

AGJ/HS

SARA MARTON

4/12/83

Family name: Roth

Mother's Maiden Name: Hirsch

Family: One of four children in close family of two brothers and two sisters. Not wealthy but comfortable. Until 1939 lived a sheltered small-town life, more modern than shtetl. In 1942 Nazis took away father and older brother. From prior experience family thought they could send money to free them but they were gassed on the train. Resentment expressed regarding the world allowing the holocaust to happen. Relates story of friend who took shoes off brother killed in street to give to poor relative.

Camp: Sara, Mother and sister sewed for soldiers. After 1942 there were a series of transports. Felt like trapped rats. Finally sent toghetto where generations were separated. Managed to keep Mother with them through manipulation. Older people were put in separate ghetto and killed. Description of several successful escapes from roundups. Mother, Sara and sister taken to Prussia because mother's papers said she sewed button holes. Brother went with youths 17-22 on transport. All were killed to avenge a German defeat. Didn't find out until after the war. Description of counting of prisoners in lots of ten and efforts of sister and self to stay together. Mother sent to Auschwitz, which she survived, only to die later when a boat transport to Stuttgart sank.

Describes lifelong depression after discovering all but sister perished. Describes effects on her children, attitudes toward intermarriage. Looks for coping aids that others might be using successfully.

Long dialogue with interviewer regarding unhappiness and loss of old way of life. Gave examples of charity of mother even in giving bread away to poor people.

Describes overwhelming love for family of origin. Describes sympathy for German soldiers previous to 1942 because many died so far from home. Germans took over step by step which made it harder to resist. Gives examples of dilemmas faced when many threatened with punishment for acts of few. Describes Uncle shot in

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cemetery who survived. Also describes manner in which children were separated from mothers. Describes chemical workers in plants who were unprotected. Saved sister by pulling her to own side and lying to Germans during a selection. Committed sabotage in munitions plant. Describes food allocation in camp and charity among prisoners.

Side II

Sleeping conditions - latrines, bunks, sharing of coat for covering. Doesn't blame Germans for discomfort but for inhumanity. Role of religious belief in explaining holocaust. Has a responsibility to parents to make them feel proud. Still cannot think of them as dead.