

OK, got it.

456

00:22:38,790 --> 00:22:39,420

Right.

457

00:22:39,420 --> 00:22:46,770

So my cousin says that, even
though Polish neighbors had

458

00:22:46,770 --> 00:22:51,360

attested that he had always
had a positive attitude

459

00:22:51,360 --> 00:22:54,360

towards the Polish
people in general,

460

00:22:54,360 --> 00:22:56,640

the family was, as I
mentioned, driven out.

461

00:22:56,640 --> 00:23:02,310

And Johann was taken to a
Soviet military internment

462

00:23:02,310 --> 00:23:07,800

camp in a town called Sikawa--

463

00:23:07,800 --> 00:23:13,540

which was Sikawa,
S-I-K-A-W-A, near Lodz.

464

00:23:13,540 --> 00:23:14,040

OK.

465

00:23:14,040 --> 00:23:18,660

And the rest of the family
was sent to another camp.

466

00:23:18,660 --> 00:23:23,970

And they had to work on
Polish farms and such.

467

00:23:23,970 --> 00:23:26,220

Well, I don't know if
it was forced labor,

468

00:23:26,220 --> 00:23:29,490

but I don't think
they had much choice.

469

00:23:29,490 --> 00:23:33,160

Hans-- excuse me,
Johann knew Russian,

470

00:23:33,160 --> 00:23:37,920

so he was a secretary and
interpreter at the internment

471

00:23:37,920 --> 00:23:42,840

camp where he was alone, as
far as family's concerned.

472

00:23:42,840 --> 00:23:45,780

And, apparently, he
had a good relationship

473

00:23:45,780 --> 00:23:50,020

with the commanding officer
of that internment camp.

474

00:23:50,020 --> 00:23:53,550

And that officer allowed him
to leave from time to time

475

00:23:53,550 --> 00:23:57,030

because he needed
to see a doctor.

476

00:23:57,030 --> 00:24:04,660

He was released from the
camp on May 15, 1945.

477

00:24:04,660 --> 00:24:05,160

Wow.

478

00:24:05,160 --> 00:24:07,260

And that-- yes.

479

00:24:07,260 --> 00:24:11,160

And that saved his life
because all the other internees

480

00:24:11,160 --> 00:24:14,440

were sent into deepest Russia--

481

00:24:14,440 --> 00:24:14,940

Yeah.

482

00:24:14,940 --> 00:24:17,090

--and never heard
from again, sadly.

483

00:24:17,090 --> 00:24:18,930

Yeah.

484

00:24:18,930 --> 00:24:21,300
OK, so--

485
00:24:21,300 --> 00:24:23,550
Do you know-- I mean, did
your cousin ever tell you

486
00:24:23,550 --> 00:24:25,260
who the other internees
might have been?

487
00:24:25,260 --> 00:24:28,500
Were they other ethnic
Germans from Poland,

488
00:24:28,500 --> 00:24:30,180
or were they military
type of people?

489
00:24:30,180 --> 00:24:32,070
Or you just don't know?

490
00:24:32,070 --> 00:24:33,030
He didn't say?

491
00:24:33,030 --> 00:24:34,770
I don't know.

492
00:24:34,770 --> 00:24:36,390
He never specified.

493
00:24:36,390 --> 00:24:37,200
OK.

494
00:24:37,200 --> 00:24:39,130
Though I don't think
they were militar--

495
00:24:39,130 --> 00:24:40,500
they were prisoners of war.

496
00:24:40,500 --> 00:24:42,000
I believe they were--

497

00:24:42,000 --> 00:24:43,470
Civilians?

498
00:24:43,470 --> 00:24:47,990
Ethnic German civilians that
got caught up in the net of--

499
00:24:47,990 --> 00:24:50,280
I don't know the-- that
was there after the war.

500
00:24:50,280 --> 00:24:52,150
OK.

501
00:24:52,150 --> 00:24:56,880
But your uncle and
your aunt and--

502
00:24:56,880 --> 00:24:58,680
so they never told you this.

503
00:24:58,680 --> 00:25:00,990
It was only their son
who told you this.

504
00:25:00,990 --> 00:25:02,350
That's correct.

505
00:25:02,350 --> 00:25:02,850
OK.

506
00:25:02,850 --> 00:25:05,730
And he only told me recently--

507
00:25:05,730 --> 00:25:10,680
relatively recently as I
was composing this material.

508
00:25:10,680 --> 00:25:13,090
And I sent him an
email asking him.

509
00:25:13,090 --> 00:25:17,640
He was kind enough to give me
a summary of the Günther family

510
00:25:17,640 --> 00:25:19,740
and what happened in 1945--

511
00:25:19,740 --> 00:25:20,670
So--

512
00:25:20,670 --> 00:25:22,218
--but only of part
of the family.

513
00:25:22,218 --> 00:25:23,760
--when you're talking
about recently,

514
00:25:23,760 --> 00:25:27,300
would you say this year, 2017?

515
00:25:27,300 --> 00:25:28,730
Last year, two years a--

516
00:25:28,730 --> 00:25:32,670
2000-- I would say
late 2016 is when

517
00:25:32,670 --> 00:25:36,390
I got this information that
I'm giving you at this time.

518
00:25:36,390 --> 00:25:40,710
OK, so until then
it was a blank, huh?

519
00:25:40,710 --> 00:25:41,640
Yes.

520
00:25:41,640 --> 00:25:42,450
It was.

521
00:25:42,450 --> 00:25:47,190
It was never talked
about, and I couldn't ask.

522
00:25:47,190 --> 00:25:49,350

I didn't feel
comfortable asking.

523
00:25:49,350 --> 00:25:54,810
And I, frankly, at that time
didn't have as much interest

524
00:25:54,810 --> 00:25:56,740
in knowing this stuff.

525
00:25:56,740 --> 00:26:00,750
But, anyway, as I
mentioned, the entire family

526
00:26:00,750 --> 00:26:04,380
was very closed-mouthed
except for my cousin Hans,

527
00:26:04,380 --> 00:26:09,990
who did tell me certain
things about the family.

528
00:26:09,990 --> 00:26:11,065
Did he have his own--

529
00:26:11,065 --> 00:26:13,440
I mean, he would have been a
four-year-old, five-year-old

530
00:26:13,440 --> 00:26:14,250
boy.

531
00:26:14,250 --> 00:26:16,980
And some children
remember, and some don't.

532
00:26:16,980 --> 00:26:21,900
Did he have any direct
memories himself of--

533
00:26:21,900 --> 00:26:23,340
I don't believe so.

534
00:26:23,340 --> 00:26:23,990
OK.

535

00:26:23,990 --> 00:26:30,090

I believe that this material about 1945,

536

00:26:30,090 --> 00:26:35,400

right after the war, was collected later in life.

537

00:26:35,400 --> 00:26:38,540

He doesn't-- I don't believe he remembers anything about that,

538

00:26:38,540 --> 00:26:40,380

or very little.

539

00:26:40,380 --> 00:26:42,060

Yeah.

540

00:26:42,060 --> 00:26:43,700

Can you hold just for a second?

541

00:26:43,700 --> 00:26:44,200

Sure.

542

00:26:44,200 --> 00:26:46,050

Just for a second.

543

00:26:46,050 --> 00:26:48,150

Are we-- we're running?

544

00:26:48,150 --> 00:26:49,500

OK.

545

00:26:49,500 --> 00:26:50,910

Sorry for that interruption.

546

00:26:50,910 --> 00:26:51,690

Oh, no problem.

547

00:26:51,690 --> 00:26:55,190

548

00:26:55,190 --> 00:26:57,470

I mean, some of
the reasons I ask

549

00:26:57,470 --> 00:27:00,740

for dates is that it's part
of the story as to when

550

00:27:00,740 --> 00:27:02,250

you find things out.

551

00:27:02,250 --> 00:27:02,750

Yes.

552

00:27:02,750 --> 00:27:04,070

And what you find out.

553

00:27:04,070 --> 00:27:05,285

And what does it--

554

00:27:05,285 --> 00:27:06,560

Um--

555

00:27:06,560 --> 00:27:11,090

--what does it do, or what
kind of effect that might have.

556

00:27:11,090 --> 00:27:15,455

Is Hans, your cousin, a
person who's more talkative,

557

00:27:15,455 --> 00:27:16,760

a person who's more--

558

00:27:16,760 --> 00:27:24,710

Yes, because-- yes, he is
because he's come to the US

559

00:27:24,710 --> 00:27:26,660

several times.

560

00:27:26,660 --> 00:27:29,480

We were-- even though we
had an age difference,

561

00:27:29,480 --> 00:27:31,970
we were good friends.

562

00:27:31,970 --> 00:27:37,320
When I was 12 or so and he
was 16, we did a lot of stuff

563

00:27:37,320 --> 00:27:37,820
together.

564

00:27:37,820 --> 00:27:42,710
And he visited London, where we
were living up until I was 12.

565

00:27:42,710 --> 00:27:45,800
And I visited
Germany and saw him.

566

00:27:45,800 --> 00:27:51,390
And we never discussed
the war at that time.

567

00:27:51,390 --> 00:27:56,780
We're talking about
the late '50s.

568

00:27:56,780 --> 00:28:02,120
But since then he's come
to the US at least twice.

569

00:28:02,120 --> 00:28:05,570
Visited, stayed
with us, and he has

570

00:28:05,570 --> 00:28:09,230
told me certain things about
the family that I didn't know.

571

00:28:09,230 --> 00:28:13,580
So, once Johann was
released from the camp,

572

00:28:13,580 --> 00:28:15,050
what happened to
the family then?

573

00:28:15,050 --> 00:28:17,480

Did he go back to
join everybody?

574

00:28:17,480 --> 00:28:18,240

Yes.

575

00:28:18,240 --> 00:28:19,190

OK.

576

00:28:19,190 --> 00:28:21,770

He found his family.

577

00:28:21,770 --> 00:28:30,590

And, on November 7, 1945,
some authorities in Lodz

578

00:28:30,590 --> 00:28:35,690

allowed the family, including
Johann's mother, who I knew

579

00:28:35,690 --> 00:28:39,710

nothing about, to leave Poland.

580

00:28:39,710 --> 00:28:44,720

It says that Johann
bribed Soviet soldiers

581

00:28:44,720 --> 00:28:47,840

to take the family on
a military truck hidden

582

00:28:47,840 --> 00:28:50,420

among gasoline drums--

583

00:28:50,420 --> 00:28:50,930

Wow.

584

00:28:50,930 --> 00:28:56,490

--to [? Stetten ?],, which
is [? Chechen ?] in Polish,

585

00:28:56,490 --> 00:28:58,310

as you probably know.

586

00:28:58,310 --> 00:29:07,310

And then they continued in
a wagon designed for cattle.

587

00:29:07,310 --> 00:29:13,790

And this is a trivial thing,
but Hans's grandmother

588

00:29:13,790 --> 00:29:16,790

got lost when she lost
the train because she

589

00:29:16,790 --> 00:29:18,080

had to relieve herself.

590

00:29:18,080 --> 00:29:19,650

But they found her eventually.

591

00:29:19,650 --> 00:29:20,150

Well--

592

00:29:20,150 --> 00:29:20,650

[INAUDIBLE]

593

00:29:20,650 --> 00:29:25,140

--you know, moments like that
are actually very frightening--

594

00:29:25,140 --> 00:29:25,640

Yes.

595

00:29:25,640 --> 00:29:29,660

--because lots of people
lost family members

596

00:29:29,660 --> 00:29:32,480

if they're on a train and one
of them gets off to get food,

597

00:29:32,480 --> 00:29:33,120

to get milk--

598

00:29:33,120 --> 00:29:33,620
Sure.

599
00:29:33,620 --> 00:29:36,720
--to take care of
these human needs.

600
00:29:36,720 --> 00:29:38,810
And sometimes it can
be months or years

601
00:29:38,810 --> 00:29:43,520
or even never that
they meet up again.

602
00:29:43,520 --> 00:29:44,210
Yes, definitely.

603
00:29:44,210 --> 00:29:46,940
Such things-- yeah.

604
00:29:46,940 --> 00:29:51,170
And so they were on
the train after having

605
00:29:51,170 --> 00:29:53,360
been on a truck
filled with gas cans.

606
00:29:53,360 --> 00:29:55,060
And that train--

607
00:29:55,060 --> 00:29:55,820
On a cattle truck.

608
00:29:55,820 --> 00:29:56,820
On a cattle truck.

609
00:29:56,820 --> 00:29:57,320
[INAUDIBLE]

610
00:29:57,320 --> 00:29:59,900
And that takes them
into West Germany,

611
00:29:59,900 --> 00:30:01,580
or into Germany proper?

612
00:30:01,580 --> 00:30:02,720
Yeah.

613
00:30:02,720 --> 00:30:09,530
Well, I can tell you exactly
that, on November 29, 1945,

614
00:30:09,530 --> 00:30:11,960
they got to Berlin--

615
00:30:11,960 --> 00:30:12,830
OK.

616
00:30:12,830 --> 00:30:17,990
--where they were thoroughly
checked medically and deloused.

617
00:30:17,990 --> 00:30:18,630
Oh, god.

618
00:30:18,630 --> 00:30:19,130
Yeah.

619
00:30:19,130 --> 00:30:20,180
Yeah.

620
00:30:20,180 --> 00:30:24,110
And then, in the beginning
of December in 1945,

621
00:30:24,110 --> 00:30:31,730
they crossed the border of
the American zone of Berlin

622
00:30:31,730 --> 00:30:34,480
and went to Frankfurt am Main.

623
00:30:34,480 --> 00:30:35,570
OK.

624

00:30:35,570 --> 00:30:37,310

The reason they
went to Frankfurt

625

00:30:37,310 --> 00:30:42,710

is that Johann's brother
was living there,

626

00:30:42,710 --> 00:30:46,310

but his apartment was
you know bombed out.

627

00:30:46,310 --> 00:30:50,090

And so they couldn't
stay with him.

628

00:30:50,090 --> 00:30:53,950

And somehow they
ended up in Bad Soden.

629

00:30:53,950 --> 00:30:56,180

And I don't know why,
but that was close,

630

00:30:56,180 --> 00:30:58,670

as I mentioned, to Frankfurt.

631

00:30:58,670 --> 00:31:02,180

And it's a spa town, nice place.

632

00:31:02,180 --> 00:31:06,350

And the-- says, on the day
before Christmas there, that's

633

00:31:06,350 --> 00:31:08,570

when they arrived in Bad Soden.

634

00:31:08,570 --> 00:31:12,230

And the family lived
there from that time on.

635

00:31:12,230 --> 00:31:13,550

Wow.

636

00:31:13,550 --> 00:31:18,650

OK, I didn't think that I would
really hear so much detail,

637
00:31:18,650 --> 00:31:21,560
but this is wonderful, just
from asking how did they

638
00:31:21,560 --> 00:31:23,210
end up in Bad Soden?

639
00:31:23,210 --> 00:31:23,930
Right.

640
00:31:23,930 --> 00:31:26,900
It's just-- if it
had been a big city,

641
00:31:26,900 --> 00:31:30,830
it wouldn't have
struck me as unusual.

642
00:31:30,830 --> 00:31:31,730
But why there?

643
00:31:31,730 --> 00:31:34,010
And this really does--

644
00:31:34,010 --> 00:31:36,380
it does illustrate what
happened to a lot of people

645
00:31:36,380 --> 00:31:37,610
moving westwards.

646
00:31:37,610 --> 00:31:39,260
I mean, a lot of
people who were trying

647
00:31:39,260 --> 00:31:42,800
to leave the Soviet zones
into the Western zones, how

648
00:31:42,800 --> 00:31:46,476
they got there, how--

649

00:31:46,476 --> 00:31:48,800

what kind of treatment
ethnic Germans

650

00:31:48,800 --> 00:31:52,820

had in Poland when
the war turns,

651

00:31:52,820 --> 00:31:56,200

when the Soviets
liberate Poland,

652

00:31:56,200 --> 00:31:58,690

and then how they behave
to them and so on.

653

00:31:58,690 --> 00:31:59,410

Yes.

654

00:31:59,410 --> 00:32:04,420

Did Hans ever mention any fear
that the women might have had?

655

00:32:04,420 --> 00:32:05,140

No.

656

00:32:05,140 --> 00:32:05,640

OK.

657

00:32:05,640 --> 00:32:06,973

That was not part of this story?

658

00:32:06,973 --> 00:32:08,440

He didn't go into
that much detail.

659

00:32:08,440 --> 00:32:10,700

And, no, he's--

660

00:32:10,700 --> 00:32:13,450

661

00:32:13,450 --> 00:32:18,670

I'm 71, and he's about 76.

662

00:32:18,670 --> 00:32:22,660

And his hearing
and his faculties

663

00:32:22,660 --> 00:32:25,420

are not as good as they were.

664

00:32:25,420 --> 00:32:28,780

And it's not that easy
for him to communicate.

665

00:32:28,780 --> 00:32:32,500

But we communicate by
email occasionally,

666

00:32:32,500 --> 00:32:38,020

and then he's able to get things
like this write-up together.

667

00:32:38,020 --> 00:32:42,412

He was fluent in English
for a long time, so--

668

00:32:42,412 --> 00:32:43,370

What about your mother?

669

00:32:43,370 --> 00:32:47,530

Was she a storyteller, or not?

670

00:32:47,530 --> 00:32:50,860

In a way, she was.

671

00:32:50,860 --> 00:32:56,150

But she didn't--

672

00:32:56,150 --> 00:32:58,320

I can give you little examples.

673

00:32:58,320 --> 00:33:01,810

674

00:33:01,810 --> 00:33:07,990

She liked to talk

about the family.

675

00:33:07,990 --> 00:33:13,120

It was only when
prompted by me that she

676

00:33:13,120 --> 00:33:17,380

would talk about the
war in a specific way.

677

00:33:17,380 --> 00:33:19,300

And I can give you
an example, which is

678

00:33:19,300 --> 00:33:23,590

that, quite a few years ago--

679

00:33:23,590 --> 00:33:28,400

she died in 1995--

680

00:33:28,400 --> 00:33:32,950

I had read a book
with the German

681

00:33:32,950 --> 00:33:38,740

title, [SPEAKING GERMAN],,
which means "red flares,"

682

00:33:38,740 --> 00:33:42,740

but I wasn't sure what
[SPEAKING GERMAN] meant.

683

00:33:42,740 --> 00:33:45,170

I thought it might
be something else.

684

00:33:45,170 --> 00:33:49,990

So I asked my mother, and
she briefly said, oh, yes,

685

00:33:49,990 --> 00:33:51,460

it's-- they're flares.

686

00:33:51,460 --> 00:33:57,850

And I remember, in Warsaw,

during the uprising in 1944

687

00:33:57,850 --> 00:34:03,850
by the Polish home army,
that she saw red flares

688

00:34:03,850 --> 00:34:07,300
and could hear the rumble
of artillery and such.

689

00:34:07,300 --> 00:34:11,320
And she said that these flares
were used for the fighting men

690

00:34:11,320 --> 00:34:13,090
to communicate.

691

00:34:13,090 --> 00:34:13,630
Wow.

692

00:34:13,630 --> 00:34:15,139
So--

693

00:34:15,139 --> 00:34:17,570
So-- but tidbits like that.

694

00:34:17,570 --> 00:34:20,440
Yeah.

695

00:34:20,440 --> 00:34:28,780
Other than that,
if I can mention,

696

00:34:28,780 --> 00:34:33,070
she never expressed any
antisemitic feelings.

697

00:34:33,070 --> 00:34:36,400

698

00:34:36,400 --> 00:34:41,980
And I remember her
saying to me that--

699

00:34:41,980 --> 00:34:48,610
and I'm quoting-- boys on both
sides with whom I had danced

700
00:34:48,610 --> 00:34:49,699
were killed--

701
00:34:49,699 --> 00:34:50,199
Oh.

702
00:34:50,199 --> 00:34:51,679
--so-- as soldiers.

703
00:34:51,679 --> 00:34:52,179
Yeah.

704
00:34:52,179 --> 00:34:56,920
So she was somewhat torn
between her Polish identity

705
00:34:56,920 --> 00:34:59,028
and her German identity.

706
00:34:59,028 --> 00:35:00,070
Well, that's interesting.

707
00:35:00,070 --> 00:35:04,030
Did she see herself as a Pole?

708
00:35:04,030 --> 00:35:06,250
To a significant degree, yes.

709
00:35:06,250 --> 00:35:10,930
I would say more as a
Pole than as a German.

710
00:35:10,930 --> 00:35:12,820
That is interesting.

711
00:35:12,820 --> 00:35:15,250
Do you know what language
she spoke at home?

712
00:35:15,250 --> 00:35:18,730

I'm talking about
family of origin.

713
00:35:18,730 --> 00:35:19,420
German.

714
00:35:19,420 --> 00:35:24,340
OK, but was she equally
fluent in Polish?

715
00:35:24,340 --> 00:35:26,200
Absolutely.

716
00:35:26,200 --> 00:35:28,990
She was fluent in Polish.

717
00:35:28,990 --> 00:35:30,730
So they were living
in the Polish city

718
00:35:30,730 --> 00:35:33,960
even though they were in
kind of a sub-part of it

719
00:35:33,960 --> 00:35:36,390
that was Germanized.

720
00:35:36,390 --> 00:35:43,360
And my mother had extremely
good linguistic abilities.

721
00:35:43,360 --> 00:35:47,350
And she spoke not only
Polish and German,

722
00:35:47,350 --> 00:35:51,940
but she spoke English
fluently and Italian fluently.

723
00:35:51,940 --> 00:35:54,220
Those latter two
languages, did she

724
00:35:54,220 --> 00:35:58,330
have them when she was in Poland

or acquired them after she

725

00:35:58,330 --> 00:35:59,935
left and went westwards?

726

00:35:59,935 --> 00:36:04,930
Well, all languages
were acquired in Poland

727

00:36:04,930 --> 00:36:06,830
because she--

728

00:36:06,830 --> 00:36:09,970
not because, but in
connection with it,

729

00:36:09,970 --> 00:36:12,050
she worked as a journalist.

730

00:36:12,050 --> 00:36:12,550
Wow.

731

00:36:12,550 --> 00:36:16,858
And had a lot of contact with
people in other countries.

732

00:36:16,858 --> 00:36:17,650
So this is before--

733

00:36:17,650 --> 00:36:21,550
And was always interested in
other cultures and nations

734

00:36:21,550 --> 00:36:22,270
and such.

735

00:36:22,270 --> 00:36:23,960
So this was before the war.

736

00:36:23,960 --> 00:36:26,980
Yes, that was her job.

737

00:36:26,980 --> 00:36:29,710
Was she a radio journalist,

a print journalist?

738

00:36:29,710 --> 00:36:30,520
Print.

739

00:36:30,520 --> 00:36:32,850
Do you know the name of
the newspaper or magazine?

740

00:36:32,850 --> 00:36:35,680
Unfortunately not,
but I do know that it

741

00:36:35,680 --> 00:36:38,710
was a German paper in Lodz.

742

00:36:38,710 --> 00:36:40,120
Oh.

743

00:36:40,120 --> 00:36:44,110
Oh, so, I mean, it
was a German paper,

744

00:36:44,110 --> 00:36:46,100
so it would have been
before the invasion.

745

00:36:46,100 --> 00:36:47,830
So it wouldn't have
necessarily had

746

00:36:47,830 --> 00:36:50,230
any kind of political
overtones, though it might have.

747

00:36:50,230 --> 00:36:54,110
No, I never got the
sense that it did.

748

00:36:54,110 --> 00:36:57,080
I possess some of her writings.

749

00:36:57,080 --> 00:36:58,610
Mm-hmm.

750

00:36:58,610 --> 00:37:05,510
And there's never any reference
to anything dodgy or anything

751

00:37:05,510 --> 00:37:06,630
strange.

752

00:37:06,630 --> 00:37:11,060
They're mostly stories
written for children that she

753

00:37:11,060 --> 00:37:12,890
was hoping to have published.

754

00:37:12,890 --> 00:37:15,110
Mm-hmm.

755

00:37:15,110 --> 00:37:19,700
I have other things that
she wrote that I referred to

756

00:37:19,700 --> 00:37:23,900
in my write-up where she
wrote about incidents

757

00:37:23,900 --> 00:37:25,460
that happened during the war.

758

00:37:25,460 --> 00:37:28,670
But, anyway, so yeah.

759

00:37:28,670 --> 00:37:29,780
You-- in the--

760

00:37:29,780 --> 00:37:31,100
I don't know if I have that.

761

00:37:31,100 --> 00:37:34,250
What I have is your email that
you wrote to Sara Bloomfield.

762

00:37:34,250 --> 00:37:34,750
Yeah.

763

00:37:34,750 --> 00:37:37,730

And, in there, I
wanted to ask you,

764

00:37:37,730 --> 00:37:41,120

still focusing on your
mother's side that you had--

765

00:37:41,120 --> 00:37:43,100

your mother's side,
you have a first cousin

766

00:37:43,100 --> 00:37:44,130

who was a Hitler Youth--

767

00:37:44,130 --> 00:37:44,205

768

00:37:44,205 --> 00:37:44,705

Yes.

769

00:37:44,705 --> 00:37:46,800

--a second cousin who
was in the Waffen-SS--

770

00:37:46,800 --> 00:37:47,300

Yes.

771

00:37:47,300 --> 00:37:50,930

--and an uncle who worked as
an historian for the commission

772

00:37:50,930 --> 00:37:53,750

appointed by Himmler
to decide what

773

00:37:53,750 --> 00:37:57,110

should be done with the civilian
Russian population in advance

774

00:37:57,110 --> 00:37:58,880

of the German
invasion of Russia.

775

00:37:58,880 --> 00:37:59,780
Yes.

776
00:37:59,780 --> 00:38:03,005
So can you tell me about
these people and who they--

777
00:38:03,005 --> 00:38:07,060
what their names were and
how you found out about this?

778
00:38:07,060 --> 00:38:08,355
OK, certainly.

779
00:38:08,355 --> 00:38:11,420

780
00:38:11,420 --> 00:38:18,750
I'll start-- OK, so, just
to clarify, we're talking--

781
00:38:18,750 --> 00:38:23,670
right now, I'm focusing
on Oskar Eugen Günther.

782
00:38:23,670 --> 00:38:25,610
OK, so your uncle.

783
00:38:25,610 --> 00:38:27,990
Yes, my mother's brother.

784
00:38:27,990 --> 00:38:29,870
OK.

785
00:38:29,870 --> 00:38:35,420
He, not surprisingly,
based on who he worked for

786
00:38:35,420 --> 00:38:39,630
and the purpose of the job,
was a right-wing person.

787
00:38:39,630 --> 00:38:40,130
So--

788

00:38:40,130 --> 00:38:40,713

Not the Nazi--

789

00:38:40,713 --> 00:38:45,410

Oskar Eugen was the one who worked for the commission.

790

00:38:45,410 --> 00:38:46,160

Yes.

791

00:38:46,160 --> 00:38:47,660

For-- by Heimler Himmler.

792

00:38:47,660 --> 00:38:51,770

That's quite-- I wouldn't say high position,

793

00:38:51,770 --> 00:38:54,060

but it requires someone who's educated.

794

00:38:54,060 --> 00:38:58,670

Well, he was a PhD in history.

795

00:38:58,670 --> 00:39:01,490

And he was a expert on Russia.

796

00:39:01,490 --> 00:39:02,390

No kidding.

797

00:39:02,390 --> 00:39:03,830

Uh-huh.

798

00:39:03,830 --> 00:39:06,350

So your mother's family, even though you

799

00:39:06,350 --> 00:39:08,660

don't know what your grandfather did, it sound--

800

00:39:08,660 --> 00:39:12,030

I mean, if she's a journalist and he's a PhD in history,

801
00:39:12,030 --> 00:39:17,510
we're not talking about a
family that was uneducated.

802
00:39:17,510 --> 00:39:18,050
Not at all.

803
00:39:18,050 --> 00:39:19,430
Yeah, we're talking about--

804
00:39:19,430 --> 00:39:22,868

805
00:39:22,868 --> 00:39:25,700
the word well-to-do, but
that doesn't mean well-to-do.

806
00:39:25,700 --> 00:39:29,180
It just means people who have
sent their kids to school

807
00:39:29,180 --> 00:39:32,480
in Poland were not of--

808
00:39:32,480 --> 00:39:36,380
they were upper class,
even if they may not

809
00:39:36,380 --> 00:39:37,370
have had the money.

810
00:39:37,370 --> 00:39:38,270
Mm-hmm.

811
00:39:38,270 --> 00:39:42,020
Yeah, I would describe them as,
in the current terminology--

812
00:39:42,020 --> 00:39:44,270
well, I don't--

813
00:39:44,270 --> 00:39:46,090
Use your terminology.

814
00:39:46,090 --> 00:39:46,590
Pardon?

815
00:39:46,590 --> 00:39:47,150
I'm sorry?

816
00:39:47,150 --> 00:39:48,470
Use your own terminology.

817
00:39:48,470 --> 00:39:49,640
I don't want to--

818
00:39:49,640 --> 00:39:51,710
Upper middle class is
what I would call them.

819
00:39:51,710 --> 00:39:53,300
OK.

820
00:39:53,300 --> 00:39:58,263
And my mother's family,
especially my grandmother

821
00:39:58,263 --> 00:40:02,090
and my mother's
mother, were convinced

822
00:40:02,090 --> 00:40:04,040
that they were
actually some kind

823
00:40:04,040 --> 00:40:07,940
of minor Protestant nobility.

824
00:40:07,940 --> 00:40:08,540
Mm-hmm.

825
00:40:08,540 --> 00:40:13,490
And I have a copy of a coat
of arms that I do not--

826
00:40:13,490 --> 00:40:15,890
I have never had authenticated.

827

00:40:15,890 --> 00:40:19,760

I made a few little--
anyway, but yeah, that's

828

00:40:19,760 --> 00:40:21,740

the essence of it.

829

00:40:21,740 --> 00:40:24,410

So he had a PhD in New Russia.

830

00:40:24,410 --> 00:40:25,740

Right.

831

00:40:25,740 --> 00:40:27,620

OK.

832

00:40:27,620 --> 00:40:34,520

So I want to tell you a quick
anecdote that says something

833

00:40:34,520 --> 00:40:40,470

about Oskar Eugen's attitudes.

834

00:40:40,470 --> 00:40:40,970

Yes, please.

835

00:40:40,970 --> 00:40:44,330

Not towards the Jews,
but when I-- as I

836

00:40:44,330 --> 00:40:47,930

mentioned, when I was 21 and I
took that trip around Europe,

837

00:40:47,930 --> 00:40:57,080

and I visited Oskar Eugen,
his wife, and my cousin Hans

838

00:40:57,080 --> 00:40:58,610

happened to be there also.

839

00:40:58,610 --> 00:41:00,470

OK.

840

00:41:00,470 --> 00:41:01,950

So we sat in the living room.

841

00:41:01,950 --> 00:41:03,650

I had just arrived.

842

00:41:03,650 --> 00:41:07,410

And I have to say this
in a German accent--

843

00:41:07,410 --> 00:41:07,910

[CHUCKLES]

844

00:41:07,910 --> 00:41:09,350

Please go right ahead.

845

00:41:09,350 --> 00:41:10,340

[CHUCKLES]

846

00:41:10,340 --> 00:41:14,690

--because Oskar Eugen
asked me in English, so

847

00:41:14,690 --> 00:41:17,720

what do you think should
be done about this problem

848

00:41:17,720 --> 00:41:19,160

with the Blacks?

849

00:41:19,160 --> 00:41:20,210

Oh, good god.

850

00:41:20,210 --> 00:41:21,830

[LAUGHS] OK.

851

00:41:21,830 --> 00:41:23,570

That was my introduction.

852

00:41:23,570 --> 00:41:24,070

[LAUGHS]

853

00:41:24,070 --> 00:41:25,070

OK.

854

00:41:25,070 --> 00:41:29,210
Ah, well, this is the mid-'60s,
and we have race riots

855

00:41:29,210 --> 00:41:30,680
in the United States and--

856

00:41:30,680 --> 00:41:31,180
Exactly.

857

00:41:31,180 --> 00:41:31,810
--and so on.

858

00:41:31,810 --> 00:41:32,810
That's the context.

859

00:41:32,810 --> 00:41:33,310
All right.

860

00:41:33,310 --> 00:41:33,810
Right.

861

00:41:33,810 --> 00:41:35,510
OK.

862

00:41:35,510 --> 00:41:40,970
And I do need to mention that
Hans, my first cousin, who

863

00:41:40,970 --> 00:41:43,430
was present, as I mentioned--

864

00:41:43,430 --> 00:41:45,530
I don't think he
batted an eyelash.

865

00:41:45,530 --> 00:41:52,820
But he became an academic
and also an expert

866

00:41:52,820 --> 00:41:55,640
on Russia and a PhD in Russia.

867

00:41:55,640 --> 00:41:57,890

But, at that time,
he was probably

868

00:41:57,890 --> 00:42:01,400

still a graduate student.

869

00:42:01,400 --> 00:42:06,840

And he had his nose in a
book almost 90% of the time,

870

00:42:06,840 --> 00:42:08,660

even when he was with company.

871

00:42:08,660 --> 00:42:12,800

So I don't know if he even
heard what Oskar Eugen had said.

872

00:42:12,800 --> 00:42:19,155

But their history has been
stormy throughout the time

873

00:42:19,155 --> 00:42:24,320

that I knew them,
because, as I mentioned,

874

00:42:24,320 --> 00:42:29,150

Oskar Eugen was very right-wing
and Hans was a socialist.

875

00:42:29,150 --> 00:42:29,970

But-- yeah--

876

00:42:29,970 --> 00:42:30,470

Ah.

877

00:42:30,470 --> 00:42:32,350

--he was a socialist.

878

00:42:32,350 --> 00:42:34,200

So they clashed a lot.

879

00:42:34,200 --> 00:42:34,700

Yeah.

880

00:42:34,700 --> 00:42:38,480
And Hans-- I tried to
get some information

881

00:42:38,480 --> 00:42:43,940
about Oskar Eugen from Hans,
but he just ignored my request.

882

00:42:43,940 --> 00:42:48,920
Well, I mean, as I say, it is
a not inconsequential position

883

00:42:48,920 --> 00:42:53,890
to have on such a commission.

884

00:42:53,890 --> 00:42:57,080
And so I'm assuming,
but you can tell me,

885

00:42:57,080 --> 00:42:59,720
did you ever learn
any details of what

886

00:42:59,720 --> 00:43:02,600
he did on that commission
and what kind of questions

887

00:43:02,600 --> 00:43:06,450
he had to deal with and
what was his job there?

888

00:43:06,450 --> 00:43:08,420
Yes.

889

00:43:08,420 --> 00:43:13,310
This is secondhand from
my father, who told me

890

00:43:13,310 --> 00:43:24,730
that Oskar Eugen work involved
assisting in making decisions

891

00:43:24,730 --> 00:43:30,490

about exactly how the Russian population should be treated.

892

00:43:30,490 --> 00:43:34,750

He, according to Hans also, by the way, who knows about this.

893

00:43:34,750 --> 00:43:37,050

And Hans actually done quite a bit about--

894

00:43:37,050 --> 00:43:40,900

Hans told me, essentially, plus what my dad said,

895

00:43:40,900 --> 00:43:42,950

what Oskar Eugen was up to.

896

00:43:42,950 --> 00:43:46,210

But my dad said that his job was kind of,

897

00:43:46,210 --> 00:43:49,750

as I mentioned, to decide on--

898

00:43:49,750 --> 00:43:51,700

could you-- would we stop for a minute?

899

00:43:51,700 --> 00:43:52,450

Yes, we can stop.

900

00:43:52,450 --> 00:43:52,950

Sure.

901

00:43:52,950 --> 00:43:56,800

Yeah, I have to say something to the [INAUDIBLE] gotten from

902

00:43:56,800 --> 00:43:58,220

my cousin, Hans--

903

00:43:58,220 --> 00:43:58,720

Yes.

904

00:43:58,720 --> 00:44:01,120

--and my father
which was consistent.

905

00:44:01,120 --> 00:44:02,260

Yes, OK.

906

00:44:02,260 --> 00:44:04,300

So it was your uncle's
role in this commission.

907

00:44:04,300 --> 00:44:08,660

And you were starting to
explain it in some detail.

908

00:44:08,660 --> 00:44:09,160

Yes.

909

00:44:09,160 --> 00:44:12,040

910

00:44:12,040 --> 00:44:18,700

Himmler's view, not
surprisingly, was that they--

911

00:44:18,700 --> 00:44:22,870

the population should just
be exterminated and the land

912

00:44:22,870 --> 00:44:26,370

taken over by German, Germans--

913

00:44:26,370 --> 00:44:27,010

Lebensraum.

914

00:44:27,010 --> 00:44:27,780

--immigrants.

915

00:44:27,780 --> 00:44:30,520

Yes, exactly.

916

00:44:30,520 --> 00:44:34,090

According to Hans, my
cousin, Oskar Eugen

917

00:44:34,090 --> 00:44:38,530
took a more moderate view.

918

00:44:38,530 --> 00:44:42,280
I don't remember if he said
whether it was that they should

919

00:44:42,280 --> 00:44:46,440
be turned into
forced labor or what,

920

00:44:46,440 --> 00:44:50,433
but he did not feel that
they should be killed.

921

00:44:50,433 --> 00:44:51,140
OK.

922

00:44:51,140 --> 00:44:54,070
But he was-- his opinion,
I mean, he wasn't--

923

00:44:54,070 --> 00:44:59,530
I'm not trying to portray
him as a major decider,

924

00:44:59,530 --> 00:45:01,600
but he had some kind of vote.

925

00:45:01,600 --> 00:45:06,400
But his opinion, in other
words, noone, not death,

926

00:45:06,400 --> 00:45:08,260
was overruled by Himmler.

927

00:45:08,260 --> 00:45:09,700
I see.

928

00:45:09,700 --> 00:45:12,460
And was he a party member,
a Nazi party member?

929

00:45:12,460 --> 00:45:15,490
No, he wasn't.

930
00:45:15,490 --> 00:45:17,470
He sounds like
the kind of person

931
00:45:17,470 --> 00:45:19,390
who might have
gravitated to that,

932
00:45:19,390 --> 00:45:25,510
but I'm certain, really,
that he was not a member.

933
00:45:25,510 --> 00:45:28,720
Well, just bec--
virtue of the position,

934
00:45:28,720 --> 00:45:31,240
that sometimes people
weren't even looked

935
00:45:31,240 --> 00:45:34,360
at if they weren't party
members or considered

936
00:45:34,360 --> 00:45:35,410
for such positions.

937
00:45:35,410 --> 00:45:38,900
Yeah, I can't
really address that.

938
00:45:38,900 --> 00:45:43,030
The only theory I have is that,
if you were an academic among

939
00:45:43,030 --> 00:45:46,200
many academics working
on this project,

940
00:45:46,200 --> 00:45:55,160
that as long as you sort of toed
the party line, that doesn't--

941
00:45:55,160 --> 00:45:57,070
I never heard anything
about him being

942
00:45:57,070 --> 00:45:59,800
pressured to be a party member.

943
00:45:59,800 --> 00:46:01,720
And--

944
00:46:01,720 --> 00:46:02,310
Let's--

945
00:46:02,310 --> 00:46:04,450
--I don't know the
percentages of--

946
00:46:04,450 --> 00:46:05,290
Yeah.

947
00:46:05,290 --> 00:46:07,390
--of people who were
sympathetic to the regime who

948
00:46:07,390 --> 00:46:09,100
actually became members.

949
00:46:09,100 --> 00:46:11,620
Well, that's, of course--

950
00:46:11,620 --> 00:46:16,120
one of the larger
aspects of this story

951
00:46:16,120 --> 00:46:19,210
is that you didn't
necessarily have to be.

952
00:46:19,210 --> 00:46:21,940

953
00:46:21,940 --> 00:46:24,350
Let's turn now to some
of the other relatives.

954

00:46:24,350 --> 00:46:25,990

You said there was
a first cousin who

955

00:46:25,990 --> 00:46:28,960

was in the Hitler-Jugend
and a second cousin who

956

00:46:28,960 --> 00:46:30,580

was in the Waffen-SS.

957

00:46:30,580 --> 00:46:31,210

Yes.

958

00:46:31,210 --> 00:46:32,410

Who would these have been?

959

00:46:32,410 --> 00:46:34,980

960

00:46:34,980 --> 00:46:36,153

Who they were?

961

00:46:36,153 --> 00:46:37,320

Yeah, what were their names?

962

00:46:37,320 --> 00:46:38,100

Oh, OK.

963

00:46:38,100 --> 00:46:41,730

964

00:46:41,730 --> 00:46:45,390

There's some construction
work going-- if you-- do

965

00:46:45,390 --> 00:46:48,990

you hear a chainsaw-like sound?

966

00:46:48,990 --> 00:46:50,910

I do hear a little
sound, but not--

967

00:46:50,910 --> 00:46:51,420
Somebody's--

968

00:46:51,420 --> 00:46:52,240
--but not much.

969

00:46:52,240 --> 00:46:52,830
OK.

970

00:46:52,830 --> 00:46:54,775
Yeah, it's--

971

00:46:54,775 --> 00:46:56,400
Is it something that's
very troublesome

972

00:46:56,400 --> 00:46:57,420
that you're hearing?

973

00:46:57,420 --> 00:47:03,060
It's bothering-- I can just
go a little bit further away,

974

00:47:03,060 --> 00:47:06,750
like into a bathroom or
something, and avoid, you know?

975

00:47:06,750 --> 00:47:07,680
Yeah.

976

00:47:07,680 --> 00:47:08,180
The noise.

977

00:47:08,180 --> 00:47:08,680
Yeah, is--

978

00:47:08,680 --> 00:47:10,142
So can we stop for a minute?

979

00:47:10,142 --> 00:47:11,100
Of course, we can stop.

980

00:47:11,100 --> 00:47:11,683

And I'll move.

981
00:47:11,683 --> 00:47:12,640
We can stop.

982
00:47:12,640 --> 00:47:14,940
Yeah.

983
00:47:14,940 --> 00:47:19,710
He has some construction
noise in his--

984
00:47:19,710 --> 00:47:23,550
OK, so we were talking
about the cousin who

985
00:47:23,550 --> 00:47:25,710
was in the Hitler Youth
and the second cousin who

986
00:47:25,710 --> 00:47:27,180
was Waffen-SS.

987
00:47:27,180 --> 00:47:29,100
Yes.

988
00:47:29,100 --> 00:47:36,840
The cousin who was in the
Hitler Youth was named Alfart--

989
00:47:36,840 --> 00:47:42,670
that's A-L, as in
Lance, F-A-R-T.

990
00:47:42,670 --> 00:47:43,260
Alfart.

991
00:47:43,260 --> 00:47:44,560
I never heard that name before.

992
00:47:44,560 --> 00:47:45,060
[INAUDIBLE]

993
00:47:45,060 --> 00:47:45,830

OK.

994

00:47:45,830 --> 00:47:47,280
There might-- wait a minute.

995

00:47:47,280 --> 00:47:51,900
Sorry, I believe it
was A-L-F-H-A-R-T.

996

00:47:51,900 --> 00:47:52,830
OK.

997

00:47:52,830 --> 00:47:54,030
Like Alf Hart.

998

00:47:54,030 --> 00:47:54,680
Yeah.

999

00:47:54,680 --> 00:47:55,200
All right.

1000

00:47:55,200 --> 00:47:56,460
Alfhart Günther.

1001

00:47:56,460 --> 00:47:57,030
Günther.

1002

00:47:57,030 --> 00:47:57,600
All right.

1003

00:47:57,600 --> 00:48:00,900
Right, and he was
Oskar Eugen son.

1004

00:48:00,900 --> 00:48:04,500
Ah, OK.

1005

00:48:04,500 --> 00:48:06,270
By the way, what
is the married name

1006

00:48:06,270 --> 00:48:08,220
of your aunt Anna,
which would also be

1007
00:48:08,220 --> 00:48:11,130
Johann's and Hans's last name?

1008
00:48:11,130 --> 00:48:14,760
Well, it so happens that,
because they were first

1009
00:48:14,760 --> 00:48:16,980
cousins, they were
both Günthers.

1010
00:48:16,980 --> 00:48:18,400
Ah, OK.

1011
00:48:18,400 --> 00:48:19,440
OK, fine.

1012
00:48:19,440 --> 00:48:21,035
So everybody's Günther.

1013
00:48:21,035 --> 00:48:24,190
So Oskar Eugen's son.

1014
00:48:24,190 --> 00:48:25,740
Right, Alfhart Günther.

1015
00:48:25,740 --> 00:48:28,710
Alfhart was in
the Hitler-Jugend,

1016
00:48:28,710 --> 00:48:29,710
or was in the Waffen-S--

1017
00:48:29,710 --> 00:48:31,960
Yes, he was in
the Hitler-Jugend.

1018
00:48:31,960 --> 00:48:32,460
All right.

1019
00:48:32,460 --> 00:48:34,050
Did you know him?

1020
00:48:34,050 --> 00:48:35,070
Yes.

1021
00:48:35,070 --> 00:48:36,480
I knew him well.

1022
00:48:36,480 --> 00:48:43,740
He came to my wedding, and
I saw him several times

1023
00:48:43,740 --> 00:48:48,390
during my childhood and also
when I visited at age 21.

1024
00:48:48,390 --> 00:48:51,510
But were-- if I were to
ask about your relation to

1025
00:48:51,510 --> 00:48:53,760
him versus your
relation to Hans,

1026
00:48:53,760 --> 00:48:57,190
would you have been closer
to Hans than to himself?

1027
00:48:57,190 --> 00:48:57,690
Or--

1028
00:48:57,690 --> 00:48:58,190
Much.

1029
00:48:58,190 --> 00:49:01,080
--does that no bearing
here on the story?

1030
00:49:01,080 --> 00:49:04,620

1031
00:49:04,620 --> 00:49:06,270
Very little bearing.

1032
00:49:06,270 --> 00:49:07,950
I was much closer to Hans.

1033
00:49:07,950 --> 00:49:10,890

1034
00:49:10,890 --> 00:49:15,930
Alfhart was extremely
pedantic to the point

1035
00:49:15,930 --> 00:49:18,900
that it was a family
joke between me

1036
00:49:18,900 --> 00:49:21,150
and my parents when
he came to visit,

1037
00:49:21,150 --> 00:49:24,540
because he'd flown
over from Germany

1038
00:49:24,540 --> 00:49:27,840
and he'd give a
five-minute discourse

1039
00:49:27,840 --> 00:49:31,650
about the altitude at which the
plane flew, and I'm not joking.

1040
00:49:31,650 --> 00:49:33,150
[LAUGHS] Good god.

1041
00:49:33,150 --> 00:49:39,210
He was a stereotypic German
in that way and kind of stiff,

1042
00:49:39,210 --> 00:49:41,850
but extremely intelligent.

1043
00:49:41,850 --> 00:49:45,390
He was an electrical
engineer for Siemens

1044
00:49:45,390 --> 00:49:47,970
and actually patented
a few things.

1045
00:49:47,970 --> 00:49:50,905
Very smart, but very science--

1046
00:49:50,905 --> 00:49:51,810
Scientific.

1047
00:49:51,810 --> 00:49:56,670
--scientific, and not a guy you
might want to have a beer with.

1048
00:49:56,670 --> 00:49:57,990
But Hans was.

1049
00:49:57,990 --> 00:49:58,786
OK.

1050
00:49:58,786 --> 00:49:59,700
Yeah.

1051
00:49:59,700 --> 00:50:00,940
So they're very different.

1052
00:50:00,940 --> 00:50:04,320
And I never really
developed any sort

1053
00:50:04,320 --> 00:50:07,920
of friendship-like
relationship with Alfhart

1054
00:50:07,920 --> 00:50:09,750
as I did with Hans.

1055
00:50:09,750 --> 00:50:11,940
Did he talk at all
about his experience

1056
00:50:11,940 --> 00:50:13,360
being in the Hitler Youth?

1057
00:50:13,360 --> 00:50:14,820
Absolutely not.

1058

00:50:14,820 --> 00:50:18,990

The only way I found
out was through--

1059

00:50:18,990 --> 00:50:20,670

I believe through Hans.

1060

00:50:20,670 --> 00:50:21,600

OK.

1061

00:50:21,600 --> 00:50:24,180

Or my father, one or the other.

1062

00:50:24,180 --> 00:50:28,230

OK, and then let's turn to the
second cousin in the Waffen-SS.

1063

00:50:28,230 --> 00:50:29,820

OK.

1064

00:50:29,820 --> 00:50:41,010

I knew a woman who was German.

1065

00:50:41,010 --> 00:50:42,410

She was a member--

1066

00:50:42,410 --> 00:50:47,570

she was like a second cousin
or something or third.

1067

00:50:47,570 --> 00:50:50,100

I never figured out
the relationship

1068

00:50:50,100 --> 00:50:53,280

because, frankly, I didn't
I didn't like her very much.

1069

00:50:53,280 --> 00:51:00,270

And she was part of the
Günther side of the family,

1070

00:51:00,270 --> 00:51:03,330

married to a German lawyer.

1071
00:51:03,330 --> 00:51:07,440
And they lived-- they came
to the US at some point,

1072
00:51:07,440 --> 00:51:14,310
but I never had any kind of
friendly relationship with her.

1073
00:51:14,310 --> 00:51:21,450
She-- my mother tended
to kowtow to people,

1074
00:51:21,450 --> 00:51:24,660
even when she didn't
like them or she--

1075
00:51:24,660 --> 00:51:27,480
I don't know whether she saw
the bright side of things,

1076
00:51:27,480 --> 00:51:31,450
the glass half full or
whatever metaphor expression.

1077
00:51:31,450 --> 00:51:37,260
But there were things about this
cousin, whose name was, or is,

1078
00:51:37,260 --> 00:51:44,010
Krista, K-R-I-S-T-A, and
the last name is Stahlmann,

1079
00:51:44,010 --> 00:51:52,980
steel man, S-T-A-H-L-M-A-N-N.

1080
00:51:52,980 --> 00:51:58,050
I will state that one of the
reasons that I couldn't stand

1081
00:51:58,050 --> 00:52:03,960
being around her was
that we would often

1082
00:52:03,960 --> 00:52:11,310

be forced by my father to go
to the house of an elderly lady

1083
00:52:11,310 --> 00:52:15,690
who was also a Volksdeutsche,
but a friend, not a relative.

1084
00:52:15,690 --> 00:52:20,020
And all of us would be crammed
into this tiny living room,

1085
00:52:20,020 --> 00:52:22,940
boring the hell out of each
other while the TV blared.

1086
00:52:22,940 --> 00:52:23,440
Oh, gosh.

1087
00:52:23,440 --> 00:52:28,300
And Krista just had an
unpleasant aura about her.

1088
00:52:28,300 --> 00:52:32,170
And sometime after
I got married--

1089
00:52:32,170 --> 00:52:34,150
my wife's name is Joan.

1090
00:52:34,150 --> 00:52:38,500
Krista sent some kind
of card or something

1091
00:52:38,500 --> 00:52:45,010
to us for some occasion that was
addressed to Edward and Nancy,

1092
00:52:45,010 --> 00:52:47,230
with Nancy, question mark--

1093
00:52:47,230 --> 00:52:48,340
Oh, good god.

1094
00:52:48,340 --> 00:52:50,200
--which became a

big family joke.

1095
00:52:50,200 --> 00:52:51,820
[LAUGHS] Yeah.

1096
00:52:51,820 --> 00:52:55,270
That, I think, says
a lot as, as-- says

1097
00:52:55,270 --> 00:52:56,590
how I thought about her.

1098
00:52:56,590 --> 00:53:00,670
So the bottom line is, to
get to the question at hand,

1099
00:53:00,670 --> 00:53:06,672
is that I only know through my
mother about this SS business.

1100
00:53:06,672 --> 00:53:07,630
And I don't even know--

1101
00:53:07,630 --> 00:53:08,980
She was the one.

1102
00:53:08,980 --> 00:53:10,930
Yeah, Krista's father.

1103
00:53:10,930 --> 00:53:14,770
Ah, so Krista's father was the
one who was in the Waffen-SS.

1104
00:53:14,770 --> 00:53:15,880
Right, exactly.

1105
00:53:15,880 --> 00:53:16,700
OK.

1106
00:53:16,700 --> 00:53:21,548
And do we know what kind of
role he had, what he was doing,

1107
00:53:21,548 --> 00:53:22,090

what he was--

1108
00:53:22,090 --> 00:53:23,410
Absolutely nothing.

1109
00:53:23,410 --> 00:53:24,550
I don't know anything.

1110
00:53:24,550 --> 00:53:26,390
It was never discussed.

1111
00:53:26,390 --> 00:53:26,890
OK.

1112
00:53:26,890 --> 00:53:30,190
It was just mentioned
in passing somehow.

1113
00:53:30,190 --> 00:53:34,930
And did-- were there
any other relatives who

1114
00:53:34,930 --> 00:53:42,250
were in some way part of the
regime in small ways, cogs

1115
00:53:42,250 --> 00:53:49,750
or involved in some sort of
organizations or activities

1116
00:53:49,750 --> 00:53:51,400
that you know of?

1117
00:53:51,400 --> 00:53:55,450
No, I only know of the two
we've been talking about.

1118
00:53:55,450 --> 00:53:58,570
And do you recall anybody
on your mother's side

1119
00:53:58,570 --> 00:54:01,420
of the family ever talking
about the Jews at all?

1120
00:54:01,420 --> 00:54:04,000

1121
00:54:04,000 --> 00:54:06,250
Never.

1122
00:54:06,250 --> 00:54:11,440
It so happens that
my grandmother

1123
00:54:11,440 --> 00:54:14,170
on my mother's side,
[PERSONAL NAME],, really

1124
00:54:14,170 --> 00:54:15,220
liked my dad.

1125
00:54:15,220 --> 00:54:18,130
And there are other
people in the family

1126
00:54:18,130 --> 00:54:19,450
who also liked my dad.

1127
00:54:19,450 --> 00:54:25,210
And no Günther that I have ever
spoken with ever gave me a hint

1128
00:54:25,210 --> 00:54:29,140
of anything disparaging
towards the Jews.

1129
00:54:29,140 --> 00:54:30,070
OK.

1130
00:54:30,070 --> 00:54:32,830
OK.

1131
00:54:32,830 --> 00:54:35,930
These are the sorts of
stories when you go down into,

1132
00:54:35,930 --> 00:54:39,640
in a detail, into an

example with a person who

1133
00:54:39,640 --> 00:54:45,670
has this individual
person with this name

1134
00:54:45,670 --> 00:54:48,640
and so on, it
sometimes disproves

1135
00:54:48,640 --> 00:54:51,340
all the arcs and
all the stereotypes

1136
00:54:51,340 --> 00:54:52,907
that people would have.

1137
00:54:52,907 --> 00:54:54,100
Uh-huh.

1138
00:54:54,100 --> 00:54:57,610
And that brings me to your
mother, who I haven't asked you

1139
00:54:57,610 --> 00:54:58,990
as much about.

1140
00:54:58,990 --> 00:55:04,840
But she sounds like she was
quite extraordinary in--

1141
00:55:04,840 --> 00:55:08,320
when you say that she was
someone who would say my--

1142
00:55:08,320 --> 00:55:11,140
ones that I danced
with and others

1143
00:55:11,140 --> 00:55:13,990
that I danced with,
they didn't survive, it

1144
00:55:13,990 --> 00:55:16,990
sounds that, from that, I

get the sense of somebody who

1145

00:55:16,990 --> 00:55:19,960
doesn't look at a
person's ethnic background

1146

00:55:19,960 --> 00:55:23,170
or religious background.

1147

00:55:23,170 --> 00:55:27,490
There I have to
interject something

1148

00:55:27,490 --> 00:55:34,760
that does not apply to the Jews
but does apply to Black people.

1149

00:55:34,760 --> 00:55:35,920
OK.

1150

00:55:35,920 --> 00:55:41,980
My mother expressed
on several occasions--

1151

00:55:41,980 --> 00:55:45,635
and I'll going into
them in a minute--

1152

00:55:45,635 --> 00:55:51,220
a very strong prejudice
towards Black people.

1153

00:55:51,220 --> 00:55:53,180
I'll give you some examples.

1154

00:55:53,180 --> 00:55:53,680
And one--

1155

00:55:53,680 --> 00:55:55,860
What about your father?

1156

00:55:55,860 --> 00:56:05,380
My father was uncomfortable with
Black people because he grew

1157

00:56:05,380 --> 00:56:07,990

up-- well, this is
true of my mother too,

1158

00:56:07,990 --> 00:56:12,350

but my father grew up
in, as did my mother,

1159

00:56:12,350 --> 00:56:15,235

an environment
where there were--

1160

00:56:15,235 --> 00:56:18,250

if a Black person walked
down the street in Lodz,

1161

00:56:18,250 --> 00:56:19,570

every head would turn.

1162

00:56:19,570 --> 00:56:20,450

Of course.

1163

00:56:20,450 --> 00:56:20,950

Of course.

1164

00:56:20,950 --> 00:56:22,090

That's Eastern Europe.

1165

00:56:22,090 --> 00:56:25,900

That's Europe at that time,
aside from France, perhaps.

1166

00:56:25,900 --> 00:56:27,430

Right.

1167

00:56:27,430 --> 00:56:29,200

But I think that--

1168

00:56:29,200 --> 00:56:32,120

I have to tell you
something about my dad

1169

00:56:32,120 --> 00:56:38,950

which relates to that, which

is in words that I frequently

1170
00:56:38,950 --> 00:56:44,440
hear myself saying, he was
an equal opportunity bigot

1171
00:56:44,440 --> 00:56:45,520
or hater.

1172
00:56:45,520 --> 00:56:46,360
[CHUCKLES] Oh gosh.

1173
00:56:46,360 --> 00:56:50,600
He had something negative to
say about every nationality.

1174
00:56:50,600 --> 00:56:52,510
And I'll give you
examples in a little bit.

1175
00:56:52,510 --> 00:56:54,490
The French didn't
wash their feet,

1176
00:56:54,490 --> 00:56:59,140
the British wore
dirty raincoats,

1177
00:56:59,140 --> 00:57:05,600
the Yugoslavs were
conceited asses, et cetera.

1178
00:57:05,600 --> 00:57:06,100
Et cetera.

1179
00:57:06,100 --> 00:57:09,730
So his attitude
towards Blacks was

1180
00:57:09,730 --> 00:57:14,336
that when we lived in Germany
and England, which is--

1181
00:57:14,336 --> 00:57:20,540
totaled 12 years of my life, he

didn't have that much contact

1182

00:57:20,540 --> 00:57:21,460
with Black people.

1183

00:57:21,460 --> 00:57:26,510
But once we got to New
York, well, I don't--

1184

00:57:26,510 --> 00:57:28,340
let me put it this way.

1185

00:57:28,340 --> 00:57:31,310
Compared to my mother, whom
I'll describe in detail

1186

00:57:31,310 --> 00:57:32,480
why I'm saying this--

1187

00:57:32,480 --> 00:57:35,540
compared to my mother, and
even not in a comparative way

1188

00:57:35,540 --> 00:57:39,110
but a general way, I
would say that my father,

1189

00:57:39,110 --> 00:57:42,290
even though he had
these stereotypes

1190

00:57:42,290 --> 00:57:44,300
about various
European countries,

1191

00:57:44,300 --> 00:57:46,480
he didn't have that
about Black people.

1192

00:57:46,480 --> 00:57:47,330
OK.

1193

00:57:47,330 --> 00:57:49,280
He didn't like Puerto
Ricans because, when

1194
00:57:49,280 --> 00:57:53,730
we came to New York, there had
been a very large immigration,

1195
00:57:53,730 --> 00:57:59,840
and the neighborhood we lived
in when we first got to New York

1196
00:57:59,840 --> 00:58:01,490
was pretty lousy.

1197
00:58:01,490 --> 00:58:04,970
We would hear bottles smashing
in the courtyard all night

1198
00:58:04,970 --> 00:58:07,170
and loud Spanish music.

1199
00:58:07,170 --> 00:58:09,830
And so that kind
of made all of us

1200
00:58:09,830 --> 00:58:12,800
not too happy with
that particular group.

1201
00:58:12,800 --> 00:58:16,170
But, anyway, my dad--

1202
00:58:16,170 --> 00:58:19,160
it wasn't at all
extreme, but with my mom

1203
00:58:19,160 --> 00:58:21,140
it was more extreme.

1204
00:58:21,140 --> 00:58:25,580
When I was 12 and, as I
mentioned, we came to the US

1205
00:58:25,580 --> 00:58:30,200
and settled in New York,
I started to make friends

1206

00:58:30,200 --> 00:58:34,820

and I made friends, among
others, with a Black boy.

1207

00:58:34,820 --> 00:58:38,690

And I asked my mother if he
could come up to our apartment,

1208

00:58:38,690 --> 00:58:41,180

and she absolutely said no.

1209

00:58:41,180 --> 00:58:43,130

She would not
allow him in there.

1210

00:58:43,130 --> 00:58:44,270

Oh.

1211

00:58:44,270 --> 00:58:45,260

Yeah.

1212

00:58:45,260 --> 00:58:49,910

And then, there's worse to come.

1213

00:58:49,910 --> 00:59:00,510

When I was about 23, I was in a
relationship with a Cajun woman

1214

00:59:00,510 --> 00:59:04,620

from Louisiana, who was what
they call a mulatto down there.

1215

00:59:04,620 --> 00:59:05,120

Yes.

1216

00:59:05,120 --> 00:59:08,880

And she had basically
Caucasian features,

1217

00:59:08,880 --> 00:59:15,290

but there was enough
Black genes to make

1218

00:59:15,290 --> 00:59:17,125

her somewhat distinctive.

1219

00:59:17,125 --> 00:59:22,220

But, anyway, to make
it brief, my mother

1220

00:59:22,220 --> 00:59:25,070

could not accept that I
was dating this woman,

1221

00:59:25,070 --> 00:59:28,070

and she called me
a n***** lover.

1222

00:59:28,070 --> 00:59:29,250

Oh, dear.

1223

00:59:29,250 --> 00:59:29,760

Yeah.

1224

00:59:29,760 --> 00:59:30,260

Oh, dear.

1225

00:59:30,260 --> 00:59:32,190

That was my reaction.

1226

00:59:32,190 --> 00:59:32,690

Yeah.

1227

00:59:32,690 --> 00:59:36,080

So I would have to say--

1228

00:59:36,080 --> 00:59:41,570

well, I would have to say, as
I mentioned, that in many ways,

1229

00:59:41,570 --> 00:59:46,280

and this is an example,
because my mother professed

1230

00:59:46,280 --> 00:59:50,300

in general not to be
a prejudiced person

1231

00:59:50,300 --> 00:59:53,630
and always said, oh,
you know, let them--

1232
00:59:53,630 --> 00:59:56,270
For example, I'll give
you an example of gays.

1233
00:59:56,270 --> 01:00:02,450
She always said, oh, you know, I
have nothing against gay people

1234
01:00:02,450 --> 01:00:07,250
except they get so
much flak and right now

1235
01:00:07,250 --> 01:00:09,320
and people don't
accept them and this--

1236
01:00:09,320 --> 01:00:12,215
but I think that, in
reality, she was--

1237
01:00:12,215 --> 01:00:16,045
I have to use the expression--
kind of two-faced.

1238
01:00:16,045 --> 01:00:16,820
And--

1239
01:00:16,820 --> 01:00:23,180
There's nothing like a child to
be able to see sometimes the--

1240
01:00:23,180 --> 01:00:25,670
hypocrisy might be a
bit of a strong term,

1241
01:00:25,670 --> 01:00:30,500
but parents have
their own self-image.

1242
01:00:30,500 --> 01:00:34,610
And it's the children who
often can see through that

1243
01:00:34,610 --> 01:00:41,240
and see what holes there
are in those self-images.

1244
01:00:41,240 --> 01:00:42,560
Yeah.

1245
01:00:42,560 --> 01:00:44,450
When I was talking,
I was thinking

1246
01:00:44,450 --> 01:00:47,720
more of that European
environment before.

1247
01:00:47,720 --> 01:00:50,720
You are speaking of
your experience of them

1248
01:00:50,720 --> 01:00:56,510
in another place, in another
country and other populations,

1249
01:00:56,510 --> 01:00:58,520
other people.

1250
01:00:58,520 --> 01:01:02,960
And, circumstantially,
the impression I got

1251
01:01:02,960 --> 01:01:08,270
is that it's unusual for
an ethnic German girl who

1252
01:01:08,270 --> 01:01:12,320
feels herself more
Polish to marry somebody

1253
01:01:12,320 --> 01:01:14,400
who was Jewish in the 1930s--

1254
01:01:14,400 --> 01:01:15,890
[? Correct. ?]

1255

01:01:15,890 --> 01:01:19,160
--or early 1940s at that
time and stick with them.

1256

01:01:19,160 --> 01:01:21,020
Yes, definitely.

1257

01:01:21,020 --> 01:01:23,550
So that makes an impression.

1258

01:01:23,550 --> 01:01:26,060
And I wonder what is her story?

1259

01:01:26,060 --> 01:01:28,160
What is she like?

1260

01:01:28,160 --> 01:01:31,220
Was she a bit of a
rebel in her family?

1261

01:01:31,220 --> 01:01:33,930
That's what I'd like
to flesh out with you.

1262

01:01:33,930 --> 01:01:36,560
Right.

1263

01:01:36,560 --> 01:01:43,565
I am thinking that
there was not a--

1264

01:01:43,565 --> 01:01:47,120
let me put it this way.

1265

01:01:47,120 --> 01:01:50,960
She wasn't, to my knowledge,
highly rebellious,

1266

01:01:50,960 --> 01:01:55,520
but I believe that,
compared to her sister, who

1267

01:01:55,520 --> 01:01:58,280
was extremely conventional, you

know, the one with the table

1268
01:01:58,280 --> 01:01:58,790
manners--

1269
01:01:58,790 --> 01:01:59,630
Oh, that's right.

1270
01:01:59,630 --> 01:02:01,760
Mm-hmm.

1271
01:02:01,760 --> 01:02:07,250
--that my mother, and
this will emerge--

1272
01:02:07,250 --> 01:02:13,640
if we end up touching on
other areas of their biography

1273
01:02:13,640 --> 01:02:16,140
and the war, this
will emerge later--

1274
01:02:16,140 --> 01:02:19,530
but I think that she
was very courageous,

1275
01:02:19,530 --> 01:02:24,870
and part of her courage had
something in common with some

1276
01:02:24,870 --> 01:02:27,255
degree of rebelliousness, yes--

1277
01:02:27,255 --> 01:02:28,290
OK.

1278
01:02:28,290 --> 01:02:32,070
--because she took on things
that most people wouldn't.

1279
01:02:32,070 --> 01:02:35,610
And do you know of
how your parents met?

1280

01:02:35,610 --> 01:02:36,840

Yes.

1281

01:02:36,840 --> 01:02:39,330

They both worked in a bank.

1282

01:02:39,330 --> 01:02:43,380

And they basically fell
head over heels in love.

1283

01:02:43,380 --> 01:02:44,740

Oh, my.

1284

01:02:44,740 --> 01:02:45,810

Oh, my.

1285

01:02:45,810 --> 01:02:47,910

Do you know the
name of the bank?

1286

01:02:47,910 --> 01:02:51,330

No, all I know is
it was in Lodz.

1287

01:02:51,330 --> 01:02:54,570

Have you ever been there?

1288

01:02:54,570 --> 01:02:59,940

Yes, and my father and I took
a trip together to Poland

1289

01:02:59,940 --> 01:03:03,480

so he could kind of show me
some of the highlights, which

1290

01:03:03,480 --> 01:03:06,850

included a couple of
his war experiences.

1291

01:03:06,850 --> 01:03:09,330

And so I visited
Lodz and visited

1292

01:03:09,330 --> 01:03:16,380

Warsaw and other major cities of
interest in Poland with my dad.

1293

01:03:16,380 --> 01:03:19,110

Did you visit any of
the concentration camps?

1294

01:03:19,110 --> 01:03:26,700

Yes, when I was in Warsaw
I visited Auschwitz.

1295

01:03:26,700 --> 01:03:27,540

OK.

1296

01:03:27,540 --> 01:03:28,980

With him or alone?

1297

01:03:28,980 --> 01:03:29,910

With him.

1298

01:03:29,910 --> 01:03:32,340

With him.

1299

01:03:32,340 --> 01:03:36,060

I've consciously wanted to
talk about your parents each

1300

01:03:36,060 --> 01:03:37,920

separately.

1301

01:03:37,920 --> 01:03:40,980

Is there anything else that
you think is important for us

1302

01:03:40,980 --> 01:03:44,220

to know about your mother's side
of the family and your mother

1303

01:03:44,220 --> 01:03:47,730

as a person before we
turn now to your dad?

1304

01:03:47,730 --> 01:03:51,100

1305

01:03:51,100 --> 01:03:55,360

Yes, I mean, I
think that I would

1306

01:03:55,360 --> 01:04:01,780

want to say that she was
quite the intellectual.

1307

01:04:01,780 --> 01:04:06,640

She was a housewife, and
my dad didn't do very much.

1308

01:04:06,640 --> 01:04:09,370

I mean, he was working,
so she was somehow

1309

01:04:09,370 --> 01:04:12,700

able to take care of
the home and also read

1310

01:04:12,700 --> 01:04:15,010

a lot of French
literature and poetry.

1311

01:04:15,010 --> 01:04:19,690

And she would write it down,
and she was very erudite

1312

01:04:19,690 --> 01:04:21,500

in those areas.

1313

01:04:21,500 --> 01:04:29,710

So I would say that she was
a significantly intellectual

1314

01:04:29,710 --> 01:04:30,850

person.

1315

01:04:30,850 --> 01:04:32,310

That's impressive.

1316

01:04:32,310 --> 01:04:33,040

Yeah.

1317

01:04:33,040 --> 01:04:36,340
And did she ever talk
about the war years

1318
01:04:36,340 --> 01:04:41,040
and about her
feelings about Poles

1319
01:04:41,040 --> 01:04:44,540
and about what happened
to the Jews of Europe?

1320
01:04:44,540 --> 01:04:47,320
Did you hear that from her?

1321
01:04:47,320 --> 01:04:49,810
If there was a wall of
silence from the others,

1322
01:04:49,810 --> 01:04:52,510
was that different
with her or not?

1323
01:04:52,510 --> 01:04:53,980
I would say not.

1324
01:04:53,980 --> 01:05:00,610
I would say that almost 100%
of what I learned and now

1325
01:05:00,610 --> 01:05:05,380
know about my parents'
experiences during the war

1326
01:05:05,380 --> 01:05:08,770
came from my father
in unguarded moments,

1327
01:05:08,770 --> 01:05:11,500
because he generally didn't
like to talk about it.

1328
01:05:11,500 --> 01:05:12,010
I see.

1329

01:05:12,010 --> 01:05:15,490
But he would sometimes, as
I mentioned in my write-up,

1330
01:05:15,490 --> 01:05:18,610
he would just think of
something and start crying

1331
01:05:18,610 --> 01:05:20,620
and have to tell us what it was.

1332
01:05:20,620 --> 01:05:21,350
Oh, dear.

1333
01:05:21,350 --> 01:05:21,850
Oh, dear.

1334
01:05:21,850 --> 01:05:23,200
Yeah.

1335
01:05:23,200 --> 01:05:30,280
And-- oh, I had a question,
but it escaped me.

1336
01:05:30,280 --> 01:05:32,440
If it comes back,
I will ask you.

1337
01:05:32,440 --> 01:05:33,250
All right.

1338
01:05:33,250 --> 01:05:37,720
Let's turn now to your father.

1339
01:05:37,720 --> 01:05:42,640
And tell me a little bit
about his personality.

1340
01:05:42,640 --> 01:05:47,050
Well, do you have about a day?

1341
01:05:47,050 --> 01:05:49,910
[LAUGHS] I know, it's not easy.

1342

01:05:49,910 --> 01:05:50,890
It's not easy.

1343
01:05:50,890 --> 01:06:01,090
No, and also, my dad was
and still remains an enigma.

1344
01:06:01,090 --> 01:06:04,900
And it's even hard for
me to say where to start.

1345
01:06:04,900 --> 01:06:08,960
But I'll tell you one thing.

1346
01:06:08,960 --> 01:06:12,000
Is it OK if I talk about his
childhood first [INAUDIBLE]??

1347
01:06:12,000 --> 01:06:13,630
That's exactly what I wanted.

1348
01:06:13,630 --> 01:06:15,100
This is exactly what I wanted.

1349
01:06:15,100 --> 01:06:17,920
It is-- when I talked
about personality,

1350
01:06:17,920 --> 01:06:19,630
I'm reverting back to--

1351
01:06:19,630 --> 01:06:22,480
excuse me, when I'm
interviewing somebody direct--

1352
01:06:22,480 --> 01:06:24,850
who has direct witness.

1353
01:06:24,850 --> 01:06:28,690
And so it's part of that "what
is your family background?"

1354
01:06:28,690 --> 01:06:29,680
question.

1355

01:06:29,680 --> 01:06:33,340

And so, yes, please do
talk about his childhood

1356

01:06:33,340 --> 01:06:36,670

and about his family
of origin and anything

1357

01:06:36,670 --> 01:06:38,890

that you know about that.

1358

01:06:38,890 --> 01:06:39,390

Right.

1359

01:06:39,390 --> 01:06:39,890

Sure.

1360

01:06:39,890 --> 01:06:41,490

And I know quite a bit.

1361

01:06:41,490 --> 01:06:41,990

And--

1362

01:06:41,990 --> 01:06:42,880

OK.

1363

01:06:42,880 --> 01:06:57,550

--he-- his father was a
grain merchant, which he,

1364

01:06:57,550 --> 01:07:03,070

my grandfather, my dad's dad,
apparently committed suicide

1365

01:07:03,070 --> 01:07:08,170

in the early '20s, and that fact
was only revealed to me about

1366

01:07:08,170 --> 01:07:12,790

two or three years
ago by a cousin--

1367

01:07:12,790 --> 01:07:14,770

On the other side, on

your father's side.

1368

01:07:14,770 --> 01:07:16,360

On my father's side.

1369

01:07:16,360 --> 01:07:19,360

I was extremely shocked,
because my father,

1370

01:07:19,360 --> 01:07:22,300

among many other
untruths, told me

1371

01:07:22,300 --> 01:07:29,140

that his father had died
of influenza at the time.

1372

01:07:29,140 --> 01:07:30,222

He--

1373

01:07:30,222 --> 01:07:31,180

Let me interject here--

1374

01:07:31,180 --> 01:07:31,270

--said that--

1375

01:07:31,270 --> 01:07:31,990

--for a moment.

1376

01:07:31,990 --> 01:07:32,720

Yeah, sure.

1377

01:07:32,720 --> 01:07:36,490

Do you think he might
not have even known?

1378

01:07:36,490 --> 01:07:40,120

Sometimes suicides at that
time were masked for children,

1379

01:07:40,120 --> 01:07:44,350

depending on how old they were
at the time that it happens.

1380

01:07:44,350 --> 01:07:47,780

My gut reaction,
first reaction, is

1381

01:07:47,780 --> 01:07:53,800

that my dad told me so many lies
over the years about his past

1382

01:07:53,800 --> 01:07:59,030

that I think he knew and
just elected not to tell me.

1383

01:07:59,030 --> 01:07:59,530

I see.

1384

01:07:59,530 --> 01:08:02,290

And it's not clear
to me, because there

1385

01:08:02,290 --> 01:08:05,230

are things that my parents did--
there are quite a few things

1386

01:08:05,230 --> 01:08:07,900

that my parents didn't tell
me that I discovered later

1387

01:08:07,900 --> 01:08:10,180

through other people.

1388

01:08:10,180 --> 01:08:15,220

I'm not sure whether it was
to protect me from hearing

1389

01:08:15,220 --> 01:08:18,729

this kind of sad family news.

1390

01:08:18,729 --> 01:08:19,540

I don't know.

1391

01:08:19,540 --> 01:08:21,160

I don't know.

1392

01:08:21,160 --> 01:08:26,560

But what I think-- what I

suspect is that he did know

1393

01:08:26,560 --> 01:08:31,240
because when he described
the consequences of his

1394

01:08:31,240 --> 01:08:37,960
father's death through the
glasses of someone who died

1395

01:08:37,960 --> 01:08:42,130
of the flu, even, that my
father was extremely traumatized

1396

01:08:42,130 --> 01:08:46,000
by his father's death because it
occurred at a time when he was

1397

01:08:46,000 --> 01:08:46,960
a teenager--

1398

01:08:46,960 --> 01:08:47,689
Oh, OK.

1399

01:08:47,689 --> 01:08:52,120
And a very bad time and he
gave me the strong impression--

1400

01:08:52,120 --> 01:08:55,540
and I'll be glad to talk about
this at any time you like--

1401

01:08:55,540 --> 01:09:00,399
he gave me the strong impression
that his mother, even when

1402

01:09:00,399 --> 01:09:04,180
he was young, was a very
difficult woman to deal with

1403

01:09:04,180 --> 01:09:06,850
and that their
relationship was stormy.

1404

01:09:06,850 --> 01:09:12,050

So had he actually
attended a yeshiva.

1405
01:09:12,050 --> 01:09:12,970
Mm-hmm.

1406
01:09:12,970 --> 01:09:16,250
Did he have brothers
and sisters?

1407
01:09:16,250 --> 01:09:20,859
He was an only child.

1408
01:09:20,859 --> 01:09:22,540
Oh.

1409
01:09:22,540 --> 01:09:26,120
And was his family
very religious?

1410
01:09:26,120 --> 01:09:29,770
I have to modify that.

1411
01:09:29,770 --> 01:09:35,140
His mother remarried not
too long before the war--

1412
01:09:35,140 --> 01:09:36,430
World War II?

1413
01:09:36,430 --> 01:09:40,840
--World War II--
and had a daughter.

1414
01:09:40,840 --> 01:09:44,770
So he had a half-sister, but
he had no relationship with her

1415
01:09:44,770 --> 01:09:46,680
to speak of.

1416
01:09:46,680 --> 01:09:50,770
But the half-sister only
came around years later,

1417

01:09:50,770 --> 01:09:53,770

10 years after my
father's death or 15.

1418

01:09:53,770 --> 01:09:55,480

Wow.

1419

01:09:55,480 --> 01:09:57,460

So she survived, in other words.

1420

01:09:57,460 --> 01:09:59,410

I'm not-- No.

1421

01:09:59,410 --> 01:10:02,050

No, she died in a
concentration camp

1422

01:10:02,050 --> 01:10:06,820

like the majority of my family.

1423

01:10:06,820 --> 01:10:10,480

But, anyway, what I was
saying is that, so, speaking

1424

01:10:10,480 --> 01:10:16,090

chronologically, I get the
impression that my dad was--

1425

01:10:16,090 --> 01:10:18,130

always seemed to me to
be very intelligent.

1426

01:10:18,130 --> 01:10:21,490

And I got the impression that
he was a very good student,

1427

01:10:21,490 --> 01:10:25,730

because he always
spoke contemptuously

1428

01:10:25,730 --> 01:10:29,930

of other students that
were slow learners.

1429

01:10:29,930 --> 01:10:36,020
My dad was athletic, and he
was a starter on the basketball

1430
01:10:36,020 --> 01:10:36,925
team.

1431
01:10:36,925 --> 01:10:44,070
And he had some well-off
and influential friends.

1432
01:10:44,070 --> 01:10:46,040
And, as I mentioned
in my write-up,

1433
01:10:46,040 --> 01:10:48,980
he was friends
with a man who was

1434
01:10:48,980 --> 01:10:51,140
a boy at the time
whose family owned

1435
01:10:51,140 --> 01:10:53,990
a theater that Yiddish
plays were put on,

1436
01:10:53,990 --> 01:10:55,820
and my dad would see them.

1437
01:10:55,820 --> 01:10:58,090
But at some point--

1438
01:10:58,090 --> 01:11:04,950
and this is a big blank in terms
of what I know-- at some point,

1439
01:11:04,950 --> 01:11:07,460
even though he came
from an Orthodox family,

1440
01:11:07,460 --> 01:11:12,230
as I mentioned, and went
to yeshiva and everything,

1441

01:11:12,230 --> 01:11:20,480
at some point in
his 20s onward, I

1442
01:11:20,480 --> 01:11:24,560
think that he kind of
renounced his religion.

1443
01:11:24,560 --> 01:11:26,540
But I don't know for sure.

1444
01:11:26,540 --> 01:11:30,380
But I got the impression
over the years

1445
01:11:30,380 --> 01:11:36,390
that there was no devotion
to the Jewish religion,

1446
01:11:36,390 --> 01:11:43,466
but there remained a
strong cultural attachment.

1447
01:11:43,466 --> 01:11:47,120
Tell me whether my
impression is right or wrong.

1448
01:11:47,120 --> 01:11:51,140
But, when you say that his
mother remarried shortly

1449
01:11:51,140 --> 01:11:52,670
before World War II--

1450
01:11:52,670 --> 01:11:53,750
Yes.

1451
01:11:53,750 --> 01:11:56,660
--does that mean that he
stayed in touch with her

1452
01:11:56,660 --> 01:11:59,660
or was kind of
estranged from her,

1453

01:11:59,660 --> 01:12:01,910
because you mentioned
also that he didn't have

1454
01:12:01,910 --> 01:12:04,650
relations with his half-sister?

1455
01:12:04,650 --> 01:12:05,150
Right.

1456
01:12:05,150 --> 01:12:08,300
Did he kind of fall out from--

1457
01:12:08,300 --> 01:12:10,430
Well, I think that--

1458
01:12:10,430 --> 01:12:21,020
because this wasn't-- this was
not too long before the war,

1459
01:12:21,020 --> 01:12:29,060
once my father got married,
not too long after that,

1460
01:12:29,060 --> 01:12:31,610
they had to leave
Lodz and go to Warsaw.

1461
01:12:31,610 --> 01:12:33,980
That's talking about your
mother and your father.

1462
01:12:33,980 --> 01:12:34,580
Yes.

1463
01:12:34,580 --> 01:12:36,170
I'm talking about
your grandmother.

1464
01:12:36,170 --> 01:12:36,670
Oh, yeah.

1465
01:12:36,670 --> 01:12:37,495
No, oh, yeah.

1466

01:12:37,495 --> 01:12:38,630

I understand.

1467

01:12:38,630 --> 01:12:42,530

But in terms of-- you're
talking about his mother

1468

01:12:42,530 --> 01:12:43,910

and the second marriage.

1469

01:12:43,910 --> 01:12:45,530

I know next to nothing.

1470

01:12:45,530 --> 01:12:52,862

I know that the second husband's
last name was Szejman, S-J---

1471

01:12:52,862 --> 01:12:55,292

Uh-huh.

1472

01:12:55,292 --> 01:12:59,630

S-J-E-J-M-A-N.

1473

01:12:59,630 --> 01:13:02,180

OK.

1474

01:13:02,180 --> 01:13:03,260

But I know very little.

1475

01:13:03,260 --> 01:13:07,460

But what I believe
happened is that there

1476

01:13:07,460 --> 01:13:12,890

may have been a mixture
of circumstances,

1477

01:13:12,890 --> 01:13:15,182

but a rift, maybe.

1478

01:13:15,182 --> 01:13:16,640

But I don't know
anything about it,

1479

01:13:16,640 --> 01:13:21,780
because my father really never
talked about his half-sister.

1480

01:13:21,780 --> 01:13:22,280
OK.

1481

01:13:22,280 --> 01:13:25,460
And he never talked
about Mr. Szejman,

1482

01:13:25,460 --> 01:13:28,730
and I think that always kind
of happened around the time

1483

01:13:28,730 --> 01:13:40,820
that my parents and my
grandmother ended up in Warsaw.

1484

01:13:40,820 --> 01:13:43,670
What I believe is
that my father--

1485

01:13:43,670 --> 01:13:48,650
I have a document that was
tracing my father's movements.

1486

01:13:48,650 --> 01:13:52,670
The Germans were
documenting his movements.

1487

01:13:52,670 --> 01:13:59,090
And it's noted in that
document, which dates from 1940

1488

01:13:59,090 --> 01:14:04,790
and a little before, it says
that, around 1940, there

1489

01:14:04,790 --> 01:14:08,180
was no further record
of his living in Lodz.

1490

01:14:08,180 --> 01:14:09,980
And that was probably

around the time

1491
01:14:09,980 --> 01:14:15,020
that my parents went to
Warsaw because my dad could be

1492
01:14:15,020 --> 01:14:17,030
sort of more anonymous there--

1493
01:14:17,030 --> 01:14:17,530
Yeah.

1494
01:14:17,530 --> 01:14:18,238
--while in Lodz--

1495
01:14:18,238 --> 01:14:21,050
I want to step back for a minute
and ask two factual questions.

1496
01:14:21,050 --> 01:14:22,400
Oh, sure.

1497
01:14:22,400 --> 01:14:24,650
One of them-- they're all dates.

1498
01:14:24,650 --> 01:14:27,650
Your father's date of birth,
your mother's date of birth,

1499
01:14:27,650 --> 01:14:29,270
and it can be just
the year, but I

1500
01:14:29,270 --> 01:14:32,400
want to get an orientation about
how old they were at that time.

1501
01:14:32,400 --> 01:14:37,530
Well, since I prepared a piece
of paper with those dates,

1502
01:14:37,530 --> 01:14:38,178
I mean--

1503

01:14:38,178 --> 01:14:39,220
You can just read it off.

1504
01:14:39,220 --> 01:14:40,053
[INAUDIBLE] exactly.

1505
01:14:40,053 --> 01:14:40,836
Yeah, hang on.

1506
01:14:40,836 --> 01:14:43,704

1507
01:14:43,704 --> 01:14:45,138
We can stop for a second.

1508
01:14:45,138 --> 01:14:48,500

1509
01:14:48,500 --> 01:14:53,450
What I actually have is my
parents' dates of death.

1510
01:14:53,450 --> 01:14:55,580
But since you're asking
about dates of birth,

1511
01:14:55,580 --> 01:14:59,330
as far as my father goes, he
had about three or four dates

1512
01:14:59,330 --> 01:15:00,160
of birth because--

1513
01:15:00,160 --> 01:15:00,680
No kidding.

1514
01:15:00,680 --> 01:15:01,180
[CHUCKLES]

1515
01:15:01,180 --> 01:15:03,590
Yeah, they have to
do with the fact

1516
01:15:03,590 --> 01:15:09,530

that he wanted to try
to avoid being drafted.

1517
01:15:09,530 --> 01:15:13,760
And I don't know if there was a
lottery system similar to ours

1518
01:15:13,760 --> 01:15:15,530
in the Vietnam era.

1519
01:15:15,530 --> 01:15:19,790
But, somehow, you know
his official birthday

1520
01:15:19,790 --> 01:15:22,635
was May 29, 1912.

1521
01:15:22,635 --> 01:15:24,407
OK, that's his
official birthday,

1522
01:15:24,407 --> 01:15:25,490
but then there are others.

1523
01:15:25,490 --> 01:15:26,150
Right.

1524
01:15:26,150 --> 01:15:30,170
There are about three others,
which have to do, probably,

1525
01:15:30,170 --> 01:15:34,010
with him assuming a false
identity of [? Konstanty ?]

1526
01:15:34,010 --> 01:15:36,880
[? Dombrowski ?] and having
to have that as his official

1527
01:15:36,880 --> 01:15:42,860
birthdate and such other ways
to kind of game the system so he

1528
01:15:42,860 --> 01:15:44,150
could survive.

1529

01:15:44,150 --> 01:15:47,750

As for my mother, I basically
don't know her birthdate,

1530

01:15:47,750 --> 01:15:50,900

but the year was
1912, as I mentioned.

1531

01:15:50,900 --> 01:15:53,550

As well-- That's for your
father, as your mother as well?

1532

01:15:53,550 --> 01:15:55,160

Well, both of them
were born in 1912.

1533

01:15:55,160 --> 01:15:55,790

Got it.

1534

01:15:55,790 --> 01:15:56,600

All right.

1535

01:15:56,600 --> 01:15:59,540

My mother was slightly
younger, just maybe

1536

01:15:59,540 --> 01:16:00,760

a couple months younger.

1537

01:16:00,760 --> 01:16:03,590

OK, and the date
that they married--

1538

01:16:03,590 --> 01:16:06,080

do you know that?

1539

01:16:06,080 --> 01:16:07,490

I can only give you the year.

1540

01:16:07,490 --> 01:16:09,407

They were married in 1939.

1541

01:16:09,407 --> 01:16:11,240

Oh, so they were married--
do you think they

1542
01:16:11,240 --> 01:16:13,410
were married before September?

1543
01:16:13,410 --> 01:16:13,910
Yes.

1544
01:16:13,910 --> 01:16:15,590
Because that's when
the Germans invaded.

1545
01:16:15,590 --> 01:16:17,910
Yes, they were.

1546
01:16:17,910 --> 01:16:25,880
OK, so they really marry at the
very beginning of everything.

1547
01:16:25,880 --> 01:16:26,460
Yes.

1548
01:16:26,460 --> 01:16:33,020
And so let's take the
story then further,

1549
01:16:33,020 --> 01:16:35,780
unless there are other things
from your father's background

1550
01:16:35,780 --> 01:16:37,520
that we should talk
about now, let's

1551
01:16:37,520 --> 01:16:41,000
go to the war years
when they're in Warsaw.

1552
01:16:41,000 --> 01:16:45,260
Is there something else we
should know before we go there?

1553
01:16:45,260 --> 01:16:46,050
Let's see.

1554
01:16:46,050 --> 01:16:48,590

1555
01:16:48,590 --> 01:16:50,300
I don't think so.

1556
01:16:50,300 --> 01:16:55,400
As I mentioned,
the 10 or 20 years

1557
01:16:55,400 --> 01:16:59,780
before the war kind of a
blank in terms of what I knew.

1558
01:16:59,780 --> 01:17:01,202
OK.

1559
01:17:01,202 --> 01:17:01,910
Was your father--

1560
01:17:01,910 --> 01:17:02,660
One thing--

1561
01:17:02,660 --> 01:17:03,620
Mm-hmm.

1562
01:17:03,620 --> 01:17:04,360
Go ahead.

1563
01:17:04,360 --> 01:17:07,430
One thing that I
did want to mention

1564
01:17:07,430 --> 01:17:17,660
is that my father told me that
he got out of military service

1565
01:17:17,660 --> 01:17:21,920
because he was the sole
financial support of my mother,

1566
01:17:21,920 --> 01:17:23,600
but-- oh, my grandmother, sorry.

1567
01:17:23,600 --> 01:17:24,740
His mother.

1568
01:17:24,740 --> 01:17:26,240
OK.

1569
01:17:26,240 --> 01:17:32,240
But, when my father passed
away, we, of course,

1570
01:17:32,240 --> 01:17:34,220
got a lot of his
belongings, which

1571
01:17:34,220 --> 01:17:38,175
included a box that had a lot
of his mother's memorabilia.

1572
01:17:38,175 --> 01:17:38,675
Oh, wow.

1573
01:17:38,675 --> 01:17:39,560

1574
01:17:39,560 --> 01:17:43,398
Yeah, and that box has been
very helpful to reconstruct

1575
01:17:43,398 --> 01:17:43,940
some of this.

1576
01:17:43,940 --> 01:17:46,730
And, in that box,
there's a photograph

1577
01:17:46,730 --> 01:17:50,360
of my father in what
is without doubt

1578
01:17:50,360 --> 01:17:53,581
a Polish military uniform.

1579
01:17:53,581 --> 01:17:55,610

Hmm, that's interesting,
given that you're

1580
01:17:55,610 --> 01:18:01,140
saying he made efforts to
be able to avoid a draft.

1581
01:18:01,140 --> 01:18:04,310
Right, and it's possible
that he was in uniform

1582
01:18:04,310 --> 01:18:06,200
and then got a discharge.

1583
01:18:06,200 --> 01:18:08,360
So I can't say that's--

1584
01:18:08,360 --> 01:18:10,910
I was surprised to see that.

1585
01:18:10,910 --> 01:18:14,840
Well, there could have been
also a draft of two years.

1586
01:18:14,840 --> 01:18:17,930
I mean, if he's born
in 1912, most young men

1587
01:18:17,930 --> 01:18:19,700
are drafted age 18, 19.

1588
01:18:19,700 --> 01:18:23,600
So that would have made it early
'30s, Polish army, two years,

1589
01:18:23,600 --> 01:18:26,210
and, yes, you're
discharged, and then

1590
01:18:26,210 --> 01:18:28,790
you're not a member
of the military when

1591
01:18:28,790 --> 01:18:30,890
actually the war starts.

1592
01:18:30,890 --> 01:18:35,630
Right, but my father,
among many untruths

1593
01:18:35,630 --> 01:18:39,370
that he told me, when I
was about 12, I asked him,

1594
01:18:39,370 --> 01:18:41,790
you know, Dad, did
you fight in the war?

1595
01:18:41,790 --> 01:18:43,760
And he said, yes.

1596
01:18:43,760 --> 01:18:45,890
And I asked him, did
you kill anybody?

1597
01:18:45,890 --> 01:18:49,880
And he said, no, I don't
know, they were too far away.

1598
01:18:49,880 --> 01:18:53,270
But, subsequent to that, it
appeared that he actually

1599
01:18:53,270 --> 01:18:56,990
was never in the army,
because he got this deferment

1600
01:18:56,990 --> 01:18:59,220
or discharge, whatever it was.

1601
01:18:59,220 --> 01:19:02,960
OK, so these are holes, in
other words, where you really

1602
01:19:02,960 --> 01:19:06,140
don't know what that
photograph means.

1603
01:19:06,140 --> 01:19:07,650
Right, exactly.

1604
01:19:07,650 --> 01:19:11,090
OK, That's all part
of the story, though.

1605
01:19:11,090 --> 01:19:11,780
Yeah.

1606
01:19:11,780 --> 01:19:15,950
And as many people say when
you talk about market research

1607
01:19:15,950 --> 01:19:19,790
surveys, when you get an answer
back and it says don't know,

1608
01:19:19,790 --> 01:19:21,460
don't know also says something.

1609
01:19:21,460 --> 01:19:24,140
Sure.

1610
01:19:24,140 --> 01:19:26,120
OK, when they went
to Warsaw, was

1611
01:19:26,120 --> 01:19:28,310
it your maternal or
paternal grandmother

1612
01:19:28,310 --> 01:19:31,310
that went with them?

1613
01:19:31,310 --> 01:19:39,300
My paternal grandmother
went, not with them,

1614
01:19:39,300 --> 01:19:43,940
but I believe followed
after my parents went.

1615
01:19:43,940 --> 01:19:46,580
OK, and she was in
the Warsaw ghetto.

1616

01:19:46,580 --> 01:19:47,760

That's right, yeah.

1617

01:19:47,760 --> 01:19:50,160

Along with the half-sister.

1618

01:19:50,160 --> 01:19:50,940

Yes.

1619

01:19:50,940 --> 01:19:54,190

And her husband.

1620

01:19:54,190 --> 01:20:02,170

Yes, everybody at that
time that lived in Warsaw

1621

01:20:02,170 --> 01:20:04,252

went to Treblinka.

1622

01:20:04,252 --> 01:20:06,270

So that's where
they were deported?

1623

01:20:06,270 --> 01:20:07,200

Yes.

1624

01:20:07,200 --> 01:20:07,700

OK.

1625

01:20:07,700 --> 01:20:11,310

1626

01:20:11,310 --> 01:20:16,020

Let's talk about your own
father and how did he--

1627

01:20:16,020 --> 01:20:18,990

1628

01:20:18,990 --> 01:20:21,490

tell me about how he survives.

1629

01:20:21,490 --> 01:20:21,990

Sure.

1630

01:20:21,990 --> 01:20:23,410

What are those four years like?

1631

01:20:23,410 --> 01:20:23,910

OK.

1632

01:20:23,910 --> 01:20:27,270

1633

01:20:27,270 --> 01:20:34,950

What happened was that, at some point after they got to Warsaw,

1634

01:20:34,950 --> 01:20:40,710

my dad with my mother's help, as I mentioned earlier,

1635

01:20:40,710 --> 01:20:42,210

took somebody's identity.

1636

01:20:42,210 --> 01:20:43,032

Mm-hmm.

1637

01:20:43,032 --> 01:20:43,740

[? Dombrowski. ?]

1638

01:20:43,740 --> 01:20:48,570

[? Konstanty ?]

[? Dombrowski. ?] And my mother

1639

01:20:48,570 --> 01:20:55,800

was out in the open and also, but she professed to be

1640

01:20:55,800 --> 01:20:58,600

a Volksdeutsche ethnic German.

1641

01:20:58,600 --> 01:21:02,000

And she actually worked as like an assistant

1642

01:21:02,000 --> 01:21:06,160

to the director of the German
Chamber of Commerce in Warsaw.

1643
01:21:06,160 --> 01:21:06,660
So--

1644
01:21:06,660 --> 01:21:08,340
I'm not surprised,
because they needed

1645
01:21:08,340 --> 01:21:14,850
trusted Volksdeutsche to be
able to man certain positions--

1646
01:21:14,850 --> 01:21:16,230
Right.

1647
01:21:16,230 --> 01:21:16,960
--at the time.

1648
01:21:16,960 --> 01:21:20,200
So that was-- you anticipated
a question that I had.

1649
01:21:20,200 --> 01:21:20,820
Oh.

1650
01:21:20,820 --> 01:21:24,000
So she went as Mrs.
[? Dombrowska. ?]

1651
01:21:24,000 --> 01:21:24,780
Yes.

1652
01:21:24,780 --> 01:21:26,170
OK.

1653
01:21:26,170 --> 01:21:28,170
[? Jadviga ?] [? Dombrowska, ?]
and she worked--

1654
01:21:28,170 --> 01:21:30,900
Well, let me put it this way.

1655

01:21:30,900 --> 01:21:33,270
That's a lacuna in the story.

1656
01:21:33,270 --> 01:21:40,050
And, actually, your asking this
made me realize that given how

1657
01:21:40,050 --> 01:21:47,670
many omissions and untruths
are part of the way my parents

1658
01:21:47,670 --> 01:21:55,500
related their war experience, I
now suspect that my mother did

1659
01:21:55,500 --> 01:22:01,080
not acknowledge being married to
my father but probably remained

1660
01:22:01,080 --> 01:22:04,450
a Günther, as far as the German
authorities were concerned.

1661
01:22:04,450 --> 01:22:04,950
Oh.

1662
01:22:04,950 --> 01:22:11,040
But I don't have any I don't
have any documentation at all

1663
01:22:11,040 --> 01:22:14,640
during the war years in
Warsaw of my mother's name

1664
01:22:14,640 --> 01:22:15,660
or anything.

1665
01:22:15,660 --> 01:22:19,230
But I have documentation that my
father remained [? Konstanty ?]

1666
01:22:19,230 --> 01:22:21,120
[? Dombrowski ?]
throughout the war.

1667

01:22:21,120 --> 01:22:22,697
Got it.

1668
01:22:22,697 --> 01:22:23,655
Did they live together?

1669
01:22:23,655 --> 01:22:28,450
So-- from what I understand,
they lived together.

1670
01:22:28,450 --> 01:22:36,580
They-- I mean, I'll give you
a sketch of what I understand

1671
01:22:36,580 --> 01:22:41,280
were some of the factors
that led to their survival.

1672
01:22:41,280 --> 01:22:45,600
First of all, in terms of my
father's personality, one very

1673
01:22:45,600 --> 01:22:50,010
significant aspect was that
he was not only very bright

1674
01:22:50,010 --> 01:22:54,630
in an intellectual
way, although I

1675
01:22:54,630 --> 01:22:57,150
don't think he went that
far beyond high school,

1676
01:22:57,150 --> 01:22:59,550
but he always came
across as someone

1677
01:22:59,550 --> 01:23:00,630
who had gone to college.

1678
01:23:00,630 --> 01:23:02,760
And he knew an awful
lot about certain areas.

1679

01:23:02,760 --> 01:23:04,260
But the point is that--

1680
01:23:04,260 --> 01:23:06,930

1681
01:23:06,930 --> 01:23:09,340
now I've lost my
train [LAUGHING]----

1682
01:23:09,340 --> 01:23:09,840
It happens.

1683
01:23:09,840 --> 01:23:10,380
Don't worry.

1684
01:23:10,380 --> 01:23:10,970
It happens.

1685
01:23:10,970 --> 01:23:11,470
Yes.

1686
01:23:11,470 --> 01:23:15,760
What is something about how
your father survived it.

1687
01:23:15,760 --> 01:23:17,670
Oh, how he survived, yeah.

1688
01:23:17,670 --> 01:23:21,660
So, from what I
understand, they--

1689
01:23:21,660 --> 01:23:28,560
as I documented in my
write-up-- they had enough money

1690
01:23:28,560 --> 01:23:34,200
because my dad sold dental
equipment, drill bits

1691
01:23:34,200 --> 01:23:36,810
and things like that,
on the black market,

1692

01:23:36,810 --> 01:23:38,040
and god knows what else.

1693

01:23:38,040 --> 01:23:43,920
And they had enough money to
rent these extremely cheap

1694

01:23:43,920 --> 01:23:46,980
apartments that had been
occupied by Jews that

1695

01:23:46,980 --> 01:23:49,317
were thrown out and also
many Poles were thrown out

1696

01:23:49,317 --> 01:23:50,400
of their apartments, too--

1697

01:23:50,400 --> 01:23:51,030
That's right.

1698

01:23:51,030 --> 01:23:54,510
--and occupied by the
Germans, as you probably know.

1699

01:23:54,510 --> 01:23:56,730
So they seemed to--

1700

01:23:56,730 --> 01:24:03,630
I don't get the impression
that they were starving.

1701

01:24:03,630 --> 01:24:05,920
I don't think their--

1702

01:24:05,920 --> 01:24:10,350
their life was very hard,
because my dad was constantly

1703

01:24:10,350 --> 01:24:13,530
on his guard, afraid
he's going to reveal

1704

01:24:13,530 --> 01:24:15,390

his Jewishness some way.

1705

01:24:15,390 --> 01:24:16,320
Did he look Jewish?

1706

01:24:16,320 --> 01:24:17,060
They had-- huh?

1707

01:24:17,060 --> 01:24:17,560
Sorry?

1708

01:24:17,560 --> 01:24:19,740
Let me-- I mean, it's
a blunt question,

1709

01:24:19,740 --> 01:24:20,698
but did he look Jewish?

1710

01:24:20,698 --> 01:24:22,032
Did he look like he could pass--

1711

01:24:22,032 --> 01:24:22,570
Oh, no.

1712

01:24:22,570 --> 01:24:24,850
Not in-- no.

1713

01:24:24,850 --> 01:24:28,350
That, I think was a very
major factor in his survival,

1714

01:24:28,350 --> 01:24:32,760
is that he looked not in
the least Jewish, not even--

1715

01:24:32,760 --> 01:24:35,010
nobody would look at
this photograph and say,

1716

01:24:35,010 --> 01:24:36,610
this guy looks Jewish.

1717

01:24:36,610 --> 01:24:38,290
Ah, I see.

1718
01:24:38,290 --> 01:24:43,440
He was extremely
good-looking, but in a--

1719
01:24:43,440 --> 01:24:47,250
he could have been French,
German, Polish, but not--

1720
01:24:47,250 --> 01:24:54,120
nothing suggested any
Jewish genetic traits

1721
01:24:54,120 --> 01:24:56,160
and reflected in his looks.

1722
01:24:56,160 --> 01:24:57,730
So that was a big thing.

1723
01:24:57,730 --> 01:25:00,000
Another factor was
that my father--

1724
01:25:00,000 --> 01:25:03,660
and I believe this has to
do with what I mentioned

1725
01:25:03,660 --> 01:25:09,150
about some kind of alienation
from Judaism that happened must

1726
01:25:09,150 --> 01:25:11,130
have happened for some time--

1727
01:25:11,130 --> 01:25:14,850
because I don't know if
you're aware, but most

1728
01:25:14,850 --> 01:25:18,570
Polish Jews had a very
distinct strong accent

1729
01:25:18,570 --> 01:25:20,988
when they spoke Polish,
even if they were fluent.

1730
01:25:20,988 --> 01:25:21,780
That happens, yeah.

1731
01:25:21,780 --> 01:25:22,280
Yeah.

1732
01:25:22,280 --> 01:25:23,850
That is across Eastern Europe.

1733
01:25:23,850 --> 01:25:24,550
Mm-hmm.

1734
01:25:24,550 --> 01:25:25,240
Right.

1735
01:25:25,240 --> 01:25:29,850
My father had absolutely
no accent for some reason.

1736
01:25:29,850 --> 01:25:30,810
Do you speak Polish?

1737
01:25:30,810 --> 01:25:31,560
Because I think he had--

1738
01:25:31,560 --> 01:25:32,060
I'm sorry?

1739
01:25:32,060 --> 01:25:34,020
Do you speak Polish?

1740
01:25:34,020 --> 01:25:37,590
I speak poorly, very poorly.

1741
01:25:37,590 --> 01:25:40,680
I can probably make myself
understood-- understandable

1742
01:25:40,680 --> 01:25:42,450
if I need to go to the
bathroom in Poland,

1743

01:25:42,450 --> 01:25:43,590
but-- stuff like that.

1744
01:25:43,590 --> 01:25:45,480
I can read it, though.

1745
01:25:45,480 --> 01:25:47,670
But I don't understand
most of what I'm reading.

1746
01:25:47,670 --> 01:25:50,190

1747
01:25:50,190 --> 01:25:53,250
But you're describing
two key things, really,

1748
01:25:53,250 --> 01:25:57,030
that help towards
survival is the ability

1749
01:25:57,030 --> 01:26:00,300
to blend in and
hide in plain sight.

1750
01:26:00,300 --> 01:26:02,070
Neither your speech
gives you away

1751
01:26:02,070 --> 01:26:03,930
nor your looks give you away.

1752
01:26:03,930 --> 01:26:05,700
Right, and there
were other things--

1753
01:26:05,700 --> 01:26:08,430
and this reflects my
dad's common sense

1754
01:26:08,430 --> 01:26:11,280
and resourcefulness
and inventiveness--

1755
01:26:11,280 --> 01:26:18,630

is that he developed a certain
tact-- certain persona, not

1756

01:26:18,630 --> 01:26:20,880
a persona in terms
of personality

1757

01:26:20,880 --> 01:26:23,790
but in terms of his
physical presentation.

1758

01:26:23,790 --> 01:26:25,260
He was not a tall man.

1759

01:26:25,260 --> 01:26:26,490
He was 5' 8".

1760

01:26:26,490 --> 01:26:29,160
But he would walk very str--

1761

01:26:29,160 --> 01:26:31,410
with a very erect,
almost military,

1762

01:26:31,410 --> 01:26:36,060
posture, even into old age
and always walked fast.

1763

01:26:36,060 --> 01:26:38,970
He was always ahead of us
when we went somewhere.

1764

01:26:38,970 --> 01:26:42,900
And he decided that
it was to his benefit

1765

01:26:42,900 --> 01:26:45,150
to make eye contact with no one.

1766

01:26:45,150 --> 01:26:49,710
So he disciplined himself
to make eye contact

1767

01:26:49,710 --> 01:26:53,430
with no one to minimize the

chances of being recognized

1768

01:26:53,430 --> 01:26:56,490
or something coming to
somebody's mind that passed him

1769

01:26:56,490 --> 01:26:58,380
on the street.

1770

01:26:58,380 --> 01:27:01,650
And there are
probably other things,

1771

01:27:01,650 --> 01:27:03,390
but those are the
salient things.

1772

01:27:03,390 --> 01:27:05,070
Those are-- were
things he told me

1773

01:27:05,070 --> 01:27:10,710
about that he used sort
of as a survival tactic.

1774

01:27:10,710 --> 01:27:16,560
How is it that your grandmother
ends up in the ghetto

1775

01:27:16,560 --> 01:27:18,780
and your father does not
end up in the ghetto?

1776

01:27:18,780 --> 01:27:20,490
I know we've just
talked about what

1777

01:27:20,490 --> 01:27:24,180
helps him hide in
plain sight, but when

1778

01:27:24,180 --> 01:27:27,720
she follows your
parents to Warsaw,

1779

01:27:27,720 --> 01:27:31,620
does she live with them at any
time and then is rounded up?

1780
01:27:31,620 --> 01:27:33,720
Do you know how that happens?

1781
01:27:33,720 --> 01:27:36,030
No, I don't know
how it happened.

1782
01:27:36,030 --> 01:27:38,560

1783
01:27:38,560 --> 01:27:42,810
In fact, as I mentioned
a little earlier,

1784
01:27:42,810 --> 01:27:47,820
I'm not sure how my parents
presented their relationship

1785
01:27:47,820 --> 01:27:52,320
to the world at that time, i.e.
did they deny being married

1786
01:27:52,320 --> 01:27:54,510
or keep different names?

1787
01:27:54,510 --> 01:27:58,920
But I believe that one
reason is, for certain,

1788
01:27:58,920 --> 01:28:04,990
that my mother was
willing to take the risk,

1789
01:28:04,990 --> 01:28:08,910
meaning if it were found out
that she were married to a Jew,

1790
01:28:08,910 --> 01:28:13,110
she would be shot on the spot
and my father too, basically.

1791

01:28:13,110 --> 01:28:15,270
Not even-- they wouldn't
even bother with a camp.

1792
01:28:15,270 --> 01:28:16,860
Yeah.

1793
01:28:16,860 --> 01:28:20,430
Under those circumstances,
it was just cut and dried.

1794
01:28:20,430 --> 01:28:23,250
So what I believe is
that my mother played

1795
01:28:23,250 --> 01:28:27,030
a very significant
role, as having taken

1796
01:28:27,030 --> 01:28:30,390
on a German identity,
in my father's survival

1797
01:28:30,390 --> 01:28:31,560
some way or other.

1798
01:28:31,560 --> 01:28:32,070
I see.

1799
01:28:32,070 --> 01:28:35,550
But my grandmother
looked very Jewish

1800
01:28:35,550 --> 01:28:37,920
and spoke with a very
strong Jewish accent,

1801
01:28:37,920 --> 01:28:42,030
so it's not surprising
to me that she ended up

1802
01:28:42,030 --> 01:28:42,820
in the ghetto--

1803
01:28:42,820 --> 01:28:43,320

I see.

1804

01:28:43,320 --> 01:28:46,350
--whether somebody gave the
game away because there were

1805

01:28:46,350 --> 01:28:50,250
blackmailers everywhere looking
for Jews that they could turn

1806

01:28:50,250 --> 01:28:52,630
in for money, et
cetera, et cetera,

1807

01:28:52,630 --> 01:28:54,940
because, as you're
probably aware,

1808

01:28:54,940 --> 01:28:58,020
there was a lot of hostility
towards the Jews in Poland even

1809

01:28:58,020 --> 01:28:58,900
before the war--

1810

01:28:58,900 --> 01:28:59,400
Yes.

1811

01:28:59,400 --> 01:29:01,850
--just over hundreds of years.

1812

01:29:01,850 --> 01:29:04,230
So, anyway, let's see.

1813

01:29:04,230 --> 01:29:06,240
Do you want me to
continue-- so--

1814

01:29:06,240 --> 01:29:06,750
Yes.

1815

01:29:06,750 --> 01:29:08,940
OK, so basically,
as I mentioned,

1816

01:29:08,940 --> 01:29:11,220

they were able to afford
several apartments,

1817

01:29:11,220 --> 01:29:16,260

and, from what my father told
me, the German tactic was--

1818

01:29:16,260 --> 01:29:21,540

let's say Joe Blow is listening
to Churchill on the radio

1819

01:29:21,540 --> 01:29:23,430

and somebody turns him in.

1820

01:29:23,430 --> 01:29:26,460

The Germans would come, and
they wouldn't bother with just

1821

01:29:26,460 --> 01:29:28,420

taking Joe Blow to a camp.

1822

01:29:28,420 --> 01:29:32,870

They'd take the whole-- every
inhabitant of the building--

1823

01:29:32,870 --> 01:29:33,370

Right.

1824

01:29:33,370 --> 01:29:35,430

--you know, guilt
by association.

1825

01:29:35,430 --> 01:29:39,600

But my parents were
fortunate that whenever

1826

01:29:39,600 --> 01:29:42,960

the buildings they were
living in were raided,

1827

01:29:42,960 --> 01:29:43,770

they weren't home.

1828

01:29:43,770 --> 01:29:46,670

They were in one of
their other apartments.

1829

01:29:46,670 --> 01:29:49,672

OK, so they had multiple at
the same time, or more than one

1830

01:29:49,672 --> 01:29:50,380

at the same time.

1831

01:29:50,380 --> 01:29:50,963

Yes, they did.

1832

01:29:50,963 --> 01:29:53,670

And they just shuttled
from one to the other

1833

01:29:53,670 --> 01:29:58,110

to avoid being discovered.

1834

01:29:58,110 --> 01:30:00,270

Now, did your mother
ever talk about this,

1835

01:30:00,270 --> 01:30:04,020

or was it through your father
that you learned these things

1836

01:30:04,020 --> 01:30:05,610

about the Warsaw years?

1837

01:30:05,610 --> 01:30:09,630

This is all through my father.

1838

01:30:09,630 --> 01:30:12,750

And let's see, my--

1839

01:30:12,750 --> 01:30:15,420

I have a second
cousin, the one that

1840

01:30:15,420 --> 01:30:18,510

told me about my grandfather's
suicide, who had told

1841
01:30:18,510 --> 01:30:20,400
me a few things I didn't know.

1842
01:30:20,400 --> 01:30:22,140
He was another source.

1843
01:30:22,140 --> 01:30:29,160
And also, I have a second cousin
who lives in Israel with whom

1844
01:30:29,160 --> 01:30:34,620
I have been in touch
because the three of us,

1845
01:30:34,620 --> 01:30:40,170
meaning the male second whatever
cousin, the woman in Israel,

1846
01:30:40,170 --> 01:30:49,740
we all are in the process of
finalizing becoming inheritors

1847
01:30:49,740 --> 01:30:53,400
of land that was
purchased before the war

1848
01:30:53,400 --> 01:30:57,840
by my great-uncle on
my father's side, who

1849
01:30:57,840 --> 01:31:00,510
was murdered at Treblinka.

1850
01:31:00,510 --> 01:31:04,230
And we're the heirs to
some land in Israel.

1851
01:31:04,230 --> 01:31:05,730
Oh, wow.

1852
01:31:05,730 --> 01:31:09,150
So he had immigrated to
Israel and purchased land--

1853

01:31:09,150 --> 01:31:11,100

No, he was planning to.

1854

01:31:11,100 --> 01:31:16,080

See, this purchase of the land happened in the '30s,

1855

01:31:16,080 --> 01:31:17,430

before the war.

1856

01:31:17,430 --> 01:31:20,180

He was planning to retire to Israel.

1857

01:31:20,180 --> 01:31:23,260

Oh, and then the war took over and he would go into--

1858

01:31:23,260 --> 01:31:24,510

Everything went to hell, yeah.

1859

01:31:24,510 --> 01:31:25,830

Yeah.

1860

01:31:25,830 --> 01:31:29,940

Now, in your letter, you mention that over 50 members

1861

01:31:29,940 --> 01:31:32,160

of your family on your father's side

1862

01:31:32,160 --> 01:31:35,580

were murdered by the Nazis.

1863

01:31:35,580 --> 01:31:37,440

Yes.

1864

01:31:37,440 --> 01:31:41,640

And yet, in our description here today, it really

1865

01:31:41,640 --> 01:31:44,700

has a sense of a small

family, if talking

1866

01:31:44,700 --> 01:31:49,200
about nuclear family, your
father, his father who

1867

01:31:49,200 --> 01:31:53,190
is dead by that point, a
grandmother, and no siblings,

1868

01:31:53,190 --> 01:31:55,030
except for the half-sister.

1869

01:31:55,030 --> 01:31:55,530
Right.

1870

01:31:55,530 --> 01:31:58,110
Who would the other
people have been?

1871

01:31:58,110 --> 01:32:03,510
OK, yeah, I can
certainly address that.

1872

01:32:03,510 --> 01:32:08,550
The cousin that I referred
to, male cousin, I think maybe

1873

01:32:08,550 --> 01:32:12,690
you might want his name so you
can keep track of all these--

1874

01:32:12,690 --> 01:32:18,720
his name currently is Jacques--

1875

01:32:18,720 --> 01:32:22,385
as written in French,
J-A-C-Q-U-E-S--

1876

01:32:22,385 --> 01:32:23,090
Luben.

1877

01:32:23,090 --> 01:32:27,330
L as in Larry, U as in under,
B as in boy, E as in Edward,

1878
01:32:27,330 --> 01:32:28,180
N as in Nancy.

1879
01:32:28,180 --> 01:32:28,680
Got it.

1880
01:32:28,680 --> 01:32:29,580
Jacques Luben.

1881
01:32:29,580 --> 01:32:32,430
Jacques Luben, cousin in Israel.

1882
01:32:32,430 --> 01:32:33,250
No, no, no.

1883
01:32:33,250 --> 01:32:33,750
Oh.

1884
01:32:33,750 --> 01:32:35,440
Jacques Luben lives in Delaware.

1885
01:32:35,440 --> 01:32:35,940
[LAUGHTER]

1886
01:32:35,940 --> 01:32:36,470
Oh, OK.

1887
01:32:36,470 --> 01:32:37,710
He used to live in New York.

1888
01:32:37,710 --> 01:32:39,900
OK.

1889
01:32:39,900 --> 01:32:42,480
I babysat him when he was--

1890
01:32:42,480 --> 01:32:44,820
he's about five years or
six years younger than me.

1891
01:32:44,820 --> 01:32:48,120
I babysat him when we

first came to the US.

1892

01:32:48,120 --> 01:32:53,180
There's a whole-- I
want, for your sake,

1893

01:32:53,180 --> 01:32:55,530
to give you a
coherent narrative.

1894

01:32:55,530 --> 01:32:59,430
But there's a huge side
story to the relationship

1895

01:32:59,430 --> 01:33:04,950
between Jacques's
father and my father

1896

01:33:04,950 --> 01:33:10,200
and how it impacted on my
father's mother and things

1897

01:33:10,200 --> 01:33:11,550
like that.

1898

01:33:11,550 --> 01:33:14,670
But that seems to me
something that is really

1899

01:33:14,670 --> 01:33:18,360
kind of encapsulated
and maybe doesn't

1900

01:33:18,360 --> 01:33:21,008
fit with what you want
to know right now.

1901

01:33:21,008 --> 01:33:21,550
I don't know.

1902

01:33:21,550 --> 01:33:21,900
[INAUDIBLE]

1903

01:33:21,900 --> 01:33:23,370
Well, it's hard

to s-- yeah, it's

1904

01:33:23,370 --> 01:33:25,920
hard to say without
knowing the story.

1905

01:33:25,920 --> 01:33:26,800
OK.

1906

01:33:26,800 --> 01:33:27,360
But--

1907

01:33:27,360 --> 01:33:28,710
Could I just-- I'm sorry.

1908

01:33:28,710 --> 01:33:29,335
Sure, go ahead.

1909

01:33:29,335 --> 01:33:31,350
I'm sorry to interrupt, but--

1910

01:33:31,350 --> 01:33:31,860
Go ahead.

1911

01:33:31,860 --> 01:33:34,680
I was leading-- I was leading
up to answering your question

1912

01:33:34,680 --> 01:33:38,310
about how come 50 people, but--

1913

01:33:38,310 --> 01:33:39,498
Yeah, who are the 50 people?

1914

01:33:39,498 --> 01:33:40,290
[INAUDIBLE] family.

1915

01:33:40,290 --> 01:33:40,620
Yeah.

1916

01:33:40,620 --> 01:33:41,120
Mm-hmm.

1917

01:33:41,120 --> 01:33:46,200

OK, I think that
my father extended

1918

01:33:46,200 --> 01:33:49,380

the scope of the
people who had died

1919

01:33:49,380 --> 01:33:51,720

to cousins and second cousins--

1920

01:33:51,720 --> 01:33:52,620

That's fine.

1921

01:33:52,620 --> 01:33:54,150

It's--

1922

01:33:54,150 --> 01:33:56,250

--to make 50.

1923

01:33:56,250 --> 01:34:01,500

And Jacques Luben's
father, and I

1924

01:34:01,500 --> 01:34:05,820

think perhaps it would
be helpful to you

1925

01:34:05,820 --> 01:34:09,300

to record the name that--

1926

01:34:09,300 --> 01:34:12,510

he became Michael Luben--

1927

01:34:12,510 --> 01:34:13,170

OK.

1928

01:34:13,170 --> 01:34:14,880

--when he came to
the US, which was--

1929

01:34:14,880 --> 01:34:16,500

That is the father.

1930

01:34:16,500 --> 01:34:17,950
This is Jacques's father.

1931
01:34:17,950 --> 01:34:18,450
Yeah.

1932
01:34:18,450 --> 01:34:22,650
And Jacques and his wife
and Jacques's mother

1933
01:34:22,650 --> 01:34:27,870
all immigrated to the US
and settled in New York.

1934
01:34:27,870 --> 01:34:32,400
And all this happened
about five or six

1935
01:34:32,400 --> 01:34:35,730
or more years before
we got to New York.

1936
01:34:35,730 --> 01:34:36,330
So--

1937
01:34:36,330 --> 01:34:38,610
Post-war, in any
words-- in other words,

1938
01:34:38,610 --> 01:34:40,590
they survived World War II.

1939
01:34:40,590 --> 01:34:46,905
Yes, Jacques's mother was,
significantly, I guess--

1940
01:34:46,905 --> 01:34:50,363

1941
01:34:50,363 --> 01:34:51,780
Jacques's father
and mother didn't

1942
01:34:51,780 --> 01:34:53,490
meet until after the war.

1943

01:34:53,490 --> 01:34:56,550
So it wasn't like they survived
together, like my parents.

1944

01:34:56,550 --> 01:34:59,730
They didn't even
know each other.

1945

01:34:59,730 --> 01:35:02,640
Michael Luben, whose
other names I'll

1946

01:35:02,640 --> 01:35:04,230
tell you because
this is parallel

1947

01:35:04,230 --> 01:35:07,110
with my dad and his names--

1948

01:35:07,110 --> 01:35:10,360
Michael Luben was
fortunate enough

1949

01:35:10,360 --> 01:35:14,380
to be sent to live
in Switzerland just

1950

01:35:14,380 --> 01:35:17,070
before the war broke out.

1951

01:35:17,070 --> 01:35:18,100
OK.

1952

01:35:18,100 --> 01:35:20,410
But he eventually
returned to Poland

1953

01:35:20,410 --> 01:35:25,820
and also lived in plain
sight under circumstances

1954

01:35:25,820 --> 01:35:27,730
that I know very little
about because there

1955

01:35:27,730 --> 01:35:33,100
was a rift between that
part of the family and mine.

1956

01:35:33,100 --> 01:35:33,670
OK.

1957

01:35:33,670 --> 01:35:35,440
What was the relation between--

1958

01:35:35,440 --> 01:35:39,580
cousin relation between your
father and Michael Luben?

1959

01:35:39,580 --> 01:35:40,805
Were they second cousins?

1960

01:35:40,805 --> 01:35:41,305
Were they--

1961

01:35:41,305 --> 01:35:42,670
They were first cousins.

1962

01:35:42,670 --> 01:35:43,850
They were first cousins.

1963

01:35:43,850 --> 01:35:44,350
Yes.

1964

01:35:44,350 --> 01:35:45,180
OK.

1965

01:35:45,180 --> 01:35:45,680
So--

1966

01:35:45,680 --> 01:35:46,180
And--

1967

01:35:46,180 --> 01:35:47,890
Mm-hmm.

1968

01:35:47,890 --> 01:35:52,330

I don't know how Michael
felt about my dad,

1969
01:35:52,330 --> 01:35:57,190
but my dad, for a
number of reasons,

1970
01:35:57,190 --> 01:36:00,950
strongly disliked Michael.

1971
01:36:00,950 --> 01:36:01,450
OK.

1972
01:36:01,450 --> 01:36:06,460
And the dislike
grew over the years

1973
01:36:06,460 --> 01:36:10,870
due to certain circumstances
that I think probably--

1974
01:36:10,870 --> 01:36:13,825
I think they're a
little delicate, but--

1975
01:36:13,825 --> 01:36:16,570
You know what we--

1976
01:36:16,570 --> 01:36:17,650
I'm looking right now.

1977
01:36:17,650 --> 01:36:23,500
Let's-- in order to streamline
this a little bit, let's talk--

1978
01:36:23,500 --> 01:36:25,090
we have until 3 o'clock.

1979
01:36:25,090 --> 01:36:26,140
And then--

1980
01:36:26,140 --> 01:36:27,325
Oh, I didn't realize that.

1981

01:36:27,325 --> 01:36:27,610
Yeah.

1982
01:36:27,610 --> 01:36:28,510
Yeah, that's right.

1983
01:36:28,510 --> 01:36:31,570
Because we have a space that we
reserve so that we can actually

1984
01:36:31,570 --> 01:36:32,365
record audio.

1985
01:36:32,365 --> 01:36:32,905
Right.

1986
01:36:32,905 --> 01:36:33,405
Sure.

1987
01:36:33,405 --> 01:36:35,620
And I would suggest what we do--

1988
01:36:35,620 --> 01:36:37,810
I mean, by saying
this and interrupting,

1989
01:36:37,810 --> 01:36:40,750
I'm not saying these other
things are irrelevant,

1990
01:36:40,750 --> 01:36:45,350
but I'm saying let's get the
major part of the story down.

1991
01:36:45,350 --> 01:36:45,850
OK.

1992
01:36:45,850 --> 01:36:47,800
And, in some ways,
this is my fault

1993
01:36:47,800 --> 01:36:49,990
because I ask certain
details, and then we

1994

01:36:49,990 --> 01:36:51,573
go off on that tangent.

1995

01:36:51,573 --> 01:36:52,280
Right.

1996

01:36:52,280 --> 01:36:56,560
So I asked about the 50 people
and how would they have been--

1997

01:36:56,560 --> 01:37:00,340
but the real issue that--
or the real experiences

1998

01:37:00,340 --> 01:37:03,610
that we need to
get down are what

1999

01:37:03,610 --> 01:37:08,020
are the-- as many details of
that your parents told you

2000

01:37:08,020 --> 01:37:13,060
or your father told you about
his hiding in plain sight

2001

01:37:13,060 --> 01:37:14,920
experiences during the war?

2002

01:37:14,920 --> 01:37:15,610
Oh, absolutely.

2003

01:37:15,610 --> 01:37:19,270
And how he gets-- what is his
relationship to his mother?

2004

01:37:19,270 --> 01:37:21,040
Does he know what
happens to her?

2005

01:37:21,040 --> 01:37:23,920
Does he find-- does he ever
go into the ghetto himself?

2006

01:37:23,920 --> 01:37:24,650
Things like that.

2007
01:37:24,650 --> 01:37:25,150
Sure.

2008
01:37:25,150 --> 01:37:27,457
I can address all
that in great detail.

2009
01:37:27,457 --> 01:37:28,540
OK, let's talk about that.

2010
01:37:28,540 --> 01:37:32,650
OK, so if I talk too
much, just shut me up.

2011
01:37:32,650 --> 01:37:33,660
No, no, no, you're fine.

2012
01:37:33,660 --> 01:37:34,160
You're fine.

2013
01:37:34,160 --> 01:37:35,560
I tend to be very precise.

2014
01:37:35,560 --> 01:37:36,728
Maybe it's the German part--

2015
01:37:36,728 --> 01:37:37,270
[LAUGHS] No--

2016
01:37:37,270 --> 01:37:39,610
--if you don't mind me
speaking in stereotypes.

2017
01:37:39,610 --> 01:37:40,630
No, no, no, no, no.

2018
01:37:40,630 --> 01:37:42,940
And the issue is that
we can-- the next time

2019
01:37:42,940 --> 01:37:47,230

we have a reservation for a
space like this is in a month.

2020
01:37:47,230 --> 01:37:50,710
So we can always
come back and expand

2021
01:37:50,710 --> 01:37:53,090
on things at another point.

2022
01:37:53,090 --> 01:37:53,590
Right.

2023
01:37:53,590 --> 01:37:55,510
But for the next 40--

2024
01:37:55,510 --> 01:37:58,510
to use up the other time,
let's get most of the skel--

2025
01:37:58,510 --> 01:38:01,357
the spine of the story down.

2026
01:38:01,357 --> 01:38:02,440
I wanted to say skeleton--

2027
01:38:02,440 --> 01:38:03,010
Absolutely.

2028
01:38:03,010 --> 01:38:04,890
But the spine is
really what I mean.

2029
01:38:04,890 --> 01:38:05,390
And then--

2030
01:38:05,390 --> 01:38:07,050
OK.

2031
01:38:07,050 --> 01:38:09,010
OK, so your father--

2032
01:38:09,010 --> 01:38:13,090
and he sells dental equipment--

who knows what else he sells.

2033

01:38:13,090 --> 01:38:13,870
Right.

2034

01:38:13,870 --> 01:38:16,570
They move between
apartment and apartment.

2035

01:38:16,570 --> 01:38:22,090
It's not clear whether or not
officially they're married.

2036

01:38:22,090 --> 01:38:27,700
Your mother protects him, but
her own official sort of face

2037

01:38:27,700 --> 01:38:29,680
is one that she goes
by her name Günther,

2038

01:38:29,680 --> 01:38:31,720
as far as you understand.

2039

01:38:31,720 --> 01:38:32,390
Right.

2040

01:38:32,390 --> 01:38:32,890
OK.

2041

01:38:32,890 --> 01:38:35,015
One thing that I did want
to mention that I believe

2042

01:38:35,015 --> 01:38:37,330
is important is that
my cousin in Israel

2043

01:38:37,330 --> 01:38:43,330
says that she and her family,
when my parents visited Israel,

2044

01:38:43,330 --> 01:38:45,700
were told that my
mother converted

2045
01:38:45,700 --> 01:38:49,300
to Judaism after the
war, which I believe

2046
01:38:49,300 --> 01:38:51,110
is a complete untruth.

2047
01:38:51,110 --> 01:38:51,610
Really.

2048
01:38:51,610 --> 01:38:52,420
That was one thing.

2049
01:38:52,420 --> 01:38:57,850
I think that this was
part of my parents' way

2050
01:38:57,850 --> 01:39:02,170
that I mentioned of wanting
to, on the surface, gratify

2051
01:39:02,170 --> 01:39:04,510
other people's needs
and please them.

2052
01:39:04,510 --> 01:39:05,140
I see.

2053
01:39:05,140 --> 01:39:08,320
And I believe they told
this lie to the Israeli part

2054
01:39:08,320 --> 01:39:12,200
of the family because
of many factors,

2055
01:39:12,200 --> 01:39:16,300
including my father's guilt
about being Jewish and hiding

2056
01:39:16,300 --> 01:39:16,900
that fact.

2057

01:39:16,900 --> 01:39:21,370
And that was one place where
he could tell the truth.

2058
01:39:21,370 --> 01:39:23,470
OK.

2059
01:39:23,470 --> 01:39:25,890
But that I don't
believe was the truth.

2060
01:39:25,890 --> 01:39:26,390
I see.

2061
01:39:26,390 --> 01:39:29,590
So, anyway, let me get to
what you're asking for,

2062
01:39:29,590 --> 01:39:33,370
because I have a very definite
experience that my father

2063
01:39:33,370 --> 01:39:38,090
and mother related, my father,
verbally, and my mother

2064
01:39:38,090 --> 01:39:40,130
documented it in writing.

2065
01:39:40,130 --> 01:39:40,990
OK.

2066
01:39:40,990 --> 01:39:49,900
There was-- my father made
periodic trips into the ghetto.

2067
01:39:49,900 --> 01:39:54,850
As long as you wore
the proper armband--

2068
01:39:54,850 --> 01:39:57,460
if you-- or not
Jewish, obviously,

2069
01:39:57,460 --> 01:39:59,560

because you'd already
be in the ghetto--

2070
01:39:59,560 --> 01:40:02,920
if you were a Gentile Pole, like
my father was passing himself--

2071
01:40:02,920 --> 01:40:06,280
if you wore a certain
band around your arm,

2072
01:40:06,280 --> 01:40:07,720
you could enter the ghetto.

2073
01:40:07,720 --> 01:40:10,940
You were screened by a
policeman, a Polish policeman,

2074
01:40:10,940 --> 01:40:14,220
a German policeman,
then you could go in.

2075
01:40:14,220 --> 01:40:20,780
So what happened was that my
dad went in one time, and he--

2076
01:40:20,780 --> 01:40:22,160
wearing his armband.

2077
01:40:22,160 --> 01:40:28,580
And he wanted to
visit his mother.

2078
01:40:28,580 --> 01:40:29,600
So he visited.

2079
01:40:29,600 --> 01:40:34,280
And, at that time, his mother
and the second husband were--

2080
01:40:34,280 --> 01:40:37,180
the second husband
was still alive.

2081
01:40:37,180 --> 01:40:42,860

He visited the both of them
and his stepfather, I guess,

2082

01:40:42,860 --> 01:40:47,990
was insisting that he
give my father a fur

2083

01:40:47,990 --> 01:40:50,720
coat that he owned.

2084

01:40:50,720 --> 01:40:54,236
And my father fought--
you know, I don't want it,

2085

01:40:54,236 --> 01:40:55,010
blah blah blah.

2086

01:40:55,010 --> 01:40:58,520
It'll make me look weird
when I leave with two coats,

2087

01:40:58,520 --> 01:40:59,120
and blah blah.

2088

01:40:59,120 --> 01:41:03,660
But he ended up being
convinced to put it on.

2089

01:41:03,660 --> 01:41:05,900
So what happened
is that he started

2090

01:41:05,900 --> 01:41:07,470
to walk out of the ghetto.

2091

01:41:07,470 --> 01:41:12,650
He got about, I'd say, 20 feet
past the gates where the Polish

2092

01:41:12,650 --> 01:41:18,512
policeman came running after him
and said, the German gendarme--

2093

01:41:18,512 --> 01:41:20,720
you know, it's a combination

policemen and a military

2094

01:41:20,720 --> 01:41:21,800
person--

2095

01:41:21,800 --> 01:41:22,980
wants to talk to you.

2096

01:41:22,980 --> 01:41:24,740
So my father had to go back.

2097

01:41:24,740 --> 01:41:25,250
Right.

2098

01:41:25,250 --> 01:41:29,540
And, at that point,
the fur was discovered.

2099

01:41:29,540 --> 01:41:34,220
And my father was
arrested and taken

2100

01:41:34,220 --> 01:41:37,980
to a police station with a
whole bunch of other people.

2101

01:41:37,980 --> 01:41:41,600
But, from what he told
me, there was a long line

2102

01:41:41,600 --> 01:41:43,580
of people who were
being processed

2103

01:41:43,580 --> 01:41:45,200
who were under arrest.

2104

01:41:45,200 --> 01:41:46,880
And he just kept
going to the back

2105

01:41:46,880 --> 01:41:50,690
of the line until, finally,
the German officers that

2106

01:41:50,690 --> 01:41:53,790
were screening these people,
I think they got tired

2107

01:41:53,790 --> 01:41:54,920
and some of them left.

2108

01:41:54,920 --> 01:41:56,870
And, anyway, to make
a long story short,

2109

01:41:56,870 --> 01:42:02,150
my father was able
to persuade somebody

2110

01:42:02,150 --> 01:42:06,860
to act as an interpreter
for him with the Germans.

2111

01:42:06,860 --> 01:42:10,370
And my father
concocted a story that

2112

01:42:10,370 --> 01:42:13,910
was a complete lie
that made it look

2113

01:42:13,910 --> 01:42:17,930
as if the German policeman--
gendarme-- had been

2114

01:42:17,930 --> 01:42:21,020
negligent in not checking
his identity papers

2115

01:42:21,020 --> 01:42:22,730
or his having an armband.

2116

01:42:22,730 --> 01:42:23,910
Ah.

2117

01:42:23,910 --> 01:42:24,410
OK.

2118

01:42:24,410 --> 01:42:27,470
And as a side story, there
were blackmailers at the ghetto

2119
01:42:27,470 --> 01:42:30,470
gates who would look for
people who looked Jewish,

2120
01:42:30,470 --> 01:42:33,710
which my dad of course didn't,
and didn't have their armband

2121
01:42:33,710 --> 01:42:36,270
and then would say, we're going
to turn you in if you don't--

2122
01:42:36,270 --> 01:42:36,770
Hmm.

2123
01:42:36,770 --> 01:42:37,400
Yeah, pay up.

2124
01:42:37,400 --> 01:42:38,067
--give us money.

2125
01:42:38,067 --> 01:42:38,600
Yeah.

2126
01:42:38,600 --> 01:42:43,190
So, again, so my father went
to the back of the line.

2127
01:42:43,190 --> 01:42:48,170
He told a cockamamie story
to the German authorities

2128
01:42:48,170 --> 01:42:49,400
through the interpreter.

2129
01:42:49,400 --> 01:42:52,310
So, basically, the interpreter
told the authorities,

2130
01:42:52,310 --> 01:42:56,090
of course, what my dad

concocted, and they bought it.

2131

01:42:56,090 --> 01:42:57,200
And they let him go.

2132

01:42:57,200 --> 01:42:58,970
And they let him go, yeah.

2133

01:42:58,970 --> 01:43:00,660
That was a close call.

2134

01:43:00,660 --> 01:43:04,160
It was a very close
call, and he had one--

2135

01:43:04,160 --> 01:43:07,040
he had maybe, yeah, a
couple of close calls.

2136

01:43:07,040 --> 01:43:11,300
The only one I know in
detail is very simple.

2137

01:43:11,300 --> 01:43:13,880
And he showed me the
spot where it happened.

2138

01:43:13,880 --> 01:43:17,690
Towards the end of the
war, a sniper shot at him

2139

01:43:17,690 --> 01:43:20,270
and missed his head by a
couple inches or something,

2140

01:43:20,270 --> 01:43:23,520
and the bullet ended up in
a pile of coal next to him.

2141

01:43:23,520 --> 01:43:25,743
And he showed me
exactly that spot.

2142

01:43:25,743 --> 01:43:29,480
But there was that

and then also he

2143
01:43:29,480 --> 01:43:31,700
was arrested for something
else and ended up

2144
01:43:31,700 --> 01:43:38,545
with being interrogated
by a German officer who

2145
01:43:38,545 --> 01:43:42,260
referred to him as
a dog and ended up

2146
01:43:42,260 --> 01:43:44,560
being killed by the
Russians shortly after,

2147
01:43:44,560 --> 01:43:47,600
and my father actually
saw his dead body

2148
01:43:47,600 --> 01:43:49,460
in the street lying dead.

2149
01:43:49,460 --> 01:43:50,450
Wow.

2150
01:43:50,450 --> 01:43:51,690
Same guy?

2151
01:43:51,690 --> 01:43:53,000
Yeah, the same guy.

2152
01:43:53,000 --> 01:43:54,980
And my dad also--

2153
01:43:54,980 --> 01:43:56,660
this is one instance where--

2154
01:43:56,660 --> 01:43:58,720
he told this story
more than once,

2155

01:43:58,720 --> 01:44:03,500
whether to us, and sometimes
to people we were having--

2156
01:44:03,500 --> 01:44:04,580
company, basically.

2157
01:44:04,580 --> 01:44:08,510
And that was a story
where he burst out crying.

2158
01:44:08,510 --> 01:44:10,950
And we'd ask him what was wrong.

2159
01:44:10,950 --> 01:44:16,740
And he would say that he heard
a Pole being beaten to death.

2160
01:44:16,740 --> 01:44:19,490
Not clear if it was by
Germans or other Poles,

2161
01:44:19,490 --> 01:44:21,860
but he was being beaten
to death, apparently,

2162
01:44:21,860 --> 01:44:23,060
because my father--

2163
01:44:23,060 --> 01:44:27,890
my mother saw the body later
and was yelling for help.

2164
01:44:27,890 --> 01:44:31,330
And my father felt helpless,
because he couldn't do anything

2165
01:44:31,330 --> 01:44:32,720
to assist.

2166
01:44:32,720 --> 01:44:34,820
So he's hearing
these screams, then.

2167
01:44:34,820 --> 01:44:35,690

Yeah.

2168

01:44:35,690 --> 01:44:38,270

And feeling this
tremendous guilt--

2169

01:44:38,270 --> 01:44:38,960

Yeah.

2170

01:44:38,960 --> 01:44:42,475

--which was probably part of
his general survivor guilt,

2171

01:44:42,475 --> 01:44:47,240

to lump into a phrase,
for being with my mother,

2172

01:44:47,240 --> 01:44:51,110

for being with the Germans,
for being all these things.

2173

01:44:51,110 --> 01:44:53,360

You think that was
a big thing for him?

2174

01:44:53,360 --> 01:44:58,910

I mean, was this something
that you saw as a young child

2175

01:44:58,910 --> 01:45:01,550

growing up with him?

2176

01:45:01,550 --> 01:45:03,470

The survivor guilt
aspect, right?

2177

01:45:03,470 --> 01:45:03,970

Yeah.

2178

01:45:03,970 --> 01:45:04,720

Yeah, [INAUDIBLE].

2179

01:45:04,720 --> 01:45:12,190

Well, I can't say that it was
the kind of why did I survive

2180
01:45:12,190 --> 01:45:14,840
and, you know, the stereotype,
and everybody else died?

2181
01:45:14,840 --> 01:45:16,760
It wasn't anything like that.

2182
01:45:16,760 --> 01:45:19,810
It was more what
I saw particularly

2183
01:45:19,810 --> 01:45:23,020
in my dad's behavior
and personality

2184
01:45:23,020 --> 01:45:26,020
as it was reflected
through that was

2185
01:45:26,020 --> 01:45:34,210
that he was always very, very
ambivalent about his identity.

2186
01:45:34,210 --> 01:45:36,700
In fact, he said
to me once, I don't

2187
01:45:36,700 --> 01:45:38,980
have a good sense of identity.

2188
01:45:38,980 --> 01:45:43,300
And what he meant, by tying
it together with other things,

2189
01:45:43,300 --> 01:45:48,190
is that my father, in
his heart of hearts,

2190
01:45:48,190 --> 01:45:53,764
wanted, to a significant
degree, to be a Gentile Pole.

2191
01:45:53,764 --> 01:45:54,264
Hmm.

2192

01:45:54,264 --> 01:45:55,681

I don't know where
that came from.

2193

01:45:55,681 --> 01:45:58,270

He would have been assimilated
had there been no war.

2194

01:45:58,270 --> 01:46:01,960

Are you saying he would have
been an assimilated Pole?

2195

01:46:01,960 --> 01:46:04,990

I think that he became
an assimilated Pole

2196

01:46:04,990 --> 01:46:09,130

in terms of language
and those things I

2197

01:46:09,130 --> 01:46:12,370

mentioned quite a bit earlier.

2198

01:46:12,370 --> 01:46:14,150

It must have taken many years.

2199

01:46:14,150 --> 01:46:15,190

I don't know if--

2200

01:46:15,190 --> 01:46:16,780

I don't know when it started.

2201

01:46:16,780 --> 01:46:20,260

But I imagine that, since
my grandmother spoke

2202

01:46:20,260 --> 01:46:24,481

a lot of Yiddish, that
my father probably,

2203

01:46:24,481 --> 01:46:27,970

up until some age, past
his teens, probably

2204

01:46:27,970 --> 01:46:31,030
had a Jewish accent,
everything, and had a yarmulke

2205

01:46:31,030 --> 01:46:32,245
and went to yeshiva.

2206

01:46:32,245 --> 01:46:34,120
And that's what I was
talking about, the fact

2207

01:46:34,120 --> 01:46:35,290
that I don't have--

2208

01:46:35,290 --> 01:46:37,360
I only have an
inkling but no details

2209

01:46:37,360 --> 01:46:45,220
about the feeling that somehow
his identification with Poles--

2210

01:46:45,220 --> 01:46:49,930
and, interestingly enough, as
a bundle with Catholicism--

2211

01:46:49,930 --> 01:46:52,360
that he had, I don't know
where that comes from.

2212

01:46:52,360 --> 01:46:53,740
I could think
about it for hours.

2213

01:46:53,740 --> 01:46:58,280
But, he, I believe,
as I mentioned,

2214

01:46:58,280 --> 01:47:02,170
not only did he have
some kind of yearning

2215

01:47:02,170 --> 01:47:09,700
to be accepted as a
Pole, but also maybe

2216
01:47:09,700 --> 01:47:14,920
as part of renouncing his
Jewish religious affiliation.

2217
01:47:14,920 --> 01:47:17,810
He didn't, to my knowledge,
convert to Catholicism.

2218
01:47:17,810 --> 01:47:20,320
But when he told
me the lie, the big

2219
01:47:20,320 --> 01:47:25,360
lie, one of the big
lies, which he only--

2220
01:47:25,360 --> 01:47:27,940
he told me that
he was Catholic up

2221
01:47:27,940 --> 01:47:33,670
until he was forced
to give up the truth

2222
01:47:33,670 --> 01:47:35,110
because my grandmother came--

2223
01:47:35,110 --> 01:47:37,390
Jewish grandmother, his
grandmother-- his mother

2224
01:47:37,390 --> 01:47:38,590
came to live with us.

2225
01:47:38,590 --> 01:47:40,277
And she started
going to synagogue,

2226
01:47:40,277 --> 01:47:41,860
and I was old enough
to come with her.

2227
01:47:41,860 --> 01:47:44,440
So your grandmother from

the ghetto survives.

2228

01:47:44,440 --> 01:47:45,145
Yeah.

2229

01:47:45,145 --> 01:47:45,710
And what--

2230

01:47:45,710 --> 01:47:46,210
She--

2231

01:47:46,210 --> 01:47:46,710
OK.

2232

01:47:46,710 --> 01:47:47,440
Oh, go ahead.

2233

01:47:47,440 --> 01:47:49,630
She's not one of the 50.

2234

01:47:49,630 --> 01:47:50,350
No.

2235

01:47:50,350 --> 01:47:52,660
But her daughter doesn't.

2236

01:47:52,660 --> 01:47:55,330
Her daughter doesn't, and
her second husband doesn't.

2237

01:47:55,330 --> 01:47:56,070
I see.

2238

01:47:56,070 --> 01:47:58,030
And all the cousins--

2239

01:47:58,030 --> 01:47:59,140
her sisters.

2240

01:47:59,140 --> 01:48:02,980
She had several sisters that
are also included in all that,

2241

01:48:02,980 --> 01:48:04,270
and their children.

2242
01:48:04,270 --> 01:48:05,220
OK.

2243
01:48:05,220 --> 01:48:05,720
OK.

2244
01:48:05,720 --> 01:48:08,420
So it starts to mount
up, as I mentioned,

2245
01:48:08,420 --> 01:48:11,170
once you get to
that and cousins.

2246
01:48:11,170 --> 01:48:14,410
So-- well, it's easy
to get to such a number

2247
01:48:14,410 --> 01:48:15,770
given what the policies were.

2248
01:48:15,770 --> 01:48:16,270
Right.

2249
01:48:16,270 --> 01:48:17,700
That's not the issue.

2250
01:48:17,700 --> 01:48:19,300
Yeah.

2251
01:48:19,300 --> 01:48:22,780
How did your
grandmother survive?

2252
01:48:22,780 --> 01:48:27,907
That is a big question mark
because, as you probably know,

2253
01:48:27,907 --> 01:48:28,990
the ghetto was liquidated.

2254

01:48:28,990 --> 01:48:29,830
Yes.

2255
01:48:29,830 --> 01:48:33,910
And everybody was sent to
Treblinka, pretty much.

2256
01:48:33,910 --> 01:48:34,540
That's right.

2257
01:48:34,540 --> 01:48:36,160
I don't know how she survived.

2258
01:48:36,160 --> 01:48:39,790
But I do know that what
my father told me--

2259
01:48:39,790 --> 01:48:44,650
and this is something that
my cousin Jacques, Mr.

2260
01:48:44,650 --> 01:48:48,820
Michael Luben's son, [INAUDIBLE]
to help you keep up track--

2261
01:48:48,820 --> 01:48:49,330
Sure.

2262
01:48:49,330 --> 01:48:53,560
He didn't know anything
about any of this.

2263
01:48:53,560 --> 01:48:57,820
But my father told me that
Jacques's father, Michael,

2264
01:48:57,820 --> 01:49:00,820
was the person who
somehow facilitated

2265
01:49:00,820 --> 01:49:05,920
my grandmother escaping from
the ghetto, getting out.

2266
01:49:05,920 --> 01:49:07,880

Maybe-- I mean, he
was a smart guy.

2267
01:49:07,880 --> 01:49:13,070
Maybe he figured out a scheme
like my dad did to get out.

2268
01:49:13,070 --> 01:49:15,820
And my dad got-- he ended
up getting arrested,

2269
01:49:15,820 --> 01:49:16,930
but he got out of it.

2270
01:49:16,930 --> 01:49:17,470
Yeah.

2271
01:49:17,470 --> 01:49:18,010
Who knows?

2272
01:49:18,010 --> 01:49:19,870
My uncle was--

2273
01:49:19,870 --> 01:49:24,560
Michael was a very,
very shrewd man.

2274
01:49:24,560 --> 01:49:25,490
So--

2275
01:49:25,490 --> 01:49:25,990
I never--

2276
01:49:25,990 --> 01:49:26,590
Yeah.

2277
01:49:26,590 --> 01:49:30,640
Nobody ever told me how
my grandmother got out,

2278
01:49:30,640 --> 01:49:36,040
and nobody whom I asked,
who's left alive, knows.

2279

01:49:36,040 --> 01:49:36,590
Tell me.

2280
01:49:36,590 --> 01:49:38,500
So-- one of the thi--

2281
01:49:38,500 --> 01:49:40,360
OK, that explains
one of the questions

2282
01:49:40,360 --> 01:49:41,980
that I have from
what I was reading

2283
01:49:41,980 --> 01:49:43,420
that you had written before--

2284
01:49:43,420 --> 01:49:44,620
Yeah.

2285
01:49:44,620 --> 01:49:46,750
--is that, it sounded
to m-- on the one

2286
01:49:46,750 --> 01:49:51,280
hand, that everybody who was
in the ghetto from your family

2287
01:49:51,280 --> 01:49:54,100
ended up in Treblinka,
including grandmother,

2288
01:49:54,100 --> 01:49:56,860
and then, later, you write
that she visits you when you're

2289
01:49:56,860 --> 01:49:58,390
living in London and you're 12.

2290
01:49:58,390 --> 01:50:01,180
Oh, did I-- if--

2291
01:50:01,180 --> 01:50:06,970
yeah, I mean-- yeah, if I
wrote something to the effect--

2292
01:50:06,970 --> 01:50:10,280
you wouldn't happen to
have my thing, my write-up,

2293
01:50:10,280 --> 01:50:12,020
in front of you, would you?

2294
01:50:12,020 --> 01:50:13,030
I do.

2295
01:50:13,030 --> 01:50:13,880
You do.

2296
01:50:13,880 --> 01:50:15,860
It says-- but here--

2297
01:50:15,860 --> 01:50:20,090
[CHUCKLING] OK, let me
go back to it later.

2298
01:50:20,090 --> 01:50:21,320
OK, yeah.

2299
01:50:21,320 --> 01:50:25,940
But one of the things that
really jumped out to me

2300
01:50:25,940 --> 01:50:31,820
was that your father didn't
tell you he was Jewish

2301
01:50:31,820 --> 01:50:34,010
until you're 12 years old.

2302
01:50:34,010 --> 01:50:34,940
Yes.

2303
01:50:34,940 --> 01:50:38,000
And was that the--

2304
01:50:38,000 --> 01:50:42,620
so your assumption until then
is that he's [? Konstantin ?]

2305

01:50:42,620 --> 01:50:45,440

[? Dombrowska? ?]

[? Dombrowski. ?]

2306

01:50:45,440 --> 01:50:47,370

[? Konstanty, ?] a T-Y.

2307

01:50:47,370 --> 01:50:50,240

A T-Y. [? Konstanty ?]

[? Dombrowski? ?]

2308

01:50:50,240 --> 01:50:51,620

Yes, absolutely.

2309

01:50:51,620 --> 01:50:53,200

And that he's a Polish Catholic.

2310

01:50:53,200 --> 01:50:53,960

Yes.

2311

01:50:53,960 --> 01:50:58,520

And that, consequently,
you are half Gentile Polish

2312

01:50:58,520 --> 01:51:00,620

and half Gentile German.

2313

01:51:00,620 --> 01:51:02,150

Right.

2314

01:51:02,150 --> 01:51:05,810

Well, that does a number
on somebody's own identity.

2315

01:51:05,810 --> 01:51:07,430

Yes, for sure.

2316

01:51:07,430 --> 01:51:12,260

So you had no idea that you have
any Jewish ties or Jewish roots

2317

01:51:12,260 --> 01:51:15,710

until your grandmother from

Israel, your father's mother,

2318

01:51:15,710 --> 01:51:20,060
who is able to survive
the Warsaw ghetto,

2319

01:51:20,060 --> 01:51:21,690
arrives in London.

2320

01:51:21,690 --> 01:51:22,190
Right.

2321

01:51:22,190 --> 01:51:23,330
From Israel, yeah.

2322

01:51:23,330 --> 01:51:24,350
From Israel.

2323

01:51:24,350 --> 01:51:26,120
Yeah, she spent about a year--

2324

01:51:26,120 --> 01:51:28,150
I think it was just
a year-- in Israel.

2325

01:51:28,150 --> 01:51:33,530
And then, she came to
England only a few months

2326

01:51:33,530 --> 01:51:35,990
before we left for the US.

2327

01:51:35,990 --> 01:51:38,420
What kind of-- is
this the only time

2328

01:51:38,420 --> 01:51:40,250
that you ever saw
her or knew her

2329

01:51:40,250 --> 01:51:42,020
or had interactions with her?

2330

01:51:42,020 --> 01:51:51,020

Oh, she lived with us from
about 1956 to her death in 1962.

2331
01:51:51,020 --> 01:51:52,820
Oh, so a long time.

2332
01:51:52,820 --> 01:51:53,780
Yeah.

2333
01:51:53,780 --> 01:51:54,600
A long time.

2334
01:51:54,600 --> 01:51:58,340
So did she-- was
she a storyteller?

2335
01:51:58,340 --> 01:52:01,670
What kind of a
personality did she have?

2336
01:52:01,670 --> 01:52:08,150
Well, I guess the most salient
aspect of her personality

2337
01:52:08,150 --> 01:52:13,040
was that, like my father,
she had an extremely

2338
01:52:13,040 --> 01:52:15,320
explosive temper.

2339
01:52:15,320 --> 01:52:20,090
And they would have horrendous
fights very frequently.

2340
01:52:20,090 --> 01:52:25,100
She was very loving towards me,
and she made Jewish specialties

2341
01:52:25,100 --> 01:52:29,120
like kugela and chicken
soup that I liked.

2342
01:52:29,120 --> 01:52:31,310
Very loving, as I said.

2343
01:52:31,310 --> 01:52:36,305
But the atmosphere in
the home was horrible.

2344
01:52:36,305 --> 01:52:38,690
And if my mother-- if my
father wasn't fighting

2345
01:52:38,690 --> 01:52:40,760
with my grandmother,
my mother was

2346
01:52:40,760 --> 01:52:42,770
fighting with my grandmother.

2347
01:52:42,770 --> 01:52:46,370
She was extremely
nasty, argumentative,

2348
01:52:46,370 --> 01:52:49,100
did not really talk
about the war at all.

2349
01:52:49,100 --> 01:52:51,650
She never mentioned anything.

2350
01:52:51,650 --> 01:52:52,837
But it was always there.

2351
01:52:52,837 --> 01:52:53,670
How could it not be?

2352
01:52:53,670 --> 01:52:54,230
Yeah, I'm sure it was.

2353
01:52:54,230 --> 01:52:54,730
Yeah.

2354
01:52:54,730 --> 01:52:55,820

2355
01:52:55,820 --> 01:52:58,190
But she-- I don't know.

2356

01:52:58,190 --> 01:53:01,820

She was a very kind of
closed-in person in the sense

2357

01:53:01,820 --> 01:53:04,490

of really not discussing.

2358

01:53:04,490 --> 01:53:07,355

And I guess it's not uncommon
for her generation and culture

2359

01:53:07,355 --> 01:53:12,350

and everything to not have
her emotions on her sleeve.

2360

01:53:12,350 --> 01:53:16,370

But no, she just totally--

2361

01:53:16,370 --> 01:53:20,960

I knew nothing from her about
her experiences, not even

2362

01:53:20,960 --> 01:53:21,650

a hint.

2363

01:53:21,650 --> 01:53:25,610

OK, but, nevertheless, was
there an explanation that

2364

01:53:25,610 --> 01:53:29,660

was offered to you when she
starts visiting a synagogue

2365

01:53:29,660 --> 01:53:33,780

and you realize that you're
Jewish, you're part Jewish?

2366

01:53:33,780 --> 01:53:34,280

Right.

2367

01:53:34,280 --> 01:53:38,420

And does he then say,
oh, gee, I forgot.

2368

01:53:38,420 --> 01:53:39,790

Or does he say, you know--

2369

01:53:39,790 --> 01:53:40,290

Sorry.

2370

01:53:40,290 --> 01:53:40,750

[LAUGHS]

2371

01:53:40,750 --> 01:53:41,250

Yeah.

2372

01:53:41,250 --> 01:53:41,930

Yeah, right.

2373

01:53:41,930 --> 01:53:47,780

2374

01:53:47,780 --> 01:53:55,520

I don't remember his
giving an explanation, see.

2375

01:53:55,520 --> 01:53:58,280

The only thing I
believe happened

2376

01:53:58,280 --> 01:54:00,620

was that my mother may--

2377

01:54:00,620 --> 01:54:02,910

I think my mother said
something to the effect

2378

01:54:02,910 --> 01:54:07,640

that they just wanted
me to be A, protected

2379

01:54:07,640 --> 01:54:11,660

from hearing a lot of
unpleasantness, and also,

2380

01:54:11,660 --> 01:54:13,580

since I was--

2381

01:54:13,580 --> 01:54:16,100

they were raising me,
actually, as a Protestant,

2382

01:54:16,100 --> 01:54:19,190

as a Lutheran, as my mother was.

2383

01:54:19,190 --> 01:54:24,770

And, again, to answer
your question, there was--

2384

01:54:24,770 --> 01:54:27,740

I seldom would get a
straight answer to anything

2385

01:54:27,740 --> 01:54:28,760

from either--

2386

01:54:28,760 --> 01:54:31,340

from my parents
or my grandmother.

2387

01:54:31,340 --> 01:54:34,370

I didn't ask a lot of questions,
but when I did ask questions,

2388

01:54:34,370 --> 01:54:36,560

I frequently got
evasive answers.

2389

01:54:36,560 --> 01:54:41,960

So I can't answer you know
precisely how they explained

2390

01:54:41,960 --> 01:54:47,720

this huge lie, the biggest
lie that I think in my life

2391

01:54:47,720 --> 01:54:50,420

that I've ever been told.

2392

01:54:50,420 --> 01:54:51,540

That's huge.

2393

01:54:51,540 --> 01:54:52,640
That really is huge.

2394
01:54:52,640 --> 01:54:54,650
Had a lot of
consequences for me.

2395
01:54:54,650 --> 01:54:56,420
Such as?

2396
01:54:56,420 --> 01:54:59,060
Well, this is where--

2397
01:54:59,060 --> 01:55:01,040
things can get a little dicey.

2398
01:55:01,040 --> 01:55:06,130
But I remember
that, first of all,

2399
01:55:06,130 --> 01:55:10,730
[INAUDIBLE] several things
happened when I was maybe

2400
01:55:10,730 --> 01:55:12,440
around 13 or 14--

2401
01:55:12,440 --> 01:55:14,010
no-- yeah, younger than that.

2402
01:55:14,010 --> 01:55:14,510
OK.

2403
01:55:14,510 --> 01:55:20,030
Still 12 and almost 13, maybe.

2404
01:55:20,030 --> 01:55:27,020
I developed an
ambivalent attitude

2405
01:55:27,020 --> 01:55:31,310
towards Germans
and towards Jews.

2406

01:55:31,310 --> 01:55:35,990

It was almost as if they
were conflicting aspects

2407

01:55:35,990 --> 01:55:38,330

of my personality,
of my perception.

2408

01:55:38,330 --> 01:55:44,390

To give you concrete examples
of that, while I was still

2409

01:55:44,390 --> 01:55:47,720

in England, I
progressively began

2410

01:55:47,720 --> 01:55:51,980

to be very, very interested
in war, and particularly

2411

01:55:51,980 --> 01:55:55,670

World War II and
particularly the war

2412

01:55:55,670 --> 01:55:59,810

in the geographical areas
that my parents were

2413

01:55:59,810 --> 01:56:01,310

involved with and--

2414

01:56:01,310 --> 01:56:02,960

primarily.

2415

01:56:02,960 --> 01:56:06,200

Concurrent with that
was a tremendous conf--

2416

01:56:06,200 --> 01:56:08,860

I had more than one
identity conflict.

2417

01:56:08,860 --> 01:56:12,680

Another one was that,
coming from London,

2418

01:56:12,680 --> 01:56:14,960

arriving in New
York that I expected

2419

01:56:14,960 --> 01:56:17,030

to be like it was
portrayed in the movies

2420

01:56:17,030 --> 01:56:19,590

was an extremely rude shock.

2421

01:56:19,590 --> 01:56:22,250

I mean, I remember
the customs official

2422

01:56:22,250 --> 01:56:25,216

that checked us out saw
that I had a violin.

2423

01:56:25,216 --> 01:56:28,550

He says, basically, why
are you such a wimp?

2424

01:56:28,550 --> 01:56:29,900

Why are you playing the violin?

2425

01:56:29,900 --> 01:56:31,192

You should be playing football.

2426

01:56:31,192 --> 01:56:32,660

Oh, good god.

2427

01:56:32,660 --> 01:56:34,280

Yeah.

2428

01:56:34,280 --> 01:56:38,720

Anyway-- and then, so
for a year or more,

2429

01:56:38,720 --> 01:56:45,020

I was conflicted as to wanting
to have a British identity.

2430

01:56:45,020 --> 01:56:49,940

I felt that I was ripped
away from England just when

2431
01:56:49,940 --> 01:56:54,060
had begun to truly develop
a desire to be English.

2432
01:56:54,060 --> 01:56:54,890
Yeah.

2433
01:56:54,890 --> 01:56:56,000
Strong desire.

2434
01:56:56,000 --> 01:56:57,980
So that was
concurrent with what I

2435
01:56:57,980 --> 01:57:01,340
was talking about before
was I started reading

2436
01:57:01,340 --> 01:57:04,250
and I remember the very first
book I read about the war

2437
01:57:04,250 --> 01:57:04,900
that--

2438
01:57:04,900 --> 01:57:06,140
one of the first--

2439
01:57:06,140 --> 01:57:10,880
was the book that had the title
that referred to red flares

2440
01:57:10,880 --> 01:57:12,410
that I mentioned earlier.

2441
01:57:12,410 --> 01:57:13,350
Yeah, red flares.

2442
01:57:13,350 --> 01:57:16,040
And it was a very
touching account

2443

01:57:16,040 --> 01:57:23,540
by a German soldier, who went
through the war with Russia,

2444

01:57:23,540 --> 01:57:26,960
ended up in Stalingrad, got
one of those what they call

2445

01:57:26,960 --> 01:57:30,440
million-dollar wounds and
got shipped out by plane just

2446

01:57:30,440 --> 01:57:36,380
before the 6th Army collapsed
and was basically destroyed.

2447

01:57:36,380 --> 01:57:36,950
Yes.

2448

01:57:36,950 --> 01:57:40,280
So the book affected me,
but what's interesting

2449

01:57:40,280 --> 01:57:42,650
is it affected me
in a way that made

2450

01:57:42,650 --> 01:57:48,860
me feel sympathetic towards the
poor schlub German soldier who

2451

01:57:48,860 --> 01:57:53,495
had to fight without being
ideologically motivated,

2452

01:57:53,495 --> 01:57:56,180
at least how that soldier
portrayed himself.

2453

01:57:56,180 --> 01:57:58,460
And I had a certain sympathy.

2454

01:57:58,460 --> 01:58:01,130
And that sympathy was
amplified by the fact

2455
01:58:01,130 --> 01:58:06,980
that my experiences in
Germany were very positive.

2456
01:58:06,980 --> 01:58:08,630
I liked the people in general.

2457
01:58:08,630 --> 01:58:10,710
Everybody was very polite.

2458
01:58:10,710 --> 01:58:14,840
I took violin lessons
from a German man

2459
01:58:14,840 --> 01:58:16,640
who was definitely
in the service

2460
01:58:16,640 --> 01:58:18,830
and showed me a picture
of him in uniform.

2461
01:58:18,830 --> 01:58:20,805
He might have even
been in the SS, but--

2462
01:58:20,805 --> 01:58:21,430
You don't know.

2463
01:58:21,430 --> 01:58:22,670
--his uniform was black.

2464
01:58:22,670 --> 01:58:23,450
Yeah.

2465
01:58:23,450 --> 01:58:24,570
That's not so important.

2466
01:58:24,570 --> 01:58:27,710
So here I am in England--

2467
01:58:27,710 --> 01:58:30,290
I mean, in New York.

2468
01:58:30,290 --> 01:58:35,000
On top of it, my dad had
insisted long before,

2469
01:58:35,000 --> 01:58:36,500
when we were still
in London, that I

2470
01:58:36,500 --> 01:58:39,140
go to a French
school, A, because

2471
01:58:39,140 --> 01:58:42,260
of his dislike for
the British because he

2472
01:58:42,260 --> 01:58:45,170
felt they were snobby
and mistreated him

2473
01:58:45,170 --> 01:58:48,320
and didn't give him the same
job an Englishman would get,

2474
01:58:48,320 --> 01:58:49,440
all these resentments.

2475
01:58:49,440 --> 01:58:50,840
So I went to a French school.

2476
01:58:50,840 --> 01:58:52,920
I did very well.

2477
01:58:52,920 --> 01:58:54,980
I went to France for a vacation.

2478
01:58:54,980 --> 01:58:56,420
I became fluent in French.

2479
01:58:56,420 --> 01:59:00,740
So I have to say that that's
somewhat ancillary, because I

2480

01:59:00,740 --> 01:59:03,260
didn't have a French
identity, but I

2481
01:59:03,260 --> 01:59:07,700
did have a very strong
French cultural orientation

2482
01:59:07,700 --> 01:59:12,170
that was not a
split in my persona,

2483
01:59:12,170 --> 01:59:15,270
but somewhat significant.

2484
01:59:15,270 --> 01:59:19,460
But now this is
the delicate part.

2485
01:59:19,460 --> 01:59:25,350
I believe that the
neighborhood we lived in--

2486
01:59:25,350 --> 01:59:26,040
In New York.

2487
01:59:26,040 --> 01:59:28,010
--had-- in New York--

2488
01:59:28,010 --> 01:59:33,620
was, as I mentioned, a mixed
neighborhood, a lot of Jews,

2489
01:59:33,620 --> 01:59:38,510
Puerto Ricans, and Blacks
all kind of coexisting.

2490
01:59:38,510 --> 01:59:42,050
The guy who ran the
local candy store

2491
01:59:42,050 --> 01:59:46,550
had a prominent
concentration camp tattoo.

2492

01:59:46,550 --> 01:59:49,620
As you may know, all tattoos
were done at Auschwitz.

2493
01:59:49,620 --> 01:59:50,120
Yes.

2494
01:59:50,120 --> 01:59:52,910
Other concentration camps
didn't do the tattooing.

2495
01:59:52,910 --> 01:59:54,470
This guy had that.

2496
01:59:54,470 --> 02:00:00,470
And I developed some vague--

2497
02:00:00,470 --> 02:00:05,480
some vague dislike to some of
the Jewish people that I met.

2498
02:00:05,480 --> 02:00:08,340
I don't know where
it came from exactly.

2499
02:00:08,340 --> 02:00:11,580
But some of them were
concentration camp survivors,

2500
02:00:11,580 --> 02:00:14,130
for example, our
upstairs neighbors,

2501
02:00:14,130 --> 02:00:18,990
who my parents, I think,
knew even before the war had

2502
02:00:18,990 --> 02:00:19,950
been in camps.

2503
02:00:19,950 --> 02:00:24,840
And the mother-- it was a
couple, childless couple--

2504
02:00:24,840 --> 02:00:27,300

and the mother was
somewhat eccentric.

2505
02:00:27,300 --> 02:00:29,670
She was obsessed
with Jewishness.

2506
02:00:29,670 --> 02:00:37,290
I mean, I don't know if
you know of a singer,

2507
02:00:37,290 --> 02:00:40,215
Italian-American singer
years ago named Perry Como.

2508
02:00:40,215 --> 02:00:41,430
Oh, of course.

2509
02:00:41,430 --> 02:00:45,060
Yeah, he-- we were
watching a show with them.

2510
02:00:45,060 --> 02:00:46,980
And all she could
say is, he's a Jew.

2511
02:00:46,980 --> 02:00:47,560
He's a Jew.

2512
02:00:47,560 --> 02:00:48,060
He's a Jew.

2513
02:00:48,060 --> 02:00:50,978
And all of us knew he was
Italian, but she insisted.

2514
02:00:50,978 --> 02:00:52,020
But that's not all of it.

2515
02:00:52,020 --> 02:00:54,210
The worst thing
is that I vaguely

2516
02:00:54,210 --> 02:00:57,810
remember having a

conversation with her

2517
02:00:57,810 --> 02:00:59,520
in an elevator in our building.

2518
02:00:59,520 --> 02:01:02,910
I don't remember the
tenor of the conversation.

2519
02:01:02,910 --> 02:01:07,470
And I certainly don't remember
what she said I had said.

2520
02:01:07,470 --> 02:01:11,940
But she said to my parents that
I had said to her, verbatim

2521
02:01:11,940 --> 02:01:13,230
now--

2522
02:01:13,230 --> 02:01:18,150
I'm not a Jew, my father's not
a Jew, and I hate the Jews--

2523
02:01:18,150 --> 02:01:19,440
Oh, dear.

2524
02:01:19,440 --> 02:01:23,610
--which I believe she
concocted out of her craziness.

2525
02:01:23,610 --> 02:01:24,900
Yeah.

2526
02:01:24,900 --> 02:01:27,940
Or she picked up on something.

2527
02:01:27,940 --> 02:01:28,440
Well--

2528
02:01:28,440 --> 02:01:31,200
It's enough to give
you some guilt.

2529

02:01:31,200 --> 02:01:32,190
Yeah.

2530
02:01:32,190 --> 02:01:35,040
Yeah, I mean I--

2531
02:01:35,040 --> 02:01:36,510
in some ways, I'm like my dad.

2532
02:01:36,510 --> 02:01:40,350
I mean, my dad, as I
mentioned, maintained

2533
02:01:40,350 --> 02:01:43,290
a very strong cultural
Jewish identity even

2534
02:01:43,290 --> 02:01:47,010
at the time when he was denying
being Jewish, not only to me,

2535
02:01:47,010 --> 02:01:50,220
but he didn't want
anybody to know

2536
02:01:50,220 --> 02:01:54,150
that he was Jewish when
we came to the US, nobody

2537
02:01:54,150 --> 02:01:56,020
who didn't know him.

2538
02:01:56,020 --> 02:01:57,390
He just didn't mention it.

2539
02:01:57,390 --> 02:02:01,650
And he became curious
a couple of times

2540
02:02:01,650 --> 02:02:06,120
when somebody assumed he was
Jewish who didn't know him.

2541
02:02:06,120 --> 02:02:07,680
And that was in

the grocery store

2542

02:02:07,680 --> 02:02:11,910
where he was asking for
a certain vegetable,

2543

02:02:11,910 --> 02:02:16,260
and the grocery clerk said
in Yiddish, over there.

2544

02:02:16,260 --> 02:02:22,680
And my dad looked exploded
from being assumed to be a Jew.

2545

02:02:22,680 --> 02:02:25,980
And another incident happened--
and this is my bad judgment--

2546

02:02:25,980 --> 02:02:35,430
is that in about 1984, I was
studying stand-up comedy just

2547

02:02:35,430 --> 02:02:37,980
for fun and to be a
better public speaker.

2548

02:02:37,980 --> 02:02:42,430
And I did a routine where
with-- again, bad judgment--

2549

02:02:42,430 --> 02:02:47,160
I referred to my father and his
Jewishness in a certain way.

2550

02:02:47,160 --> 02:02:48,910
And he exploded at me--

2551

02:02:48,910 --> 02:02:49,410
Yeah.

2552

02:02:49,410 --> 02:02:51,150
--I think with
some justification.

2553

02:02:51,150 --> 02:02:54,780

I think that was an instance
of poor social intelligence

2554
02:02:54,780 --> 02:02:57,570
on my part, that I guess--

2555
02:02:57,570 --> 02:03:00,300
I wasn't as aware of
how he would react.

2556
02:03:00,300 --> 02:03:01,510
Well, these are big things.

2557
02:03:01,510 --> 02:03:04,030
These are very big--

2558
02:03:04,030 --> 02:03:07,200
I mean, there's a
certain kind of thread

2559
02:03:07,200 --> 02:03:10,710
that, I don't know if I'll
articulate it properly,

2560
02:03:10,710 --> 02:03:16,950
but as we've been speaking, a
certain thread through what you

2561
02:03:16,950 --> 02:03:21,000
describe as your parents'
story and their ability

2562
02:03:21,000 --> 02:03:24,810
to survive really
depends on being

2563
02:03:24,810 --> 02:03:28,590
able to tell a lot
of lies and really

2564
02:03:28,590 --> 02:03:33,960
be able to bend the truth so
that they are not victimized,

2565
02:03:33,960 --> 02:03:41,100

so that they can still
live to another day.

2566
02:03:41,100 --> 02:03:49,170
And yet, those things don't
stop when the danger stops.

2567
02:03:49,170 --> 02:03:51,640
And that continues.

2568
02:03:51,640 --> 02:03:54,120
So-- and a child--

2569
02:03:54,120 --> 02:03:55,420
I'm not a psychiatrist.

2570
02:03:55,420 --> 02:03:58,380
I'm not somebody's-- but I know
that a child needs something

2571
02:03:58,380 --> 02:04:00,600
that is both stable and clear.

2572
02:04:00,600 --> 02:04:01,290
Yes.

2573
02:04:01,290 --> 02:04:03,810
And there's not a
lot of clarity when

2574
02:04:03,810 --> 02:04:07,560
you are creating
obfuscations, and only

2575
02:04:07,560 --> 02:04:14,430
through obfuscation can you
find a way to try and avoid

2576
02:04:14,430 --> 02:04:17,550
a malignant force.

2577
02:04:17,550 --> 02:04:19,290
But a child needs clarity.

2578

02:04:19,290 --> 02:04:21,030

A child needs to
know who they are.

2579

02:04:21,030 --> 02:04:23,850

A child needs to know
what is it that happened.

2580

02:04:23,850 --> 02:04:26,160

And when there's a
vacuum of information,

2581

02:04:26,160 --> 02:04:28,950

you fill it in
with your own fears

2582

02:04:28,950 --> 02:04:31,980

or your own interpretation.

2583

02:04:31,980 --> 02:04:34,680

And so, if somebody
is being evasive,

2584

02:04:34,680 --> 02:04:38,280

is it because they have--

2585

02:04:38,280 --> 02:04:39,725

they're scared and
they don't want

2586

02:04:39,725 --> 02:04:41,850

to be pinned down, or is
it that they did something

2587

02:04:41,850 --> 02:04:43,050

that they're ashamed of?

2588

02:04:43,050 --> 02:04:44,070

And you don't know.

2589

02:04:44,070 --> 02:04:46,020

You don't know the
answer to that question.

2590

02:04:46,020 --> 02:04:47,492

Right.

2591

02:04:47,492 --> 02:04:48,450
If I can just mention--

2592

02:04:48,450 --> 02:04:48,950
Sure.

2593

02:04:48,950 --> 02:04:50,430
--a couple of things--

2594

02:04:50,430 --> 02:04:51,810
the wife that--

2595

02:04:51,810 --> 02:04:53,790
Joan that I am current--

2596

02:04:53,790 --> 02:04:54,930
this is my current wife.

2597

02:04:54,930 --> 02:04:57,630
I was married for three
years to another woman

2598

02:04:57,630 --> 02:04:59,130
in the early '80s.

2599

02:04:59,130 --> 02:05:03,930
And I don't want to
use up a lot of time.

2600

02:05:03,930 --> 02:05:09,320
But just, basically, my father
just hated the fact that

2601

02:05:09,320 --> 02:05:13,000
I'd married her because somehow
he didn't feel that she was

2602

02:05:13,000 --> 02:05:17,400
doing enough daughter-in-law-ish
things, basically.

2603

02:05:17,400 --> 02:05:19,720

And there were other aspects, but the bottom line

2604
02:05:19,720 --> 02:05:24,490
is that I still remember that my first wife, at one point,

2605
02:05:24,490 --> 02:05:29,650
said to me, I suspect that your parents were spies.

2606
02:05:29,650 --> 02:05:32,590
And even though there's a part of it that I thought was silly,

2607
02:05:32,590 --> 02:05:35,110
there's a part of it that kind of

2608
02:05:35,110 --> 02:05:37,330
resonated with the idea of how little

2609
02:05:37,330 --> 02:05:39,420
I knew about what they really were doing.

2610
02:05:39,420 --> 02:05:40,330
Yeah.

2611
02:05:40,330 --> 02:05:40,830
Yeah.

2612
02:05:40,830 --> 02:05:41,330
And-- yeah.

2613
02:05:41,330 --> 02:05:45,100
It is the lack of knowledge, the lack of real--

2614
02:05:45,100 --> 02:05:46,540
something firm.

2615
02:05:46,540 --> 02:05:49,690
Even if people have-- all

families have narratives,

2616
02:05:49,690 --> 02:05:53,230
all families have stories,
and we call them narratives

2617
02:05:53,230 --> 02:05:54,977
and we call them,
sometimes, tales,

2618
02:05:54,977 --> 02:05:56,560
that doesn't mean
they're not factual.

2619
02:05:56,560 --> 02:06:01,630
It just means that you
select from an event that

2620
02:06:01,630 --> 02:06:04,600
happened something that
has significance for you.

2621
02:06:04,600 --> 02:06:07,060
And that's what you
will tell somebody,

2622
02:06:07,060 --> 02:06:09,010
and they'll tell
somebody else, and so on.

2623
02:06:09,010 --> 02:06:13,270
And I believe that, as human
beings, we need those things.

2624
02:06:13,270 --> 02:06:16,000
We need those stories.

2625
02:06:16,000 --> 02:06:20,840
Well, and what you're mentioning
about lack of consistency

2626
02:06:20,840 --> 02:06:24,460
was very, very prominent
in my upbringing.

2627

02:06:24,460 --> 02:06:26,170
And on the one hand--

2628
02:06:26,170 --> 02:06:28,150
and my first wife
picked up on this

2629
02:06:28,150 --> 02:06:29,950
even when I was 27 years old.

2630
02:06:29,950 --> 02:06:32,900
She said one time, you know,
your parents don't respect you.

2631
02:06:32,900 --> 02:06:34,390
And that was true, because--

2632
02:06:34,390 --> 02:06:35,740
to a certain degree.

2633
02:06:35,740 --> 02:06:39,190
My mother would lie to
me about certain things.

2634
02:06:39,190 --> 02:06:41,535
She'd say I was
good-looking at a time when

2635
02:06:41,535 --> 02:06:43,180
I was really awkward-looking.

2636
02:06:43,180 --> 02:06:45,782

2637
02:06:45,782 --> 02:06:47,740
Sometimes she would just
say, you know, Edward,

2638
02:06:47,740 --> 02:06:49,180
you're a little bit stupid.

2639
02:06:49,180 --> 02:06:52,660
And my father was
always denigrating me--

2640
02:06:52,660 --> 02:06:55,760
you're stupid, you're
this, you're that.

2641
02:06:55,760 --> 02:07:00,340
It was extremely difficult
being around him.

2642
02:07:00,340 --> 02:07:05,710
He was so self-centered that
everything he did always

2643
02:07:05,710 --> 02:07:10,270
had to be something that
was to his advantage.

2644
02:07:10,270 --> 02:07:10,810
Yeah.

2645
02:07:10,810 --> 02:07:12,910
And both my parents
were that way.

2646
02:07:12,910 --> 02:07:15,600
And this, I know, is food
for another conversation

2647
02:07:15,600 --> 02:07:19,310
if we had one or
whatever, but my parents

2648
02:07:19,310 --> 02:07:22,430
were phony in two di--
in different ways.

2649
02:07:22,430 --> 02:07:25,780
My dad would lie
outright, sometimes

2650
02:07:25,780 --> 02:07:29,050
just to defend himself
when we made remarks

2651
02:07:29,050 --> 02:07:31,330
that he had behaved

in a way, like not

2652
02:07:31,330 --> 02:07:32,950
asserted himself or something.

2653
02:07:32,950 --> 02:07:34,690
He might fly into a rage.

2654
02:07:34,690 --> 02:07:36,430
My mother didn't lie.

2655
02:07:36,430 --> 02:07:44,020
She just skirted the
truth often and seemed

2656
02:07:44,020 --> 02:07:48,940
in an insincere manner that
my grandmother, my father's

2657
02:07:48,940 --> 02:07:51,610
mother, picked up on when
she was living with us,

2658
02:07:51,610 --> 02:07:53,830
and she had an argument
with my mother.

2659
02:07:53,830 --> 02:07:58,570
And she remarked that my
mother had a phony smile.

2660
02:07:58,570 --> 02:08:00,430
And I think she was
intuitive enough

2661
02:08:00,430 --> 02:08:02,380
to get that too, you know?

2662
02:08:02,380 --> 02:08:07,780
Well, the question when we
talk about a Holocaust story

2663
02:08:07,780 --> 02:08:10,960
is how much is this--

2664

02:08:10,960 --> 02:08:14,410

how much is this as a
result of all those things

2665

02:08:14,410 --> 02:08:20,230

that happened when you
take a mix of people who

2666

02:08:20,230 --> 02:08:22,510

come from a certain
background and born

2667

02:08:22,510 --> 02:08:24,670

at a certain time
in a certain place

2668

02:08:24,670 --> 02:08:27,340

and they're with
each other, and then

2669

02:08:27,340 --> 02:08:30,700

these other forces, these
malignant forces, are there

2670

02:08:30,700 --> 02:08:32,750

and play havoc with their lives?

2671

02:08:32,750 --> 02:08:35,410

And so is what
you are describing

2672

02:08:35,410 --> 02:08:39,490

as being born after the war
and growing up with this,

2673

02:08:39,490 --> 02:08:45,010

are you experiencing the result
of that sort of bad concoction,

2674

02:08:45,010 --> 02:08:47,500

or is this part of
people's personalities?

2675

02:08:47,500 --> 02:08:52,090

And how m-- I don't know

if these are the questions

2676

02:08:52,090 --> 02:08:53,660
that you have faced.

2677

02:08:53,660 --> 02:08:55,270
I don't know what--

2678

02:08:55,270 --> 02:08:57,130
we've only touched
on a couple of those

2679

02:08:57,130 --> 02:08:58,450
that have affected you.

2680

02:08:58,450 --> 02:09:00,910
But what I'm impressed
by is that you've

2681

02:09:00,910 --> 02:09:04,360
managed to glean
from all the things

2682

02:09:04,360 --> 02:09:10,690
that you don't know some things
that you do know that are just

2683

02:09:10,690 --> 02:09:16,660
mind-blowing aspects of what
they had to deal with, given

2684

02:09:16,660 --> 02:09:19,900
who they are and the time
and place in which they found

2685

02:09:19,900 --> 02:09:20,980
themselves.

2686

02:09:20,980 --> 02:09:23,200
Yes, definitely.

2687

02:09:23,200 --> 02:09:29,980
I mean, some of the things you
just mentioned resonate with

2688

02:09:29,980 --> 02:09:35,370

the fact that my
self-perception is--

2689

02:09:35,370 --> 02:09:37,270

don't know exactly
how to say it--

2690

02:09:37,270 --> 02:09:44,620

that I'm not always as tolerant
of other people's quirks

2691

02:09:44,620 --> 02:09:47,320

as my sort of--

2692

02:09:47,320 --> 02:09:50,290

I won't go and use Freudian
terminology, because I hate it,

2693

02:09:50,290 --> 02:09:54,700

but whatever aspect is
saying, this is wrong,

2694

02:09:54,700 --> 02:09:58,030

you shouldn't be
that way comes in.

2695

02:09:58,030 --> 02:10:01,120

My parents were always
extremely critical of everything

2696

02:10:01,120 --> 02:10:02,410

and everybody.

2697

02:10:02,410 --> 02:10:05,230

And my mother would
criticize everybody's looks,

2698

02:10:05,230 --> 02:10:07,650

She'd criticize my
girlfriend's looks.

2699

02:10:07,650 --> 02:10:12,150

And they put on this
attitude of superiority

2700
02:10:12,150 --> 02:10:17,790
that I took on as a child where
kids at school would say to me,

2701
02:10:17,790 --> 02:10:20,010
you think you're better
than everybody else.

2702
02:10:20,010 --> 02:10:21,960
Yeah, and you didn't
even know that that's

2703
02:10:21,960 --> 02:10:23,080
what you were doing.

2704
02:10:23,080 --> 02:10:23,580
Yeah.

2705
02:10:23,580 --> 02:10:24,240
I didn't, no.

2706
02:10:24,240 --> 02:10:25,210
I was a very--

2707
02:10:25,210 --> 02:10:31,530
I was a very angry kid for
reasons, a number of reasons.

2708
02:10:31,530 --> 02:10:33,735
I think my home environment
was part of that.

2709
02:10:33,735 --> 02:10:36,780
And I did want to
mention that to give you

2710
02:10:36,780 --> 02:10:40,140
a very vivid
illustration that you

2711
02:10:40,140 --> 02:10:41,390
may have read in my write-up.

2712

02:10:41,390 --> 02:10:44,310

I think I put it
in there that, why

2713

02:10:44,310 --> 02:10:47,820

the arguments that my father
and grandmother and mother

2714

02:10:47,820 --> 02:10:54,330

had resulted in my threatening
them with the powerful air

2715

02:10:54,330 --> 02:10:58,600

rifle I owned to shoot them
if they didn't stop arguing.

2716

02:10:58,600 --> 02:10:59,850

Oh, how hard.

2717

02:10:59,850 --> 02:11:01,230

How hard, yeah.

2718

02:11:01,230 --> 02:11:06,570

So I sometimes-- I
have to say, I've

2719

02:11:06,570 --> 02:11:11,070

suffered from ever
since my early 20s

2720

02:11:11,070 --> 02:11:17,110

from recurrent
severe depressions.

2721

02:11:17,110 --> 02:11:21,570

I think my father, although
he hated the idea of getting

2722

02:11:21,570 --> 02:11:24,030

treatment, was probably
depressed, especially

2723

02:11:24,030 --> 02:11:27,570

after my mother died, but I
think he had depressive traits.

2724

02:11:27,570 --> 02:11:31,140

But I think that my--

2725

02:11:31,140 --> 02:11:35,280

the greatest pride

that I have now,

2726

02:11:35,280 --> 02:11:39,270

as I look back on

71 years of my life,

2727

02:11:39,270 --> 02:11:45,300

is that I was able to, in

spite of depressions that

2728

02:11:45,300 --> 02:11:49,200

were paralyzing

completely, that I almost

2729

02:11:49,200 --> 02:11:51,690

wanted to jump out of the

window or be hospitalized.

2730

02:11:51,690 --> 02:11:57,080

But I feel proud that

I could still func--

2731

02:11:57,080 --> 02:11:58,950

I couldn't function

during these things,

2732

02:11:58,950 --> 02:12:05,610

but I feel a certain pride

that I had overcome something,

2733

02:12:05,610 --> 02:12:08,880

in certain ways, that was

a tremendous obstacle.

2734

02:12:08,880 --> 02:12:10,050

That's huge.

2735

02:12:10,050 --> 02:12:10,720

That's huge.

2736

02:12:10,720 --> 02:12:12,000

And I-- yeah.

2737

02:12:12,000 --> 02:12:15,990

I mean, and I also feel
that I have overcome

2738

02:12:15,990 --> 02:12:19,920

certain aspects or certain
aspects of my upbringing

2739

02:12:19,920 --> 02:12:23,730

that formed my personality
in ways that, looking back,

2740

02:12:23,730 --> 02:12:25,575

I realize I don't like.

2741

02:12:25,575 --> 02:12:29,070

I had-- In other words, there
are many selves that I--

2742

02:12:29,070 --> 02:12:34,710

in the sense of the self in a
philosophical way in the past I

2743

02:12:34,710 --> 02:12:36,480

assumed or--

2744

02:12:36,480 --> 02:12:41,250

that was me that I don't
like a lot of what I was.

2745

02:12:41,250 --> 02:12:42,380

Well, there's a--

2746

02:12:42,380 --> 02:12:45,110

2747

02:12:45,110 --> 02:12:47,430

I have a couple of thoughts.

2748

02:12:47,430 --> 02:12:49,900

We're coming close

to the end now.

2749

02:12:49,900 --> 02:12:50,400

Yes.

2750

02:12:50,400 --> 02:12:56,430

And let me share all of these
different thoughts which--

2751

02:12:56,430 --> 02:12:59,640

number one, sort of
like a logistical one.

2752

02:12:59,640 --> 02:13:09,430

I would suggest that when I
conclude the interview today,

2753

02:13:09,430 --> 02:13:11,970

let's think if there
is anything that you'd

2754

02:13:11,970 --> 02:13:17,280

want to add to what we've talked
about, whether it's a detail

2755

02:13:17,280 --> 02:13:18,990

or whether it's a
certain tangent.

2756

02:13:18,990 --> 02:13:21,600

2757

02:13:21,600 --> 02:13:26,400

You-- keep in mind that we
could have an accretion to it.

2758

02:13:26,400 --> 02:13:30,150

As I say, the next time that we
are able to secure a room where

2759

02:13:30,150 --> 02:13:34,140

we are able to do
this audio interview,

2760

02:13:34,140 --> 02:13:38,310

we could use that time
to do such a thing.

2761
02:13:38,310 --> 02:13:39,630
Number one.

2762
02:13:39,630 --> 02:13:46,410
And number two, in
order to help that,

2763
02:13:46,410 --> 02:13:52,190
I'll find out whether
or not we can send you

2764
02:13:52,190 --> 02:13:57,330
the copy of this interview so
that you could listen to it.

2765
02:13:57,330 --> 02:13:57,960
Right.

2766
02:13:57,960 --> 02:14:01,440
And we don't-- as I say,
we don't do editing.

2767
02:14:01,440 --> 02:14:05,670
And I'll send the release form.

2768
02:14:05,670 --> 02:14:08,820
I would very much like
to have your story

2769
02:14:08,820 --> 02:14:15,060
to be illustrative of what
happens in a family dynamic

2770
02:14:15,060 --> 02:14:17,410
when you have these forces.

2771
02:14:17,410 --> 02:14:21,540
But it's a real balance
between what is helpful

2772
02:14:21,540 --> 02:14:23,700
and what is legitimate

historically--

2773
02:14:23,700 --> 02:14:24,900
Right.

2774
02:14:24,900 --> 02:14:31,290
--to what is really personal
and is not our business,

2775
02:14:31,290 --> 02:14:34,650
nor should it be
anybody else's business.

2776
02:14:34,650 --> 02:14:41,760
And you are the person to
decide that, how much to share.

2777
02:14:41,760 --> 02:14:46,807
And we're in that
kind of territory

2778
02:14:46,807 --> 02:14:48,390
when we're talking
about these things.

2779
02:14:48,390 --> 02:14:50,340
They're huge issues.

2780
02:14:50,340 --> 02:14:54,480
And yet they have
these aspects to it.

2781
02:14:54,480 --> 02:15:00,540
And I want you to keep in mind
that this is a public archive.

2782
02:15:00,540 --> 02:15:01,980
Yes.

2783
02:15:01,980 --> 02:15:03,870
And I think there's
something that you really

2784
02:15:03,870 --> 02:15:11,700
have to contribute to our

knowledge of what a genocidal

2785

02:15:11,700 --> 02:15:15,810
policy, instigated
by a right wing

2786

02:15:15,810 --> 02:15:18,420
political party that
took power in Germany,

2787

02:15:18,420 --> 02:15:22,500
what kind of havoc that could
wreak on people's lives,

2788

02:15:22,500 --> 02:15:25,570
and at the same time
have a door that says,

2789

02:15:25,570 --> 02:15:29,093
well, this really isn't
anybody's business beyond here.

2790

02:15:29,093 --> 02:15:30,510
Do you understand
what I'm saying?

2791

02:15:30,510 --> 02:15:33,450
I believe that I
fully understand

2792

02:15:33,450 --> 02:15:37,950
what you're saying right now,
because throughout my composing

2793

02:15:37,950 --> 02:15:46,170
my statement, the thought kept
coming up that basically said,

2794

02:15:46,170 --> 02:15:50,640
I have got to draw the
line in certain ways

2795

02:15:50,640 --> 02:15:56,880
between using this as a personal
catharsis, which it's not

2796

02:15:56,880 --> 02:16:02,250
supposed to be, but yet I'm so
emotionally tied up with it.

2797

02:16:02,250 --> 02:16:04,680
And, just to put
it very frankly,

2798

02:16:04,680 --> 02:16:09,120
it made a significant part
of my life really miserable.

2799

02:16:09,120 --> 02:16:09,620
Of course.

2800

02:16:09,620 --> 02:16:10,120
Of course.

2801

02:16:10,120 --> 02:16:12,810
So I'm constantly saying,
I'm going to edit this out,

2802

02:16:12,810 --> 02:16:13,740
edit that out.

2803

02:16:13,740 --> 02:16:18,180
So I will make an effort when
I'm doing what you suggested,

2804

02:16:18,180 --> 02:16:23,100
your first suggestion, to see
if there's other things that

2805

02:16:23,100 --> 02:16:27,330
are relevant
historically as opposed

2806

02:16:27,330 --> 02:16:30,280
to an emotional
catharsis or expression--

2807

02:16:30,280 --> 02:16:30,780
Well--

2808

02:16:30,780 --> 02:16:33,900
--or account of staff stuff
that's nobody's business.

2809
02:16:33,900 --> 02:16:37,139
Well, what I want to say
is it can be emotional,

2810
02:16:37,139 --> 02:16:39,150
but it is your decision
as to whether it

2811
02:16:39,150 --> 02:16:40,860
should be anybody's business.

2812
02:16:40,860 --> 02:16:44,760
That's the thing is that people
respond-- the people that I've

2813
02:16:44,760 --> 02:16:47,459
interviewed, everybody
has an emotional response

2814
02:16:47,459 --> 02:16:50,200
to what happened to them.

2815
02:16:50,200 --> 02:16:54,809
And sometimes it has nothing
to do with an historical event,

2816
02:16:54,809 --> 02:16:57,660
other than the largest
historical event, that they

2817
02:16:57,660 --> 02:17:00,987
were in a city that was
under occupation or something

2818
02:17:00,987 --> 02:17:03,570
like that, or they were in the
ghetto, or they were in a camp.

2819
02:17:03,570 --> 02:17:06,000
But it is emotional.

2820

02:17:06,000 --> 02:17:09,790
But it is a question
of at what point do--

2821
02:17:09,790 --> 02:17:12,000
yeah, at what
point is that door?

2822
02:17:12,000 --> 02:17:15,459
And who opens it, and
when do you close it?

2823
02:17:15,459 --> 02:17:15,959
Right.

2824
02:17:15,959 --> 02:17:21,180
And I think that that's the
thought I need to end with.

2825
02:17:21,180 --> 02:17:24,870
It's an unanswered question.

2826
02:17:24,870 --> 02:17:27,090
Yeah.

2827
02:17:27,090 --> 02:17:28,260
Let me just say this.

2828
02:17:28,260 --> 02:17:36,120
I do-- there are
things that I have

2829
02:17:36,120 --> 02:17:46,170
considered including in this
account that I'm very leery of.

2830
02:17:46,170 --> 02:17:50,580
And that brings me to the
idea that the statement

2831
02:17:50,580 --> 02:17:57,830
I made about emotional
things comes from that,

2832
02:17:57,830 --> 02:17:58,830

but it's more than that.

2833

02:17:58,830 --> 02:18:01,410

It's that there are
certain things that

2834

02:18:01,410 --> 02:18:05,240

happened that I still
haven't come to terms with

2835

02:18:05,240 --> 02:18:07,230

and that have affected
me tremendously

2836

02:18:07,230 --> 02:18:09,240

which we haven't discussed.

2837

02:18:09,240 --> 02:18:11,280

And I know it's
incumbent upon me

2838

02:18:11,280 --> 02:18:14,280

to decide whether I
should bring them up.

2839

02:18:14,280 --> 02:18:15,120

Yeah.

2840

02:18:15,120 --> 02:18:17,430

And I'm going to have
to do a lot of thinking.

2841

02:18:17,430 --> 02:18:18,450

OK.

2842

02:18:18,450 --> 02:18:22,379

OK, well, I appreciate
that you have

2843

02:18:22,379 --> 02:18:24,480

that you have shared what
you have shared today.

2844

02:18:24,480 --> 02:18:28,139

I think-- I know it takes a lot.

2845
02:18:28,139 --> 02:18:31,350
And I know these
are painful things.

2846
02:18:31,350 --> 02:18:36,600
You-- I think
that, reciprocally,

2847
02:18:36,600 --> 02:18:45,510
I think that you asked very good
questions in a very sympathetic

2848
02:18:45,510 --> 02:18:51,719
manner that made it
easy for me to respond--

2849
02:18:51,719 --> 02:18:52,230
Thank you.

2850
02:18:52,230 --> 02:18:53,700
--in the way I think I did.

2851
02:18:53,700 --> 02:18:55,469
I think I was very--

2852
02:18:55,469 --> 02:18:58,320
able to be very frank with
you, I haven't gotten upset.

2853
02:18:58,320 --> 02:18:59,610
[LAUGHS] I'm glad.

2854
02:18:59,610 --> 02:19:05,309
I didn't-- in thinking about the
interview, I thought, oh, gee,

2855
02:19:05,309 --> 02:19:07,740
I'm going to start
crying or something.

2856
02:19:07,740 --> 02:19:10,320
There was a point where I
almost did that, but thank

2857
02:19:10,320 --> 02:19:10,920
you so much.

2858
02:19:10,920 --> 02:19:13,980
I mean, this has been a very--

2859
02:19:13,980 --> 02:19:15,480
I don't want to get
all cliché-ish--

2860
02:19:15,480 --> 02:19:15,980
That's OK.

2861
02:19:15,980 --> 02:19:18,570
--but this was a positive
experience for me.

2862
02:19:18,570 --> 02:19:19,650
Well, thank you.

2863
02:19:19,650 --> 02:19:22,650
And so I for this
point, I'll say

2864
02:19:22,650 --> 02:19:25,889
that this will conclude
the United States Holocaust

2865
02:19:25,889 --> 02:19:28,559
Memorial Museum
interview with yourself,

2866
02:19:28,559 --> 02:19:33,930
Dr. Edward Darell
on June 20, 2017.

2867
02:19:33,930 --> 02:19:35,700
But it is possible
that there will

2868
02:19:35,700 --> 02:19:39,780
be an accretion to this
interview at a later date.

2869

02:19:39,780 --> 02:19:40,420
OK?

2870
02:19:40,420 --> 02:19:40,920
Is that--

2871
02:19:40,920 --> 02:19:41,459
OK.

2872
02:19:41,459 --> 02:19:43,940
OK, wonderful.