

1  
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:00,570

2  
00:00:00,570 --> 00:00:04,500  
This is a United States  
Holocaust Memorial Museum

3  
00:00:04,500 --> 00:00:07,920  
interview with Rachel  
Goldfarb, conducted

4  
00:00:07,920 --> 00:00:12,390  
by Margaret Garrett  
on May 20, 1997

5  
00:00:12,390 --> 00:00:14,460  
in Silver Spring, Maryland.

6  
00:00:14,460 --> 00:00:16,730  
Tape 1, side 1.

7  
00:00:16,730 --> 00:00:19,380  
Mrs. Goldfarb, thank you  
very much for agreeing

8  
00:00:19,380 --> 00:00:21,420  
to do this interview.

9  
00:00:21,420 --> 00:00:26,280  
You did a videotape interview  
for the Holocaust museum

10  
00:00:26,280 --> 00:00:30,510  
on August 27, 1991  
about your experiences

11  
00:00:30,510 --> 00:00:31,740  
during the Holocaust.

12  
00:00:31,740 --> 00:00:35,430  
And today we'd like to  
talk with you a little more

13

00:00:35,430 --> 00:00:38,850  
about experiences after that.

14  
00:00:38,850 --> 00:00:42,240  
But first, can we  
review a little bit what

15  
00:00:42,240 --> 00:00:45,720  
you spoke about briefly  
in the video interview--

16  
00:00:45,720 --> 00:00:52,530  
your experiences  
from your liberation

17  
00:00:52,530 --> 00:00:54,000  
up to the end of the war?

18  
00:00:54,000 --> 00:01:00,930  
When liberation occurred  
for you, you were where?

19  
00:01:00,930 --> 00:01:08,810  
We were in some forests that  
were in the area of Białystok I

20  
00:01:08,810 --> 00:01:10,770  
can't tell you exactly where.

21  
00:01:10,770 --> 00:01:17,310  
My geography of the land there  
is not very much remembered.

22  
00:01:17,310 --> 00:01:19,370  
I just know that  
there were forests.

23  
00:01:19,370 --> 00:01:22,050  
We were liberated  
by the Russians.

24  
00:01:22,050 --> 00:01:23,720  
Actually, we weren't  
aware that we

25

00:01:23,720 --> 00:01:26,160  
were liberated until  
somebody said that there

26  
00:01:26,160 --> 00:01:29,390  
are no more Germans there.

27  
00:01:29,390 --> 00:01:33,990  
We were in a  
village, and when we

28  
00:01:33,990 --> 00:01:35,730  
realized that we  
could move freely,

29  
00:01:35,730 --> 00:01:39,540  
we did not have to be afraid of  
the Germans anymore-- proceeded

30  
00:01:39,540 --> 00:01:45,330  
to the town where we had  
lived prior to the war,

31  
00:01:45,330 --> 00:01:49,530  
and to see if anybody else  
from the family would show up.

32  
00:01:49,530 --> 00:01:51,900  
That was the only way to  
make contact and find out

33  
00:01:51,900 --> 00:01:53,070  
if somebody else survived.

34  
00:01:53,070 --> 00:01:54,530  
The we is you and your mother?

35  
00:01:54,530 --> 00:01:56,760  
My mother and I, correct.

36  
00:01:56,760 --> 00:01:58,910  
Well actually, it was  
more than my mother and I.

37  
00:01:58,910 --> 00:02:01,440

Whatever Jews had  
survived, all of them

38  
00:02:01,440 --> 00:02:06,030  
tried to go back to  
their places of domicile

39  
00:02:06,030 --> 00:02:08,759  
to see if any of the other  
members of the family

40  
00:02:08,759 --> 00:02:12,710  
have returned.

41  
00:02:12,710 --> 00:02:15,830  
Now, you went back to  
your hometown, Dokshyts?

42  
00:02:15,830 --> 00:02:18,260  
Correct.

43  
00:02:18,260 --> 00:02:20,870  
And then what happened?

44  
00:02:20,870 --> 00:02:22,760  
We were immediately warned--

45  
00:02:22,760 --> 00:02:25,010  
my mother was warned,  
I should say--

46  
00:02:25,010 --> 00:02:27,320  
I was just a follower  
at that time.

47  
00:02:27,320 --> 00:02:30,740  
My mother was warned that if  
she spends the night there,

48  
00:02:30,740 --> 00:02:33,650  
she might never see  
the morning again.

49  
00:02:33,650 --> 00:02:35,330  
So we continued to--

50  
00:02:35,330 --> 00:02:35,880  
Because--

51  
00:02:35,880 --> 00:02:45,040  
The population were still  
with the German sentiment

52  
00:02:45,040 --> 00:02:49,360  
that all Jews should be  
exterminated or gotten rid of.

53  
00:02:49,360 --> 00:02:50,680  
This is the Polish population.

54  
00:02:50,680 --> 00:02:55,880  
That's the Polish or actually  
the Belarus population there.

55  
00:02:55,880 --> 00:03:00,130  
We proceeded to a larger  
township about 30 kilometers

56  
00:03:00,130 --> 00:03:04,570  
from Dokshyts to a  
place called Głębokie.

57  
00:03:04,570 --> 00:03:10,000  
And by the time we got there, a  
few Jews had already gathered.

58  
00:03:10,000 --> 00:03:13,220  
Of course, they, too,  
had the same warning.

59  
00:03:13,220 --> 00:03:15,040  
And we all lived in one house.

60  
00:03:15,040 --> 00:03:17,320  
I don't remember how  
many families, but I

61  
00:03:17,320 --> 00:03:19,780  
know that another mother  
and daughter shared

62  
00:03:19,780 --> 00:03:24,490  
the room with my mother  
and I and kind of set up

63  
00:03:24,490 --> 00:03:26,080  
housekeeping there.

64  
00:03:26,080 --> 00:03:28,060  
That was the gathering place.

65  
00:03:28,060 --> 00:03:32,140  
People from the surrounding  
area from smaller townships

66  
00:03:32,140 --> 00:03:37,210  
kind of joined in  
that larger township.

67  
00:03:37,210 --> 00:03:39,790  
And, of course, with  
numbers, everybody

68  
00:03:39,790 --> 00:03:43,930  
felt a greater degree of safety.

69  
00:03:43,930 --> 00:03:48,190  
We set up housekeeping  
there, and my mother

70  
00:03:48,190 --> 00:03:50,090  
enrolled me in school.

71  
00:03:50,090 --> 00:03:52,310  
So I started to attend the  
Russian school there right

72  
00:03:52,310 --> 00:03:52,810  
away.

73  
00:03:52,810 --> 00:03:57,400

74  
00:03:57,400 --> 00:04:00,000

No one knew exactly  
what was happening.

75  
00:04:00,000 --> 00:04:02,440  
We knew that the war  
was still raging.

76  
00:04:02,440 --> 00:04:05,590  
Different reports were  
coming from the front--

77  
00:04:05,590 --> 00:04:09,070  
reports that the  
Russians were doing

78  
00:04:09,070 --> 00:04:13,960  
very well, because that's what  
they were trying to impart.

79  
00:04:13,960 --> 00:04:17,589  
And yet the city  
we were in was very

80  
00:04:17,589 --> 00:04:19,720  
close to a railway station.

81  
00:04:19,720 --> 00:04:23,260  
So reports were coming back  
also about a lot of wounded

82  
00:04:23,260 --> 00:04:26,980  
coming back, and stories  
from the wounded that

83  
00:04:26,980 --> 00:04:30,430  
all wasn't going as  
the media, or should I

84  
00:04:30,430 --> 00:04:35,990  
say the Russian media, was  
letting everybody know.

85  
00:04:35,990 --> 00:04:38,164  
Now, you were 15 years old.

86

00:04:38,164 --> 00:04:39,940  
This was in '45.

87  
00:04:39,940 --> 00:04:42,040  
I was 14 years old.

88  
00:04:42,040 --> 00:04:44,200  
And your mother put you  
in school right away.

89  
00:04:44,200 --> 00:04:44,920  
Yes.

90  
00:04:44,920 --> 00:04:49,780  
You had not been to  
school for several years.

91  
00:04:49,780 --> 00:04:52,000  
Several years.

92  
00:04:52,000 --> 00:04:55,150  
I was fortunate enough that  
my parents have started

93  
00:04:55,150 --> 00:04:57,340  
my schooling rather early.

94  
00:04:57,340 --> 00:05:00,710  
By the age of three, I already  
read my own story books.

95  
00:05:00,710 --> 00:05:04,180  
And even though in  
Europe, children

96  
00:05:04,180 --> 00:05:08,740  
were not started to school  
until the age of seven,

97  
00:05:08,740 --> 00:05:13,510  
I was started at five, and I  
was advanced at that point.

98  
00:05:13,510 --> 00:05:16,580  
That was informal school, or



your governess taught you.

99

00:05:16,580 --> 00:05:17,790  
Formal school.

100

00:05:17,790 --> 00:05:19,360  
Formal school.

101

00:05:19,360 --> 00:05:22,220  
And I did have a governess  
in the times in between.

102

00:05:22,220 --> 00:05:26,050  
So I was advanced in math,  
and reading, and writing.

103

00:05:26,050 --> 00:05:28,840  
During the ghetto,  
my mother continued

104

00:05:28,840 --> 00:05:32,170  
to have private tutoring.

105

00:05:32,170 --> 00:05:38,080  
So I continued to  
get some education.

106

00:05:38,080 --> 00:05:41,740  
Actually, the only  
period that I did not

107

00:05:41,740 --> 00:05:47,900  
have any instruction at all was  
during the period of hiding,

108

00:05:47,900 --> 00:05:51,730  
which was about two years.

109

00:05:51,730 --> 00:05:56,680  
As soon as we came to  
the city, Głębokie,

110

00:05:56,680 --> 00:05:58,570  
and there was a  
school established,

111  
00:05:58,570 --> 00:06:00,940  
my mother enrolled me again.

112  
00:06:00,940 --> 00:06:04,060  
And throughout our  
travels through Europe,

113  
00:06:04,060 --> 00:06:06,580  
I was exposed in  
one way or another

114  
00:06:06,580 --> 00:06:10,370  
to some form of  
informal education--

115  
00:06:10,370 --> 00:06:13,810  
geography, history.

116  
00:06:13,810 --> 00:06:20,050  
The older survivors took charge  
of the younger survivors trying

117  
00:06:20,050 --> 00:06:21,980  
to instruct them.

118  
00:06:21,980 --> 00:06:24,865  
So I've gained little bits  
of knowledge here and there

119  
00:06:24,865 --> 00:06:26,740  
and wherever.

120  
00:06:26,740 --> 00:06:29,980  
My geography I've  
covered going from place

121  
00:06:29,980 --> 00:06:34,390  
to place, and the rivers, and  
the cities, and the countries.

122  
00:06:34,390 --> 00:06:38,710  
Math was something  
that the older adults

123

00:06:38,710 --> 00:06:41,590  
had taught the children.

124

00:06:41,590 --> 00:06:48,700  
Every place where there was  
any kind of Jewish engathering

125

00:06:48,700 --> 00:06:52,180  
where survivors have  
gathered, the interest

126

00:06:52,180 --> 00:06:54,160  
was always to  
teach the children.

127

00:06:54,160 --> 00:06:57,310  
And because there was  
nothing really to do,

128

00:06:57,310 --> 00:07:00,730  
the adults were anxious to  
impart whatever knowledge

129

00:07:00,730 --> 00:07:05,320  
they had to the younger kids.

130

00:07:05,320 --> 00:07:11,740  
By the time we got to Budapest,  
Haganah was very active there.

131

00:07:11,740 --> 00:07:15,610  
It was a Jewish  
organization that

132

00:07:15,610 --> 00:07:20,160  
had great impact on the  
liberation of Palestine

133

00:07:20,160 --> 00:07:22,960  
and the creation of  
the state of Israel.

134

00:07:22,960 --> 00:07:27,100  
And they organized the  
children right away,

135

00:07:27,100 --> 00:07:32,680  
trying to prime them  
to be citizens--

136

00:07:32,680 --> 00:07:35,290  
productive and active citizens.

137

00:07:35,290 --> 00:07:41,132  
So they set up special  
living quarters, actually,

138

00:07:41,132 --> 00:07:41,840  
for the children.

139

00:07:41,840 --> 00:07:45,930  
My mother and I for a while  
did not live in the same place.

140

00:07:45,930 --> 00:07:49,280  
Excuse me, but are we  
getting ahead of the story?

141

00:07:49,280 --> 00:07:50,860  
Ahead of the story--

142

00:07:50,860 --> 00:07:53,160  
we got on education, so  
we got ahead of the story.

143

00:07:53,160 --> 00:07:54,900  
Maybe we can pick  
up on education

144

00:07:54,900 --> 00:07:57,630  
when we get up to Budapest.

145

00:07:57,630 --> 00:08:00,990  
From Głębokie, actually,  
we started out,

146

00:08:00,990 --> 00:08:05,790  
and I remember it was  
New Year's of '45.

147

00:08:05,790 --> 00:08:07,830

I remember the date very well.

148

00:08:07,830 --> 00:08:12,820

My mother made arrangements to join a working train.

149

00:08:12,820 --> 00:08:17,070

The train stations needed repair, especially

150

00:08:17,070 --> 00:08:19,080

the water towers.

151

00:08:19,080 --> 00:08:24,270

And they accepted volunteers.

152

00:08:24,270 --> 00:08:27,990

It wasn't easy to get into the workforce

153

00:08:27,990 --> 00:08:30,660

for a woman with a child.

154

00:08:30,660 --> 00:08:34,289

She had to bribe some of the people there.

155

00:08:34,289 --> 00:08:38,820

Fortunately, we were able to retrieve some valuables that

156

00:08:38,820 --> 00:08:42,960

had been buried and hidden with some local population.

157

00:08:42,960 --> 00:08:45,750

And of course, just as the ones that were bad,

158

00:08:45,750 --> 00:08:49,290

there were some that were very good.

159

00:08:49,290 --> 00:08:50,340  
You mean the population?

160  
00:08:50,340 --> 00:08:50,965  
The population.

161  
00:08:50,965 --> 00:08:51,960  
Some were good.

162  
00:08:51,960 --> 00:08:57,240  
Yes, because actually,  
I had recuperated

163  
00:08:57,240 --> 00:09:01,020  
with a family who has also  
hidden us for part of the time

164  
00:09:01,020 --> 00:09:03,720  
when we were running  
away from the ghetto.

165  
00:09:03,720 --> 00:09:10,290  
They had a farm, and they took  
me in, and kind of fattened me

166  
00:09:10,290 --> 00:09:12,420  
up.

167  
00:09:12,420 --> 00:09:18,480  
And my mother had  
hidden some valuables

168  
00:09:18,480 --> 00:09:22,410  
with some of those people, and  
they have returned some of them

169  
00:09:22,410 --> 00:09:23,550  
to us.

170  
00:09:23,550 --> 00:09:29,340  
And also, mother had buried some  
silver and gold that she was

171  
00:09:29,340 --> 00:09:30,930  
able-- and jewelry--

172

00:09:30,930 --> 00:09:34,260  
that she was able to unearth.

173

00:09:34,260 --> 00:09:37,170  
And that is what  
we used in order

174

00:09:37,170 --> 00:09:41,010  
to survive for the  
next year or so.

175

00:09:41,010 --> 00:09:44,200

176

00:09:44,200 --> 00:09:47,010  
When she was able to  
sign on with this train,

177

00:09:47,010 --> 00:09:49,230  
we were traveling  
to the front lines.

178

00:09:49,230 --> 00:09:54,570  
And her idea was to cross  
over to the Allied side.

179

00:09:54,570 --> 00:09:56,250  
We got as far--

180

00:09:56,250 --> 00:09:58,500  
On the working train, did  
you live on the train?

181

00:09:58,500 --> 00:10:01,100  
We lived on the train.

182

00:10:01,100 --> 00:10:06,860  
Each boxcar was divided  
into four sleeping quarters.

183

00:10:06,860 --> 00:10:12,390  
And the center of it had  
sort of like a wood stove

184

00:10:12,390 --> 00:10:13,290  
that heated it.

185

00:10:13,290 --> 00:10:15,430  
And we could cook  
the meals on it.

186

00:10:15,430 --> 00:10:17,430  
And where did you  
get the food to cook?

187

00:10:17,430 --> 00:10:20,690  
Whatever we took along with  
us-- mostly potatoes and grain.

188

00:10:20,690 --> 00:10:23,760  
So you had to take your own  
food on the working train?

189

00:10:23,760 --> 00:10:24,260  
Yes.

190

00:10:24,260 --> 00:10:26,520  
It was very little rations.

191

00:10:26,520 --> 00:10:29,730  
The only thing I can tell you  
how bad the food situation was

192

00:10:29,730 --> 00:10:35,940  
is that I recall in one  
of the railroad stations

193

00:10:35,940 --> 00:10:40,980  
where a hospital train was  
on this next track to ours,

194

00:10:40,980 --> 00:10:44,490  
and we still have quite  
a bit of supplies.

195

00:10:44,490 --> 00:10:46,530  
And mother had peeled  
potatoes and was



196

00:10:46,530 --> 00:10:48,960  
going to throw out the skins.

197

00:10:48,960 --> 00:10:54,480  
And one of the doctors  
from the hospital train

198

00:10:54,480 --> 00:10:57,270  
stopped her from  
throwing out the peels.

199

00:10:57,270 --> 00:10:59,100  
He took them from her--

200

00:10:59,100 --> 00:11:01,140  
he said that'll make a  
soup for his soldiers

201

00:11:01,140 --> 00:11:04,860  
because they have  
absolutely no provisions.

202

00:11:04,860 --> 00:11:07,680  
The food situation was terrible  
as far as the Russian army

203

00:11:07,680 --> 00:11:08,280  
was concerned.

204

00:11:08,280 --> 00:11:10,178  
Now, what nationality  
was the train?

205

00:11:10,178 --> 00:11:11,220  
Was this a Russian train?

206

00:11:11,220 --> 00:11:12,152  
Russian.

207

00:11:12,152 --> 00:11:13,610  
We were still on  
the Russian front.

208

00:11:13,610 --> 00:11:15,450

You said it was a working train.

209

00:11:15,450 --> 00:11:16,770  
Was your mother working?

210

00:11:16,770 --> 00:11:19,390  
My mother was  
working on the train.

211

00:11:19,390 --> 00:11:22,190  
On the train, or on the tracks?

212

00:11:22,190 --> 00:11:23,880  
Whenever we pulled  
into a station,

213

00:11:23,880 --> 00:11:25,710  
we actually were on the way--

214

00:11:25,710 --> 00:11:28,290  
she hasn't started  
really working yet--

215

00:11:28,290 --> 00:11:32,430  
we were just traveling  
toward the stations

216

00:11:32,430 --> 00:11:34,740  
that needed repair.

217

00:11:34,740 --> 00:11:38,160  
I really don't know what she  
would do before we'd get there.

218

00:11:38,160 --> 00:11:41,280  
So while you and your  
mother were on the train,

219

00:11:41,280 --> 00:11:43,420  
you were only  
traveling on the train

220

00:11:43,420 --> 00:11:46,080  
to get to stations  
that needed repair.

221  
00:11:46,080 --> 00:11:46,630  
Correct.

222  
00:11:46,630 --> 00:11:49,470  
Where, theoretically, she  
would've helped to work.

223  
00:11:49,470 --> 00:11:52,230  
She would have helped to work  
if she were assigned a task.

224  
00:11:52,230 --> 00:11:56,610  
And was everyone on this train  
in this same category-- that

225  
00:11:56,610 --> 00:11:58,180  
is they were workers?

226  
00:11:58,180 --> 00:11:59,040  
They were going--

227  
00:11:59,040 --> 00:12:00,510  
They were workers.

228  
00:12:00,510 --> 00:12:05,070  
We were with another family  
that were also Jewish--

229  
00:12:05,070 --> 00:12:07,770  
my mother and I, and then  
there was a husband, a wife,

230  
00:12:07,770 --> 00:12:08,370  
and a son.

231  
00:12:08,370 --> 00:12:11,910  
They also had  
survived in hiding.

232  
00:12:11,910 --> 00:12:16,210  
And the others were workers.

233  
00:12:16,210 --> 00:12:17,350

They were--

234

00:12:17,350 --> 00:12:17,850

Men, mostly?

235

00:12:17,850 --> 00:12:21,210

Men, some women.

236

00:12:21,210 --> 00:12:26,160

But they were not Jewish,  
and they were just

237

00:12:26,160 --> 00:12:28,740

enlisted into the workforce.

238

00:12:28,740 --> 00:12:30,820

And they were Polish?

239

00:12:30,820 --> 00:12:32,790

White Russians-- Russians.

240

00:12:32,790 --> 00:12:34,740

There were a lot of Russians.

241

00:12:34,740 --> 00:12:38,520

There were very few  
from the Belarus.

242

00:12:38,520 --> 00:12:41,760

I don't think they  
quite incorporated them

243

00:12:41,760 --> 00:12:42,990

into anything yet.

244

00:12:42,990 --> 00:12:48,870

Those were people that were  
devoted Russians, communists.

245

00:12:48,870 --> 00:12:52,170

And how was it for you  
and your mother as women

246

00:12:52,170 --> 00:12:55,200

alone with all those men?

247

00:12:55,200 --> 00:12:58,230  
To tell me the truth, I  
can't really tell you,

248

00:12:58,230 --> 00:13:03,600  
other than my experiences that  
we were just along for the ride

249

00:13:03,600 --> 00:13:05,490  
sort of.

250

00:13:05,490 --> 00:13:09,180  
I remember one time we  
had a general traveling

251

00:13:09,180 --> 00:13:10,230  
in the boxcar--

252

00:13:10,230 --> 00:13:12,330  
he was hitching a ride.

253

00:13:12,330 --> 00:13:14,010  
And we had to make  
vacate our bed.

254

00:13:14,010 --> 00:13:16,170  
After all, he was a general.

255

00:13:16,170 --> 00:13:21,510  
So we crowded in-- five  
people in one side--

256

00:13:21,510 --> 00:13:26,187  
actually, it was less than  
a quarter of the boxcar.

257

00:13:26,187 --> 00:13:28,270  
So you and your mother  
crowded in with the other--

258

00:13:28,270 --> 00:13:29,950  
The other family.

259

00:13:29,950 --> 00:13:31,320

With the others.

260

00:13:31,320 --> 00:13:33,230

Space had to be made,  
and that was it.

261

00:13:33,230 --> 00:13:38,380

And if anybody of  
rank needed to travel,

262

00:13:38,380 --> 00:13:40,663

they would hook on to wherever.

263

00:13:40,663 --> 00:13:41,580

It was great disorder.

264

00:13:41,580 --> 00:13:44,310

265

00:13:44,310 --> 00:13:47,130

If I think back,  
living in this country,

266

00:13:47,130 --> 00:13:49,500

and knowing how things  
have been orderly, my god,

267

00:13:49,500 --> 00:13:52,910

there was hardly  
any order at all.

268

00:13:52,910 --> 00:13:57,960

Trains moved whenever  
the lines were free

269

00:13:57,960 --> 00:14:01,500

and you could push on.

270

00:14:01,500 --> 00:14:04,350

Trains were coming back.

271

00:14:04,350 --> 00:14:06,990

Like I told you, the hospital

train on the next track--

272

00:14:06,990 --> 00:14:09,450  
they were there for  
days, and so were we

273

00:14:09,450 --> 00:14:12,150  
waiting to be able to move on.

274

00:14:12,150 --> 00:14:13,738  
So things were kind of chaotic--

275

00:14:13,738 --> 00:14:14,280  
Very chaotic.

276

00:14:14,280 --> 00:14:16,340  
You were pushed around a lot.

277

00:14:16,340 --> 00:14:17,170  
Very chaotic.

278

00:14:17,170 --> 00:14:20,995  
Was there any sexual  
harassment or abuse?

279

00:14:20,995 --> 00:14:22,620  
Talking to the wrong  
person about that.

280

00:14:22,620 --> 00:14:24,390  
I was as naive as  
naive could be.

281

00:14:24,390 --> 00:14:26,640  
If there was, I  
wasn't aware of it.

282

00:14:26,640 --> 00:14:28,740  
So you don't remember  
anybody doing anything

283

00:14:28,740 --> 00:14:30,870  
to you or your mother?

284

00:14:30,870 --> 00:14:32,800  
No, no.

285  
00:14:32,800 --> 00:14:35,500  
We kind of kept to  
our own little niche.

286  
00:14:35,500 --> 00:14:39,390  
And I knew enough to  
stay out of the way.

287  
00:14:39,390 --> 00:14:44,610  
So you traveled under these  
conditions up to where?

288  
00:14:44,610 --> 00:14:51,345  
Up to Southern Prussia.

289  
00:14:51,345 --> 00:14:54,960

290  
00:14:54,960 --> 00:14:57,670  
That was the area that  
was just being liberated.

291  
00:14:57,670 --> 00:15:02,100  
And this train was  
heading there to clean up

292  
00:15:02,100 --> 00:15:05,010  
the railway stations.

293  
00:15:05,010 --> 00:15:07,410  
When we got to that  
station in Prussia--

294  
00:15:07,410 --> 00:15:11,920  
some of my recollections, I  
can't remember everything--

295  
00:15:11,920 --> 00:15:13,500  
some of the things  
that stand out

296  
00:15:13,500 --> 00:15:18,180



is that we had a path that  
we followed to get water.

297

00:15:18,180 --> 00:15:21,570

Because, of course, there was  
no running water on the train.

298

00:15:21,570 --> 00:15:27,660

And we traveled that path back  
and forth for several days.

299

00:15:27,660 --> 00:15:30,990

A soldier a mis-stepped  
one step off the path,

300

00:15:30,990 --> 00:15:33,000

and he was blown to bits.

301

00:15:33,000 --> 00:15:34,500

That left an impression on me.

302

00:15:34,500 --> 00:15:40,290

303

00:15:40,290 --> 00:15:43,690

At that time, we were  
afraid to almost get off

304

00:15:43,690 --> 00:15:46,260

to take a few steps  
off the train.

305

00:15:46,260 --> 00:15:51,450

Then when things calmed  
down, it was a Prussian city,

306

00:15:51,450 --> 00:15:53,820

I can't even remember  
the name of it.

307

00:15:53,820 --> 00:15:57,540

But I remember that other  
workers from the train

308

00:15:57,540 --> 00:15:59,160

and some of the soldiers--

309

00:15:59,160 --> 00:16:02,130  
soldiers were everywhere--  
were telling stories

310

00:16:02,130 --> 00:16:06,000  
about going in to  
Prussian houses,

311

00:16:06,000 --> 00:16:11,280  
finding that the occupants  
have committed suicide.

312

00:16:11,280 --> 00:16:17,220  
And when the bodies were  
tried to be removed,

313

00:16:17,220 --> 00:16:19,230  
whoever was trying  
to remove the bodies

314

00:16:19,230 --> 00:16:20,580  
was blown up with the bodies.

315

00:16:20,580 --> 00:16:22,950  
They had mined themselves.

316

00:16:22,950 --> 00:16:26,520  
Chandeliers were mined.

317

00:16:26,520 --> 00:16:30,450  
You were afraid to touch  
most anything because

318

00:16:30,450 --> 00:16:33,600  
of the booby traps.

319

00:16:33,600 --> 00:16:38,130  
And needless to say that  
the roads, and the railroad

320

00:16:38,130 --> 00:16:44,190  
stations, everything had  
a certain amount of danger

321  
00:16:44,190 --> 00:16:49,980  
to it because of the  
mines everywhere.

322  
00:16:49,980 --> 00:16:54,780  
At that point, from  
some of the people that

323  
00:16:54,780 --> 00:16:58,530  
had come from  
Southern Poland, we

324  
00:16:58,530 --> 00:17:01,950  
learned that there was  
a gathering of Jews

325  
00:17:01,950 --> 00:17:05,700  
in a city called Lublin.

326  
00:17:05,700 --> 00:17:11,520  
And mother, again,  
was able to bribe

327  
00:17:11,520 --> 00:17:18,790  
to have our boxcar attached to  
a train that was heading there.

328  
00:17:18,790 --> 00:17:21,000  
And we got there I  
think rather quickly.

329  
00:17:21,000 --> 00:17:24,359  
I don't remember exactly  
how long it took.

330  
00:17:24,359 --> 00:17:31,200  
But we must have gotten there  
around the end of March,

331  
00:17:31,200 --> 00:17:34,080  
because I remember the  
snows were melting.

332  
00:17:34,080 --> 00:17:37,380

And it wasn't as cold  
anymore because we

333  
00:17:37,380 --> 00:17:42,390  
had a couple of sheep skins,  
and mother had a fur coat

334  
00:17:42,390 --> 00:17:45,690  
that we were able to  
sell in the marketplace

335  
00:17:45,690 --> 00:17:48,420  
in order to gain a  
little bit of cash.

336  
00:17:48,420 --> 00:17:51,520  
We needed food, and  
we needed shelter.

337  
00:17:51,520 --> 00:17:54,750  
Shelter was provided,  
actually, free

338  
00:17:54,750 --> 00:17:57,270  
by some of the  
organizations that

339  
00:17:57,270 --> 00:18:01,350  
have set up there  
through the Haganah

340  
00:18:01,350 --> 00:18:06,090  
and through HIAS, which was  
another Jewish organization

341  
00:18:06,090 --> 00:18:09,120  
that was helpful.

342  
00:18:09,120 --> 00:18:11,160  
The only thing I  
remember is the Red Cross

343  
00:18:11,160 --> 00:18:15,360  
must have been active, because  
I have my mother's document--

344

00:18:15,360 --> 00:18:17,220

Red Cross document--  
that was issued

345

00:18:17,220 --> 00:18:23,130

to her that was the first  
identification that we've had.

346

00:18:23,130 --> 00:18:28,680

And if we have this, the Red  
Cross must have been active.

347

00:18:28,680 --> 00:18:35,560

I don't remember it, per se,  
but this would be my evidence,

348

00:18:35,560 --> 00:18:38,250

I should say.

349

00:18:38,250 --> 00:18:42,060

Some food was provided,  
and some shelter.

350

00:18:42,060 --> 00:18:48,270

The shelter that was  
provided was mainly a cot.

351

00:18:48,270 --> 00:18:51,720

They crowded in as many cots  
as possible into one room,

352

00:18:51,720 --> 00:18:55,410

and everybody got a  
cot, and everybody

353

00:18:55,410 --> 00:18:57,420

got some sort of food.

354

00:18:57,420 --> 00:18:59,970

355

00:18:59,970 --> 00:19:07,470

The Haganah had organized  
groups that they were trying

356

00:19:07,470 --> 00:19:11,490  
to smuggle into Palestine.

357

00:19:11,490 --> 00:19:17,190  
And the youngsters were the  
ones that were the first ones

358

00:19:17,190 --> 00:19:20,740  
to be pushed forward.

359

00:19:20,740 --> 00:19:23,470  
I remember being separated  
from my mother at that point.

360

00:19:23,470 --> 00:19:24,770  
She said, you go.

361

00:19:24,770 --> 00:19:27,570  
I'll come when my turn comes.

362

00:19:27,570 --> 00:19:31,350  
But it didn't happen that way.

363

00:19:31,350 --> 00:19:35,160  
But you were separated  
from her for a time?

364

00:19:35,160 --> 00:19:36,790  
I was put in different  
living quarters

365

00:19:36,790 --> 00:19:39,000  
than my mother--  
slightly better ones.

366

00:19:39,000 --> 00:19:47,550  
Also, again, the organized type  
of supervision of the children,

367

00:19:47,550 --> 00:19:50,190  
and schooling.

368

00:19:50,190 --> 00:19:52,820  
How did you feel about

being separated from her?

369

00:19:52,820 --> 00:19:58,090  
Well, it was just a few blocks  
away, and I saw her every day.

370

00:19:58,090 --> 00:20:04,290  
But the idea for the separation  
was to keep the younger

371

00:20:04,290 --> 00:20:07,680  
people-- and I was probably  
amongst the youngest

372

00:20:07,680 --> 00:20:08,430  
in the group--

373

00:20:08,430 --> 00:20:13,410  
the others were 16, 17, 18, 20--

374

00:20:13,410 --> 00:20:18,780  
and the idea was not to  
let them become hooligans,

375

00:20:18,780 --> 00:20:22,410  
to have some sort of  
organized supervision.

376

00:20:22,410 --> 00:20:25,740  
I was fortunate I had my  
mother, but the majority of them

377

00:20:25,740 --> 00:20:27,540  
had absolutely no one.

378

00:20:27,540 --> 00:20:30,570  
I would say the great majority  
had absolutely no one.

379

00:20:30,570 --> 00:20:34,620  
So the idea was to keep  
them busy with something

380

00:20:34,620 --> 00:20:38,190  
other than free time

to run around and get

381  
00:20:38,190 --> 00:20:39,990  
into some sort of mischief.

382  
00:20:39,990 --> 00:20:43,080  
And your mother wanted you  
to go for the opportunities.

383  
00:20:43,080 --> 00:20:46,230  
My mother wanted me to  
go for the opportunities,

384  
00:20:46,230 --> 00:20:50,040  
because otherwise all I  
would do is lay on the cot.

385  
00:20:50,040 --> 00:20:53,130  
It wasn't freedom of movement  
or anything like that.

386  
00:20:53,130 --> 00:20:55,650

387  
00:20:55,650 --> 00:20:57,760  
Again, because she had  
a little bit of money,

388  
00:20:57,760 --> 00:21:01,800  
she was able to get  
in with a group that

389  
00:21:01,800 --> 00:21:04,710  
would travel on their own  
without the supervision

390  
00:21:04,710 --> 00:21:08,340  
of the organizations  
that were trying to help.

391  
00:21:08,340 --> 00:21:14,500  
And we, mainly on foot,  
proceeded forward.

392  
00:21:14,500 --> 00:21:18,180



Now, how did your mother  
decide that you would

393

00:21:18,180 --> 00:21:21,570  
travel onward at that point?

394

00:21:21,570 --> 00:21:26,340  
Because there was  
no hope of anything.

395

00:21:26,340 --> 00:21:28,420  
It didn't move anywhere.

396

00:21:28,420 --> 00:21:29,760  
We were just sitting there.

397

00:21:29,760 --> 00:21:31,890  
So the Haganah was not--

398

00:21:31,890 --> 00:21:34,922  
Well, they were active,  
but it was very difficult.

399

00:21:34,922 --> 00:21:36,630  
So they weren't able  
to arrange anything?

400

00:21:36,630 --> 00:21:42,900  
They were not able to  
move the amount of people

401

00:21:42,900 --> 00:21:44,370  
that were there.

402

00:21:44,370 --> 00:21:47,490  
And needless to say, they  
were the ones selecting

403

00:21:47,490 --> 00:21:49,470  
who and what they should move.

404

00:21:49,470 --> 00:21:52,780  
And I guess neither my  
mother nor I were priority.

405

00:21:52,780 --> 00:21:54,978

So your mother decided  
she would take matters

406

00:21:54,978 --> 00:21:55,770

into her own hands.

407

00:21:55,770 --> 00:21:57,750

She would take matters  
into her own hands

408

00:21:57,750 --> 00:22:00,960

and try to arrange  
for us to go--

409

00:22:00,960 --> 00:22:04,560

actually to be guided, because  
we did not know how to travel,

410

00:22:04,560 --> 00:22:07,980

and where it was safe to travel,  
and the direction in which

411

00:22:07,980 --> 00:22:09,090

to go.

412

00:22:09,090 --> 00:22:11,550

So a group of people  
who had some means

413

00:22:11,550 --> 00:22:14,610

had gotten together  
and hired a guide

414

00:22:14,610 --> 00:22:17,540

to proceed towards  
the Allied lines.

415

00:22:17,540 --> 00:22:18,810

OK.

416

00:22:18,810 --> 00:22:23,250

And I remember going toward  
Czechoslovakia first.

417

00:22:23,250 --> 00:22:27,210

Now, just backing up a  
bit, this was on foot--

418

00:22:27,210 --> 00:22:27,840

On foot.

419

00:22:27,840 --> 00:22:29,180

And leaving from--

420

00:22:29,180 --> 00:22:31,010

From Budapest.

421

00:22:31,010 --> 00:22:32,580

No, I'm sorry from Lublin.

422

00:22:32,580 --> 00:22:34,170

From Lublin in Poland.

423

00:22:34,170 --> 00:22:35,000

In Poland.

424

00:22:35,000 --> 00:22:38,570

On foot with a group  
of others and guides.

425

00:22:38,570 --> 00:22:39,480

And guides.

426

00:22:39,480 --> 00:22:42,690

And we proceeded  
as far as Budapest.

427

00:22:42,690 --> 00:22:45,750

And where did you  
sleep along the way?

428

00:22:45,750 --> 00:22:50,740

Barns, wherever the guide  
could find some shelter.

429

00:22:50,740 --> 00:22:54,030

And how did you find food?

430

00:22:54,030 --> 00:22:56,130  
Well, that had to be purchased.

431

00:22:56,130 --> 00:22:57,840  
That was the final step--

432

00:22:57,840 --> 00:22:59,730  
whoever had,  
everything was shared.

433

00:22:59,730 --> 00:23:02,880

434

00:23:02,880 --> 00:23:05,790  
If the guide was able to arrange  
some sort of transportation

435

00:23:05,790 --> 00:23:07,290  
other than by foot--

436

00:23:07,290 --> 00:23:08,820  
mostly it was done by foot.

437

00:23:08,820 --> 00:23:11,880  
I remember sometimes  
some wagons arranged

438

00:23:11,880 --> 00:23:14,820  
with some farmer that  
was going someplace,

439

00:23:14,820 --> 00:23:17,070  
whether by the  
goodness of his heart.

440

00:23:17,070 --> 00:23:18,960  
It wasn't a big group.

441

00:23:18,960 --> 00:23:21,900  
I can't remember how many,  
but I would judge probably

442

00:23:21,900 --> 00:23:23,640  
no more than 10.

443  
00:23:23,640 --> 00:23:25,940  
And were the guides Israelis?

444  
00:23:25,940 --> 00:23:29,460  
No, they were not Israelis.

445  
00:23:29,460 --> 00:23:32,670  
I'm sorry, my memory  
is not that good.

446  
00:23:32,670 --> 00:23:37,740  
And I'll tell you, it wasn't as  
impressive to me at the time,

447  
00:23:37,740 --> 00:23:40,860  
other than the fact that they  
would get up again-- no sooner

448  
00:23:40,860 --> 00:23:44,610  
do we get settled in some  
place, and we keep on moving,

449  
00:23:44,610 --> 00:23:46,760  
until we got to Budapest.

450  
00:23:46,760 --> 00:23:48,780  
When we got to Budapest,  
there was some sort

451  
00:23:48,780 --> 00:23:51,480  
of better organization.

452  
00:23:51,480 --> 00:23:57,630  
As time was passing, the  
organization had improved.

453  
00:23:57,630 --> 00:24:01,950  
And I think there  
was also a bigger

454  
00:24:01,950 --> 00:24:07,060  
availability of support funds  
from I suppose the United

455

00:24:07,060 --> 00:24:07,560  
States--

456

00:24:07,560 --> 00:24:09,210  
I don't know where  
it came from, but I

457

00:24:09,210 --> 00:24:11,490  
suppose the United  
States and maybe

458

00:24:11,490 --> 00:24:13,980  
some of the South  
American countries.

459

00:24:13,980 --> 00:24:18,060  
Because it sure didn't come  
from the Jews in Poland anymore.

460

00:24:18,060 --> 00:24:20,400  
So there was some support.

461

00:24:20,400 --> 00:24:26,880  
Haganah basically was  
the biggest active force

462

00:24:26,880 --> 00:24:29,670  
to move the Jews  
toward Palestine.

463

00:24:29,670 --> 00:24:33,480  
The idea was to move them to  
Romania, which was the closest

464

00:24:33,480 --> 00:24:37,500  
access point to Palestine.

465

00:24:37,500 --> 00:24:43,020  
And I know of some people  
that got across that way.

466

00:24:43,020 --> 00:24:45,720  
We got stuck in Budapest.

467

00:24:45,720 --> 00:24:50,100  
And from there, it was more  
difficult at that point

468  
00:24:50,100 --> 00:24:53,370  
to already start moving,  
because the British had

469  
00:24:53,370 --> 00:24:56,130  
caught on to what was  
going on and blockaded

470  
00:24:56,130 --> 00:25:01,080  
the ports, intercepted  
some of the vessels that

471  
00:25:01,080 --> 00:25:05,060  
were heading that way.

472  
00:25:05,060 --> 00:25:08,010  
Eventually, and I can't give  
you the exact details how,

473  
00:25:08,010 --> 00:25:10,500  
I just remember  
certain incidents.

474  
00:25:10,500 --> 00:25:14,820  
I remember having crossed  
into Austria, I think it was,

475  
00:25:14,820 --> 00:25:21,120  
and being faced with  
the British who sent us

476  
00:25:21,120 --> 00:25:24,910  
right back to the Russian side.

477  
00:25:24,910 --> 00:25:29,280  
At that point, the realization  
dawned on everyone that you

478  
00:25:29,280 --> 00:25:38,580  
cannot cross borders freely, and  
that some discretion had to be

479

00:25:38,580 --> 00:25:43,740

taken as to how the crossings  
were made and where.

480

00:25:43,740 --> 00:25:46,010

I remember certain  
dates and certain times.

481

00:25:46,010 --> 00:25:48,270

I remember in  
Czechoslovakia hearing

482

00:25:48,270 --> 00:25:52,440

that Berlin was surrounded.

483

00:25:52,440 --> 00:25:55,350

484

00:25:55,350 --> 00:25:59,790

I remember that when  
we crossed into Italy,

485

00:25:59,790 --> 00:26:03,800

that was the highlight  
of everything.

486

00:26:03,800 --> 00:26:11,490

Because we had to go through the  
Alps and some of the passes--

487

00:26:11,490 --> 00:26:13,120

Still on foot.

488

00:26:13,120 --> 00:26:14,460

All on foot.

489

00:26:14,460 --> 00:26:18,020

And of, course I  
remember how cold it was.

490

00:26:18,020 --> 00:26:21,510

And when we came through  
the pass, we were so frozen,

491



00:26:21,510 --> 00:26:26,580  
and we saw the Israeli flag.

492  
00:26:26,580 --> 00:26:29,100  
And everybody started  
to pinch each other,

493  
00:26:29,100 --> 00:26:31,480  
because we thought we  
were hallucinating.

494  
00:26:31,480 --> 00:26:33,420  
It was so cold,  
everybody was trying

495  
00:26:33,420 --> 00:26:37,950  
to encourage the others  
to stay warm, rubbing

496  
00:26:37,950 --> 00:26:42,090  
each other's toes and hands.

497  
00:26:42,090 --> 00:26:49,110  
And seeing the tents and  
the blue and white flags

498  
00:26:49,110 --> 00:26:52,680  
was like a mirage.

499  
00:26:52,680 --> 00:26:56,900  
And everybody was pinching each  
other-- do you see what I see?

500  
00:26:56,900 --> 00:26:58,440  
Do you see what I see?

501  
00:26:58,440 --> 00:26:59,740  
Yeah, I see an Israeli flag.

502  
00:26:59,740 --> 00:27:02,550  
Well, if you see it,  
then I must see it too.

503  
00:27:02,550 --> 00:27:05,780  
And sure enough, it was

the Hebrew brigade--

504

00:27:05,780 --> 00:27:08,130

that was part of the  
British army at that point.

505

00:27:08,130 --> 00:27:12,570

And they were occupying an  
area that was near Bologna,

506

00:27:12,570 --> 00:27:15,530

because I know that was  
the next stop that we had.

507

00:27:15,530 --> 00:27:18,510

And we had the most  
warm reception.

508

00:27:18,510 --> 00:27:21,150

Our clothes were tattered.

509

00:27:21,150 --> 00:27:30,930

And we were given some issue  
of the Israeli uniform issue.

510

00:27:30,930 --> 00:27:33,480

And I know I had  
a pair of shorts.

511

00:27:33,480 --> 00:27:35,250

I don't remember  
the shirt, but I

512

00:27:35,250 --> 00:27:37,170

remember the jacket  
which I cherished

513

00:27:37,170 --> 00:27:39,770

for a long, long time--

514

00:27:39,770 --> 00:27:42,930

and of course, no shoes.

515

00:27:42,930 --> 00:27:46,710

And the Italian population

were so different

516

00:27:46,710 --> 00:27:51,120  
from the Belarus and  
the Polish population,

517

00:27:51,120 --> 00:27:55,572  
where it was the first time  
where we felt that we didn't

518

00:27:55,572 --> 00:27:56,655  
have to run for our lives.

519

00:27:56,655 --> 00:28:00,700

520

00:28:00,700 --> 00:28:07,260  
I remember stories from some of  
the youngsters and the travels

521

00:28:07,260 --> 00:28:11,520  
were they had to jump out of  
bed in their night clothes

522

00:28:11,520 --> 00:28:14,010  
and run for their lives--

523

00:28:14,010 --> 00:28:17,400  
who have lost brothers,  
or sisters, or relatives,

524

00:28:17,400 --> 00:28:22,740  
or friends after the Holocaust  
at the hands of the Poles.

525

00:28:22,740 --> 00:28:27,320

526

00:28:27,320 --> 00:28:38,658  
It's difficult to even imagine  
that people would go with axes,

527

00:28:38,658 --> 00:28:40,050  
with bats.

528

00:28:40,050 --> 00:28:42,710

They were not baseball bats,  
what I mean by bats is pieces

529

00:28:42,710 --> 00:28:45,680

of wood-- we think here about  
the bat being a piece of wood

530

00:28:45,680 --> 00:28:48,140

that you can clobber  
somebody with--

531

00:28:48,140 --> 00:28:49,880

I guess I should say  
with two by fours--

532

00:28:49,880 --> 00:28:52,720

the size of pieces  
of wood like that--

533

00:28:52,720 --> 00:28:57,060

to just kill.

534

00:28:57,060 --> 00:29:00,840

And when we got to Italy, it  
was a different atmosphere.

535

00:29:00,840 --> 00:29:04,740

536

00:29:04,740 --> 00:29:06,690

The Italians were very warm.

537

00:29:06,690 --> 00:29:11,130

They were very  
accommodating, actually,

538

00:29:11,130 --> 00:29:16,640

because we lived in some  
of the Italian homes.

539

00:29:16,640 --> 00:29:18,210

Were these Jews?

540

00:29:18,210 --> 00:29:18,810  
No.

541  
00:29:18,810 --> 00:29:19,470  
Gentiles?

542  
00:29:19,470 --> 00:29:20,640  
Gentiles.

543  
00:29:20,640 --> 00:29:22,650  
Actually, the  
first quarries were

544  
00:29:22,650 --> 00:29:24,720  
in Bologna were army barracks.

545  
00:29:24,720 --> 00:29:28,370  
I remember now the Quonset huts.

546  
00:29:28,370 --> 00:29:33,380  
And at that point,  
the Israeli Haganah

547  
00:29:33,380 --> 00:29:38,160  
was very active in Italy  
to try to transport people

548  
00:29:38,160 --> 00:29:44,670  
to the seashore, to either the  
Adriatic or the Mediterranean

549  
00:29:44,670 --> 00:29:46,550  
and get them across  
to Palestine.

550  
00:29:46,550 --> 00:29:53,610

551  
00:29:53,610 --> 00:29:57,570  
Everybody waited  
for the opportunity

552  
00:29:57,570 --> 00:29:59,340  
to be put on a ship.

553

00:29:59,340 --> 00:30:05,760

There were no other  
desires, no other hopes.

554

00:30:05,760 --> 00:30:06,880

A ship to Palestine.

555

00:30:06,880 --> 00:30:08,580

To Palestine, yes.

556

00:30:08,580 --> 00:30:15,300

557

00:30:15,300 --> 00:30:19,740

The first movement we had to the  
South, we were put on a truck,

558

00:30:19,740 --> 00:30:24,570

about between 30 and  
40, to be transported.

559

00:30:24,570 --> 00:30:26,460

A ship was going  
to go out from one

560

00:30:26,460 --> 00:30:29,130

of the southern ports in Italy.

561

00:30:29,130 --> 00:30:32,790

And our truck broke down--

562

00:30:32,790 --> 00:30:35,370

never made it.

563

00:30:35,370 --> 00:30:38,430

We were broken down  
for about a day or two

564

00:30:38,430 --> 00:30:41,730

by the time they got  
supplies and everything

565

00:30:41,730 --> 00:30:44,570

and did not move very far.

566

00:30:44,570 --> 00:30:50,760

We were housed in  
some actually villas--

567

00:30:50,760 --> 00:30:54,630

a lot of people in one  
place, so sharing rooms

568

00:30:54,630 --> 00:30:57,420

but having a corner of our own.

569

00:30:57,420 --> 00:30:59,230

Food was provided at that time.

570

00:30:59,230 --> 00:31:00,480

We didn't have any more money.

571

00:31:00,480 --> 00:31:02,155

That was it.

572

00:31:02,155 --> 00:31:03,030

Everything was spent.

573

00:31:03,030 --> 00:31:06,090

By the time we reached  
Italy, we didn't

574

00:31:06,090 --> 00:31:08,282

have a suit to our name--

575

00:31:08,282 --> 00:31:09,990

didn't even have any  
clothes on our back,

576

00:31:09,990 --> 00:31:15,310

other than what was given  
to us by the Hebrew brigade.

577

00:31:15,310 --> 00:31:20,370

But we were housed in  
Bologna for a little bit.

578

00:31:20,370 --> 00:31:27,260

And at that point,  
the organization

579  
00:31:27,260 --> 00:31:29,220  
was called on UNRRA--

580  
00:31:29,220 --> 00:31:30,110  
no, that came later.

581  
00:31:30,110 --> 00:31:31,160  
I'm sorry.

582  
00:31:31,160 --> 00:31:38,550  
It was the highest, and it was  
also a Jewish organization--

583  
00:31:38,550 --> 00:31:40,970  
trying to think what it was--

584  
00:31:40,970 --> 00:31:44,080  
that provided food and  
started to bring in clothing.

585  
00:31:44,080 --> 00:31:47,140  
There were donations from  
Jews from the United States.

586  
00:31:47,140 --> 00:31:50,190

587  
00:31:50,190 --> 00:31:58,230  
From there, again, we had the  
opportunity, or shall we say,

588  
00:31:58,230 --> 00:31:59,820  
we thought we had  
the opportunity,

589  
00:31:59,820 --> 00:32:01,740  
to get on another ship.

590  
00:32:01,740 --> 00:32:07,230  
And we were transported  
to the South of Italy--



591

00:32:07,230 --> 00:32:08,870  
to the heel of Italy.

592

00:32:08,870 --> 00:32:10,470  
There were three Santas there--

593

00:32:10,470 --> 00:32:13,310  
Santa Maria, Santa Caesarea,  
and Santa di Leuca--

594

00:32:13,310 --> 00:32:15,880  
I'll never forget that.

595

00:32:15,880 --> 00:32:21,480  
And we got there to find  
out that the British were

596

00:32:21,480 --> 00:32:24,750  
blockading, couldn't  
get on any ships.

597

00:32:24,750 --> 00:32:38,310  
That became our living quarters  
for 1945 to early 1947.

598

00:32:38,310 --> 00:32:40,460  
And where were you living?

599

00:32:40,460 --> 00:32:42,650  
In housing in Italy--

600

00:32:42,650 --> 00:32:46,970  
these villas that were  
converted to boarding houses.

601

00:32:46,970 --> 00:32:48,920  
I don't know how  
I can explain it

602

00:32:48,920 --> 00:32:52,430  
that would be similar to  
what you could imagine here,

603

00:32:52,430 --> 00:32:56,900

except for we didn't each  
have a room of our own.

604  
00:32:56,900 --> 00:32:58,300  
We had corner of our own.

605  
00:32:58,300 --> 00:32:59,780  
And who owned the houses?

606  
00:32:59,780 --> 00:33:01,700  
Who was sponsoring this?

607  
00:33:01,700 --> 00:33:06,890  
All of this was being  
sponsored by HIAS.

608  
00:33:06,890 --> 00:33:09,650  
I'm trying to think what the  
organization was, because it

609  
00:33:09,650 --> 00:33:11,270  
became UNRRA afterwards.

610  
00:33:11,270 --> 00:33:13,725  
But it was an organization.

611  
00:33:13,725 --> 00:33:16,370  
Organization that  
provided us with food.

612  
00:33:16,370 --> 00:33:23,130  
They had a general  
kitchen that served food.

613  
00:33:23,130 --> 00:33:26,320  
And that was '45 to '47.

614  
00:33:26,320 --> 00:33:28,010  
'45 to '47.

615  
00:33:28,010 --> 00:33:34,400  
It was about July of  
'45 until early in '47.

616

00:33:34,400 --> 00:33:36,680

And this was all  
Jewish refugees?

617

00:33:36,680 --> 00:33:38,720

All Jewish refugees.

618

00:33:38,720 --> 00:33:43,250

I remember that  
there was an army

619

00:33:43,250 --> 00:33:47,610

outpost near Santa Caesarea.

620

00:33:47,610 --> 00:33:52,400

And I also remember  
my first encounter

621

00:33:52,400 --> 00:33:55,070

with Negroes, Blacks--

622

00:33:55,070 --> 00:33:56,810

at that point, they  
were called Negroes,

623

00:33:56,810 --> 00:33:59,450

and they were of  
tremendous stature.

624

00:33:59,450 --> 00:34:02,370

I remember that each one of  
them was about six feet tall.

625

00:34:02,370 --> 00:34:03,780

To me, it seemed like that.

626

00:34:03,780 --> 00:34:05,900

That was the first time  
you'd ever seen a Negro?

627

00:34:05,900 --> 00:34:08,360

Yes, the first time.

628

00:34:08,360 --> 00:34:11,840

And I know that they were

very kindly, because I never

629

00:34:11,840 --> 00:34:15,889  
had such, how shall  
I say, treats,

630

00:34:15,889 --> 00:34:17,000  
especially the children.

631

00:34:17,000 --> 00:34:20,150  
They would give  
candy and ice cream.

632

00:34:20,150 --> 00:34:23,449  
Italy is known for  
its gelato, and they

633

00:34:23,449 --> 00:34:26,370  
would treat us to that.

634

00:34:26,370 --> 00:34:29,300  
The place got  
organized very quickly.

635

00:34:29,300 --> 00:34:32,940  
I started school again.

636

00:34:32,940 --> 00:34:34,830  
Books were available.

637

00:34:34,830 --> 00:34:37,929  
I remember doing  
a lot of reading.

638

00:34:37,929 --> 00:34:39,690  
And what language  
were the books in?

639

00:34:39,690 --> 00:34:41,960  
The books were in Yiddish--

640

00:34:41,960 --> 00:34:43,920  
and some in Polish,  
even though don't

641

00:34:43,920 --> 00:34:45,389  
ask me to speak Polish now.

642

00:34:45,389 --> 00:34:46,330  
I hate the language.

643

00:34:46,330 --> 00:34:48,090  
I have no love for the people.

644

00:34:48,090 --> 00:34:50,830  
And I almost forgot it.

645

00:34:50,830 --> 00:34:55,350  
Russian-- probably  
every language

646

00:34:55,350 --> 00:34:58,710  
that people had spoken,  
they had some books there.

647

00:34:58,710 --> 00:35:02,160  
They were kind of collected  
and made available,

648

00:35:02,160 --> 00:35:04,950  
and we all shared.

649

00:35:04,950 --> 00:35:08,400  
You couldn't take up more  
than one book at a time.

650

00:35:08,400 --> 00:35:12,030  
And also some textbooks  
were provided.

651

00:35:12,030 --> 00:35:16,320  
And we had an organized school.

652

00:35:16,320 --> 00:35:18,960  
Everybody, no matter  
what their age

653

00:35:18,960 --> 00:35:22,080  
was, depending on the

subject they wanted to learn,

654

00:35:22,080 --> 00:35:25,240  
and whatever there was  
a teacher available for,

655

00:35:25,240 --> 00:35:26,790  
that's what you learned.

656

00:35:26,790 --> 00:35:31,540  
Probably learned more  
world history over there

657

00:35:31,540 --> 00:35:34,020  
than anybody learns  
in a school here.

658

00:35:34,020 --> 00:35:38,940  
I know I learned enough to  
pass my New York Regent exam

659

00:35:38,940 --> 00:35:41,340  
without having to study for it.

660

00:35:41,340 --> 00:35:42,390  
So you learned a lot.

661

00:35:42,390 --> 00:35:44,930  
And the same thing  
with geography.

662

00:35:44,930 --> 00:35:45,900  
It helped me here.

663

00:35:45,900 --> 00:35:50,940  
What else was going on  
besides academic work for you?

664

00:35:50,940 --> 00:35:52,950  
What did you do for fun?

665

00:35:52,950 --> 00:35:55,530  
What did we do for fun?

666

00:35:55,530 --> 00:35:56,385  
Sing, talk.

667  
00:35:56,385 --> 00:36:03,630

668  
00:36:03,630 --> 00:36:07,140  
There was no such  
thing as having fun.

669  
00:36:07,140 --> 00:36:09,060  
Come to think of it,  
there were a few things,

670  
00:36:09,060 --> 00:36:11,130  
but that was later on.

671  
00:36:11,130 --> 00:36:15,750  
Whoever had made contacts with  
relatives in the United States

672  
00:36:15,750 --> 00:36:19,500  
and got a few cents shared  
it with everybody else.

673  
00:36:19,500 --> 00:36:22,480  
I'm still in touch  
with a friend,

674  
00:36:22,480 --> 00:36:25,180  
a man friend who was  
quite a bit older than I,

675  
00:36:25,180 --> 00:36:26,720  
and we still visit--

676  
00:36:26,720 --> 00:36:33,240  
his family and our family  
keep closely in touch.

677  
00:36:33,240 --> 00:36:37,230  
He had brothers here  
in the United States.

678  
00:36:37,230 --> 00:36:40,620

His father had two families, so to speak.

679  
00:36:40,620 --> 00:36:44,220  
Some of his nieces were older than he was.

680  
00:36:44,220 --> 00:36:47,510  
And his brother was an attorney in New York.

681  
00:36:47,510 --> 00:36:50,890  
I used to send him money on a pretty regular basis.

682  
00:36:50,890 --> 00:36:52,360  
And he shared it with everybody.

683  
00:36:52,360 --> 00:36:57,940  
My introduction to the opera, to music came this way.

684  
00:36:57,940 --> 00:37:00,330  
Now, what could you buy with the money?

685  
00:37:00,330 --> 00:37:02,370  
Did you go to opera performances?

686  
00:37:02,370 --> 00:37:03,960  
Performances.

687  
00:37:03,960 --> 00:37:05,040  
Performances.

688  
00:37:05,040 --> 00:37:07,740  
Performances.

689  
00:37:07,740 --> 00:37:09,630  
So there was an opera company.

690  
00:37:09,630 --> 00:37:11,070  
Oh yeah.



691

00:37:11,070 --> 00:37:13,490

Not in Santa Caesarea-- this happened a little later.

692

00:37:13,490 --> 00:37:15,915

Santa Caesarea was a sleepy town.

693

00:37:15,915 --> 00:37:17,290

What did we do for entertainment?

694

00:37:17,290 --> 00:37:18,660

I learned to swim.

695

00:37:18,660 --> 00:37:20,480

It was right on the sea--

696

00:37:20,480 --> 00:37:22,470

there was a nice cove.

697

00:37:22,470 --> 00:37:24,930

Actually, it was a resort place.

698

00:37:24,930 --> 00:37:27,420

One of the hotels that was built there,

699

00:37:27,420 --> 00:37:33,000

Mussolini would frequent, because they were so hot sulfur

700

00:37:33,000 --> 00:37:35,010

baths.

701

00:37:35,010 --> 00:37:41,070

And for entertainment, we used to collect--

702

00:37:41,070 --> 00:37:45,090

it was sort of like a winter resort and a spa.

703

00:37:45,090 --> 00:37:48,480

And they would have  
dances on the terraces,

704  
00:37:48,480 --> 00:37:50,940  
and people would dress  
up in formal wear.

705  
00:37:50,940 --> 00:37:54,300  
And we would kind of sneak a  
look, and listen to the music,

706  
00:37:54,300 --> 00:37:58,260  
and we learned to dance  
on the area below,

707  
00:37:58,260 --> 00:38:01,570  
because the music was there, and  
we copied what they were doing.

708  
00:38:01,570 --> 00:38:02,940  
So there were boys and girls.

709  
00:38:02,940 --> 00:38:04,680  
Boys and girls.

710  
00:38:04,680 --> 00:38:06,540  
Actually, there were  
more boys than girls,

711  
00:38:06,540 --> 00:38:08,700  
because I was given  
a lot of attention,

712  
00:38:08,700 --> 00:38:11,140  
because I was  
probably the youngest,

713  
00:38:11,140 --> 00:38:13,290  
and the boys took care of me.

714  
00:38:13,290 --> 00:38:18,810  
But there were no harassment,  
there was no molestation.

715  
00:38:18,810 --> 00:38:20,860

Everybody had respect  
for everybody else.

716  
00:38:20,860 --> 00:38:23,550  
And everybody tried to  
help everybody else.

717  
00:38:23,550 --> 00:38:25,320  
Let's stop here and  
turn over the tape.

718  
00:38:25,320 --> 00:38:35,780

719  
00:38:35,780 --> 00:38:39,770  
Take 1, side 2.

720  
00:38:39,770 --> 00:38:41,480  
So you were talking  
about learning

721  
00:38:41,480 --> 00:38:44,520  
to dance by watching others  
and having a good time.

722  
00:38:44,520 --> 00:38:47,410  
If you wouldn't jar  
my memory, it probably

723  
00:38:47,410 --> 00:38:51,410  
was one of the things  
that I wouldn't exactly

724  
00:38:51,410 --> 00:38:52,370  
put my finger on.

725  
00:38:52,370 --> 00:38:56,300  
But yeah, now that  
I remember, yeah--

726  
00:38:56,300 --> 00:39:03,500  
I used to like to watch and  
see how the other half lived.

727  
00:39:03,500 --> 00:39:06,650

And it was really big exposure  
to how the other side lived,

728  
00:39:06,650 --> 00:39:10,220  
because there were  
a few until us

729  
00:39:10,220 --> 00:39:13,910  
that were occupied by refugees.

730  
00:39:13,910 --> 00:39:18,680  
But the general population  
was from the villages.

731  
00:39:18,680 --> 00:39:21,140  
They did a lot of fishing.

732  
00:39:21,140 --> 00:39:22,850  
There were olive groves.

733  
00:39:22,850 --> 00:39:26,210  
I remember climbing-- my  
favorite place to read

734  
00:39:26,210 --> 00:39:28,730  
was in a fig tree.

735  
00:39:28,730 --> 00:39:31,490  
There were figs  
and olives growing.

736  
00:39:31,490 --> 00:39:35,030  
And it afforded  
shade and privacy.

737  
00:39:35,030 --> 00:39:38,290

738  
00:39:38,290 --> 00:39:42,440  
The population also was  
very kind and helpful.

739  
00:39:42,440 --> 00:39:44,900  
I met some  
vacationers, or should

740

00:39:44,900 --> 00:39:51,170

I say, winter vacationers-- they had a villa there from Rome,

741

00:39:51,170 --> 00:39:53,510

and they had a hotel in Rome.

742

00:39:53,510 --> 00:39:58,270

And I became friendly with the children in the family.

743

00:39:58,270 --> 00:40:00,110

And I was learning a little bit of Italian,

744

00:40:00,110 --> 00:40:01,940

so it was easy to communicate.

745

00:40:01,940 --> 00:40:04,310

And they were very kind-hearted.

746

00:40:04,310 --> 00:40:09,470

It ended up that I would visit them in Rome later on.

747

00:40:09,470 --> 00:40:12,680

They took me along.

748

00:40:12,680 --> 00:40:13,520

Were they Jewish?

749

00:40:13,520 --> 00:40:15,293

No, no, no.

750

00:40:15,293 --> 00:40:16,085

They were Italians.

751

00:40:16,085 --> 00:40:19,040

752

00:40:19,040 --> 00:40:20,930

Actually, the only Jews that I knew

753  
00:40:20,930 --> 00:40:25,340  
there were the Jews that  
were all displaced persons.

754  
00:40:25,340 --> 00:40:27,800  
They were Jews from Poland.

755  
00:40:27,800 --> 00:40:30,970  
They were Jews from Hungary--

756  
00:40:30,970 --> 00:40:34,525  
I'd say a good majority  
of them were from Hungary.

757  
00:40:34,525 --> 00:40:35,900  
There were some  
Jews from Greece.

758  
00:40:35,900 --> 00:40:39,230

759  
00:40:39,230 --> 00:40:41,120  
My fond memory of  
that is they taught me

760  
00:40:41,120 --> 00:40:42,230  
how to play the mandolin.

761  
00:40:42,230 --> 00:40:44,563  
Now that you asked me, what  
did we do for entertainment?

762  
00:40:44,563 --> 00:40:48,405  
It seems like we did nothing,  
and yet we did quite a bit.

763  
00:40:48,405 --> 00:40:50,405  
I was taught how to play  
certain games in cards.

764  
00:40:50,405 --> 00:40:53,630

765

00:40:53,630 --> 00:40:56,360  
What else?

766  
00:40:56,360 --> 00:40:59,340  
And how did your mother  
spend her time there?

767  
00:40:59,340 --> 00:41:00,490  
Mother worked.

768  
00:41:00,490 --> 00:41:01,680  
She worked in the kitchen.

769  
00:41:01,680 --> 00:41:04,780

770  
00:41:04,780 --> 00:41:09,150  
She did a little bit here  
and a little bit there.

771  
00:41:09,150 --> 00:41:11,850  
A lot of it was volunteer work.

772  
00:41:11,850 --> 00:41:15,030  
There was no real pay.

773  
00:41:15,030 --> 00:41:16,950  
Later on, there was  
a little bit of pay

774  
00:41:16,950 --> 00:41:20,220  
when everything  
got more organized

775  
00:41:20,220 --> 00:41:23,700  
and there were more  
people coming in.

776  
00:41:23,700 --> 00:41:25,560  
But from the beginning,  
it was volunteers--

777  
00:41:25,560 --> 00:41:27,300  
one helped the other.

778

00:41:27,300 --> 00:41:29,480

I learned to ride a bike.

779

00:41:29,480 --> 00:41:32,290

What else did I do?

780

00:41:32,290 --> 00:41:34,300

I guess they were  
one day things,

781

00:41:34,300 --> 00:41:38,660

but it was progress in some way.

782

00:41:38,660 --> 00:41:40,015

And so what happened next?

783

00:41:40,015 --> 00:41:43,850

784

00:41:43,850 --> 00:41:49,420

What happened next is that  
the frontier sort of opened.

785

00:41:49,420 --> 00:41:52,300

People were able to  
communicate with relatives

786

00:41:52,300 --> 00:41:54,250

in different countries.

787

00:41:54,250 --> 00:42:02,460

And the relatives made  
arrangements for their kin

788

00:42:02,460 --> 00:42:05,860

to come and join them.

789

00:42:05,860 --> 00:42:09,460

We were not able to make  
contact with anybody.

790

00:42:09,460 --> 00:42:13,090

So, again, the main  
push was to try



791  
00:42:13,090 --> 00:42:17,180  
to get to Palestine,  
because that was the haven.

792  
00:42:17,180 --> 00:42:20,140  
Did you know of any relatives?

793  
00:42:20,140 --> 00:42:26,227  
Yes, but we did not  
have an address.

794  
00:42:26,227 --> 00:42:27,310  
We didn't know an address.

795  
00:42:27,310 --> 00:42:32,050  
My mother remembered that my  
uncle, my father's sister,

796  
00:42:32,050 --> 00:42:36,770  
and her husband, they  
lived in Washington, DC.

797  
00:42:36,770 --> 00:42:39,160  
She remember the DC.

798  
00:42:39,160 --> 00:42:42,910  
And from the beginning, there  
was really no communication.

799  
00:42:42,910 --> 00:42:46,960  
As time progressed, and  
some of the survivors

800  
00:42:46,960 --> 00:42:50,020  
had emigrated to  
the United States,

801  
00:42:50,020 --> 00:42:52,510  
and we kept  
corresponding with them,

802  
00:42:52,510 --> 00:42:58,620  
they wrote and gave us advice  
on how to contact relatives.

803

00:42:58,620 --> 00:43:03,130

The ones that left  
early were the ones

804

00:43:03,130 --> 00:43:07,720

that remembered the  
addresses of relatives

805

00:43:07,720 --> 00:43:13,580

and had managed to send  
communication to them.

806

00:43:13,580 --> 00:43:16,300

There was also a  
problem with quotas.

807

00:43:16,300 --> 00:43:20,320

Refugees were not allowed as  
quickly into the United States.

808

00:43:20,320 --> 00:43:23,780

Since we were on  
the Polish quota,

809

00:43:23,780 --> 00:43:25,660

the Polish quota was  
pretty much full,

810

00:43:25,660 --> 00:43:29,200

because Jews had emigrated from  
Poland to the United States

811

00:43:29,200 --> 00:43:33,070

up until the very  
end of the war.

812

00:43:33,070 --> 00:43:39,070

So the accumulation of credits--

813

00:43:39,070 --> 00:43:41,380

I don't know what  
else to call them--

814

00:43:41,380 --> 00:43:43,570

of openings were not that big.

815

00:43:43,570 --> 00:43:46,720

It was only what had  
accumulated when people were not

816

00:43:46,720 --> 00:43:50,110

allowed to emigrate during  
the couple of years of war.

817

00:43:50,110 --> 00:43:52,480

And once that was  
filled, you had

818

00:43:52,480 --> 00:43:55,920

to wait from month to  
month, from year to year

819

00:43:55,920 --> 00:43:57,800

for your turn on the quota.

820

00:43:57,800 --> 00:44:00,040

This is why some of  
the refugees did not

821

00:44:00,040 --> 00:44:04,950

reach the shores of the United  
States until 1948 and '49.

822

00:44:04,950 --> 00:44:10,435

It became a little easier  
later on, but in '46 and '47,

823

00:44:10,435 --> 00:44:15,430

it was extremely  
difficult to emigrate.

824

00:44:15,430 --> 00:44:19,600

We tried to go to Palestine.

825

00:44:19,600 --> 00:44:22,270

What did you do to try?

826

00:44:22,270 --> 00:44:23,320

What did you do to try?

827

00:44:23,320 --> 00:44:28,630

You got yourself on lists  
with the proper authorities.

828

00:44:28,630 --> 00:44:30,610

And of course, they  
had to have the ship,

829

00:44:30,610 --> 00:44:35,020

they had to have the  
means to bribe whoever

830

00:44:35,020 --> 00:44:38,920

had to be bribed to allow the  
ship to exit the port, first,

831

00:44:38,920 --> 00:44:46,510

in Italy, and, of course,  
then the hope of reaching

832

00:44:46,510 --> 00:44:49,690

the shores of Israel.

833

00:44:49,690 --> 00:44:57,160

People that I knew who had  
gotten caught in the blockades,

834

00:44:57,160 --> 00:45:02,620

they actually jumped ship, and  
tried to wade into Palestine,

835

00:45:02,620 --> 00:45:07,810

and got the bullet,  
because the British did not

836

00:45:07,810 --> 00:45:10,600

want the immigration.

837

00:45:10,600 --> 00:45:13,000

I think they were under a lot  
of pressure from the Arabs,

838

00:45:13,000 --> 00:45:20,680

and they sided with them,

and stopped the entry.

839

00:45:20,680 --> 00:45:23,463

We missed the exodus,  
the famous exodus,

840

00:45:23,463 --> 00:45:24,880

because my mother  
got sick and had

841

00:45:24,880 --> 00:45:26,970

to be taken to the hospital.

842

00:45:26,970 --> 00:45:30,620

And I think that was about  
the saddest day of my life.

843

00:45:30,620 --> 00:45:31,810

When you missed the exodus.

844

00:45:31,810 --> 00:45:34,670

Missed the exodus,  
only to find out we

845

00:45:34,670 --> 00:45:35,920  
would have ended up in Cyprus.

846

00:45:35,920 --> 00:45:37,878

But that would have been  
better too, because we

847

00:45:37,878 --> 00:45:39,700

would have been closer.

848

00:45:39,700 --> 00:45:46,210

And then my mother had  
written to the Jewish language

849

00:45:46,210 --> 00:45:49,090

newspapers in the  
United States--

850

00:45:49,090 --> 00:45:51,340

there were two papers  
here the talk--

851  
00:45:51,340 --> 00:45:54,700  
which meant the day  
and the forwards--

852  
00:45:54,700 --> 00:46:02,050  
and looking for-- you always  
thought of looking for the man

853  
00:46:02,050 --> 00:46:04,260  
relatives, not the  
women relatives--

854  
00:46:04,260 --> 00:46:06,040  
for my uncle.

855  
00:46:06,040 --> 00:46:10,270  
And it all depended on  
who saw what in the paper

856  
00:46:10,270 --> 00:46:12,820  
and who identified with what.

857  
00:46:12,820 --> 00:46:17,290  
And then somebody  
here in Washington

858  
00:46:17,290 --> 00:46:20,710  
happened to read the  
paper and asked him

859  
00:46:20,710 --> 00:46:25,660  
whether this was a name  
that he recognized.

860  
00:46:25,660 --> 00:46:28,880  
And sure enough, it was  
my aunt's maiden name--

861  
00:46:28,880 --> 00:46:30,590  
my father's sister.

862  
00:46:30,590 --> 00:46:34,310  
Recognized the name, and  
then there was a question as

863

00:46:34,310 --> 00:46:36,710  
to tracking down.

864

00:46:36,710 --> 00:46:39,560  
The name was there,  
we were in Italy

865

00:46:39,560 --> 00:46:42,170  
and trying to communicate  
with the forwards who

866

00:46:42,170 --> 00:46:44,430  
put in the end-- well,  
we didn't put it in.

867

00:46:44,430 --> 00:46:46,670  
We had to give it to  
somebody to put it

868

00:46:46,670 --> 00:46:48,110  
in for us in the United States.

869

00:46:48,110 --> 00:46:51,590  
Somebody was going to the  
United States took the name,

870

00:46:51,590 --> 00:46:53,900  
and it took time.

871

00:46:53,900 --> 00:46:55,400  
You don't come to  
the United States,

872

00:46:55,400 --> 00:46:56,858  
and the first thing  
you think about

873

00:46:56,858 --> 00:47:00,900  
is somebody has given  
you a task to do.

874

00:47:00,900 --> 00:47:05,370  
They got the help to approach  
the paper to send it in.

875

00:47:05,370 --> 00:47:06,530

So it took some time.

876

00:47:06,530 --> 00:47:12,230

And we had a letter that  
he's identifying himself

877

00:47:12,230 --> 00:47:14,630

as the William Godkin  
that we are searching.

878

00:47:14,630 --> 00:47:19,250

And, yes, his wife had  
relatives in the township,

879

00:47:19,250 --> 00:47:23,630

and they recognized the names  
because my mother and my aunt--

880

00:47:23,630 --> 00:47:26,450

actually, my mother was a  
little older than my aunt--

881

00:47:26,450 --> 00:47:30,230

but my aunt lived  
with her and my father

882

00:47:30,230 --> 00:47:34,070

before coming to  
the United States.

883

00:47:34,070 --> 00:47:37,520

And she knew exactly who it was.

884

00:47:37,520 --> 00:47:42,240

They corresponded until  
the war broke out.

885

00:47:42,240 --> 00:47:46,160

And we made contact.

886

00:47:46,160 --> 00:47:50,240

And of course, letters  
did not turn around



887

00:47:50,240 --> 00:47:51,560  
as quickly as they do now.

888

00:47:51,560 --> 00:47:54,230  
Everything went by ship,  
so it was probably a month

889

00:47:54,230 --> 00:47:56,570  
between communication.

890

00:47:56,570 --> 00:47:59,570  
But he immediately wrote that  
he will start the paperwork

891

00:47:59,570 --> 00:48:03,250  
to bring us to  
the United States.

892

00:48:03,250 --> 00:48:06,160  
And it was a question of quota.

893

00:48:06,160 --> 00:48:08,630  
But my mother was  
born, actually,

894

00:48:08,630 --> 00:48:11,750  
the area was Russia  
when she was born.

895

00:48:11,750 --> 00:48:13,120  
Then it became White Russia.

896

00:48:13,120 --> 00:48:17,540  
Because when Poland  
got its independence,

897

00:48:17,540 --> 00:48:22,190  
some of the territory  
was transferred to Poland

898

00:48:22,190 --> 00:48:24,650  
that was Russia before.

899

00:48:24,650 --> 00:48:27,050

And I remember  
the trip to Naples

900  
00:48:27,050 --> 00:48:31,060  
where the American Council was.

901  
00:48:31,060 --> 00:48:33,010  
And that was the closest place.

902  
00:48:33,010 --> 00:48:37,100  
Actually, something else  
happened before then.

903  
00:48:37,100 --> 00:48:44,540  
Those people that after the  
exodus had been intercepted,

904  
00:48:44,540 --> 00:48:50,600  
the UNRRA that was  
administering the camps,

905  
00:48:50,600 --> 00:48:53,320  
had divided the people that  
were interested in going

906  
00:48:53,320 --> 00:48:57,350  
to the United States  
into a camp in Bari.

907  
00:48:57,350 --> 00:49:00,770  
It was a military  
camp originally--

908  
00:49:00,770 --> 00:49:01,882  
Quonset huts.

909  
00:49:01,882 --> 00:49:03,590  
Actually, it was the  
first time my mother

910  
00:49:03,590 --> 00:49:07,970  
and I had a cubicle of our own.

911  
00:49:07,970 --> 00:49:11,270  
And people would transfer there.

912  
00:49:11,270 --> 00:49:13,550  
And then the people  
that were trying

913  
00:49:13,550 --> 00:49:15,740  
to go to Israel,  
they transferred

914  
00:49:15,740 --> 00:49:18,260  
further north to Milan.

915  
00:49:18,260 --> 00:49:23,850  
So it would be harder for  
them to traverse the waters.

916  
00:49:23,850 --> 00:49:26,710  
It was a longer distance.

917  
00:49:26,710 --> 00:49:28,040  
It was also inland.

918  
00:49:28,040 --> 00:49:29,810  
It wasn't close to sea.

919  
00:49:29,810 --> 00:49:31,610  
Bari was a port.

920  
00:49:31,610 --> 00:49:36,920  
You could easily  
steal away on a ship--

921  
00:49:36,920 --> 00:49:39,410  
not that any ships  
would have allowed it.

922  
00:49:39,410 --> 00:49:42,980  
Not too many ships were  
going to Palestine anyway.

923  
00:49:42,980 --> 00:49:46,790  
So we were transferred to Bari.

924  
00:49:46,790 --> 00:49:51,020

And in Bari, my  
uncle was sending us

925  
00:49:51,020 --> 00:49:53,630  
some money at that point.

926  
00:49:53,630 --> 00:49:58,130  
And I was enrolled  
into an Italian school,

927  
00:49:58,130 --> 00:50:01,940  
not having a very  
good grasp of Italian,

928  
00:50:01,940 --> 00:50:04,280  
but with the idea  
of learning English.

929  
00:50:04,280 --> 00:50:08,810  
It was an Italian school  
that taught English.

930  
00:50:08,810 --> 00:50:13,730  
And I did gain quite a  
bit, because my vocabulary

931  
00:50:13,730 --> 00:50:14,330  
was awful.

932  
00:50:14,330 --> 00:50:16,850  
I spoke with an Italian accent.

933  
00:50:16,850 --> 00:50:25,010  
But I did learn a little bit  
about grammar, how to read,

934  
00:50:25,010 --> 00:50:29,100  
and how to perceive the vowels.

935  
00:50:29,100 --> 00:50:34,520  
But from Bari, that  
was our last point

936  
00:50:34,520 --> 00:50:40,370  
where we managed to get on

the Russian quota, which

937

00:50:40,370 --> 00:50:44,300  
expedited our departure  
for the United States.

938

00:50:44,300 --> 00:50:47,360  
So that was a long,  
tedious process.

939

00:50:47,360 --> 00:50:48,290  
It was us.

940

00:50:48,290 --> 00:50:52,220  
We spent 2 and 1/2  
years in Italy.

941

00:50:52,220 --> 00:51:00,380  
We left November 1, because we  
came to the United States right

942

00:51:00,380 --> 00:51:03,260  
before Thanksgiving--

943

00:51:03,260 --> 00:51:04,820  
the week before Thanksgiving.

944

00:51:04,820 --> 00:51:08,700  
What was the crossing like?

945

00:51:08,700 --> 00:51:11,210  
What was crossing like?

946

00:51:11,210 --> 00:51:15,780  
It was a troop ship with bunks.

947

00:51:15,780 --> 00:51:20,820

948

00:51:20,820 --> 00:51:22,780  
My mother had a very  
difficult crossing.

949

00:51:22,780 --> 00:51:25,630

I don't think I  
would bring her food.

950  
00:51:25,630 --> 00:51:30,820  
She couldn't even get out of her  
bunk to go to the dining room.

951  
00:51:30,820 --> 00:51:32,710  
Was it mostly displaced people?

952  
00:51:32,710 --> 00:51:37,420  
No, not too many  
displaced people.

953  
00:51:37,420 --> 00:51:41,260  
There were a lot of Italians  
that were traveling here.

954  
00:51:41,260 --> 00:51:45,070  
But that was the only  
mode of transportation.

955  
00:51:45,070 --> 00:51:48,730  
How did you feel about coming  
to the United States instead

956  
00:51:48,730 --> 00:51:49,630  
of Palestine?

957  
00:51:49,630 --> 00:51:53,470

958  
00:51:53,470 --> 00:51:55,180  
How did I feel?

959  
00:51:55,180 --> 00:51:57,910  
Well, mixed feelings.

960  
00:51:57,910 --> 00:52:03,310  
One of the good feelings  
was coming to relatives.

961  
00:52:03,310 --> 00:52:06,800  
All the friends  
went the other way--

962  
00:52:06,800 --> 00:52:08,770  
or the majority of them.

963  
00:52:08,770 --> 00:52:10,570  
Some did come to  
the United States,

964  
00:52:10,570 --> 00:52:13,390  
but it was a vast country.

965  
00:52:13,390 --> 00:52:17,320  
From just having an  
idea about geography

966  
00:52:17,320 --> 00:52:20,520  
and where the  
different places were,

967  
00:52:20,520 --> 00:52:23,800  
there was probably very little  
hope of seeing anybody again.

968  
00:52:23,800 --> 00:52:28,010

969  
00:52:28,010 --> 00:52:33,110  
After having sights set  
on Palestine for so long,

970  
00:52:33,110 --> 00:52:37,280  
and having a feeling of  
devotion that was actually

971  
00:52:37,280 --> 00:52:39,590  
instilled in me as a child--

972  
00:52:39,590 --> 00:52:42,290  
because my father was  
a Zionist way back,

973  
00:52:42,290 --> 00:52:45,200  
and probably that's why  
I learned the language.

974

00:52:45,200 --> 00:52:52,250

And I knew Hebrew, because I spoke it from the beginning.

975

00:52:52,250 --> 00:52:57,500

It was like anybody here learns English, I learned Hebrew.

976

00:52:57,500 --> 00:53:01,760

In the previous interview, you said that your father

977

00:53:01,760 --> 00:53:03,680

had founded a school.

978

00:53:03,680 --> 00:53:05,960

Yes.

979

00:53:05,960 --> 00:53:07,800

A modern Hebrew school.

980

00:53:07,800 --> 00:53:17,150

Actually, my father had supplied funds,

981

00:53:17,150 --> 00:53:19,860

but this rabbi had organized the school.

982

00:53:19,860 --> 00:53:23,240

It was a modern Hebrew school, with the Hebrew

983

00:53:23,240 --> 00:53:26,660

as spoken now in Israel.

984

00:53:26,660 --> 00:53:35,840

And it provided both a secular and Hebrew education.

985

00:53:35,840 --> 00:53:39,350

And I was enrolled in that school at the age of five,

986



00:53:39,350 --> 00:53:44,960  
because they needed enrollees,  
and I was advanced enough

987  
00:53:44,960 --> 00:53:50,720  
to be able to just fit in.

988  
00:53:50,720 --> 00:53:54,920  
The rabbi and his family  
ended up in the United States.

989  
00:53:54,920 --> 00:53:59,750  
And a son of his  
lives in this area.

990  
00:53:59,750 --> 00:54:04,320  
And jumping here from  
one thing to the other--

991  
00:54:04,320 --> 00:54:08,870  
we went to a function  
here in the United States

992  
00:54:08,870 --> 00:54:12,910  
and my mother says to me,  
this is Noah Delinken.

993  
00:54:12,910 --> 00:54:15,830  
I says, mom, we have a dream.

994  
00:54:15,830 --> 00:54:17,030  
This is the United States.

995  
00:54:17,030 --> 00:54:18,290  
She says, it is.

996  
00:54:18,290 --> 00:54:21,440  
You go up and you ask  
him whether he is he.

997  
00:54:21,440 --> 00:54:23,510  
I said, do I have to?

998  
00:54:23,510 --> 00:54:24,980  
Sure enough.

999

00:54:24,980 --> 00:54:27,950

That's amazing.

1000

00:54:27,950 --> 00:54:29,710

It is amazing.

1001

00:54:29,710 --> 00:54:33,770

And the first person  
that I met when

1002

00:54:33,770 --> 00:54:38,960

we crossed the Alps was the  
brother of my governess,

1003

00:54:38,960 --> 00:54:41,460

because he asked me,  
where did I come from?

1004

00:54:41,460 --> 00:54:42,330

Where was I born?

1005

00:54:42,330 --> 00:54:43,747

And I said, you  
never heard of it.

1006

00:54:43,747 --> 00:54:45,807

It's a little town,  
you've never heard of it.

1007

00:54:45,807 --> 00:54:47,390

And he says, I come  
from a little town

1008

00:54:47,390 --> 00:54:49,610

that nobody ever  
heard of either.

1009

00:54:49,610 --> 00:54:53,060

And sure enough, we both  
came from the same place.

1010

00:54:53,060 --> 00:54:57,380

And when he heard my name,  
he knew exactly who it was.

1011  
00:54:57,380 --> 00:54:59,580  
And when I called  
my mother over,

1012  
00:54:59,580 --> 00:55:02,120  
and they started to  
talk about the family,

1013  
00:55:02,120 --> 00:55:04,080  
and his sister was my governess.

1014  
00:55:04,080 --> 00:55:05,180  
You never expected.

1015  
00:55:05,180 --> 00:55:06,050  
No.

1016  
00:55:06,050 --> 00:55:09,020  
And he gave me one of the books  
that I've read thoroughly,

1017  
00:55:09,020 --> 00:55:10,730  
and that's the Bible--

1018  
00:55:10,730 --> 00:55:12,240  
the complete Bible.

1019  
00:55:12,240 --> 00:55:14,570  
It was a military issue.

1020  
00:55:14,570 --> 00:55:22,940  
That's about 3 inches thick  
and it's probably 3 by 3 by 5.

1021  
00:55:22,940 --> 00:55:25,580  
And the pages are so thin, I  
had to put a piece of paper

1022  
00:55:25,580 --> 00:55:29,570  
underneath so I wouldn't  
see the words below.

1023  
00:55:29,570 --> 00:55:31,040

But that was one  
of the books too

1024  
00:55:31,040 --> 00:55:37,190  
that I studied, just  
to keep occupied.

1025  
00:55:37,190 --> 00:55:40,310  
So back to the crossing when  
you were coming to the United

1026  
00:55:40,310 --> 00:55:44,660  
States instead of Palestine--

1027  
00:55:44,660 --> 00:55:46,550  
when you had thought  
of going to Palestine,

1028  
00:55:46,550 --> 00:55:49,970  
did that seem partly  
like coming home again?

1029  
00:55:49,970 --> 00:55:51,770  
Yes, it was.

1030  
00:55:51,770 --> 00:55:52,310  
Yes, it was.

1031  
00:55:52,310 --> 00:55:56,756  
It was the next  
best thing to home.

1032  
00:55:56,756 --> 00:55:59,810  
As I told you, my father  
was interested in Palestine,

1033  
00:55:59,810 --> 00:56:02,930  
also interested in the  
modern Hebrew language,

1034  
00:56:02,930 --> 00:56:05,770  
and wanted his  
children to know it.

1035  
00:56:05,770 --> 00:56:11,590

We learned the language from  
birth, both my brother and I.

1036  
00:56:11,590 --> 00:56:13,920  
My brother did not survive.

1037  
00:56:13,920 --> 00:56:17,990  
And I had a very  
close identification

1038  
00:56:17,990 --> 00:56:19,640  
coming to the United  
States with sort

1039  
00:56:19,640 --> 00:56:25,010  
of almost like second-best,  
other than coming to a family.

1040  
00:56:25,010 --> 00:56:29,990  
So what was it like for  
you when you arrived?

1041  
00:56:29,990 --> 00:56:35,270  
When I arrived, very  
warm reception .

1042  
00:56:35,270 --> 00:56:36,610  
We got off the ship.

1043  
00:56:36,610 --> 00:56:39,800  
And by the way, we  
almost got lost at sea.

1044  
00:56:39,800 --> 00:56:43,760  
Three days out of New York,  
there was a big storm.

1045  
00:56:43,760 --> 00:56:46,280  
And the ship was  
listing, and it was

1046  
00:56:46,280 --> 00:56:51,350  
listing so badly that we  
watched a fishing boat go down--

1047

00:56:51,350 --> 00:56:55,310  
couldn't give it any help,  
because we walked on the sides,

1048  
00:56:55,310 --> 00:56:57,710  
the ship listed so badly.

1049  
00:56:57,710 --> 00:57:00,330  
But we made it.

1050  
00:57:00,330 --> 00:57:04,370  
Pulled into New York port,  
and what was it like?

1051  
00:57:04,370 --> 00:57:10,760  
Sitting outside the port of New  
York, we arrived, it was dusk.

1052  
00:57:10,760 --> 00:57:12,830  
It was late evening.

1053  
00:57:12,830 --> 00:57:18,470  
To stand on the deck and to  
watch the strings of light--

1054  
00:57:18,470 --> 00:57:21,140  
whoever thought they were cars--

1055  
00:57:21,140 --> 00:57:29,850  
cars were something that was a  
novelty to many in Europe yet.

1056  
00:57:29,850 --> 00:57:33,620  
Strings and strings of light,  
and all the neon lights

1057  
00:57:33,620 --> 00:57:38,240  
blasting, flashing--

1058  
00:57:38,240 --> 00:57:40,310  
unbelievable sight.

1059  
00:57:40,310 --> 00:57:41,690  
Unbelievable sight.

1060

00:57:41,690 --> 00:57:44,630

I still think the  
skyline of New York--

1061

00:57:44,630 --> 00:57:52,220

whenever I'm there, it's  
still a sight to behold.

1062

00:57:52,220 --> 00:57:55,630

And the excitement--

1063

00:57:55,630 --> 00:57:59,080

Was it different from  
what you had imagined?

1064

00:57:59,080 --> 00:58:01,870

Much different.

1065

00:58:01,870 --> 00:58:05,710

Italy is a progressive  
country, but nowhere

1066

00:58:05,710 --> 00:58:09,730

near what I saw here.

1067

00:58:09,730 --> 00:58:14,335

Sure, we had running water in  
Italy, but it was one faucet.

1068

00:58:14,335 --> 00:58:17,650

1069

00:58:17,650 --> 00:58:21,190

To walk into an apartment  
and turn on the spigot--

1070

00:58:21,190 --> 00:58:24,260

So everything seemed  
quite strange.

1071

00:58:24,260 --> 00:58:26,020

Remember something  
else-- that Poland

1072

00:58:26,020 --> 00:58:29,530  
is a very backward country.

1073  
00:58:29,530 --> 00:58:35,500  
They didn't even have any  
bathrooms, indoor plumbing

1074  
00:58:35,500 --> 00:58:37,390  
in most of the houses.

1075  
00:58:37,390 --> 00:58:40,480  
Your family, which  
was affluent--

1076  
00:58:40,480 --> 00:58:41,570  
We had a bathtub.

1077  
00:58:41,570 --> 00:58:43,360  
But the bathtub  
had to be filled.

1078  
00:58:43,360 --> 00:58:47,470  
The well was in the yard.

1079  
00:58:47,470 --> 00:58:50,980  
It had to be pumped  
into the kitchen.

1080  
00:58:50,980 --> 00:58:54,250  
You used the pump to pump  
it up from there to here.

1081  
00:58:54,250 --> 00:58:57,130

1082  
00:58:57,130 --> 00:59:00,440  
We had electricity, and we  
were way ahead of the others.

1083  
00:59:00,440 --> 00:59:02,710  
There was many houses that  
didn't have electricity.

1084  
00:59:02,710 --> 00:59:05,860



1085  
00:59:05,860 --> 00:59:08,410  
We had a radio, but  
that was probably

1086  
00:59:08,410 --> 00:59:09,790  
one of the few in the city.

1087  
00:59:09,790 --> 00:59:17,100

1088  
00:59:17,100 --> 00:59:23,100  
I can't begin to explain to  
you how backwards Poland is.

1089  
00:59:23,100 --> 00:59:30,400  
So just physically, the  
United States was a shock.

1090  
00:59:30,400 --> 00:59:33,090  
It wasn't as big a shock as  
if I would have come directly

1091  
00:59:33,090 --> 00:59:33,780  
from Poland.

1092  
00:59:33,780 --> 00:59:38,580  
We went through Czechoslovakia,  
which was very much modernized.

1093  
00:59:38,580 --> 00:59:42,780  
We came into Italy that  
was also quite modernized.

1094  
00:59:42,780 --> 00:59:48,750  
But it was still a long way  
from what I've encountered here.

1095  
00:59:48,750 --> 00:59:51,720  
So did your relatives  
meet you in New York?

1096  
00:59:51,720 --> 00:59:53,430  
Yes.

1097

00:59:53,430 --> 00:59:59,130

My uncle and his cousin  
met us in New York.

1098

00:59:59,130 --> 01:00:01,440

And we spent the night  
with my uncle's cousin.

1099

01:00:01,440 --> 01:00:04,440

By the time we disembarked,  
went to customs,

1100

01:00:04,440 --> 01:00:07,960

and then the next morning, we  
took a train to Washington.

1101

01:00:07,960 --> 01:00:11,130

And needless to say, New  
York was very busy, scary.

1102

01:00:11,130 --> 01:00:13,740

1103

01:00:13,740 --> 01:00:15,720

None of the places--

1104

01:00:15,720 --> 01:00:20,160

Rome was a big city, and  
there was a tram going around.

1105

01:00:20,160 --> 01:00:24,588

You make the circle, and you  
could come to the same place.

1106

01:00:24,588 --> 01:00:26,225

New York wasn't  
anything like that.

1107

01:00:26,225 --> 01:00:28,960

1108

01:00:28,960 --> 01:00:32,010

We disembarked, and the  
first thing that I saw

1109

01:00:32,010 --> 01:00:35,020  
was the Brooklyn Bridge.

1110

01:00:35,020 --> 01:00:38,940  
And my god, the expanse of it--

1111

01:00:38,940 --> 01:00:41,130  
how long it was.

1112

01:00:41,130 --> 01:00:44,580  
And I was pointed out right away  
that there is the Williamsburg

1113

01:00:44,580 --> 01:00:45,810  
Bridge.

1114

01:00:45,810 --> 01:00:49,350  
That's just as long.

1115

01:00:49,350 --> 01:00:52,200  
It was incomprehensible.

1116

01:00:52,200 --> 01:00:55,310  
And of course, the subway--

1117

01:00:55,310 --> 01:00:58,500  
we got on the subway  
underground train.

1118

01:00:58,500 --> 01:01:04,770  
The trains that I remembered  
were the steam trains.

1119

01:01:04,770 --> 01:01:07,290  
The train here was  
an electric train.

1120

01:01:07,290 --> 01:01:09,270  
So how did that all seem to you?

1121

01:01:09,270 --> 01:01:13,410  
Scary or exciting?

1122

01:01:13,410 --> 01:01:15,340  
It was exciting.

1123  
01:01:15,340 --> 01:01:17,100  
I don't think I was  
scared of anything,

1124  
01:01:17,100 --> 01:01:19,440  
to tell you the truth.

1125  
01:01:19,440 --> 01:01:28,570  
I think part of my experience  
had sort of taken away

1126  
01:01:28,570 --> 01:01:29,190  
any fear.

1127  
01:01:29,190 --> 01:01:32,420

1128  
01:01:32,420 --> 01:01:35,850  
I was a daredevil anyway.

1129  
01:01:35,850 --> 01:01:38,130  
You were a daredevil  
anyway-- you mean--

1130  
01:01:38,130 --> 01:01:39,910  
Not being afraid of things.

1131  
01:01:39,910 --> 01:01:42,620  
For instance, there was  
electricity in the villa

1132  
01:01:42,620 --> 01:01:45,840  
that we lived in,  
but everybody had

1133  
01:01:45,840 --> 01:01:49,750  
sort of like-- in Italy,  
they had their hot plates.

1134  
01:01:49,750 --> 01:01:51,120  
So everybody had a hot plate.

1135

01:01:51,120 --> 01:01:54,840

And needless to say, the  
electricity was always out.

1136

01:01:54,840 --> 01:02:02,667

I would go up to the pole  
and connect it back again.

1137

01:02:02,667 --> 01:02:04,500

I didn't really understand  
what I was doing,

1138

01:02:04,500 --> 01:02:08,910

other than the fact I  
was told to wear gloves

1139

01:02:08,910 --> 01:02:11,610

and not to touch anything  
metal with my feet.

1140

01:02:11,610 --> 01:02:14,910

Were you a daredevil  
because of your experience

1141

01:02:14,910 --> 01:02:16,290

during the Holocaust?

1142

01:02:16,290 --> 01:02:18,150

Or did you have  
those tendencies,

1143

01:02:18,150 --> 01:02:20,242

do you think, as a child before?

1144

01:02:20,242 --> 01:02:21,450

How would I know from before?

1145

01:02:21,450 --> 01:02:23,970

1146

01:02:23,970 --> 01:02:30,000

But from the Holocaust, you  
say that not being afraid--

1147

01:02:30,000 --> 01:02:34,980  
at one point during the  
Holocaust, during the hiding,

1148  
01:02:34,980 --> 01:02:37,150  
and the running, and so forth--

1149  
01:02:37,150 --> 01:02:39,690  
I got lost from my mother.

1150  
01:02:39,690 --> 01:02:44,980  
I was in the forest, I had no  
idea which direction to go.

1151  
01:02:44,980 --> 01:02:48,870  
I had no idea where  
the Germans were.

1152  
01:02:48,870 --> 01:02:51,930  
I was by myself,  
and the forests were

1153  
01:02:51,930 --> 01:02:57,620  
full of wolves, and bears,  
and all kinds of animals.

1154  
01:02:57,620 --> 01:02:59,820  
And what were your prospects?

1155  
01:02:59,820 --> 01:03:05,560  
And I thought to myself,  
I came out to a clearing,

1156  
01:03:05,560 --> 01:03:07,480  
and I heard the  
Germans yell, halt.

1157  
01:03:07,480 --> 01:03:09,650  
And I thought, oh,  
this is my chance.

1158  
01:03:09,650 --> 01:03:11,970  
I'll just step out  
and they'll shoot me.

1159

01:03:11,970 --> 01:03:14,528  
And the bullets were  
hitting the ground.

1160  
01:03:14,528 --> 01:03:17,070  
I don't know if you've ever seen  
a bulletted the ground-- just

1161  
01:03:17,070 --> 01:03:19,890  
makes it a little puff in  
the dirt all around me.

1162  
01:03:19,890 --> 01:03:20,770  
And nothing happened.

1163  
01:03:20,770 --> 01:03:22,937  
And all of a sudden, I heard  
my mother call my name.

1164  
01:03:22,937 --> 01:03:24,750  
And so I turned around,  
I ran to my mother.

1165  
01:03:24,750 --> 01:03:26,400  
I mean, life didn't  
mean anything.

1166  
01:03:26,400 --> 01:03:29,100

1167  
01:03:29,100 --> 01:03:31,080  
There was a strong  
sense of survival,

1168  
01:03:31,080 --> 01:03:32,400  
but life didn't mean anything.

1169  
01:03:32,400 --> 01:03:35,040  
You didn't expect to survive.

1170  
01:03:35,040 --> 01:03:37,410  
You wanted to.

1171  
01:03:37,410 --> 01:03:39,120  
You had the desire to.

1172  
01:03:39,120 --> 01:03:42,360  
The aim was to  
survive, but you had

1173  
01:03:42,360 --> 01:03:46,590  
to expect that something is  
going to happen in some way.

1174  
01:03:46,590 --> 01:03:48,700  
If you die, you die.

1175  
01:03:48,700 --> 01:03:50,610  
My life wasn't that interesting.

1176  
01:03:50,610 --> 01:03:52,740  
Life didn't hold  
that much for you.

1177  
01:03:52,740 --> 01:04:00,360  
It's just I think the ingrained  
desire, the human push to live.

1178  
01:04:00,360 --> 01:04:03,660  
This is why sometimes--

1179  
01:04:03,660 --> 01:04:05,140  
my husband has a big family.

1180  
01:04:05,140 --> 01:04:10,970  
I don't-- relatives who are  
in their 90s and so forth.

1181  
01:04:10,970 --> 01:04:15,180  
And you watch and somebody says,  
they are more dead than alive.

1182  
01:04:15,180 --> 01:04:18,090  
Yeah, but the will to live  
is there, and it's so strong,

1183  
01:04:18,090 --> 01:04:20,280  
and one is not even aware of it.

1184



01:04:20,280 --> 01:04:25,410  
You know it as a will  
to live, but it's there.

1185  
01:04:25,410 --> 01:04:27,240  
And you remember  
what that felt like.

1186  
01:04:27,240 --> 01:04:29,310  
Yeah.

1187  
01:04:29,310 --> 01:04:34,140  
And I don't know,  
maybe I'm a fatalist.

1188  
01:04:34,140 --> 01:04:36,840  
I said, well, if my  
day comes, it comes.

1189  
01:04:36,840 --> 01:04:39,540  
Go by car-- some people  
are afraid to go at night.

1190  
01:04:39,540 --> 01:04:42,270  
I'm not afraid to go at night.

1191  
01:04:42,270 --> 01:04:46,740  
It's just this attitude  
that when your time is up,

1192  
01:04:46,740 --> 01:04:49,530  
it's going to be up.

1193  
01:04:49,530 --> 01:04:53,580  
So back to arriving  
in the States,

1194  
01:04:53,580 --> 01:04:58,780  
and you got on the train with  
your relatives to Washington.

1195  
01:04:58,780 --> 01:05:06,630  
My uncle had a grocery  
store at 3rd and P. He

1196

01:05:06,630 --> 01:05:12,490  
and my aunt were working  
unbelievable hours.

1197  
01:05:12,490 --> 01:05:14,148  
He would be up at  
5:00 in the morning,

1198  
01:05:14,148 --> 01:05:16,440  
and I don't think he ever  
closed the store before 10:00

1199  
01:05:16,440 --> 01:05:17,010  
at night.

1200  
01:05:17,010 --> 01:05:19,320  
And by time he'd get to bed,  
it'd probably by midnight,

1201  
01:05:19,320 --> 01:05:20,490  
and be up again at 5.

1202  
01:05:20,490 --> 01:05:23,070  
Now, your aunt was  
born in Poland.

1203  
01:05:23,070 --> 01:05:24,730  
Both my uncle and aunt.

1204  
01:05:24,730 --> 01:05:26,190  
Your uncle also.

1205  
01:05:26,190 --> 01:05:27,990  
My uncle came to  
the United States.

1206  
01:05:27,990 --> 01:05:33,330  
I think he was about  
16 when he left Poland.

1207  
01:05:33,330 --> 01:05:35,550  
And my aunt was 14 at the time.

1208  
01:05:35,550 --> 01:05:38,550  
And I'll always remember

this romantic story

1209  
01:05:38,550 --> 01:05:42,060  
that he promised her  
that he'll send for her.

1210  
01:05:42,060 --> 01:05:45,420  
And he did-- as soon  
as he could earn

1211  
01:05:45,420 --> 01:05:51,150  
enough to make some sort  
of arrangements for her

1212  
01:05:51,150 --> 01:05:52,050  
to live here.

1213  
01:05:52,050 --> 01:05:53,550  
And she was only 14?

1214  
01:05:53,550 --> 01:05:55,260  
She was 14 when he left.

1215  
01:05:55,260 --> 01:05:59,180  
She was about 16 or  
17 when she came here.

1216  
01:05:59,180 --> 01:06:01,260  
And she came here to marry him?

1217  
01:06:01,260 --> 01:06:04,610  
My father paid the passage.

1218  
01:06:04,610 --> 01:06:06,840  
And she couldn't come  
to the United States.

1219  
01:06:06,840 --> 01:06:09,030  
Because if she wasn't a  
citizen she couldn't enter.

1220  
01:06:09,030 --> 01:06:10,980  
But she came to Cuba.

1221

01:06:10,980 --> 01:06:14,390  
And he went to Cuba  
and married her.

1222  
01:06:14,390 --> 01:06:17,908  
And talking about crossings, my  
aunt said when she came back,

1223  
01:06:17,908 --> 01:06:19,950  
I said, I thought I was  
going to die on the ship.

1224  
01:06:19,950 --> 01:06:21,150  
She says, you thought  
you were going

1225  
01:06:21,150 --> 01:06:22,950  
to die on the ship--  
you crossed the ocean.

1226  
01:06:22,950 --> 01:06:24,510  
I crossed that ocean too.

1227  
01:06:24,510 --> 01:06:26,590  
But I thought that after  
crossing the ocean,

1228  
01:06:26,590 --> 01:06:31,800  
I was going to die crossing  
from Cuba to the United States.

1229  
01:06:31,800 --> 01:06:34,770  
But she crossed when  
she was only 16,

1230  
01:06:34,770 --> 01:06:38,120  
she married a man that she  
hadn't seen for two years.

1231  
01:06:38,120 --> 01:06:38,620  
Yes.

1232  
01:06:38,620 --> 01:06:40,357  
This very young man.

1233

01:06:40,357 --> 01:06:41,190  
Two or three years--

1234  
01:06:41,190 --> 01:06:43,360  
I don't know whether  
she was 16 or 17.

1235  
01:06:43,360 --> 01:06:45,870  
So back to your story,  
they had this store--

1236  
01:06:45,870 --> 01:06:48,630  
They had this grocery store,  
they had three daughters.

1237  
01:06:48,630 --> 01:06:52,920  
Their oldest daughter was  
six months younger than I.

1238  
01:06:52,920 --> 01:06:59,790  
And I was welcomed into  
the family very warmly.

1239  
01:06:59,790 --> 01:07:01,890  
The next morning, it  
was before Thanksgiving,

1240  
01:07:01,890 --> 01:07:03,360  
and the store was busy.

1241  
01:07:03,360 --> 01:07:11,600  
And my cousin, who was 16,  
dressed in jeans and a shirt

1242  
01:07:11,600 --> 01:07:13,170  
and went down to  
help in the store.

1243  
01:07:13,170 --> 01:07:15,210  
And I was given a pair  
of jeans and a shirt

1244  
01:07:15,210 --> 01:07:18,490  
and a pair of loafers that  
I squeezed my feet into.

1245

01:07:18,490 --> 01:07:20,850

And I went down to the store.

1246

01:07:20,850 --> 01:07:23,880

And I could read, but  
a lot of the things

1247

01:07:23,880 --> 01:07:25,730

I didn't know what they meant.

1248

01:07:25,730 --> 01:07:27,220

And I couldn't  
understand everybody

1249

01:07:27,220 --> 01:07:28,980

with the different  
dialects, because I had

1250

01:07:28,980 --> 01:07:33,420

learned some English in Italy--

1251

01:07:33,420 --> 01:07:35,370

a few words here and there.

1252

01:07:35,370 --> 01:07:40,120

And it started out, well,  
they started to point to me.

1253

01:07:40,120 --> 01:07:43,590

They wanted a can of  
peas, and I couldn't

1254

01:07:43,590 --> 01:07:44,800

understand what they wanted.

1255

01:07:44,800 --> 01:07:46,330

They pointed, and  
I read it as peas,

1256

01:07:46,330 --> 01:07:48,210

and the label  
showed little peas,

1257

01:07:48,210 --> 01:07:49,890

and that was a word  
that I've learned.

1258  
01:07:49,890 --> 01:07:52,950

1259  
01:07:52,950 --> 01:07:56,050  
My cousins, of course, did  
not have quite the patience.

1260  
01:07:56,050 --> 01:07:57,810  
But nonetheless, they  
were good teachers,

1261  
01:07:57,810 --> 01:08:01,020  
because I was afraid  
to cross them.

1262  
01:08:01,020 --> 01:08:05,040  
And just as soon as Thanksgiving  
was over, my uncle took me--

1263  
01:08:05,040 --> 01:08:13,240  
there was a private Jewish  
religious school at Wisconsin

1264  
01:08:13,240 --> 01:08:13,740  
and O--

1265  
01:08:13,740 --> 01:08:17,340  
I remember that, because that  
was ingrained in my memory.

1266  
01:08:17,340 --> 01:08:18,540  
I'd get lost otherwise.

1267  
01:08:18,540 --> 01:08:22,229  
I wouldn't know how  
to ask where it is.

1268  
01:08:22,229 --> 01:08:25,439  
And he took me down there--  
it was an elementary school--

1269  
01:08:25,439 --> 01:08:27,840

and enrolled me.

1270  
01:08:27,840 --> 01:08:32,300  
And he says, you speak to  
those children in English.

1271  
01:08:32,300 --> 01:08:34,978  
I said, uncle, I spoke  
to him in Yiddish--

1272  
01:08:34,978 --> 01:08:35,520  
I don't know.

1273  
01:08:35,520 --> 01:08:37,979  
And he says, well, they  
are trying to learn Hebrew.

1274  
01:08:37,979 --> 01:08:40,720  
So you teach them Hebrew, and  
they'll teach you English.

1275  
01:08:40,720 --> 01:08:43,680  
Well, they did accept  
me, for one thing--

1276  
01:08:43,680 --> 01:08:46,979  
not necessarily,  
how shall I say,

1277  
01:08:46,979 --> 01:08:48,840  
willingly, but at that  
time, he was already

1278  
01:08:48,840 --> 01:08:51,479  
a little better off, and he  
made contributions that school.

1279  
01:08:51,479 --> 01:08:54,689  
It was a religious school  
that lived on contributions.

1280  
01:08:54,689 --> 01:08:56,080  
So I was accepted.

1281  
01:08:56,080 --> 01:09:00,000



And by the end of January--

1282

01:09:00,000 --> 01:09:03,850  
the new semester  
started in February--

1283

01:09:03,850 --> 01:09:07,529  
I had conquered the  
language well enough

1284

01:09:07,529 --> 01:09:10,380  
to be able to at  
least communicate.

1285

01:09:10,380 --> 01:09:13,290  
I had no problem  
with the writing.

1286

01:09:13,290 --> 01:09:16,229  
Were the classes conducted  
in English or Hebrew?

1287

01:09:16,229 --> 01:09:18,180  
They were both in  
Hebrew and English,

1288

01:09:18,180 --> 01:09:20,189  
but mostly in English--  
mostly in English.

1289

01:09:20,189 --> 01:09:21,450  
I sat in the classes.

1290

01:09:21,450 --> 01:09:24,630  
I wasn't really required to do  
very much other than the fact

1291

01:09:24,630 --> 01:09:27,180  
that I had the  
drive within myself.

1292

01:09:27,180 --> 01:09:33,069  
So whatever classes there were,  
the main idea was to English.

1293

01:09:33,069 --> 01:09:39,830

But I learned enough of  
it to be able to exist.

1294

01:09:39,830 --> 01:09:42,290

I knew enough to communicate.

1295

01:09:42,290 --> 01:09:44,010

My vocabulary was very poor.

1296

01:09:44,010 --> 01:09:45,960

My sentence structure was awful.

1297

01:09:45,960 --> 01:09:48,200

And my grammar, forget.

1298

01:09:48,200 --> 01:09:50,300

And I was fortunate  
to a certain degree--

1299

01:09:50,300 --> 01:09:52,130

I guess I had the  
desire to learn,

1300

01:09:52,130 --> 01:09:55,250

and I had people  
that recognized that.

1301

01:09:55,250 --> 01:09:58,220

I was enrolled into  
a junior high school,

1302

01:09:58,220 --> 01:10:01,970

because this elementary school  
said that I knew enough--

1303

01:10:01,970 --> 01:10:03,740

I had no credentials--

1304

01:10:03,740 --> 01:10:08,190

that I knew enough to be  
able to handle the work.

1305

01:10:08,190 --> 01:10:10,815

Now, in the elementary school,

the children in your class

1306

01:10:10,815 --> 01:10:12,650

must have been much  
younger than you.

1307

01:10:12,650 --> 01:10:14,090

Of course.

1308

01:10:14,090 --> 01:10:16,040

I was 16.

1309

01:10:16,040 --> 01:10:17,680

I was almost 17.

1310

01:10:17,680 --> 01:10:19,890

I was actually 17 by  
the time I started--

1311

01:10:19,890 --> 01:10:22,520

How did that feel to  
be with little kids?

1312

01:10:22,520 --> 01:10:24,510

It didn't matter.

1313

01:10:24,510 --> 01:10:25,460

I was there to learn.

1314

01:10:25,460 --> 01:10:27,020

I knew the purpose  
I was there for.

1315

01:10:27,020 --> 01:10:29,520

And I knew that if I pushed  
myself, I could go along.

1316

01:10:29,520 --> 01:10:30,900

So that was the important thing.

1317

01:10:30,900 --> 01:10:31,400

Yes.

1318

01:10:31,400 --> 01:10:34,350

And my uncle took me to a  
friend of his who was a rabbi.

1319

01:10:34,350 --> 01:10:38,690  
And both of them sat down and  
asked me, what did I want.

1320

01:10:38,690 --> 01:10:39,350  
I had a choice.

1321

01:10:39,350 --> 01:10:41,880

1322

01:10:41,880 --> 01:10:45,290  
I could go to Americanization  
school, where they

1323

01:10:45,290 --> 01:10:47,840  
taught English to foreigners.

1324

01:10:47,840 --> 01:10:49,670  
Or they could get  
me into this school

1325

01:10:49,670 --> 01:10:52,340  
where I would have  
to learn on my own--

1326

01:10:52,340 --> 01:10:54,110  
just be exposed to it.

1327

01:10:54,110 --> 01:10:56,780  
And having been exposed to  
the different languages--

1328

01:10:56,780 --> 01:11:00,050  
I mean, in Hungary, I picked  
up a few words of Hungarian.

1329

01:11:00,050 --> 01:11:02,840  
In Italy, I picked  
up some Italian.

1330

01:11:02,840 --> 01:11:05,840  
And I realized that

a language is not

1331  
01:11:05,840 --> 01:11:09,620  
that difficult to conquer  
if you put your mind to it.

1332  
01:11:09,620 --> 01:11:12,320  
I guess I had a pretty good IQ.

1333  
01:11:12,320 --> 01:11:16,160  
Because from the German, I  
recognized some of the words.

1334  
01:11:16,160 --> 01:11:19,730  
And the week that I spent  
in the grocery store

1335  
01:11:19,730 --> 01:11:22,500  
before they took me  
down to the school,

1336  
01:11:22,500 --> 01:11:24,710  
I had already picked  
up some words.

1337  
01:11:24,710 --> 01:11:27,650  
My cousins didn't speak  
anything else but English.

1338  
01:11:27,650 --> 01:11:31,790  
They understood Yiddish,  
but they discouraged me

1339  
01:11:31,790 --> 01:11:32,540  
from speaking it.

1340  
01:11:32,540 --> 01:11:33,800  
Say it in English.

1341  
01:11:33,800 --> 01:11:35,820  
And if I didn't, if  
I said it in Yiddish,

1342  
01:11:35,820 --> 01:11:39,020  
they made me repeat it.

1343  
01:11:39,020 --> 01:11:40,250  
And my uncle made me repeat.

1344  
01:11:40,250 --> 01:11:41,690  
I mean, his English  
was horrible,

1345  
01:11:41,690 --> 01:11:44,210  
but he made me  
repeat it in English.

1346  
01:11:44,210 --> 01:11:50,090  
And I don't know, I just  
fell in with the tide.

1347  
01:11:50,090 --> 01:11:55,340  
But when I started junior high  
school, I had a lot of help

1348  
01:11:55,340 --> 01:11:58,040  
from two teachers.

1349  
01:11:58,040 --> 01:12:03,080  
One of them was my homeroom  
teacher, who later on I

1350  
01:12:03,080 --> 01:12:05,540  
had acquainted much  
better because she

1351  
01:12:05,540 --> 01:12:07,310  
was a member of  
Hadassah, and we were

1352  
01:12:07,310 --> 01:12:12,800  
both in the same organization,  
a leftover from my early days.

1353  
01:12:12,800 --> 01:12:17,300  
And I was in the class  
with my little cousin--

1354  
01:12:17,300 --> 01:12:20,400  
in the same grade.

1355

01:12:20,400 --> 01:12:22,940

She didn't have the  
classes with me.

1356

01:12:22,940 --> 01:12:25,500

I think my homeroom  
teacher saw to it

1357

01:12:25,500 --> 01:12:30,440

that we weren't, because  
she was afraid that there

1358

01:12:30,440 --> 01:12:32,900

would be intimidation.

1359

01:12:32,900 --> 01:12:38,120

But at least I wasn't  
afraid to go from the store

1360

01:12:38,120 --> 01:12:38,850

to the school.

1361

01:12:38,850 --> 01:12:40,670

I went with somebody--

1362

01:12:40,670 --> 01:12:44,510

just to traverse the streets  
here in the United States,

1363

01:12:44,510 --> 01:12:47,840

even though today's traffic is  
a lot more than it was then--

1364

01:12:47,840 --> 01:12:50,670

but it was still busy streets.

1365

01:12:50,670 --> 01:12:51,170

And--

1366

01:12:51,170 --> 01:12:54,420

Let's stop here and  
change the tape.

1367

01:12:54,420 --> 01:12:55,000