

1
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:04,440

2
00:00:04,440 --> 00:00:08,640
The following is an interview
of Jerry Rosenstein.

3
00:00:08,640 --> 00:00:13,050
It is taking place
on January 13, 1995,

4
00:00:13,050 --> 00:00:16,660
in San Francisco, California.

5
00:00:16,660 --> 00:00:19,950
The interviewer
is Gail Schwartz,

6
00:00:19,950 --> 00:00:23,100
and it is being done on behalf
of the United States Holocaust

7
00:00:23,100 --> 00:00:23,955
Memorial Museum.

8
00:00:23,955 --> 00:00:27,300

9
00:00:27,300 --> 00:00:29,520
Could you please give
us your full name?

10
00:00:29,520 --> 00:00:32,080

11
00:00:32,080 --> 00:00:34,510
Gerald B. Rosenstein.

12
00:00:34,510 --> 00:00:36,200
And when were you born?

13

00:00:36,200 --> 00:00:38,740

I was born May 21, 1927.

14

00:00:38,740 --> 00:00:39,980

And where were you born?

15

00:00:39,980 --> 00:00:41,885

I was born in Bensheim, Germany.

16

00:00:41,885 --> 00:00:45,660

17

00:00:45,660 --> 00:00:48,170

Let's talk a little bit
about your childhood.

18

00:00:48,170 --> 00:00:49,490

Who made up your family?

19

00:00:49,490 --> 00:00:51,890

Who were the members
of your family?

20

00:00:51,890 --> 00:00:54,060

My family-- my parents.

21

00:00:54,060 --> 00:00:55,340

And their names?

22

00:00:55,340 --> 00:00:58,640

Sophie Bendheim
and Max Rosenstein.

23

00:00:58,640 --> 00:01:03,010

And I had two older
brothers, Ernst and Hans.

24

00:01:03,010 --> 00:01:05,300

Ernst was four
years older than I,

25

00:01:05,300 --> 00:01:09,020
and Hans was two years
older than I was.

26
00:01:09,020 --> 00:01:11,070
What kind of work
did your father do?

27
00:01:11,070 --> 00:01:13,250
My father was a manufacturer.

28
00:01:13,250 --> 00:01:15,440
He had at the time
of-- when I was

29
00:01:15,440 --> 00:01:18,110
a child, a furniture
and upholstery

30
00:01:18,110 --> 00:01:21,710
factory in Bensheim, Germany.

31
00:01:21,710 --> 00:01:22,910
Did your mother work?

32
00:01:22,910 --> 00:01:24,160
No.

33
00:01:24,160 --> 00:01:28,220
At that-- women
didn't work there.

34
00:01:28,220 --> 00:01:30,770
And what kind of
neighborhood did you live in?

35
00:01:30,770 --> 00:01:32,375
We lived on the--

36
00:01:32,375 --> 00:01:35,030
in the house that
I was born in was

37

00:01:35,030 --> 00:01:40,340
a large house on a very, very
big grounds on the outskirts

38

00:01:40,340 --> 00:01:42,300
of the small town.

39

00:01:42,300 --> 00:01:46,735
It's-- today if you look at
the house, it's an Edwardian--

40

00:01:46,735 --> 00:01:50,480
a fake Edwardian house
with lots of stucco on it,

41

00:01:50,480 --> 00:01:54,470
and the grounds have been
subdivided in the meantime

42

00:01:54,470 --> 00:01:55,350
by the current--

43

00:01:55,350 --> 00:01:56,630
by recent owners.

44

00:01:56,630 --> 00:01:57,710
And there's about 20--

45

00:01:57,710 --> 00:02:02,030
15 or 20 individual
homes and pools, and it's

46

00:02:02,030 --> 00:02:04,400
a very fancy neighborhood now.

47

00:02:04,400 --> 00:02:07,257
Let's talk a little
bit about your town.

48

00:02:07,257 --> 00:02:08,340
How would you describe it?

49

00:02:08,340 --> 00:02:11,030

Do you know how many people
were living there at the time?

50

00:02:11,030 --> 00:02:14,240

I would say at the time
between 30,000 and 40,000.

51

00:02:14,240 --> 00:02:17,440

Today it's probably closer
to 60,000 or 80,000.

52

00:02:17,440 --> 00:02:20,390

And what percentage of
the people were Jewish?

53

00:02:20,390 --> 00:02:23,620

There were probably about 150--

54

00:02:23,620 --> 00:02:27,380

100 to 150 Jewish
families there.

55

00:02:27,380 --> 00:02:30,210

And in your neighborhood, did
you have Jewish neighbors?

56

00:02:30,210 --> 00:02:30,710

Yes.

57

00:02:30,710 --> 00:02:31,210

No.

58

00:02:31,210 --> 00:02:34,550

We had-- the Jewish families,
the friends of my parents

59

00:02:34,550 --> 00:02:36,910

that I grew up with,
were interspersed.

60

00:02:36,910 --> 00:02:42,320

They all lived in fairly
large houses amongst Gentiles,

61
00:02:42,320 --> 00:02:46,070
and there was not that one Jew
was living next to another Jew.

62
00:02:46,070 --> 00:02:48,550
It was fairly emancipated town.

63
00:02:48,550 --> 00:02:51,680
We were Orthodox when I grew up.

64
00:02:51,680 --> 00:02:54,740
But I would say most of the
Jewish families in the town

65
00:02:54,740 --> 00:02:56,490
were not Orthodox.

66
00:02:56,490 --> 00:03:00,140
So there was only one
synagogue, which was Orthodox.

67
00:03:00,140 --> 00:03:02,690
So your neighborhood was
made up of, as you said,

68
00:03:02,690 --> 00:03:04,000
Gentile families.

69
00:03:04,000 --> 00:03:04,520
Yes.

70
00:03:04,520 --> 00:03:08,390
As a young child, then, did
you play with Gentile children?

71
00:03:08,390 --> 00:03:10,950
Only very briefly,
because when I was six,

72

00:03:10,950 --> 00:03:15,930
Hitler was already in power,
and there was definitely

73
00:03:15,930 --> 00:03:18,530
a cessation of playing with
neighborhood children then,

74
00:03:18,530 --> 00:03:19,160
and seven.

75
00:03:19,160 --> 00:03:22,130
And we were then not really
playing on the streets

76
00:03:22,130 --> 00:03:25,010
with other children, which
we had never done much anyway

77
00:03:25,010 --> 00:03:28,400
because the way the
structure of the neighborhood

78
00:03:28,400 --> 00:03:32,510
was, one didn't play with
other children on the street

79
00:03:32,510 --> 00:03:38,170
because people had lived in
large houses with gardens.

80
00:03:38,170 --> 00:03:40,730
About how much property
did your parents have?

81
00:03:40,730 --> 00:03:47,730
Oh, I'm sure it must have been
five or six acres at the time.

82
00:03:47,730 --> 00:03:49,770
So your family was very
upper class, obviously,

83

00:03:49,770 --> 00:03:51,020
to have this kind of property.

84
00:03:51,020 --> 00:03:53,150
Well, almost all the Jewish
families in this town

85
00:03:53,150 --> 00:03:56,540
were well-to-do,
were well-off, yeah.

86
00:03:56,540 --> 00:03:58,173
There were obviously
Jewish families--

87
00:03:58,173 --> 00:03:59,090
there must have been--

88
00:03:59,090 --> 00:04:01,007
I researched that a
little bit later in life--

89
00:04:01,007 --> 00:04:02,590
that weren't so well-off.

90
00:04:02,590 --> 00:04:05,900
And I'd always thought
that the entire town had

91
00:04:05,900 --> 00:04:09,050
left, that all the Jewish
families had left and settled

92
00:04:09,050 --> 00:04:10,490
in the United States.

93
00:04:10,490 --> 00:04:12,290
But that wasn't quite
the case either.

94
00:04:12,290 --> 00:04:16,250
I found out in recent years
that there were at least

95

00:04:16,250 --> 00:04:19,370

30 or 40 Jewish people from
the town that were deported

96

00:04:19,370 --> 00:04:21,589

to Auschwitz or other camps.

97

00:04:21,589 --> 00:04:25,050

Did you have an extended
family-- grandparents, aunts,

98

00:04:25,050 --> 00:04:26,220

uncles, cousins?

99

00:04:26,220 --> 00:04:26,720

No.

100

00:04:26,720 --> 00:04:30,100

Not-- when I was born, my
grandparents had already died.

101

00:04:30,100 --> 00:04:31,820

On both sides?

102

00:04:31,820 --> 00:04:35,200

Except my father's father
who lived in another town.

103

00:04:35,200 --> 00:04:39,780

He was a retired teacher, and
we saw him maybe once or twice

104

00:04:39,780 --> 00:04:40,280

a year.

105

00:04:40,280 --> 00:04:42,800

There was not-- my grandmother
on my father's side

106

00:04:42,800 --> 00:04:44,420

had died very young.

107
00:04:44,420 --> 00:04:46,170
What about aunts,
uncles, cousins?

108
00:04:46,170 --> 00:04:46,670
Yes.

109
00:04:46,670 --> 00:04:48,860
We had aunts, uncles,
cousins, but most of them

110
00:04:48,860 --> 00:04:52,520
lived either in Berlin or in
London or in the United States.

111
00:04:52,520 --> 00:04:53,360
At that time.

112
00:04:53,360 --> 00:04:54,380
At that time.

113
00:04:54,380 --> 00:04:58,520
Most of them had immigrated
earlier than we had.

114
00:04:58,520 --> 00:05:01,640
How much education
did your father have?

115
00:05:01,640 --> 00:05:05,060
My father had gymnasium--

116
00:05:05,060 --> 00:05:06,500
no University.

117
00:05:06,500 --> 00:05:08,040
And your mother?

118
00:05:08,040 --> 00:05:11,870
My mother was educated in
one of those Catholic girls

119
00:05:11,870 --> 00:05:13,805
schools, where all the
Jewish girls in town

120
00:05:13,805 --> 00:05:16,070
went to a fancy
Catholic girls school.

121
00:05:16,070 --> 00:05:21,188
And I imagine it went through
about 14, 15, 16 years,

122
00:05:21,188 --> 00:05:22,730
and then she went
to the conservatory

123
00:05:22,730 --> 00:05:25,390
in the neighboring
town, in Darmstadt,

124
00:05:25,390 --> 00:05:27,590
and studied music,
which she never pursued.

125
00:05:27,590 --> 00:05:28,490
Oh.

126
00:05:28,490 --> 00:05:30,290
Let's talk about your education.

127
00:05:30,290 --> 00:05:31,660
When did you start school?

128
00:05:31,660 --> 00:05:32,660
How old were you?

129
00:05:32,660 --> 00:05:35,330
I started school just
before the age of six,

130
00:05:35,330 --> 00:05:37,157

or just at the age of six.

131
00:05:37,157 --> 00:05:38,740
And what kind of
school did you go to?

132
00:05:38,740 --> 00:05:43,870
It was a public grammar
school in Bensheim.

133
00:05:43,870 --> 00:05:46,980
And I only had first
and second grade there,

134
00:05:46,980 --> 00:05:51,660
then we moved to a small
town called Darmstadt

135
00:05:51,660 --> 00:05:54,750
just before we immigrated
for about six months.

136
00:05:54,750 --> 00:05:58,237
And I also went to a
Jewish public school there.

137
00:05:58,237 --> 00:05:59,820
When you-- let's
back up a little bit.

138
00:05:59,820 --> 00:06:04,025
When you were very young and
you went at the age of six,

139
00:06:04,025 --> 00:06:05,400
obviously there
were children who

140
00:06:05,400 --> 00:06:06,900
were not Jewish in your class.

141
00:06:06,900 --> 00:06:08,880
And the teacher-- were

the teachers Jewish?

142
00:06:08,880 --> 00:06:09,180
No.

143
00:06:09,180 --> 00:06:09,680
OK.

144
00:06:09,680 --> 00:06:14,130
Did you-- do you remember
any unpleasant experiences

145
00:06:14,130 --> 00:06:16,860
at that time, or did you have
a sense of being different?

146
00:06:16,860 --> 00:06:19,290
Granted, you were very young.

147
00:06:19,290 --> 00:06:21,090
Not very much, but it became--

148
00:06:21,090 --> 00:06:25,650
it came upon us very quickly
the sense of being different,

149
00:06:25,650 --> 00:06:30,290
the sense of being singled out,
the sense of being different,

150
00:06:30,290 --> 00:06:30,790
yes.

151
00:06:30,790 --> 00:06:34,530
When I was seven years old,
seven and a half, possibly,

152
00:06:34,530 --> 00:06:37,200
on the way home from
school in the dark,

153
00:06:37,200 --> 00:06:39,240

and it must have been
in the wintertime,

154
00:06:39,240 --> 00:06:45,450
I was attacked and beaten up by
the father of a schoolmate who

155
00:06:45,450 --> 00:06:47,190
was probably drunk.

156
00:06:47,190 --> 00:06:49,860
And he had-- he was--

157
00:06:49,860 --> 00:06:54,550
waylaid me in the portal
of the neighbor's garden,

158
00:06:54,550 --> 00:06:58,620
and just because I was Jewish.

159
00:06:58,620 --> 00:07:00,370
It was not a terribly
hard beating,

160
00:07:00,370 --> 00:07:03,520
but it was just being
attacked by a man.

161
00:07:03,520 --> 00:07:06,968
Do you-- again, do you remember
any thoughts or feelings

162
00:07:06,968 --> 00:07:07,510
that you had?

163
00:07:07,510 --> 00:07:08,010
Oh, yes.

164
00:07:08,010 --> 00:07:08,890
I was horrified.

165
00:07:08,890 --> 00:07:09,610

I was crying.

166
00:07:09,610 --> 00:07:11,445
And I had never been
attacked by anybody.

167
00:07:11,445 --> 00:07:13,660
Did you know why you
were being attacked?

168
00:07:13,660 --> 00:07:15,120
Well, yes, because I was Jewish.

169
00:07:15,120 --> 00:07:15,620
It was--

170
00:07:15,620 --> 00:07:16,380
You knew that?

171
00:07:16,380 --> 00:07:17,250
I knew that.

172
00:07:17,250 --> 00:07:18,170
At that young age?

173
00:07:18,170 --> 00:07:19,080
Right.

174
00:07:19,080 --> 00:07:21,730
And I came home, and
my mother was out,

175
00:07:21,730 --> 00:07:24,780
and my father was traveling,
and there was only the maid.

176
00:07:24,780 --> 00:07:28,050
And I'm sure she
tried to console me

177
00:07:28,050 --> 00:07:32,250
as best she could, but

she was not Jewish either.

178
00:07:32,250 --> 00:07:35,440
Any other incidents like that
in the first couple years--

179
00:07:35,440 --> 00:07:35,940
No.

180
00:07:35,940 --> 00:07:38,830
Really, this is the one
that really stands out,

181
00:07:38,830 --> 00:07:39,990
that singles out.

182
00:07:39,990 --> 00:07:44,447
Then, of course, in
1935, at the time

183
00:07:44,447 --> 00:07:45,780
I was seven or eight years old--

184
00:07:45,780 --> 00:07:51,570
eight, probably-- I remember
that my father was away

185
00:07:51,570 --> 00:07:52,500
on a business trip.

186
00:07:52,500 --> 00:07:59,040
And they threw gasoline-soaked
rags into our--

187
00:07:59,040 --> 00:08:02,190
not into the house, but into
the garage, which was quite

188
00:08:02,190 --> 00:08:04,350
at the end of the property.

189
00:08:04,350 --> 00:08:06,900

But it didn't set
anything on fire.

190
00:08:06,900 --> 00:08:09,480
But I do remember that.

191
00:08:09,480 --> 00:08:12,030
And right after that
incident happened,

192
00:08:12,030 --> 00:08:14,260
and then we couldn't have--

193
00:08:14,260 --> 00:08:18,760
we were not supposed to have
maids or personnel any longer.

194
00:08:18,760 --> 00:08:20,390
We moved to Darmstadt.

195
00:08:20,390 --> 00:08:23,160
My parents sold the house,
and we moved to Darmstadt.

196
00:08:23,160 --> 00:08:25,417
When your family was
living in Bensheim,

197
00:08:25,417 --> 00:08:27,000
and again, I know
you were very young,

198
00:08:27,000 --> 00:08:29,880
do you remember your
parents explaining anything

199
00:08:29,880 --> 00:08:32,039
to you as a very young child?

200
00:08:32,039 --> 00:08:34,380
Did they talk to you
about what was happening?

201
00:08:34,380 --> 00:08:35,280
I'm sure they did.

202
00:08:35,280 --> 00:08:38,400
I'm sure we all knew
what was happening.

203
00:08:38,400 --> 00:08:41,950
It didn't require
too much explanation.

204
00:08:41,950 --> 00:08:46,013
And you did not have Jewish
friends to talk this over

205
00:08:46,013 --> 00:08:46,680
with as a child?

206
00:08:46,680 --> 00:08:47,910
Oh, yes, we-- oh, yes.

207
00:08:47,910 --> 00:08:49,290
All our friends were Jewish.

208
00:08:49,290 --> 00:08:50,550
Oh, all-- OK.

209
00:08:50,550 --> 00:08:54,000
The only people we were
associating with at that time

210
00:08:54,000 --> 00:08:55,440
were Jewish.

211
00:08:55,440 --> 00:09:00,060
We did not have other
friends that I recall.

212
00:09:00,060 --> 00:09:03,120
So the changes that you
remember in the beginning

213

00:09:03,120 --> 00:09:07,230

when Hitler first came in were these attacks and so forth.

214

00:09:07,230 --> 00:09:07,970

OK.

215

00:09:07,970 --> 00:09:10,980

Then your family, you said, moved to Darmstadt in 1935?

216

00:09:10,980 --> 00:09:11,550

Right.

217

00:09:11,550 --> 00:09:12,200

OK.

218

00:09:12,200 --> 00:09:13,800

And did you live in the town there?

219

00:09:13,800 --> 00:09:15,090

In the town in Darmstadt.

220

00:09:15,090 --> 00:09:17,430

We had-- they rented an apartment

221

00:09:17,430 --> 00:09:19,560

for about five or six months.

222

00:09:19,560 --> 00:09:24,900

And I do remember that the maid we had in Bensheim

223

00:09:24,900 --> 00:09:28,050

moved with us to Darmstadt.

224

00:09:28,050 --> 00:09:31,380

And she then also moved with us to Amsterdam,

225

00:09:31,380 --> 00:09:35,900
but then she didn't like it
and she went back to Germany.

226

00:09:35,900 --> 00:09:37,710
And you started
school in Darmstadt?

227

00:09:37,710 --> 00:09:38,400
I had-- yeah.

228

00:09:38,400 --> 00:09:39,980
And there was a Jewish school.

229

00:09:39,980 --> 00:09:42,660
There was a Jewish grammar
school for six months.

230

00:09:42,660 --> 00:09:43,634
Uh-huh.

231

00:09:43,634 --> 00:09:46,070
1935.

232

00:09:46,070 --> 00:09:49,200
You had mentioned before that
your family was at Orthodox.

233

00:09:49,200 --> 00:09:49,940
Right.

234

00:09:49,940 --> 00:09:50,640
OK.

235

00:09:50,640 --> 00:09:53,310
So did you have any
kind of Jewish training?

236

00:09:53,310 --> 00:09:57,930
Yes, we-- I went-- we all-- all
the Jewish children in Bensheim

237

00:09:57,930 --> 00:09:59,950
went to Hebrew school.

238

00:09:59,950 --> 00:10:00,870
I mean, this was--

239

00:10:00,870 --> 00:10:04,680
there was a Hebrew teacher there
by the name of [? Mueller. ?]

240

00:10:04,680 --> 00:10:06,450
And we all had to go.

241

00:10:06,450 --> 00:10:07,560
We all hated him.

242

00:10:07,560 --> 00:10:11,070
We all hated Hebrew school,
and he was a terrible teacher.

243

00:10:11,070 --> 00:10:13,560
But we all went
to Hebrew school.

244

00:10:13,560 --> 00:10:15,200
This was after school?

245

00:10:15,200 --> 00:10:16,615
It was after school, yeah.

246

00:10:16,615 --> 00:10:16,920
How often did you go?

247

00:10:16,920 --> 00:10:19,003
Two or three-- times a week--
probably twice a week,

248

00:10:19,003 --> 00:10:19,800
I imagine.

249

00:10:19,800 --> 00:10:22,740

And did your-- your family
was very observant then?

250
00:10:22,740 --> 00:10:23,730
Yes.

251
00:10:23,730 --> 00:10:25,530
Actually, my father's
family was not.

252
00:10:25,530 --> 00:10:30,730
But my mother's family who had
lived in Bensheim since 1750,

253
00:10:30,730 --> 00:10:33,955
1780, somewhere like
that, were very Orthodox.

254
00:10:33,955 --> 00:10:35,740
And yes.

255
00:10:35,740 --> 00:10:40,230
And my mother's orthodoxy
prevailed in the family.

256
00:10:40,230 --> 00:10:43,150
So you-- did your
family keep kashrut?

257
00:10:43,150 --> 00:10:47,510
We kept kashrut, but we
didn't write on Saturday,

258
00:10:47,510 --> 00:10:51,060
but there was no such thing
as wearing a sheitel or--

259
00:10:51,060 --> 00:10:52,100
wasn't that Orthodox.

260
00:10:52,100 --> 00:10:52,680
Yeah.

261

00:10:52,680 --> 00:10:54,700

And obviously, observing
all the holidays.

262

00:10:54,700 --> 00:10:55,200

Oh, yes.

263

00:10:55,200 --> 00:10:58,460

All the holidays
were always observed.

264

00:10:58,460 --> 00:11:03,160

When you moved to Darmstadt
you were now eight years old.

265

00:11:03,160 --> 00:11:03,690

Yes.

266

00:11:03,690 --> 00:11:05,000

Seven or eight.

267

00:11:05,000 --> 00:11:06,650

What did you do besides school?

268

00:11:06,650 --> 00:11:11,240

Were you in any kind of
sports groups or any hobbies?

269

00:11:11,240 --> 00:11:13,410

Did you do anything besides--

270

00:11:13,410 --> 00:11:13,910

No.

271

00:11:13,910 --> 00:11:16,280

I was-- at that time was
the only time in my life

272

00:11:16,280 --> 00:11:18,750

I was kind of interested
in things Jewish,

273

00:11:18,750 --> 00:11:20,900

and I think I took a real
interest in Hebrew school

274

00:11:20,900 --> 00:11:22,960

at the time for
about six months,

275

00:11:22,960 --> 00:11:26,750

and was just about the only
time I took an interest in it.

276

00:11:26,750 --> 00:11:29,150

I don't recall having any
other hobbies at the time.

277

00:11:29,150 --> 00:11:30,650

You know, the Nazis
were prevailing,

278

00:11:30,650 --> 00:11:32,960

and you just stayed
off the streets.

279

00:11:32,960 --> 00:11:33,590

Right.

280

00:11:33,590 --> 00:11:36,200

Right.

281

00:11:36,200 --> 00:11:39,710

What was the next
unpleasant incident

282

00:11:39,710 --> 00:11:41,180

that you remember as a child?

283

00:11:41,180 --> 00:11:44,330

Anything in Darmstadt that
happened to you particularly?

284

00:11:44,330 --> 00:11:45,660

Nothing happened to me--

285
00:11:45,660 --> 00:11:46,230
Personally.

286
00:11:46,230 --> 00:11:46,970
--personally.

287
00:11:46,970 --> 00:11:50,440
Nor did anything happen
personally to my parents

288
00:11:50,440 --> 00:11:52,820
or to my brothers.

289
00:11:52,820 --> 00:11:55,180
So you were just a young
child going to school.

290
00:11:55,180 --> 00:11:57,870
Yeah, going to school,
waiting to move to Holland.

291
00:11:57,870 --> 00:11:59,600
My father was mostly absent.

292
00:11:59,600 --> 00:12:03,230
He had already established
an office in Amsterdam.

293
00:12:03,230 --> 00:12:09,320
And we then moved
officially from Darmstadt

294
00:12:09,320 --> 00:12:13,410
to Amsterdam with all
the furniture, with--

295
00:12:13,410 --> 00:12:16,350
by car.

296
00:12:16,350 --> 00:12:17,830

It was a regular transport.

297

00:12:17,830 --> 00:12:20,420

We were not refugees
in any sense.

298

00:12:20,420 --> 00:12:22,790

We were regular
immigrants to Holland.

299

00:12:22,790 --> 00:12:24,950

And what-- do you remember
what your feelings

300

00:12:24,950 --> 00:12:27,110

were as a young boy
having to pick up and move

301

00:12:27,110 --> 00:12:28,160

to another country?

302

00:12:28,160 --> 00:12:29,960

Oh, it was a-- we
all left Germany

303

00:12:29,960 --> 00:12:31,760

with a great feeling of relief.

304

00:12:31,760 --> 00:12:34,440

We couldn't wait until we got
to cross that border to Holland,

305

00:12:34,440 --> 00:12:36,450

and it was wonderful
to be in Holland.

306

00:12:36,450 --> 00:12:39,530

It was wonderful
from day one there.

307

00:12:39,530 --> 00:12:42,750

We had to go to a--

308

00:12:42,750 --> 00:12:45,590

we were quartered
first, us three boys,

309

00:12:45,590 --> 00:12:48,260

with a Dutch family somewhere
in the middle of town,

310

00:12:48,260 --> 00:12:50,120

because my-- the
furniture hadn't arrived,

311

00:12:50,120 --> 00:12:54,572

and we didn't have-- my parents
were just renting an apartment.

312

00:12:54,572 --> 00:12:56,360

And I'm not exactly
sure anymore where

313

00:12:56,360 --> 00:12:59,360

my parents were staying--
probably in a hotel

314

00:12:59,360 --> 00:13:01,026

until the furniture came.

315

00:13:01,026 --> 00:13:03,110

[COUGHS] Excuse me.

316

00:13:03,110 --> 00:13:07,280

We were immediately sent
to a special language

317

00:13:07,280 --> 00:13:12,990

school, a six-week Dutch
high-intensive language school.

318

00:13:12,990 --> 00:13:15,920

And after that, we went
to a regular Dutch school

319

00:13:15,920 --> 00:13:16,910
and managed this.

320
00:13:16,910 --> 00:13:20,330
Speaking of languages, what
language did you speak at home?

321
00:13:20,330 --> 00:13:22,520
We spoke German at home.

322
00:13:22,520 --> 00:13:27,500
And then later on in the
camps, we spoke Dutch mostly.

323
00:13:27,500 --> 00:13:29,830
In Auschwitz-- I know in
Auschwitz we spoke Dutch.

324
00:13:29,830 --> 00:13:32,126
At home we spoke German.

325
00:13:32,126 --> 00:13:34,340
Yeah.

326
00:13:34,340 --> 00:13:38,510
Do you remember any feelings
that you had in Germany

327
00:13:38,510 --> 00:13:42,310
when you would see a Nazi
soldier or a uniform?

328
00:13:42,310 --> 00:13:43,590
Was it frightening?

329
00:13:43,590 --> 00:13:45,290
Fear, yes.

330
00:13:45,290 --> 00:13:47,980
Oh, absolutely.

331
00:13:47,980 --> 00:13:51,460

And did you talk it
over with your parents?

332
00:13:51,460 --> 00:13:51,960
No.

333
00:13:51,960 --> 00:13:52,560
Why not?

334
00:13:52,560 --> 00:13:55,110
Because we were just not
a very communicative--

335
00:13:55,110 --> 00:13:56,550
I think it's generational.

336
00:13:56,550 --> 00:13:59,005
We didn't talk about things.

337
00:13:59,005 --> 00:14:00,630
We'll get into this
a little bit later.

338
00:14:00,630 --> 00:14:01,124
OK.

339
00:14:01,124 --> 00:14:01,624
OK.

340
00:14:01,624 --> 00:14:03,100
OK.

341
00:14:03,100 --> 00:14:05,820
OK, now you're in Holland, and
you're in Amsterdam, you said.

342
00:14:05,820 --> 00:14:08,460
And you and your two
brothers temporarily

343
00:14:08,460 --> 00:14:11,050
were living with a family

until your parents got settled.

344
00:14:11,050 --> 00:14:11,550
Right.

345
00:14:11,550 --> 00:14:13,740
And then what happened?

346
00:14:13,740 --> 00:14:16,980
And then we all moved
into a very nice apartment

347
00:14:16,980 --> 00:14:17,930
in Amsterdam.

348
00:14:17,930 --> 00:14:21,740
If you want, I can
show you pictures--

349
00:14:21,740 --> 00:14:23,850
building's still standing
exactly where it always

350
00:14:23,850 --> 00:14:25,350
was in the south
of Amsterdam, which

351
00:14:25,350 --> 00:14:27,210
was a neighborhood which was--

352
00:14:27,210 --> 00:14:30,520
where many German
Jews were settling.

353
00:14:30,520 --> 00:14:32,490
And I went to school.

354
00:14:32,490 --> 00:14:35,310
And I loved school there,
and I loved life as a child

355
00:14:35,310 --> 00:14:37,660

in Amsterdam.

356
00:14:37,660 --> 00:14:41,370
My older brothers were
in different schools.

357
00:14:41,370 --> 00:14:44,195
Did you talk things over
with your older brothers--

358
00:14:44,195 --> 00:14:44,820
Actually, the--

359
00:14:44,820 --> 00:14:45,990
--about the changing times?

360
00:14:45,990 --> 00:14:47,220
The age gap was tremendous.

361
00:14:47,220 --> 00:14:50,163
When you are eight and nine,
two and four years old is hard.

362
00:14:50,163 --> 00:14:51,330
They had lives of their own.

363
00:14:51,330 --> 00:14:53,880
We all had lives of of our own.

364
00:14:53,880 --> 00:14:58,980
We were not particularly close,
but boys that age aren't often.

365
00:14:58,980 --> 00:15:01,680
And when you were
in Amsterdam, did

366
00:15:01,680 --> 00:15:04,400
you do any sports there or--

367
00:15:04,400 --> 00:15:05,140
Skating.

368
00:15:05,140 --> 00:15:05,640
Oh.

369
00:15:05,640 --> 00:15:07,470
Skating and swimming, yes.

370
00:15:07,470 --> 00:15:10,910
But not-- nothing serious,
nothing competitive.

371
00:15:10,910 --> 00:15:11,550
Right.

372
00:15:11,550 --> 00:15:14,880
Were you part of
any youth groups,

373
00:15:14,880 --> 00:15:18,520
or you just did solitary
and personal things.

374
00:15:18,520 --> 00:15:19,020
Yeah.

375
00:15:19,020 --> 00:15:19,520
No.

376
00:15:19,520 --> 00:15:22,822
We had a lot of friends, and
it was a very friendly time

377
00:15:22,822 --> 00:15:23,780
with lots of neighbors.

378
00:15:23,780 --> 00:15:24,580
Jewish friends.

379
00:15:24,580 --> 00:15:26,470
No, both.

380

00:15:26,470 --> 00:15:27,820
In Amsterdam it was both.

381
00:15:27,820 --> 00:15:30,180
And certainly in
those years if--

382
00:15:30,180 --> 00:15:33,210
there was no-- you
didn't pay-- they didn't

383
00:15:33,210 --> 00:15:34,505
pay much attention to it.

384
00:15:34,505 --> 00:15:35,880
Yes, there were,
of course, a lot

385
00:15:35,880 --> 00:15:38,198
of-- my parents had a
lot of Jewish friends,

386
00:15:38,198 --> 00:15:39,740
but they also had
non-Jewish friends.

387
00:15:39,740 --> 00:15:41,860
They also made friends
with non-Jewish people.

388
00:15:41,860 --> 00:15:44,245
Did you-- do you know if
your parents had contact

389
00:15:44,245 --> 00:15:48,630
with people back in Germany
once they moved to Holland?

390
00:15:48,630 --> 00:15:49,440
Some.

391
00:15:49,440 --> 00:15:51,480
I'm sure that there were

some business contacts

392
00:15:51,480 --> 00:15:53,880
my father had, but minimal.

393
00:15:53,880 --> 00:15:56,890
What happened to your father's
business back in Germany?

394
00:15:56,890 --> 00:15:58,910
Oh, he sold that
business at a bad price.

395
00:15:58,910 --> 00:16:01,100
And like he sold the
house at a bad price,

396
00:16:01,100 --> 00:16:02,807
he sold the business
at a bad price.

397
00:16:02,807 --> 00:16:03,890
He reestablished himself--

398
00:16:03,890 --> 00:16:05,190
To non-Jews.

399
00:16:05,190 --> 00:16:06,870
To non-Jews.

400
00:16:06,870 --> 00:16:10,770
He reestablished himself in
a new business in Holland,

401
00:16:10,770 --> 00:16:13,020
which was surgical
instruments and surgical--

402
00:16:13,020 --> 00:16:15,600
supplies for surgical--

403
00:16:15,600 --> 00:16:19,260

drug supplies and surgical instruments, primarily.

404
00:16:19,260 --> 00:16:24,380
And he also had maintained some of his older business

405
00:16:24,380 --> 00:16:26,800
in the upholstered furniture.

406
00:16:26,800 --> 00:16:29,640
And he managed to do fairly well, I imagine,

407
00:16:29,640 --> 00:16:33,660
because he supported a family with three children.

408
00:16:33,660 --> 00:16:34,860
OK.

409
00:16:34,860 --> 00:16:38,040
When is the next change that you remember?

410
00:16:38,040 --> 00:16:40,935
You were going along, swimming and skating.

411
00:16:40,935 --> 00:16:42,060
And then when is the next--

412
00:16:42,060 --> 00:16:44,780
Well, when my grammar school was over--

413
00:16:44,780 --> 00:16:49,930
in '39 or '40, I was finished with grammar school.

414
00:16:49,930 --> 00:16:53,130
And I was a very good student, and I got into the--

415
00:16:53,130 --> 00:16:55,650
one of the better high schools.

416
00:16:55,650 --> 00:16:58,140
But I could only stay in the
high school for a very short

417
00:16:58,140 --> 00:16:59,040
period of time.

418
00:16:59,040 --> 00:17:03,300
My bar mitzvah was in May
1940, and the German invasion

419
00:17:03,300 --> 00:17:06,569
had taken place three weeks
before my bar mitzvah.

420
00:17:06,569 --> 00:17:09,210
Tell me about your bar
mitzvah, what you remember.

421
00:17:09,210 --> 00:17:11,109
It was very sad [LAUGHING].

422
00:17:11,109 --> 00:17:15,060
It was not a very happy affair.

423
00:17:15,060 --> 00:17:16,790
It was a small-- it
was a bar mitzvah,

424
00:17:16,790 --> 00:17:18,520
and it was a small--
at synagogue.

425
00:17:18,520 --> 00:17:20,520
And it's like all bar mitzvahs.

426
00:17:20,520 --> 00:17:23,880
You had to study for it, but

not as hard as kids do here.

427

00:17:23,880 --> 00:17:26,599

You just did a minimal.

428

00:17:26,599 --> 00:17:30,150

And I think my parents
had a little open house

429

00:17:30,150 --> 00:17:34,290

or a little reception in the
afternoon and that was it.

430

00:17:34,290 --> 00:17:36,600

They allowed me to smoke
my first cigarette, which

431

00:17:36,600 --> 00:17:39,520

was a bad mistake
because from that day on,

432

00:17:39,520 --> 00:17:41,940

I became a chain smoker.

433

00:17:41,940 --> 00:17:43,710

But the family
obviously had a sense

434

00:17:43,710 --> 00:17:45,960

of foreboding at
your bar mitzvah?

435

00:17:45,960 --> 00:17:46,530

Oh, yes.

436

00:17:46,530 --> 00:17:47,580

Oh, yes.

437

00:17:47,580 --> 00:17:48,240

Most certainly.

438

00:17:48,240 --> 00:17:49,770

The Germans were
there, and there

439
00:17:49,770 --> 00:17:52,170
was real a sense of foreboding.

440
00:17:52,170 --> 00:17:53,865
During the invasion--

441
00:17:53,865 --> 00:17:55,198
What do you remember about that?

442
00:17:55,198 --> 00:17:59,550
--which was two weeks earlier,
we tried-- at the last minute,

443
00:17:59,550 --> 00:18:03,660
we packed up the car with
another family or friends,

444
00:18:03,660 --> 00:18:06,720
very good friends of
my parents, and we

445
00:18:06,720 --> 00:18:09,780
drove to Zandvoort, which
was a beach resort really,

446
00:18:09,780 --> 00:18:11,340
to see if we could
find a fisherman

447
00:18:11,340 --> 00:18:12,900
to take us to England.

448
00:18:12,900 --> 00:18:15,430
But that was a little
late in the game,

449
00:18:15,430 --> 00:18:18,200
and there were no fishermen
left and no boats left.

450

00:18:18,200 --> 00:18:22,780

And we just go
back to Amsterdam.

451

00:18:22,780 --> 00:18:25,350

And then the next
change in your life?

452

00:18:25,350 --> 00:18:28,830

Well, then the next
changes came very gradual,

453

00:18:28,830 --> 00:18:30,460

or not so gradual.

454

00:18:30,460 --> 00:18:33,360

First of all, I was in
this wonderful high school,

455

00:18:33,360 --> 00:18:37,122

and I'm not sure I'm going
exactly chronologically now,

456

00:18:37,122 --> 00:18:38,580

and I don't think
it really matters

457

00:18:38,580 --> 00:18:42,390

for the purposes
of this interview.

458

00:18:42,390 --> 00:18:50,070

But in matters of
importance, I had to--

459

00:18:50,070 --> 00:18:52,430

not just me, everybody
who was Jewish

460

00:18:52,430 --> 00:18:54,740

had to leave the
non-Jewish high school

461

00:18:54,740 --> 00:18:56,660
and go to a Jewish high school.

462

00:18:56,660 --> 00:18:58,700
This Jewish high school
was in a different part

463

00:18:58,700 --> 00:19:02,540
in East Amsterdam, and
it entailed a long walk.

464

00:19:02,540 --> 00:19:05,510
Meanwhile, our bicycle
had been confiscated,

465

00:19:05,510 --> 00:19:07,550
and Jews were no
longer permitted

466

00:19:07,550 --> 00:19:13,080
to use to the streetcar
or public transportation.

467

00:19:13,080 --> 00:19:15,560
So I had to walk to school.

468

00:19:15,560 --> 00:19:17,820
My parents had friends who
lived in the neighborhood,

469

00:19:17,820 --> 00:19:19,730
and they were nice
enough to feed me lunch

470

00:19:19,730 --> 00:19:23,480
every day so I didn't
have to go home.

471

00:19:23,480 --> 00:19:24,770
What other restrictions?

472

00:19:24,770 --> 00:19:28,210

You did mention some about
confiscation of your bicycle

473
00:19:28,210 --> 00:19:29,258
and walking to school.

474
00:19:29,258 --> 00:19:30,300
What other restrictions--

475
00:19:30,300 --> 00:19:31,100
The car.

476
00:19:31,100 --> 00:19:35,750
My father's car was
confiscated right away.

477
00:19:35,750 --> 00:19:37,760
But most cars--
or many cars were.

478
00:19:37,760 --> 00:19:41,340
Not just Jewish cars
were confiscated.

479
00:19:41,340 --> 00:19:43,250
But that happened
almost within weeks,

480
00:19:43,250 --> 00:19:45,740
the first couple of weeks
that the Germans were there.

481
00:19:45,740 --> 00:19:49,070
Did your parents have to
turn in any valuables?

482
00:19:49,070 --> 00:19:51,370
I believe they did, yes.

483
00:19:51,370 --> 00:19:53,390
They were asked to
turn in valuables.

484

00:19:53,390 --> 00:19:56,410

Not everything was turned in.

485

00:19:56,410 --> 00:20:00,140

I still have today silver
from my great grandparents

486

00:20:00,140 --> 00:20:01,490

or grandparents--

487

00:20:01,490 --> 00:20:05,630

some items which were buried by
business friends of my father's

488

00:20:05,630 --> 00:20:09,470

outside Amsterdam that
they were underground.

489

00:20:09,470 --> 00:20:13,000

And some of the carpets,
some oriental rugs and so on

490

00:20:13,000 --> 00:20:13,700

were saved.

491

00:20:13,700 --> 00:20:17,630

But basically-- eventually,
everything else disappeared.

492

00:20:17,630 --> 00:20:22,190

What were you thinking when you
had to give up your bicycle?

493

00:20:22,190 --> 00:20:23,790

Were you angry?

494

00:20:23,790 --> 00:20:25,920

Well, everybody else did.

495

00:20:25,920 --> 00:20:27,600

You know, if something
happens to you

496
00:20:27,600 --> 00:20:30,570
that happens to everybody
else in your group,

497
00:20:30,570 --> 00:20:32,070
you do accept it.

498
00:20:32,070 --> 00:20:33,840
You do not feel singled out.

499
00:20:33,840 --> 00:20:34,920
Right.

500
00:20:34,920 --> 00:20:36,630
Of course, one was
not happy about it,

501
00:20:36,630 --> 00:20:38,400
but it was just
one of those things

502
00:20:38,400 --> 00:20:40,590
we had-- we learned to
accept a whole lot of things,

503
00:20:40,590 --> 00:20:42,550
and this was just one of them.

504
00:20:42,550 --> 00:20:45,510
And I suppose what
we learned to do

505
00:20:45,510 --> 00:20:48,480
is to suppress or supplement
the trauma that we

506
00:20:48,480 --> 00:20:50,860
were going through all along.

507
00:20:50,860 --> 00:20:52,080
We did that very well.

508
00:20:52,080 --> 00:20:53,670
We became most
professional at it.

509
00:20:53,670 --> 00:20:57,150

510
00:20:57,150 --> 00:21:00,645
What about when you had
to change schools, and--

511
00:21:00,645 --> 00:21:01,145
Yeah.

512
00:21:01,145 --> 00:21:01,765
That was--

513
00:21:01,765 --> 00:21:03,440
Was that a difficult experience?

514
00:21:03,440 --> 00:21:04,830
That was a difficult experience.

515
00:21:04,830 --> 00:21:06,160
Leaving your friends and--

516
00:21:06,160 --> 00:21:07,590
Leaving this--
well, particularly

517
00:21:07,590 --> 00:21:12,420
leaving the academic environment
of that particular school.

518
00:21:12,420 --> 00:21:14,700
And I managed to do quite
well in the next school,

519
00:21:14,700 --> 00:21:17,310
but I'm sure my heart wasn't
in it nearly as much as it

520
00:21:17,310 --> 00:21:19,320
was in the first school.

521
00:21:19,320 --> 00:21:21,060
Did the teachers
in the next school

522
00:21:21,060 --> 00:21:23,430
talk to you about what
was happening in Europe?

523
00:21:23,430 --> 00:21:25,010
More, because they were Jewish.

524
00:21:25,010 --> 00:21:25,705
Right.

525
00:21:25,705 --> 00:21:27,570
Oh, yes.

526
00:21:27,570 --> 00:21:28,230
They did.

527
00:21:28,230 --> 00:21:29,700
Was this a coed school or--

528
00:21:29,700 --> 00:21:30,910
This was coed, yes.

529
00:21:30,910 --> 00:21:34,480
Yeah, the schools in
Holland were always coed.

530
00:21:34,480 --> 00:21:34,980
All right.

531
00:21:34,980 --> 00:21:37,352
So you tried to take the
boat, but you couldn't.

532

00:21:37,352 --> 00:21:39,060
Then you came back to
Amsterdam, and then

533
00:21:39,060 --> 00:21:42,600
what was the next experience?

534
00:21:42,600 --> 00:21:45,060
Well, as I was
saying, Amsterdam--

535
00:21:45,060 --> 00:21:49,740
during the war there were
no bombing incidents,

536
00:21:49,740 --> 00:21:51,770
but there were many
bad experiences.

537
00:21:51,770 --> 00:21:54,242
It built up gradually.

538
00:21:54,242 --> 00:21:56,700
First one was [INAUDIBLE],,
then the next was [INAUDIBLE],,

539
00:21:56,700 --> 00:21:59,400
then we had to wear
the yellow stars.

540
00:21:59,400 --> 00:22:01,740
We couldn't use
public transportation.

541
00:22:01,740 --> 00:22:03,620
Let's talk about
the yellow star.

542
00:22:03,620 --> 00:22:04,120
OK.

543
00:22:04,120 --> 00:22:06,930

544
00:22:06,930 --> 00:22:09,060
Did that bother you a lot?

545
00:22:09,060 --> 00:22:10,480
Yes, I think it did.

546
00:22:10,480 --> 00:22:12,390
I think it really did.

547
00:22:12,390 --> 00:22:15,330
But again, it was one of the
things everybody else had

548
00:22:15,330 --> 00:22:17,790
to do, and you couldn't
be caught without it

549
00:22:17,790 --> 00:22:22,633
because it would-- you'd be
in real trouble if you did.

550
00:22:22,633 --> 00:22:23,550
Where did you wear it?

551
00:22:23,550 --> 00:22:24,690
On what part of your clothing?

552
00:22:24,690 --> 00:22:25,090
On the--

553
00:22:25,090 --> 00:22:25,798
On the left side?

554
00:22:25,798 --> 00:22:27,210
On the left upper.

555
00:22:27,210 --> 00:22:28,700
Did your mother sew it on?

556
00:22:28,700 --> 00:22:30,600

Yeah.

557

00:22:30,600 --> 00:22:32,190

You had to have it sewn on.

558

00:22:32,190 --> 00:22:33,955

You had lots of
them, and they were

559

00:22:33,955 --> 00:22:35,880

sewn on all outer governments.

560

00:22:35,880 --> 00:22:38,240

Were you proud of it or--

561

00:22:38,240 --> 00:22:38,740

No.

562

00:22:38,740 --> 00:22:40,120

--embarrassed?

563

00:22:40,120 --> 00:22:41,830

I was neither proud
nor embarrassed.

564

00:22:41,830 --> 00:22:45,430

It was just one of those things.

565

00:22:45,430 --> 00:22:47,580

But it wasn't pleasant.

566

00:22:47,580 --> 00:22:49,140

But, of course, we
lived in Holland,

567

00:22:49,140 --> 00:22:52,500

and the population in
general was very sympathetic.

568

00:22:52,500 --> 00:22:57,720

One day in the
summer of 1942, I got

569
00:22:57,720 --> 00:22:59,620
caught in what they
called the [GERMAN],,

570
00:22:59,620 --> 00:23:03,030
where they closed off
the street on two blocks

571
00:23:03,030 --> 00:23:06,410
and just picked up all the Jews
they could find on the streets.

572
00:23:06,410 --> 00:23:08,140
You are 15 years old now?

573
00:23:08,140 --> 00:23:08,680
14.

574
00:23:08,680 --> 00:23:09,910
14.

575
00:23:09,910 --> 00:23:11,580
Probably 14.

576
00:23:11,580 --> 00:23:19,410
And our iceman-- we did not
have an electric refrigerator.

577
00:23:19,410 --> 00:23:22,740
We still had an old ice chest,
and ice was delivered every day

578
00:23:22,740 --> 00:23:26,910
by a guy with a leather jacket
with the ice on his back.

579
00:23:26,910 --> 00:23:29,160
And he was in the same
block with his horse

580
00:23:29,160 --> 00:23:30,030

and his carriage.

581

00:23:30,030 --> 00:23:33,720

And he spotted me on the street
as the street was being closed

582

00:23:33,720 --> 00:23:35,940

by the Nazis on both sides.

583

00:23:35,940 --> 00:23:37,440

And he just grabbed
me and shoved me

584

00:23:37,440 --> 00:23:40,830

in the back of his
ice truck, and drove

585

00:23:40,830 --> 00:23:46,458

me home, cold, but frozen,
and so probably saved me.

586

00:23:46,458 --> 00:23:48,750

I don't know if they would
have picked up a little guy,

587

00:23:48,750 --> 00:23:51,000

but that might have.

588

00:23:51,000 --> 00:23:54,168

Did you see any, at that time,
any beatings on the streets?

589

00:23:54,168 --> 00:23:56,460

There were very few beatings
on the streets in Holland.

590

00:23:56,460 --> 00:23:57,300

You never saw that.

591

00:23:57,300 --> 00:23:57,800

OK.

592

00:23:57,800 --> 00:23:58,350
OK.

593
00:23:58,350 --> 00:23:59,600
That didn't happen in Holland.

594
00:23:59,600 --> 00:24:01,380
What kind of curfew
did you have?

595
00:24:01,380 --> 00:24:07,095
We had dawn to dusk
curfew, I'm sure.

596
00:24:07,095 --> 00:24:09,800
Or rather, dusk to dawn curfew.

597
00:24:09,800 --> 00:24:11,288
Right.

598
00:24:11,288 --> 00:24:12,180
OK.

599
00:24:12,180 --> 00:24:20,370
But in 1943, or was it '42, the
deportations began in Holland.

600
00:24:20,370 --> 00:24:21,510
By October '42 [INAUDIBLE].

601
00:24:21,510 --> 00:24:24,960
In October '42, deportations
began in Holland.

602
00:24:24,960 --> 00:24:29,070
And my middle brother
was the first one

603
00:24:29,070 --> 00:24:32,580
to be called on for deportation.

604
00:24:32,580 --> 00:24:34,770

And he was then
16, and he was sent

605
00:24:34,770 --> 00:24:40,740
to Birkenau, after which we
received one postcard from him,

606
00:24:40,740 --> 00:24:41,705
a handwritten postcard.

607
00:24:41,705 --> 00:24:43,950
How was he taken away?

608
00:24:43,950 --> 00:24:49,362
He was told to report to
the railroad station and--

609
00:24:49,362 --> 00:24:50,910
Did he say goodbye to you?

610
00:24:50,910 --> 00:24:52,290
Yes.

611
00:24:52,290 --> 00:24:54,300
He had about three
days notice I think.

612
00:24:54,300 --> 00:24:56,460
He said goodbye, but of
course, we didn't know.

613
00:24:56,460 --> 00:24:58,897
We didn't know
what was happening.

614
00:24:58,897 --> 00:25:00,480
But I must backtrack
here a little bit

615
00:25:00,480 --> 00:25:03,300
because my older brother,
whom I hadn't mentioned,

616
00:25:03,300 --> 00:25:04,510
was a Zionist.

617
00:25:04,510 --> 00:25:06,682
And at a very young
age, he did not

618
00:25:06,682 --> 00:25:07,890
want to stay with the family.

619
00:25:07,890 --> 00:25:09,348
He did not want to
stay in Holland.

620
00:25:09,348 --> 00:25:12,150
He wanted to go to Palestine.

621
00:25:12,150 --> 00:25:13,980
And he went to--

622
00:25:13,980 --> 00:25:16,920
when I was in school, a
regular school in Amsterdam,

623
00:25:16,920 --> 00:25:21,510
he already was outside Amsterdam
in an agricultural college

624
00:25:21,510 --> 00:25:24,960
situation where Jewish boys
were trained for immigration

625
00:25:24,960 --> 00:25:25,710
to Palestine.

626
00:25:25,710 --> 00:25:31,620
And he made Aliyah in
1938 from Amsterdam--

627
00:25:31,620 --> 00:25:34,910
'38 or '39, before the war--

628

00:25:34,910 --> 00:25:38,370

and he went to a kibbutz
in Israel in Palestine.

629

00:25:38,370 --> 00:25:43,950

He then enlisted in the war very
early, in the Palestine Corps,

630

00:25:43,950 --> 00:25:54,410

and did very well, became a
commander and a parachutist.

631

00:25:54,410 --> 00:25:59,330

And he was shot down and killed
over Albania or Yugoslavia

632

00:25:59,330 --> 00:26:05,810

in 1944, very much towards
the end of the war.

633

00:26:05,810 --> 00:26:09,160

We found out about that
right after we got to Paris.

634

00:26:09,160 --> 00:26:10,165

And--

635

00:26:10,165 --> 00:26:12,500

What were your
parents' reactions

636

00:26:12,500 --> 00:26:14,430

when he had to leave the house?

637

00:26:14,430 --> 00:26:15,430

He didn't have to leave.

638

00:26:15,430 --> 00:26:16,430

He wanted to leave.

639

00:26:16,430 --> 00:26:17,030

I'm sorry.

640
00:26:17,030 --> 00:26:19,185
I'm talking about
your other brother.

641
00:26:19,185 --> 00:26:19,746
I'm sorry.

642
00:26:19,746 --> 00:26:20,246
OK.

643
00:26:20,246 --> 00:26:21,847
[INAUDIBLE] I am.

644
00:26:21,847 --> 00:26:22,430
Your brother--

645
00:26:22,430 --> 00:26:23,810
You're going back to
the middle brother now.

646
00:26:23,810 --> 00:26:24,690
Yeah.

647
00:26:24,690 --> 00:26:27,830
Oh, they were-- you know, it
was very traumatic, obviously,

648
00:26:27,830 --> 00:26:28,490
and very sad.

649
00:26:28,490 --> 00:26:33,580
My father was a very
calm and quiet man.

650
00:26:33,580 --> 00:26:38,990
But obviously, everybody
was terribly upset about it.

651
00:26:38,990 --> 00:26:44,390
But in retrospect,
we would have--

652
00:26:44,390 --> 00:26:46,790
everybody would have been
much more upset had they

653
00:26:46,790 --> 00:26:51,710
known what's on the other side.

654
00:26:51,710 --> 00:26:53,530
So you were the one
child left at home?

655
00:26:53,530 --> 00:26:55,280
Right, the youngest.

656
00:26:55,280 --> 00:26:56,103
OK, and then--

657
00:26:56,103 --> 00:26:58,480
And was raised to reason you
couldn't go out at night.

658
00:26:58,480 --> 00:27:06,530
I went into an intensive
reading thing in my life.

659
00:27:06,530 --> 00:27:10,020
I learned how to play bridge,
and I read a great deal.

660
00:27:10,020 --> 00:27:12,780
What about any sports
during the day?

661
00:27:12,780 --> 00:27:13,280
No.

662
00:27:13,280 --> 00:27:13,960
That was restricted?

663
00:27:13,960 --> 00:27:14,440
No.

664
00:27:14,440 --> 00:27:15,857
You couldn't go
to swimming pools,

665
00:27:15,857 --> 00:27:18,100
and you wouldn't be out on
the streets unnecessarily.

666
00:27:18,100 --> 00:27:19,030
There were no sports.

667
00:27:19,030 --> 00:27:22,950

668
00:27:22,950 --> 00:27:26,520
But we also were
mentally prepared.

669
00:27:26,520 --> 00:27:28,740
People were
disappearing constantly

670
00:27:28,740 --> 00:27:30,710
and were being
deported constantly.

671
00:27:30,710 --> 00:27:35,010
And we were also prepared that
this would be our fate, that we

672
00:27:35,010 --> 00:27:36,210
were going to be deported.

673
00:27:36,210 --> 00:27:40,220
There was no way for us to
go underground, apparently.

674
00:27:40,220 --> 00:27:43,440
And I don't know if my parents
had discussions about this,

675

00:27:43,440 --> 00:27:47,360
but I wasn't privy to it.

676
00:27:47,360 --> 00:27:53,450
And so in 1943, middle of
the night the doorbell rang.

677
00:27:53,450 --> 00:27:56,510
And we had our suitcases
packed, and we were deported.

678
00:27:56,510 --> 00:27:59,570
At first we were
taken to a theater.

679
00:27:59,570 --> 00:28:01,450
The suitcases were
already packed?

680
00:28:01,450 --> 00:28:02,210
Oh, yes.

681
00:28:02,210 --> 00:28:03,080
Why?

682
00:28:03,080 --> 00:28:05,100
Because we knew it
was going to happen.

683
00:28:05,100 --> 00:28:06,410
We just knew.

684
00:28:06,410 --> 00:28:09,650
It was just a question of time.

685
00:28:09,650 --> 00:28:11,490
Had any of your
friends disappeared--

686
00:28:11,490 --> 00:28:11,990
Yes.

687

00:28:11,990 --> 00:28:12,920
--and been deported by then?

688
00:28:12,920 --> 00:28:13,190
Yes.

689
00:28:13,190 --> 00:28:14,420
By then most of them had.

690
00:28:14,420 --> 00:28:15,740
Most of them had.

691
00:28:15,740 --> 00:28:19,780
Friends and distant relatives
we had, most of them

692
00:28:19,780 --> 00:28:21,530
had been deported by then.

693
00:28:21,530 --> 00:28:24,530
Did you pack your own suitcase?

694
00:28:24,530 --> 00:28:25,670
I don't remember that.

695
00:28:25,670 --> 00:28:26,170
Do you know what you packed?

696
00:28:26,170 --> 00:28:26,740
[INAUDIBLE]

697
00:28:26,740 --> 00:28:28,490
Do you know what you
had in your suitcase?

698
00:28:28,490 --> 00:28:29,000
Yes.

699
00:28:29,000 --> 00:28:34,810
Good shoes, good socks,
sweaters, that sort of thing.

700

00:28:34,810 --> 00:28:37,288

Did you take anything
especially personal to you?

701

00:28:37,288 --> 00:28:39,920

702

00:28:39,920 --> 00:28:41,510

Some photographs.

703

00:28:41,510 --> 00:28:43,640

I'm sure I had some
photographs, but all of that

704

00:28:43,640 --> 00:28:47,210

disappeared eventually.

705

00:28:47,210 --> 00:28:50,000

But I didn't know, but my
father had some American dollars

706

00:28:50,000 --> 00:28:50,780

which he packed.

707

00:28:50,780 --> 00:28:53,900

708

00:28:53,900 --> 00:28:54,965

So--

709

00:28:54,965 --> 00:28:56,840

So it's the middle of
the night, and then she

710

00:28:56,840 --> 00:28:58,410

said the knock on the door.

711

00:28:58,410 --> 00:28:58,910

Oh.

712

00:28:58,910 --> 00:29:02,630

Knock on the door, and
there were Dutch policemen

713
00:29:02,630 --> 00:29:08,030
collaborators who took us to
a [INAUDIBLE] station which

714
00:29:08,030 --> 00:29:11,970
was an old theater
in an East Amsterdam.

715
00:29:11,970 --> 00:29:16,280
[? Scarborough ?] House,
I believe, it was called.

716
00:29:16,280 --> 00:29:22,140
And we stayed in that
theater for about two days.

717
00:29:22,140 --> 00:29:23,590
And then we were sent--

718
00:29:23,590 --> 00:29:25,160
Did you have any food then?

719
00:29:25,160 --> 00:29:26,990
Yes, they fed us.

720
00:29:26,990 --> 00:29:28,340
Where did you sleep?

721
00:29:28,340 --> 00:29:28,940
On the ground.

722
00:29:28,940 --> 00:29:29,828
On the floor.

723
00:29:29,828 --> 00:29:30,370
In the seats.

724
00:29:30,370 --> 00:29:31,580
Were there a lot of people?

725
00:29:31,580 --> 00:29:32,080
Yeah.

726
00:29:32,080 --> 00:29:34,880
It was not too full,
but it was pretty full.

727
00:29:34,880 --> 00:29:37,640
And you could either
sleep in theater seats,

728
00:29:37,640 --> 00:29:40,370
or you just made yourself
comfortable on the ground.

729
00:29:40,370 --> 00:29:41,810
It was carpeted theater.

730
00:29:41,810 --> 00:29:44,270
It was no-- was not
terribly traumatic.

731
00:29:44,270 --> 00:29:46,130
But people already were--

732
00:29:46,130 --> 00:29:49,310
I was a rather
sheltered boy, and I

733
00:29:49,310 --> 00:29:51,275
was being exposed
right then and there

734
00:29:51,275 --> 00:29:54,380
to people with epileptic
fits and things

735
00:29:54,380 --> 00:29:59,420
that you were not
prepared for in life.

736

00:29:59,420 --> 00:30:00,680
And--

737
00:30:00,680 --> 00:30:05,460
Was the overall atmosphere
calm or very nervous then?

738
00:30:05,460 --> 00:30:06,470
Very nervous.

739
00:30:06,470 --> 00:30:07,515
I would say very nervous.

740
00:30:07,515 --> 00:30:10,230

741
00:30:10,230 --> 00:30:15,920
From there we were sent
to Westerbork, which

742
00:30:15,920 --> 00:30:19,200
is in Northeastern Holland.

743
00:30:19,200 --> 00:30:21,937
And my parents were
put in a different--

744
00:30:21,937 --> 00:30:24,020
I think all three of us
were in different barracks

745
00:30:24,020 --> 00:30:28,920
in Westerbork, but Westerbork
was not a bad camp at all.

746
00:30:28,920 --> 00:30:31,710
And I forgot whether my
parents were working or not.

747
00:30:31,710 --> 00:30:34,140
They were there for a
short period of time.

748

00:30:34,140 --> 00:30:39,060

I was put to work,
partly agricultural work

749

00:30:39,060 --> 00:30:42,045

in the summertime, partly as
a messenger and as a typist.

750

00:30:42,045 --> 00:30:44,930

751

00:30:44,930 --> 00:30:47,610

And I had to type lists
of incoming transport,

752

00:30:47,610 --> 00:30:50,640

outgoing transports, and
do bicycle messenger work

753

00:30:50,640 --> 00:30:53,120

and things like that, so--

754

00:30:53,120 --> 00:30:55,210

or peel potatoes or
work in the kitchen.

755

00:30:55,210 --> 00:30:56,310

I always was occupied.

756

00:30:56,310 --> 00:30:58,950

There wasn't a day that I
didn't have to do something,

757

00:30:58,950 --> 00:31:00,420

which was very good basically.

758

00:31:00,420 --> 00:31:10,660

759

00:31:10,660 --> 00:31:14,950

You were talking about your
experiences in Westerbork.

760
00:31:14,950 --> 00:31:17,530
What were the living
conditions like?

761
00:31:17,530 --> 00:31:19,720
Where did you sleep?

762
00:31:19,720 --> 00:31:21,640
Today, we view the
living conditions

763
00:31:21,640 --> 00:31:25,190
in all the camps from hindsight.

764
00:31:25,190 --> 00:31:30,310
And we slept in barracks.

765
00:31:30,310 --> 00:31:35,140
I slept in the men's barracks
with double-tiered beds.

766
00:31:35,140 --> 00:31:36,840
But you were not
with your father.

767
00:31:36,840 --> 00:31:40,330
No, my father was in
a different barrack.

768
00:31:40,330 --> 00:31:42,870
Let me inject here, my
parents were only a few weeks

769
00:31:42,870 --> 00:31:43,600
in Westerbork.

770
00:31:43,600 --> 00:31:44,840
We were separated.

771
00:31:44,840 --> 00:31:50,980
It was probably a very

traumatic experience for me.

772

00:31:50,980 --> 00:31:53,770

My parents were sent
to Bergen-Belsen

773

00:31:53,770 --> 00:31:57,310

after about two weeks, and
I was kept in Westerbork.

774

00:31:57,310 --> 00:31:58,870

Were you able to
say goodbye to them?

775

00:31:58,870 --> 00:32:00,800

Yes.

776

00:32:00,800 --> 00:32:01,300

Yes.

777

00:32:01,300 --> 00:32:03,520

Did they say anything
special to you

778

00:32:03,520 --> 00:32:05,980

when they left
that you remember?

779

00:32:05,980 --> 00:32:06,900

I'm sure they did.

780

00:32:06,900 --> 00:32:10,840

781

00:32:10,840 --> 00:32:11,340

But--

782

00:32:11,340 --> 00:32:12,715

And so you were
on your own then?

783

00:32:12,715 --> 00:32:15,160

I was on my own for a couple of months in Westerbork.

784

00:32:15,160 --> 00:32:17,210

Any friend-- previous friends there?

785

00:32:17,210 --> 00:32:19,050

Yeah, there were lots of previous friends.

786

00:32:19,050 --> 00:32:20,460

There were people coming through.

787

00:32:20,460 --> 00:32:22,280

There were people I knew-- we knew.

788

00:32:22,280 --> 00:32:24,110

There were probably relatives.

789

00:32:24,110 --> 00:32:29,740

There were-- I didn't feel alone, strangely enough,

790

00:32:29,740 --> 00:32:33,320

even though I was a small-- a young child.

791

00:32:33,320 --> 00:32:35,490

But there were people there, and there were

792

00:32:35,490 --> 00:32:37,900

other people in my position.

793

00:32:37,900 --> 00:32:43,890

And I managed it quite well, I imagine.

794

00:32:43,890 --> 00:32:45,515

Though I do know,

you know, emotionally

795
00:32:45,515 --> 00:32:53,130
it was a bad situation
for me at the time.

796
00:32:53,130 --> 00:32:55,200
I don't think the
interview will be

797
00:32:55,200 --> 00:32:57,000
long enough for me
to go into details

798
00:32:57,000 --> 00:33:00,480
and relate individual
things that happened.

799
00:33:00,480 --> 00:33:01,125
I do--

800
00:33:01,125 --> 00:33:02,340
Any particular experience?

801
00:33:02,340 --> 00:33:09,420
Yes, there was one experience,
which was very moving.

802
00:33:09,420 --> 00:33:12,900
A friend of my parents, a
woman, she and her husband had

803
00:33:12,900 --> 00:33:15,450
befriended me as a child in
Amsterdam, and she would--

804
00:33:15,450 --> 00:33:16,060
they had a--

805
00:33:16,060 --> 00:33:17,730
She was a very
famous bridge player.

806

00:33:17,730 --> 00:33:20,490

He was a theatrical
agent from Berlin.

807

00:33:20,490 --> 00:33:23,900

They entertained a lot of the
movie people and the theater

808

00:33:23,900 --> 00:33:27,420

people from Berlin at
their home in Amsterdam.

809

00:33:27,420 --> 00:33:30,120

And I got to know them
because they were elderly,

810

00:33:30,120 --> 00:33:31,950

and I was there every
day after school

811

00:33:31,950 --> 00:33:35,250

to walk their big German dog,
Boxer, which they were both too

812

00:33:35,250 --> 00:33:36,990

feeble to walk.

813

00:33:36,990 --> 00:33:38,730

Her husband was
dying of lung cancer,

814

00:33:38,730 --> 00:33:42,930

and luckily died of lung cancer.

815

00:33:42,930 --> 00:33:47,190

They had tenants-- a German
brother and sister, non-Jewish,

816

00:33:47,190 --> 00:33:50,340

anti-Nazis who had fled Germany.

817

00:33:50,340 --> 00:33:53,260

I believe he was homosexual.

818
00:33:53,260 --> 00:33:57,840
And both these tenants, I think,
were picked up by the Germans

819
00:33:57,840 --> 00:34:00,590
and executed.

820
00:34:00,590 --> 00:34:03,945
Well, as I was in Westerbork--
the name of the lady was--

821
00:34:03,945 --> 00:34:06,650
of the woman was Mrs. Jacoby.

822
00:34:06,650 --> 00:34:11,880
Mrs. Jacoby arrived on a
transport in a pink nightgown.

823
00:34:11,880 --> 00:34:13,530
And I tried to help
her and I tried

824
00:34:13,530 --> 00:34:16,139
to get her blankets
and clothing,

825
00:34:16,139 --> 00:34:18,719
and she absolutely refused
to wear any clothing.

826
00:34:18,719 --> 00:34:20,219
She came in a pink nightgown.

827
00:34:20,219 --> 00:34:23,489
She was deported in the same
pink nightgown from Westerbork.

828
00:34:23,489 --> 00:34:25,889
She made absolutely
no effort to survive.

829

00:34:25,889 --> 00:34:30,330

She must have sensed
more than anybody

830

00:34:30,330 --> 00:34:32,537

else what was ahead of her.

831

00:34:32,537 --> 00:34:40,650

It was a very tragic
but not uncommon

832

00:34:40,650 --> 00:34:43,780

thing to have happened.

833

00:34:43,780 --> 00:34:47,760

I was in Westerbork probably
two or three more months

834

00:34:47,760 --> 00:34:50,489

after my parents had been
sent to Bergen-Belsen,

835

00:34:50,489 --> 00:34:53,949

and then I was given orders
to report for transport

836

00:34:53,949 --> 00:34:57,120

to Theresienstadt.

837

00:34:57,120 --> 00:34:58,370

How did you get these orders?

838

00:34:58,370 --> 00:35:01,590

839

00:35:01,590 --> 00:35:02,830

The bureaucratic way.

840

00:35:02,830 --> 00:35:05,160

I'm sure that they were
posted in my barracks,

841

00:35:05,160 --> 00:35:08,530
or somebody handed me a
piece of paper or whatever.

842

00:35:08,530 --> 00:35:10,065
And how big were your barracks?

843

00:35:10,065 --> 00:35:13,090

844

00:35:13,090 --> 00:35:14,460
It's very difficult to describe.

845

00:35:14,460 --> 00:35:20,310
I would say there were probably
50 people in a barracks.

846

00:35:20,310 --> 00:35:22,600
Were they young men
like you or all ages?

847

00:35:22,600 --> 00:35:23,830
Well, I was the youngest.

848

00:35:23,830 --> 00:35:26,130
I was always kind
of the youngest.

849

00:35:26,130 --> 00:35:28,080
There were very few
people younger than myself

850

00:35:28,080 --> 00:35:32,310
in the camps at that time.

851

00:35:32,310 --> 00:35:33,712
They were not uncomfortable.

852

00:35:33,712 --> 00:35:34,920
I mean, there were bunk beds.

853

00:35:34,920 --> 00:35:36,930

There was a stove.

854

00:35:36,930 --> 00:35:40,140

And there was good camaraderie--

855

00:35:40,140 --> 00:35:41,560

people looked out

for one another.

856

00:35:41,560 --> 00:35:43,110

I was going to say, did

the older men look out

857

00:35:43,110 --> 00:35:44,320

for you being the young--

858

00:35:44,320 --> 00:35:45,000

Yeah.

859

00:35:45,000 --> 00:35:47,370

People looked kind

of after each other.

860

00:35:47,370 --> 00:35:50,130

And there were no problems that

I can remember from Westerbork.

861

00:35:50,130 --> 00:35:51,560

And you still had your suitcase?

862

00:35:51,560 --> 00:35:53,160

I still had my suitcase.

863

00:35:53,160 --> 00:35:54,260

So we were--

864

00:35:54,260 --> 00:35:55,950

I was told to go to--

865

00:35:55,950 --> 00:35:58,530

get on the train to

go to Theresienstadt.

866

00:35:58,530 --> 00:36:02,010

And all the other trains that
left for the East, the camps,

867

00:36:02,010 --> 00:36:04,060

were always cattle cars.

868

00:36:04,060 --> 00:36:06,370

And this was a regular
passenger train

869

00:36:06,370 --> 00:36:09,720

with regular compartments.

870

00:36:09,720 --> 00:36:11,610

You were part of a large group.

871

00:36:11,610 --> 00:36:14,340

I was part of a large
group, yes, of course.

872

00:36:14,340 --> 00:36:17,720

And so took the train
to Theresienstadt, and I

873

00:36:17,720 --> 00:36:20,180

don't remember, there was--

874

00:36:20,180 --> 00:36:25,380

we were probably given some
food in Westerbork, some rations

875

00:36:25,380 --> 00:36:26,218

to eat on the train.

876

00:36:26,218 --> 00:36:28,260

You had enough food while
you were in Westerbork?

877

00:36:28,260 --> 00:36:28,760

Yeah.

878
00:36:28,760 --> 00:36:30,150
That was not a problem?

879
00:36:30,150 --> 00:36:32,100
Oh, that was not a
problem, because food

880
00:36:32,100 --> 00:36:33,940
was sent to me from Amsterdam.

881
00:36:33,940 --> 00:36:36,270
Friends in Amsterdam
of my parents--

882
00:36:36,270 --> 00:36:41,010
non-Jewish friends-- had money
that my dad had left with them,

883
00:36:41,010 --> 00:36:44,490
and they could send me food
packages from Amsterdam.

884
00:36:44,490 --> 00:36:47,360
And so I was not uncomfortable.

885
00:36:47,360 --> 00:36:49,410
And they even managed to
get food packages to us

886
00:36:49,410 --> 00:36:51,430
in Theresienstadt for a while.

887
00:36:51,430 --> 00:36:53,190
And your health was good?

888
00:36:53,190 --> 00:36:56,164
My health was always good.

889
00:36:56,164 --> 00:36:57,950
OK.

890
00:36:57,950 --> 00:37:00,410
So you took this train
now to Theresienstadt.

891
00:37:00,410 --> 00:37:02,550
To Theresienstadt.

892
00:37:02,550 --> 00:37:08,160
And it probably took a couple of
days to get to Theresienstadt.

893
00:37:08,160 --> 00:37:10,130
And we were unloaded
from the train

894
00:37:10,130 --> 00:37:12,240
and marched into the
town of Theresienstadt.

895
00:37:12,240 --> 00:37:14,860
And possibly you've been there.

896
00:37:14,860 --> 00:37:19,980
It's an old garrison town
going back to the 18th century.

897
00:37:19,980 --> 00:37:24,320
And it had the special feel
and looks of a garrison town--

898
00:37:24,320 --> 00:37:29,080
lots of barrack-like
building-- called kasärny.

899
00:37:29,080 --> 00:37:31,970
And it was a motor town.

900
00:37:31,970 --> 00:37:34,500
Who were your guards?

901
00:37:34,500 --> 00:37:37,130

The guards were locals,
or they were Germans.

902
00:37:37,130 --> 00:37:41,120
I don't recall exactly
who all the guards were,

903
00:37:41,120 --> 00:37:42,680
but it was well guarded.

904
00:37:42,680 --> 00:37:49,770
But basically, it was not bad.

905
00:37:49,770 --> 00:37:53,600
It was not a concentration
camp in the sense of hard labor

906
00:37:53,600 --> 00:37:57,590
or in the sense of
physical deprivation.

907
00:37:57,590 --> 00:38:01,060
Now, what month are we
talking about now in the--

908
00:38:01,060 --> 00:38:02,270
That's a very good question.

909
00:38:02,270 --> 00:38:05,750
We were talking about
the winter of 1944.

910
00:38:05,750 --> 00:38:06,710
Early '44.

911
00:38:06,710 --> 00:38:09,400
Early '44.

912
00:38:09,400 --> 00:38:09,900
OK.

913
00:38:09,900 --> 00:38:13,700

914
00:38:13,700 --> 00:38:16,560
In spring of 1944--

915
00:38:16,560 --> 00:38:19,670
Where-- let's talk also now
about the living conditions.

916
00:38:19,670 --> 00:38:21,920
The living conditions--
again, we were living in these

917
00:38:21,920 --> 00:38:24,910
barracks in these kasÃ¡rny,
also in the bunk beds.

918
00:38:24,910 --> 00:38:25,410
And--

919
00:38:25,410 --> 00:38:26,760
Did you have blankets?

920
00:38:26,760 --> 00:38:27,260
Oh, yes.

921
00:38:27,260 --> 00:38:28,460
There were blankets.

922
00:38:28,460 --> 00:38:29,730
And you had enough
clothes to keep you warm?

923
00:38:29,730 --> 00:38:30,800
And we had enough clothes.

924
00:38:30,800 --> 00:38:32,980
Oh, we had our own clothes
and there was enough clothes.

925
00:38:32,980 --> 00:38:33,480
Yeah.

926
00:38:33,480 --> 00:38:34,030
There was--

927
00:38:34,030 --> 00:38:36,110
Were you still
wearing your stars?

928
00:38:36,110 --> 00:38:36,930
Yes.

929
00:38:36,930 --> 00:38:40,250
We were still wearing
our stars, but we

930
00:38:40,250 --> 00:38:43,070
didn't have to wear any blue
and white striped uniforms

931
00:38:43,070 --> 00:38:44,280
or anything like that.

932
00:38:44,280 --> 00:38:44,370
Right, right.

933
00:38:44,370 --> 00:38:45,870
When you had clothes
[INAUDIBLE]----

934
00:38:45,870 --> 00:38:48,070
In Theresienstadt there
was some schooling.

935
00:38:48,070 --> 00:38:49,898
I remember there
were some school--

936
00:38:49,898 --> 00:38:50,940
there was some schooling.

937
00:38:50,940 --> 00:38:51,890
There was some work.

938

00:38:51,890 --> 00:38:54,960

Again, I did some
agricultural work,

939

00:38:54,960 --> 00:38:57,410

and I forgot what else I
did-- actually, very little,

940

00:38:57,410 --> 00:39:00,010

probably.

941

00:39:00,010 --> 00:39:01,330

My mother-- oh, my mother.

942

00:39:01,330 --> 00:39:03,230

Now, I have to go back
like a little bit.

943

00:39:03,230 --> 00:39:06,547

After I was in
Theresienstadt for six weeks,

944

00:39:06,547 --> 00:39:08,630

I was in the middle of the
day, somebody called me

945

00:39:08,630 --> 00:39:11,180

on the street and say,
hey, Jerry, or [DUTCH],,

946

00:39:11,180 --> 00:39:13,640

or whatever my
name was in Dutch,

947

00:39:13,640 --> 00:39:16,210

your parents have just arrived.

948

00:39:16,210 --> 00:39:19,670

I just couldn't believe
it, and it absolutely true.

949

00:39:19,670 --> 00:39:21,840
That's in a transport
from Bergen-Belsen

950
00:39:21,840 --> 00:39:23,480
to Theresienstadt,
and my parents

951
00:39:23,480 --> 00:39:27,920
were both on the transport
from Bergen-Belsen.

952
00:39:27,920 --> 00:39:30,750
So we were again together,
but not in the same barracks,

953
00:39:30,750 --> 00:39:32,270
and that was wonderful.

954
00:39:32,270 --> 00:39:36,160
And my mother went to work in
a place called the glimmer.

955
00:39:36,160 --> 00:39:37,820
The glimmer was a
place where they

956
00:39:37,820 --> 00:39:44,390
did hand work to
manufacture mica

957
00:39:44,390 --> 00:39:50,060
used in the insulation
of submarines.

958
00:39:50,060 --> 00:39:52,310
And there were about 300
women working in the glimmer,

959
00:39:52,310 --> 00:39:55,160
as I was told.

960
00:39:55,160 --> 00:39:57,380

And those were the
only survivors.

961
00:39:57,380 --> 00:39:59,230
The old survivors
in Theresienstadt

962
00:39:59,230 --> 00:40:02,803
were probably the 300 women
who worked in the glimmer.

963
00:40:02,803 --> 00:40:04,220
Everybody else who
survived, there

964
00:40:04,220 --> 00:40:06,980
were people that had been
sent in at the last minute

965
00:40:06,980 --> 00:40:08,130
from other camps.

966
00:40:08,130 --> 00:40:10,910
I don't understand exactly
because the numbers are fairly

967
00:40:10,910 --> 00:40:14,930
high that are given, but
when I was in Theresienstadt,

968
00:40:14,930 --> 00:40:20,630
everybody had been sent
to Birkenau, Auschwitz

969
00:40:20,630 --> 00:40:23,870
during the summer of 1944.

970
00:40:23,870 --> 00:40:25,970
What was your parents'
state of mind?

971
00:40:25,970 --> 00:40:30,770

972
00:40:30,770 --> 00:40:31,787
They were coping?

973
00:40:31,787 --> 00:40:32,495
They were coping.

974
00:40:32,495 --> 00:40:33,080
They were coping?

975
00:40:33,080 --> 00:40:33,350
They were working?

976
00:40:33,350 --> 00:40:34,100
They were coping.

977
00:40:34,100 --> 00:40:36,680
My mother's state of
mind was probably better

978
00:40:36,680 --> 00:40:42,540
than my father's in the sense
that she was a real survivor.

979
00:40:42,540 --> 00:40:45,560
And she was a real copier.

980
00:40:45,560 --> 00:40:49,310
She managed to look well
and do well and stay

981
00:40:49,310 --> 00:40:54,720
healthy physically, and they
were coping reasonably well,

982
00:40:54,720 --> 00:40:55,880
I would think, yes.

983
00:40:55,880 --> 00:40:57,350
Your father's health?

984

00:40:57,350 --> 00:41:01,580
My father was diabetic before
the war-- has always been

985
00:41:01,580 --> 00:41:04,070
diabetic, severely diabetic.

986
00:41:04,070 --> 00:41:08,540
And the starvation diet in the
camps was very good for him.

987
00:41:08,540 --> 00:41:09,950
He lost weight.

988
00:41:09,950 --> 00:41:12,050
He was very thin.

989
00:41:12,050 --> 00:41:14,925
But because of the weight
loss, his diabetes disappeared,

990
00:41:14,925 --> 00:41:16,550
and he didn't have
any kidney problems.

991
00:41:16,550 --> 00:41:17,830
He didn't have any
heart problems.

992
00:41:17,830 --> 00:41:19,400
He didn't have any
problems at all,

993
00:41:19,400 --> 00:41:22,010
and he could work very hard.

994
00:41:22,010 --> 00:41:24,230
And that was
particularly noticeable

995
00:41:24,230 --> 00:41:28,220
in Theresienstadt
and in Auschwitz

996
00:41:28,220 --> 00:41:30,980
because he was already at the
upper age limits in Auschwitz

997
00:41:30,980 --> 00:41:33,500
where people would not survive.

998
00:41:33,500 --> 00:41:36,350
Right.

999
00:41:36,350 --> 00:41:38,870
My mother stayed well.

1000
00:41:38,870 --> 00:41:42,410
My mother did quite well
emotionally in Theresienstadt.

1001
00:41:42,410 --> 00:41:46,640
I do remember her always
being a physically attractive

1002
00:41:46,640 --> 00:41:48,035
and upbeat.

1003
00:41:48,035 --> 00:41:51,010

1004
00:41:51,010 --> 00:42:01,290
There was a lot of underground
and also officially sanctioned

1005
00:42:01,290 --> 00:42:03,750
entertainment in Theresienstadt.

1006
00:42:03,750 --> 00:42:05,910
This entire group
of theater people

1007
00:42:05,910 --> 00:42:07,290
that I knew in Amsterdam--

1008

00:42:07,290 --> 00:42:15,030

Kurt Gerron and [PERSONAL NAME]
and playwrights and whatever,

1009

00:42:15,030 --> 00:42:19,440

only one of them, I
believe, survived--

1010

00:42:19,440 --> 00:42:22,530

they kind of looked after
me in Theresienstadt, too.

1011

00:42:22,530 --> 00:42:25,500

You know, I was the
little pet from Amsterdam,

1012

00:42:25,500 --> 00:42:28,260

and so I was invited
to rehearsals

1013

00:42:28,260 --> 00:42:32,160

of the three-penny opera
and musical things.

1014

00:42:32,160 --> 00:42:34,300

There was chamber music there.

1015

00:42:34,300 --> 00:42:36,340

There was a certain
amount of cultural life

1016

00:42:36,340 --> 00:42:37,610

in Theresienstadt.

1017

00:42:37,610 --> 00:42:39,570

As you probably know,
there were many famous

1018

00:42:39,570 --> 00:42:44,160

Czech and German composers
there, and a lot of the music

1019

00:42:44,160 --> 00:42:46,390
survived.

1020
00:42:46,390 --> 00:42:48,330
I wasn't particularly
well-versed in music

1021
00:42:48,330 --> 00:42:51,150
at that time of my
life, but I must

1022
00:42:51,150 --> 00:42:54,300
say it was a very
positive influence.

1023
00:42:54,300 --> 00:42:59,315
And Theresienstadt on the whole
was a camp that was survivable.

1024
00:42:59,315 --> 00:43:00,690
I mean, there
wasn't enough food.

1025
00:43:00,690 --> 00:43:04,720
People died-- OK,
many people died.

1026
00:43:04,720 --> 00:43:07,380
You remember seeing dead people?

1027
00:43:07,380 --> 00:43:08,220
Oh, yes.

1028
00:43:08,220 --> 00:43:13,350
And as a teenager, how
did that make you feel,

1029
00:43:13,350 --> 00:43:17,020
seeing people dying?

1030
00:43:17,020 --> 00:43:21,025
Well, sadly--

1031

00:43:21,025 --> 00:43:22,150

It's such a vulnerable age.

1032

00:43:22,150 --> 00:43:25,120

It's such a vulnerable
age, but you also

1033

00:43:25,120 --> 00:43:27,370

have to put yourself into
the mindset of people

1034

00:43:27,370 --> 00:43:28,750

in the concentration camp.

1035

00:43:28,750 --> 00:43:31,270

1036

00:43:31,270 --> 00:43:34,720

You always-- you only survive
by thinking you will survive.

1037

00:43:34,720 --> 00:43:37,480

You do not survive if you think
you're going to be dying next.

1038

00:43:37,480 --> 00:43:39,605

Because if you think you're
going to be dying next,

1039

00:43:39,605 --> 00:43:41,860

you're going to be dying next.

1040

00:43:41,860 --> 00:43:45,550

So your mindset is it's always
the other person that dies.

1041

00:43:45,550 --> 00:43:49,040

1042

00:43:49,040 --> 00:43:52,460

I'm sure that there's
almost a thread that

1043
00:43:52,460 --> 00:43:56,070
runs through most of survivors.

1044
00:43:56,070 --> 00:44:00,390

1045
00:44:00,390 --> 00:44:02,370
Kind of like a protective armor?

1046
00:44:02,370 --> 00:44:04,610
Kind of like a
protective armor, yes.

1047
00:44:04,610 --> 00:44:06,480
And my mother had
it very strong.

1048
00:44:06,480 --> 00:44:08,017
My father probably had it, too.

1049
00:44:08,017 --> 00:44:09,225
My father had a lot of sense.

1050
00:44:09,225 --> 00:44:11,760

1051
00:44:11,760 --> 00:44:15,270
Did your parents or
any of the other people

1052
00:44:15,270 --> 00:44:19,470
know what was happening
in other camps?

1053
00:44:19,470 --> 00:44:20,340
No.

1054
00:44:20,340 --> 00:44:23,010
Had we known, I don't think
anybody would have had the will

1055

00:44:23,010 --> 00:44:24,373

to live or to go through it.

1056

00:44:24,373 --> 00:44:25,290

So you were not aware?

1057

00:44:25,290 --> 00:44:27,270

We did not know.

1058

00:44:27,270 --> 00:44:29,120

The camp elders must have known.

1059

00:44:29,120 --> 00:44:32,395

We did not know what went
on in the other camps.

1060

00:44:32,395 --> 00:44:35,040

1061

00:44:35,040 --> 00:44:37,590

I also was at Theresienstadt
during the time

1062

00:44:37,590 --> 00:44:40,220

that they did that
Red Cross film,

1063

00:44:40,220 --> 00:44:42,960

and I'm sure I
participated in it.

1064

00:44:42,960 --> 00:44:44,790

I was filmed, and
it's the only time

1065

00:44:44,790 --> 00:44:48,240

we were allowed in the swimming
pool was when they did that Red

1066

00:44:48,240 --> 00:44:51,180

Cross film.

1067

00:44:51,180 --> 00:44:53,550

But I wasn't aware what
was going on at all.

1068

00:44:53,550 --> 00:44:56,550

What did you think
was happening?

1069

00:44:56,550 --> 00:44:58,218

I didn't give it much thought.

1070

00:44:58,218 --> 00:44:59,760

I really didn't give
it much thought.

1071

00:44:59,760 --> 00:45:02,800

I didn't know what
was happening.

1072

00:45:02,800 --> 00:45:04,110

But it was just--

1073

00:45:04,110 --> 00:45:07,740

you were grateful for
the opportunity of a--

1074

00:45:07,740 --> 00:45:09,300

getting to swim in
a swimming pool,

1075

00:45:09,300 --> 00:45:12,390

and maybe being fed an
extra meal or something.

1076

00:45:12,390 --> 00:45:14,450

Did you talk to any of
the Red Cross people?

1077

00:45:14,450 --> 00:45:14,950

No.

1078

00:45:14,950 --> 00:45:15,470

No.

1079
00:45:15,470 --> 00:45:15,970
No.

1080
00:45:15,970 --> 00:45:19,520
I had no contact with
anybody on the outside.

1081
00:45:19,520 --> 00:45:24,120
So Kurt Geron and some of these
German movie makers and film

1082
00:45:24,120 --> 00:45:27,200
people that were there,
I'm sure were participating

1083
00:45:27,200 --> 00:45:29,830
in making that particular film.

1084
00:45:29,830 --> 00:45:31,480
I learned that much later.

1085
00:45:31,480 --> 00:45:33,870
So at this point, you
knew German and Dutch,

1086
00:45:33,870 --> 00:45:34,890
were your two languages?

1087
00:45:34,890 --> 00:45:36,490
Yes, and also in French.

1088
00:45:36,490 --> 00:45:37,020
And French?

1089
00:45:37,020 --> 00:45:37,520
Yeah.

1090
00:45:37,520 --> 00:45:38,930
You learned that in school?

1091

00:45:38,930 --> 00:45:43,025

And I also had a fair
amount of English, too.

1092

00:45:43,025 --> 00:45:44,650

Where did you learn
French and English?

1093

00:45:44,650 --> 00:45:45,575

In Holland in school.

1094

00:45:45,575 --> 00:45:46,950

When you go to
school in Holland,

1095

00:45:46,950 --> 00:45:48,270

you learn four languages.

1096

00:45:48,270 --> 00:45:50,780

1097

00:45:50,780 --> 00:45:54,110

I learned German really
in school in Holland,

1098

00:45:54,110 --> 00:45:55,710

better than I
learned it at home.

1099

00:45:55,710 --> 00:45:57,650

I took German as a
foreign language,

1100

00:45:57,650 --> 00:46:01,010

and that's why I speak
very good German today.

1101

00:46:01,010 --> 00:46:02,570

When you conversed
with your parents

1102

00:46:02,570 --> 00:46:04,070

you said you spoke
always in German.

1103
00:46:04,070 --> 00:46:06,148
Always in German.

1104
00:46:06,148 --> 00:46:08,690
But it's still different if you
learn the language in school.

1105
00:46:08,690 --> 00:46:11,680

1106
00:46:11,680 --> 00:46:14,510
Were there many other
teenagers like you--

1107
00:46:14,510 --> 00:46:15,010
Yes.

1108
00:46:15,010 --> 00:46:15,940
--around?

1109
00:46:15,940 --> 00:46:18,940
Yeah, there were quite a few
teenagers like myself around.

1110
00:46:18,940 --> 00:46:20,740
Did you all stick together?

1111
00:46:20,740 --> 00:46:21,430
Yes.

1112
00:46:21,430 --> 00:46:25,690
I know I had a Czech
friend, a boy my age

1113
00:46:25,690 --> 00:46:28,960
who his mother was
an opera singer.

1114
00:46:28,960 --> 00:46:36,250

And he knew all the Puccini opera, [INAUDIBLE] at age 15.

1115
00:46:36,250 --> 00:46:37,720
So there you are
in Theresienstadt

1116
00:46:37,720 --> 00:46:38,637
talking about Puccini.

1117
00:46:38,637 --> 00:46:41,690

1118
00:46:41,690 --> 00:46:46,760
Well, Theresienstadt was
a rather special place

1119
00:46:46,760 --> 00:46:51,550
for these many-- for
many reasons also.

1120
00:46:51,550 --> 00:46:55,500
It was a bit of a privileged
place, but as I said,

1121
00:46:55,500 --> 00:46:57,100
there was just--

1122
00:46:57,100 --> 00:46:59,740
as we all know, it
was a terrible place

1123
00:46:59,740 --> 00:47:01,720
in that everybody,
almost everybody,

1124
00:47:01,720 --> 00:47:05,400
was deported from
Theresienstadt to Auschwitz.

1125
00:47:05,400 --> 00:47:08,830
Trains went every
week, and you just

1126
00:47:08,830 --> 00:47:12,610
were lucky you weren't on the
train, until one day my dad

1127
00:47:12,610 --> 00:47:16,480
and I were told to
report for transport.

1128
00:47:16,480 --> 00:47:17,380
Your father?

1129
00:47:17,380 --> 00:47:18,380
Yeah.

1130
00:47:18,380 --> 00:47:19,800
But not your mother.

1131
00:47:19,800 --> 00:47:21,910
Not my mother,
because she worked

1132
00:47:21,910 --> 00:47:25,620
in this particular
place, the glimmer.

1133
00:47:25,620 --> 00:47:27,340
My mother stayed
in Theresienstadt

1134
00:47:27,340 --> 00:47:28,480
until the end of the war.

1135
00:47:28,480 --> 00:47:32,090
My father and I were
deported to Auschwitz

1136
00:47:32,090 --> 00:47:37,090
in a cattle car with about
125 people and a bucket of--

1137
00:47:37,090 --> 00:47:39,100

for toilet purposes.

1138
00:47:39,100 --> 00:47:40,670
Did you know where
you were going?

1139
00:47:40,670 --> 00:47:41,170
No.

1140
00:47:41,170 --> 00:47:43,400
We had no idea.

1141
00:47:43,400 --> 00:47:46,000
All we knew was
somewhere in the East,

1142
00:47:46,000 --> 00:47:47,770
relocating to a
camp in the East.

1143
00:47:47,770 --> 00:47:49,570
We had no idea
where we were going.

1144
00:47:49,570 --> 00:47:51,460
I'm sure we didn't.

1145
00:47:51,460 --> 00:47:54,760
Do you remember saying
goodbye to your mother again?

1146
00:47:54,760 --> 00:47:55,600
Yes.

1147
00:47:55,600 --> 00:47:56,643
I do remember that.

1148
00:47:56,643 --> 00:47:58,560
Did she say anything
special to you this time?

1149
00:47:58,560 --> 00:48:01,670

1150
00:48:01,670 --> 00:48:02,760
I blocked everything.

1151
00:48:02,760 --> 00:48:03,000
You blocked it.

1152
00:48:03,000 --> 00:48:03,500
Yeah.

1153
00:48:03,500 --> 00:48:05,730

1154
00:48:05,730 --> 00:48:10,440
I blocked a whole lot of
stuff and it remains blocked.

1155
00:48:10,440 --> 00:48:11,676
Right.

1156
00:48:11,676 --> 00:48:12,500
We--

1157
00:48:12,500 --> 00:48:14,940
So you were with your
father in the car?

1158
00:48:14,940 --> 00:48:15,690
In the cattle car.

1159
00:48:15,690 --> 00:48:16,720
Was it all men, or was--

1160
00:48:16,720 --> 00:48:17,220
No.

1161
00:48:17,220 --> 00:48:19,170
It was mixed.

1162
00:48:19,170 --> 00:48:21,780

To the best of my
memory it was mixed.

1163
00:48:21,780 --> 00:48:24,540
People died in the car.

1164
00:48:24,540 --> 00:48:28,310
It took three days I think to
get to Auschwitz, three or four

1165
00:48:28,310 --> 00:48:28,810
days.

1166
00:48:28,810 --> 00:48:29,720
I can't remember [INAUDIBLE].

1167
00:48:29,720 --> 00:48:31,200
Were you in the
car the whole time?

1168
00:48:31,200 --> 00:48:32,170
Oh, yes.

1169
00:48:32,170 --> 00:48:34,890
Doors were never opened.

1170
00:48:34,890 --> 00:48:37,510
What did you and your father do?

1171
00:48:37,510 --> 00:48:39,860
Did you comfort each other?

1172
00:48:39,860 --> 00:48:42,600
[? We did. ?]

1173
00:48:42,600 --> 00:48:44,850
How did you manage to get
through those three days?

1174
00:48:44,850 --> 00:48:46,390
We managed.

1175

00:48:46,390 --> 00:48:48,030

We managed.

1176

00:48:48,030 --> 00:48:51,120

Everybody else had to get through those three days.

1177

00:48:51,120 --> 00:48:53,580

Were people a help to each other?

1178

00:48:53,580 --> 00:48:55,200

Sure.

1179

00:48:55,200 --> 00:48:56,340

I am sure that--

1180

00:48:56,340 --> 00:49:00,600

I don't recall anybody fighting over anything.

1181

00:49:00,600 --> 00:49:01,950

We were all there in the same--

1182

00:49:01,950 --> 00:49:08,260

but people did-- some elderly people I'm sure didn't survive.

1183

00:49:08,260 --> 00:49:09,940

So again, you saw dead people?

1184

00:49:09,940 --> 00:49:10,440

Yes.

1185

00:49:10,440 --> 00:49:13,763

Well, by that time you're used to seeing dead people.

1186

00:49:13,763 --> 00:49:15,180

I mean, you saw them every morning

1187
00:49:15,180 --> 00:49:16,710
in Theresienstadt
being picked up

1188
00:49:16,710 --> 00:49:20,350
and carted off to
the crematorium.

1189
00:49:20,350 --> 00:49:23,850
A cousin of my mother's
in Theresienstadt

1190
00:49:23,850 --> 00:49:30,240
was dying of throat
cancer, and I remember

1191
00:49:30,240 --> 00:49:31,440
visiting him every day.

1192
00:49:31,440 --> 00:49:32,850
And there was no morphine.

1193
00:49:32,850 --> 00:49:34,360
There were no drugs to help.

1194
00:49:34,360 --> 00:49:39,480
Poor man was suffering horribly
until he could finally die.

1195
00:49:39,480 --> 00:49:42,330
He had a son my age and a wife.

1196
00:49:42,330 --> 00:49:45,330
And the son and the wife
were both sent to Auschwitz

1197
00:49:45,330 --> 00:49:47,710
about the same time I was.

1198
00:49:47,710 --> 00:49:50,775
And the son didn't survive,
but his wife had survived.

1199
00:49:50,775 --> 00:49:53,400

1200
00:49:53,400 --> 00:49:56,580
I remember seeing her once
after the war in New York.

1201
00:49:56,580 --> 00:49:58,090
She had immigrated
to the states.

1202
00:49:58,090 --> 00:50:01,624
But she was very sad case.

1203
00:50:01,624 --> 00:50:05,510
So you were on the train
for three days and--

1204
00:50:05,510 --> 00:50:08,297
We came to Auschwitz in the
middle of the night, and--

1205
00:50:08,297 --> 00:50:09,880
What was the first
scene that you saw?

1206
00:50:09,880 --> 00:50:13,180
The scene was-- raus, raus.

1207
00:50:13,180 --> 00:50:18,010
And the SS with the German
shepherds, and line up

1208
00:50:18,010 --> 00:50:21,160
five in a row, and the harsh
lights coming, shining down.

1209
00:50:21,160 --> 00:50:22,900
And we were told--

1210
00:50:22,900 --> 00:50:24,520

Did you have your
suitcase with you?

1211
00:50:24,520 --> 00:50:25,020
No, no.

1212
00:50:25,020 --> 00:50:26,920
We were not-- yes, I
did, but we were not

1213
00:50:26,920 --> 00:50:30,120
allowed to-- it had to be
left in the railroad car.

1214
00:50:30,120 --> 00:50:32,980
You could not take anything
out except ourselves.

1215
00:50:32,980 --> 00:50:34,690
Were you still standing
with your father?

1216
00:50:34,690 --> 00:50:36,100
I was with my father.

1217
00:50:36,100 --> 00:50:40,330
And as we were marching up,
and we saw that selection table

1218
00:50:40,330 --> 00:50:42,610
with Mengele--

1219
00:50:42,610 --> 00:50:43,840
How did you know it was him--

1220
00:50:43,840 --> 00:50:45,120
We didn't know that at this--

1221
00:50:45,120 --> 00:50:45,620
At the time.

1222
00:50:45,620 --> 00:50:47,390

--after the fact, of course.

1223
00:50:47,390 --> 00:50:50,880
We saw a selection table with
two officers sitting there,

1224
00:50:50,880 --> 00:50:52,640
and people being
assigned left and right.

1225
00:50:52,640 --> 00:50:54,700
And as we were
walking up, my father

1226
00:50:54,700 --> 00:50:57,270
said to me, if they ask you
what your profession is,

1227
00:50:57,270 --> 00:51:00,690
tell them we are metalworkers.

1228
00:51:00,690 --> 00:51:08,240
The German was [GERMAN],,
meaning metal separators.

1229
00:51:08,240 --> 00:51:11,863
And it was just a very
good idea of my father's.

1230
00:51:11,863 --> 00:51:14,870
And we said that, and we
were sent to the right.

1231
00:51:14,870 --> 00:51:15,570
The two of you?

1232
00:51:15,570 --> 00:51:17,960
The two of us together
were sent to the right--

1233
00:51:17,960 --> 00:51:20,640

1234
00:51:20,640 --> 00:51:22,220
to the left.

1235
00:51:22,220 --> 00:51:26,990
And right then and
there, one of the kapos

1236
00:51:26,990 --> 00:51:29,150
who was herding us
or shepherding us,

1237
00:51:29,150 --> 00:51:34,670
who were whipping us, who were
beating us, whatever it was,

1238
00:51:34,670 --> 00:51:38,540
told us that all
those that had gone--

1239
00:51:38,540 --> 00:51:39,310
wait a minute.

1240
00:51:39,310 --> 00:51:42,010
All those that had gone
to the right, I believe--

1241
00:51:42,010 --> 00:51:43,060
we went to the left.

1242
00:51:43,060 --> 00:51:45,170
The ones to the right went to--

1243
00:51:45,170 --> 00:51:48,830
he said, they're all going
to be smoked in no time

1244
00:51:48,830 --> 00:51:50,330
and pointing to the chimneys.

1245
00:51:50,330 --> 00:51:52,320
Did you believe him?

1246

00:51:52,320 --> 00:51:55,160

We could smell the--

1247

00:51:55,160 --> 00:51:58,700

the smell was very pervasive of
flesh burning from the ovens,

1248

00:51:58,700 --> 00:52:00,390

from the crematorium.

1249

00:52:00,390 --> 00:52:04,770

And we saw these six
chimneys with a flame,

1250

00:52:04,770 --> 00:52:06,770

because there's no
oxygen in those chimneys.

1251

00:52:06,770 --> 00:52:09,300

The flames were burning
above the chimney.

1252

00:52:09,300 --> 00:52:11,930

It's like when you
go to an oil field,

1253

00:52:11,930 --> 00:52:14,720

and you see the
fires above the--

1254

00:52:14,720 --> 00:52:16,180

the flames above.

1255

00:52:16,180 --> 00:52:19,840

That's what the chimneys
looked like except much higher.

1256

00:52:19,840 --> 00:52:20,340

Oh, yes.

1257

00:52:20,340 --> 00:52:23,200

We believed them all right.

1258
00:52:23,200 --> 00:52:27,015
And well, there was a
harsh dose of reality

1259
00:52:27,015 --> 00:52:30,520
right there on arrival
within the first hour or so.

1260
00:52:30,520 --> 00:52:32,070
You knew everything.

1261
00:52:32,070 --> 00:52:34,140
How was your father then?

1262
00:52:34,140 --> 00:52:35,460
Was he--

1263
00:52:35,460 --> 00:52:36,300
Very calm.

1264
00:52:36,300 --> 00:52:36,800
He was calm?

1265
00:52:36,800 --> 00:52:40,270
You had to be very calm.

1266
00:52:40,270 --> 00:52:47,790
He-- so we were marched
with this group of men,

1267
00:52:47,790 --> 00:52:48,700
all more or less--

1268
00:52:48,700 --> 00:52:51,840
I was probably the youngest,
or amongst the youngest.

1269
00:52:51,840 --> 00:52:53,210
And I was a small--

1270

00:52:53,210 --> 00:52:54,850
Oh, you were a small child?

1271
00:52:54,850 --> 00:52:56,590
I was a small
person always, yes.

1272
00:52:56,590 --> 00:52:58,270
And I look much
younger than my age.

1273
00:52:58,270 --> 00:53:01,730
My father certainly did not
look younger than his age,

1274
00:53:01,730 --> 00:53:07,290
and in 1944 he was 51.

1275
00:53:07,290 --> 00:53:09,800
And there are very few
people that age that--

1276
00:53:09,800 --> 00:53:11,740
particularly with gray hair--

1277
00:53:11,740 --> 00:53:14,360
that managed to get through.

1278
00:53:14,360 --> 00:53:15,090
So we were--

1279
00:53:15,090 --> 00:53:17,410
Were there any other
familiar people with you?

1280
00:53:17,410 --> 00:53:18,295
Yes, there were--

1281
00:53:18,295 --> 00:53:19,360
You were still with
people [INAUDIBLE]----

1282

00:53:19,360 --> 00:53:21,110
Yeah, a group of Dutch
people with us that

1283
00:53:21,110 --> 00:53:24,130
were familiar, about 10 of them.

1284
00:53:24,130 --> 00:53:26,350
None of the names that
I remember, but there

1285
00:53:26,350 --> 00:53:27,670
was a nucleus of people that--

1286
00:53:27,670 --> 00:53:29,962
So you were surrounded by at
least some familiar faces?

1287
00:53:29,962 --> 00:53:32,890
That were familiar to us, yes.

1288
00:53:32,890 --> 00:53:35,470
We were-- then the
usual treatment--

1289
00:53:35,470 --> 00:53:37,330
I'm sure you have
this on many tapes.

1290
00:53:37,330 --> 00:53:39,640
We were told to disrobe.

1291
00:53:39,640 --> 00:53:42,110
We could put our shoes aside.

1292
00:53:42,110 --> 00:53:44,230
I mean, we were allowed
to keep our shoes.

1293
00:53:44,230 --> 00:53:45,850
Everything else was confiscated.

1294

00:53:45,850 --> 00:53:47,410
We were deloused.

1295
00:53:47,410 --> 00:53:49,450
We were shaven, all bodily hair.

1296
00:53:49,450 --> 00:53:50,740
We were tattooed.

1297
00:53:50,740 --> 00:53:51,910
I do not have a tattoo now.

1298
00:53:51,910 --> 00:53:54,598
I had it removed.

1299
00:53:54,598 --> 00:53:56,140
Do you remember what
your number was?

1300
00:53:56,140 --> 00:53:56,640
Yeah.

1301
00:53:56,640 --> 00:54:01,540
B12773.

1302
00:54:01,540 --> 00:54:05,090
And there was a number
at the Holocaust museum

1303
00:54:05,090 --> 00:54:08,760
on the second floor, I
believe, in Washington,

1304
00:54:08,760 --> 00:54:11,240
which was 12778 or--

1305
00:54:11,240 --> 00:54:12,530
within eight or nine numbers.

1306
00:54:12,530 --> 00:54:19,010
It had to be somebody who
was in the same transport.

1307
00:54:19,010 --> 00:54:22,630
Was that very painful
to have done to you?

1308
00:54:22,630 --> 00:54:24,050
The tattoo?

1309
00:54:24,050 --> 00:54:28,391
No, it was humiliating,
but it was not painful.

1310
00:54:28,391 --> 00:54:30,470
It went very quickly.

1311
00:54:30,470 --> 00:54:36,290
And it being 1944,
we were tattooed--

1312
00:54:36,290 --> 00:54:36,790
What month?

1313
00:54:36,790 --> 00:54:37,850
What month was that?

1314
00:54:37,850 --> 00:54:39,270
This was in summer of 1944.

1315
00:54:39,270 --> 00:54:41,050
Summer of '44.

1316
00:54:41,050 --> 00:54:43,690
And we were tattooed
on the inner arm,

1317
00:54:43,690 --> 00:54:46,790
whereas the earlier
first couple of years,

1318
00:54:46,790 --> 00:54:48,980
the A numbers and the
earlier serial numbers

1319
00:54:48,980 --> 00:54:51,500
were tattooed on the outer
arm with huge numbers,

1320
00:54:51,500 --> 00:54:55,180
and that got the
technology [INAUDIBLE]..

1321
00:54:55,180 --> 00:54:56,780
Was your father's number--

1322
00:54:56,780 --> 00:55:02,600
His was 12772-- either 2 or 4.

1323
00:55:02,600 --> 00:55:04,070
But he never had his removed.

1324
00:55:04,070 --> 00:55:08,730

1325
00:55:08,730 --> 00:55:11,200
And then what were
you given to wear?

1326
00:55:11,200 --> 00:55:13,650
Well, first of all,
we were deloused

1327
00:55:13,650 --> 00:55:15,520
and showered and
shaven and tattooed,

1328
00:55:15,520 --> 00:55:17,500
and then were given the
blue and white uniforms

1329
00:55:17,500 --> 00:55:22,870
and the blue and white cap
with that number on the uniform

1330
00:55:22,870 --> 00:55:25,360

and the yellow star--

1331
00:55:25,360 --> 00:55:27,333
a triangle.

1332
00:55:27,333 --> 00:55:28,750
That's what we
were given to wear,

1333
00:55:28,750 --> 00:55:31,720
but then we were allowed
to take our shoes back.

1334
00:55:31,720 --> 00:55:35,080
And unbeknownst to me, and
even then I didn't know it,

1335
00:55:35,080 --> 00:55:40,780
my father had hidden a \$10 bill,
his same \$10 bill he still had,

1336
00:55:40,780 --> 00:55:43,060
and it was is the
lining of his shoe.

1337
00:55:43,060 --> 00:55:43,750
Of his shoe?

1338
00:55:43,750 --> 00:55:46,420
Of his shoe.

1339
00:55:46,420 --> 00:55:50,570
And we kept our shoes, and
they were good, sturdy shoes.

1340
00:55:50,570 --> 00:55:54,690
And without those shoes, we
would never have survived.

1341
00:55:54,690 --> 00:55:56,440
These were leather shoes?

1342

00:55:56,440 --> 00:55:57,955

Good leather shoes
with thick soles.

1343

00:55:57,955 --> 00:56:02,360

1344

00:56:02,360 --> 00:56:05,210

Well, then the usual--

1345

00:56:05,210 --> 00:56:07,490

the Auschwitz torture started.

1346

00:56:07,490 --> 00:56:08,980

You then went to a barrack?

1347

00:56:08,980 --> 00:56:09,980

We went to our barracks.

1348

00:56:09,980 --> 00:56:11,810

It was very tightly--

1349

00:56:11,810 --> 00:56:12,980

herded into a barracks.

1350

00:56:12,980 --> 00:56:15,640

1351

00:56:15,640 --> 00:56:16,970

You and your father?

1352

00:56:16,970 --> 00:56:19,910

My father and I and
the whole group, yes.

1353

00:56:19,910 --> 00:56:21,590

And we had to
sleep on the ground

1354

00:56:21,590 --> 00:56:26,410

on cement floor, body to
body, very close together

1355
00:56:26,410 --> 00:56:26,965
under lights.

1356
00:56:26,965 --> 00:56:30,770

1357
00:56:30,770 --> 00:56:34,310
The conditions were terrible.

1358
00:56:34,310 --> 00:56:41,910
The arrivals every
day were horrible.

1359
00:56:41,910 --> 00:56:47,790
I saw a man beaten to death by
other inmates in the barracks

1360
00:56:47,790 --> 00:56:49,170
the second day I was there.

1361
00:56:49,170 --> 00:56:49,920
Why was he beaten?

1362
00:56:49,920 --> 00:56:51,970
He had just arrived
from-- he was a traitor.

1363
00:56:51,970 --> 00:56:55,920
He had betrayed other people
in the underground in Holland.

1364
00:56:55,920 --> 00:56:58,170
And then he himself had
been sent to Auschwitz.

1365
00:56:58,170 --> 00:57:01,650
And people that he had
betrayed found him there,

1366
00:57:01,650 --> 00:57:04,800
and they just beat him to

death, slowly but surely.

1367
00:57:04,800 --> 00:57:06,183
And you witnessed this?

1368
00:57:06,183 --> 00:57:08,841
Yeah.

1369
00:57:08,841 --> 00:57:10,400
It was very cruel
and very gruesome.

1370
00:57:10,400 --> 00:57:12,970

1371
00:57:12,970 --> 00:57:18,410
That's where you learned a
whole lot of life very quickly.

1372
00:57:18,410 --> 00:57:24,470
People who didn't want
to live would and did

1373
00:57:24,470 --> 00:57:27,800
walk to the barbed wire
and killed themselves.

1374
00:57:27,800 --> 00:57:29,630
That was an easy way
to commit suicide.

1375
00:57:29,630 --> 00:57:33,210

1376
00:57:33,210 --> 00:57:35,450
We were stand-- we had to march.

1377
00:57:35,450 --> 00:57:38,030
We had to stand on
the parade grounds.

1378
00:57:38,030 --> 00:57:41,780

We had to stand
on one foot and--

1379
00:57:41,780 --> 00:57:43,110
For a long time?

1380
00:57:43,110 --> 00:57:46,220
Yes, it was all cruel
and unusual punishment

1381
00:57:46,220 --> 00:57:48,110
I would say for a long time.

1382
00:57:48,110 --> 00:57:49,940
And there wasn't--
in Birkenau itself,

1383
00:57:49,940 --> 00:57:53,020
there was no meaningful
work for us to do,

1384
00:57:53,020 --> 00:57:56,460
and we were there for
about four, six weeks,

1385
00:57:56,460 --> 00:57:57,630
perhaps even longer.

1386
00:57:57,630 --> 00:58:01,010
I just don't remember exactly
how long we were there.

1387
00:58:01,010 --> 00:58:03,590
And I do remember that
after two or three weeks,

1388
00:58:03,590 --> 00:58:05,090
we had to go
through a selection,

1389
00:58:05,090 --> 00:58:10,400
and that was probably the
worst part of all the camp

1390
00:58:10,400 --> 00:58:11,240
experiences.

1391
00:58:11,240 --> 00:58:12,770
Because the first
time we arrived

1392
00:58:12,770 --> 00:58:14,770
we did not know that
there was a selection

1393
00:58:14,770 --> 00:58:17,240
and it was a life
and death matter.

1394
00:58:17,240 --> 00:58:19,670
But then we had
to undress, and we

1395
00:58:19,670 --> 00:58:23,660
had to jump and run and do
all kinds of physical things

1396
00:58:23,660 --> 00:58:26,940
in order to prove that
we were fit to work.

1397
00:58:26,940 --> 00:58:28,640
And if you couldn't
pass that selection,

1398
00:58:28,640 --> 00:58:30,960
you knew you were going
to go to the gas chamber.

1399
00:58:30,960 --> 00:58:34,430
So that was probably one
of the worst experiences

1400
00:58:34,430 --> 00:58:37,623
we all had in those--

1401

00:58:37,623 --> 00:58:39,050

This is in Birkenau?

1402

00:58:39,050 --> 00:58:40,240

In Birkenau, yeah.

1403

00:58:40,240 --> 00:58:41,370

What about your father?

1404

00:58:41,370 --> 00:58:42,480

He had to do this also?

1405

00:58:42,480 --> 00:58:43,370

He had to do this.

1406

00:58:43,370 --> 00:58:44,750

And how did he get through it?

1407

00:58:44,750 --> 00:58:45,610

He got through it.

1408

00:58:45,610 --> 00:58:45,770

He did?

1409

00:58:45,770 --> 00:58:47,103

He was able to do the physical--

1410

00:58:47,103 --> 00:58:47,930

He was able to do--

1411

00:58:47,930 --> 00:58:49,582

yeah, he got through it.

1412

00:58:49,582 --> 00:58:50,290

I got through it.

1413

00:58:50,290 --> 00:58:51,207

We all got through it.

1414

00:58:51,207 --> 00:58:53,180

How long did it take?

1415
00:58:53,180 --> 00:58:54,650
It seemed forever,
but it probably

1416
00:58:54,650 --> 00:58:57,990
was just a few minutes.

1417
00:58:57,990 --> 00:58:59,630
You know, that's hard to say.

1418
00:58:59,630 --> 00:59:01,910
The food was terrible.

1419
00:59:01,910 --> 00:59:04,042
If you were lucky and
you got fed something out

1420
00:59:04,042 --> 00:59:05,750
of the bottom of the
bucket, you probably

1421
00:59:05,750 --> 00:59:07,250
got a little bit
more substance than

1422
00:59:07,250 --> 00:59:11,270
if you got something from
the top of the bucket.

1423
00:59:11,270 --> 00:59:15,290
You had a tin can, and
the sanitary conditions

1424
00:59:15,290 --> 00:59:17,000
were terrible.

1425
00:59:17,000 --> 00:59:20,630
And you could see people
who were slated for death.

1426

00:59:20,630 --> 00:59:22,760
We called them [GERMAN].

1427
00:59:22,760 --> 00:59:24,890
You've heard the expression.

1428
00:59:24,890 --> 00:59:34,030
And it was almost some
people who no longer could--

1429
00:59:34,030 --> 00:59:39,475
had the will to live and that
showed a certain demeanor.

1430
00:59:39,475 --> 00:59:43,990

1431
00:59:43,990 --> 00:59:46,800
They were almost
self-selected for death.

1432
00:59:46,800 --> 00:59:49,840
Fate selected them for death
first, and then they gave up.

1433
00:59:49,840 --> 00:59:52,500

1434
00:59:52,500 --> 00:59:56,280
And they became sort of--

1435
00:59:56,280 --> 01:00:00,165
not pariahs, but
you avoided contact.

1436
01:00:00,165 --> 01:00:04,476

1437
01:00:04,476 --> 01:00:06,700
It was your own
way of survival, I

1438

01:00:06,700 --> 01:00:10,340
suppose, is to avoid
contact with these--

1439
01:00:10,340 --> 01:00:14,920
with people we termed
to be [GERMAN]..

1440
01:00:14,920 --> 01:00:18,560
How supportive were the older
people to you-- the older?

1441
01:00:18,560 --> 01:00:20,910
You obviously were still
with men, the older men.

1442
01:00:20,910 --> 01:00:23,513
Did the older men take
care of the younger men?

1443
01:00:23,513 --> 01:00:24,830
Well, yes.

1444
01:00:24,830 --> 01:00:29,840
There was really-- there
was really support.

1445
01:00:29,840 --> 01:00:32,840
The second day or the
third day in Birkenau--

1446
01:00:32,840 --> 01:00:34,100
I was a cute little kid.

1447
01:00:34,100 --> 01:00:36,680
The kapo who was a
criminal for the barracks

1448
01:00:36,680 --> 01:00:39,710
had picked me out to
become his room boy.

1449
01:00:39,710 --> 01:00:43,140

And I knew, and my father
knew, what would be involved.

1450
01:00:43,140 --> 01:00:48,870
And I somehow managed to
play dumb and get out of it,

1451
01:00:48,870 --> 01:00:50,145
because it--

1452
01:00:50,145 --> 01:00:50,947
they used these--

1453
01:00:50,947 --> 01:00:51,780
How did you do that?

1454
01:00:51,780 --> 01:00:52,280
Huh?

1455
01:00:52,280 --> 01:00:53,300
What did you say?

1456
01:00:53,300 --> 01:00:54,660
How did you get out of it?

1457
01:00:54,660 --> 01:00:56,472
Well, I just played
very dumb and said

1458
01:00:56,472 --> 01:00:58,930
I didn't know what he wanted
from me, et cetera, et cetera.

1459
01:00:58,930 --> 01:01:01,730
No, I wasn't interested in the
sardines or in the chocolate.

1460
01:01:01,730 --> 01:01:02,484
Yeah.

1461
01:01:02,484 --> 01:01:03,240
Yeah.

1462
01:01:03,240 --> 01:01:03,920
And--

1463
01:01:03,920 --> 01:01:04,938
And he let you get away?

1464
01:01:04,938 --> 01:01:06,980
Well, there were other
cute kids in the barracks.

1465
01:01:06,980 --> 01:01:08,980
And I knew that--

1466
01:01:08,980 --> 01:01:13,700
I had already heard earlier
what would happen to these kids

1467
01:01:13,700 --> 01:01:16,900
is they get tired of them, and
so they let them go to the gas

1468
01:01:16,900 --> 01:01:19,935
chamber, you know, [INAUDIBLE].

1469
01:01:19,935 --> 01:01:21,560
So I got out of that,
and somebody else

1470
01:01:21,560 --> 01:01:23,270
was picked instead.

1471
01:01:23,270 --> 01:01:30,260
But there was no dearth of
people for them to pick on.

1472
01:01:30,260 --> 01:01:32,110
And there--