

RG-50.120 #117 5 Tapes
PINKOFF, MIRIAM

TAPE I

- 1.03 Her family dates back to 16th century in Holland. Her father, Waterman, was born in Amsterdam. He was a socialist and idealist, had studied agriculture and bought land in Lotrecht and built a farm. She was born in 1916 and together with 3 siblings grew up there. She describes farm, parents, childhood, school.
- 1.16 1938, refugees from Germany arrived. She taught in Orvacker School 'Werkplatz' where Jopp Westerwald and his wife taught. School was like a kibbutz community located in Bildhofan. Jewish refugee children joined the school.
- 1.29 1940, invasion of Holland. She returned to Lostrecht and started a school. Became interested in Judaism and Zionism.
- 1.41 1940-41, she opened the school to all Jewish children who could no longer attend regular schools. Her feeling of impending doom.
- 1.47 Describes Youth Aliya house in Lostrecht, when Menachem Pinkoff worked. Refugee children swelled to 760, Pinkoff came to help.
- 1.59 Talks about Joss Westerweld.
- 2.02 Family reaction to war, history of Jews in Holland.
- 2.19 Help of the non-Jewish population. The strike of February against persecution of Jews. Anti Jewish laws.
- 2.30 The fate of her siblings.
- 2.35 Talks about her husband's book [Menachem Pinkoff], his family and education.
- 2.44 Jopp Westerweld, Shu Shu, Jacob Edelstein were close friends and helped hiding Jews.
- 2.58 Yachin Simon, called Shu Shu, Jopp, Jan Smith, Bout Corning, Menachen P. and herself became cornerstone of the underground rescue group. Describes their plans and activities.
- 3.04 Describes people in group and spirit of group. Reads their anthem.
- 3.32 Reads from Menachem's book describing Shu Shu. Describes his rescue of children.

3.47 Prelude to underground. Edelstein's pessimism about the fate of Jews. The group's decision to hide all the children.

4.01 Preparing lists of children and finding families who would hide them.

TAPE II

4.07 Cooperation of Dutch citizens in her work. Preparing to hide 50 children.

4.15 Evacuation of children of Youth Aliya house to hiding places. She maintained contact. Prepared children.

4.24 Fate of family members.

4.31 Plans to move out of Holland to South of France.

4.36 Plan to send 8 children to Switzerland was betrayed.

4.43 Shu Shu plans for escape to S. France, was caught in Breda and committed suicide. How they established relationship with groups outside Holland.

4.59 Describes what happened when Germans came to take the children from the house.

5.06 Smuggling across borders to Belgium and Paris.

TAPE III

5.10 Abraham Hildesheim taught Menachem to make false papers for people escaping to Paris and Spain.

5.20 'Green border', the illegal escape route through forest. March 1944 Jopp was caught. His fate.

5.30 They were betrayed and caught. She went to several prisons and then to Westerburg.

5.38 Story of her family's fate.

5.45 Smuggling people out of Westerburg.

6.11 An elaborate plan to break out of Westerburg that was not carried out.

6.16 August 1942. describes time before they were caught. Jopp's map of underground.

- 6.19 Describes bringing children to families who agreed to hide them. Describes cases.
- 6.32 Summer 1943, Razia in Amsterdam and crowds of Jews were transported to Westerburg.
- 6.34 April 1944 she was arrested and brought to Westerburg. Kurt and Erika Blut helped her and Menachem to get on list of prisoner exchange group in Bergen Belsen.
- 6.40 Describes Bergen Belsen, her life, work. Friendships.
- 7.15 Composition of B.B. populations, Hungarians, Russian POWs, women, diamond workers.
- 7.20 Dec. '44, people returning from Auschwitz tell them about the gas chambers.
- 7.24 'Stern Lager', her camp in B.B. had to wear yellow star. They were supposed to be exchanged for POWs. 220 went to Palestine.
- 7.26 Fate of Menachem's family.
- 7.34 Describes barracks.
- 7.35 Diary of 2 who were taken to clean the crematorium.
- 7.42 Joseph Weiss was Juden Alteste in B.B., other people in camp she remembered. Abel Herzberg was judge in court of B.B.
- 7.59 9 April 1945 they were ordered to leave by train. Describes 2 weeks on train until they were liberated by Russians. She and Menachem went to an East German town.

TAPE IV

- 8.21 Repeats memories of B.B.
- 8.29 Passover.
- 8.33 The Chalutz group in the camp and other camps within the camp.
- 8.45 Special geriatric and orphan barracks. Germans gave general orders and inmates organized and carried them out.
- 8.53 May '44 a group of diamond workers was sent to Auschwitz.

- 8.56 Edelstein was head of Judenrat and helped more middle class people and less the poor.
- 9.00 Characteristics of people who succeeded in getting things.
- 9.03 Repeats story about liberation.
- 9.05 Their journey across the Elbe to the American side, then to Leipzig, Luxemburg, Antwerp, Breda where they went through political and medical examination. Menachem was sick and she was pregnant.
- 9.22 They got to Enthofen to DPC. Describes. The horror of hearing what had happened to friends and relatives when they came back to Lostrecht.
- 9.30 Lostrecht Sept. '45, meeting with Jewish Brigade who helped them organize immigration to Palestine.
- 9.40 Menachem's speech.
- 9.42 The battle of the Jewish community for the return of the hidden children.
- 9.49 Her shock at the party politics of immigration.
- 9.53 She gives birth, they get certificate and go to Palestine. Adaptation to life in Israel.
- 10.12 Memorializing Jopp Westerwelt.

TAPE V

Group meeting with her 3 adult children. Reaction of children to the tapes.
Discussion of how the Holocaust experience affected the family.