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Accession No 7413/2

SCHINDLER

Erika (?) Hirschfeld

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SCHINDLER - N.6112

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SLATE 132/1 - MRS. HIRSHFELD

Q: I'll ask you again and you can just take up from where you were. So you had friends from both sides?

HIRSHFELD: That's right and we formed a Jewish organisation that was paying for some people that couldn't afford it and we had some social functions and summer camps and things of that sort. And this was our life really sort of life. And then the war came.

Q: Let me ask you a little bit more about life before hand.

HIRSHFELD: Yes.

Q: You lived amongst non Jews, you didn't live in a Jewish area..

HIRSHFELD: No.

Q: ...you were quite well off, you wanted to be a dentist.

HIRSHFELD: Yes.

Q: Tell me a little bit about that side of things.

HIRSHFELD: Er to a certain extent it was a dream because Jewish people were not readily accepted to universities, they were only accepted to law school. But then, when you finished the law school, there was no job for you. This was the .. er the new generation, there were many Jewish lawyers from before, but

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132/1 -MRS. HIRSHFELD INTERVIEW CONT'D

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HIRSHFELD:.... So (NOT CLEAR) ... it was wasted. So we tried to do the next best, that's why my husband to chemistry in order to have something related to medicine, which was his dream really. And er it was again the same story. There were the - the university was in a part of Krakow where there is a park sort of going all through the town and many a times Jewish students were attacked by non-Jewish, right in front of the university. Nobody tried to intervene, nobody tried to stop it. And things like this, things of that nature.

Q: But life wasn't particularly uncomfortable?

HIRSHFELD: Life wasn't bad.. Er we were happy. We were not poor. We could afford more or less what we wanted. We lived in nice homes, we had servants. We all had education. ~~What more can I tell you? I lost my father very~~ young, but my mother was both the father and the mother. She was a wonderful lady. I had a best friend in her.

Q: In September 1939 the Germans arrived and I suspect that life changed quite quickly. Tell me a little bit, once I've finished talking, about your memory of the German occupation, up until the time that you had to go to Plashov. So end at the time you had to go to Plashov.

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132/1 MRS. HIRSHFELD INTERVIEW CONT'D

HIRSHFELD: The life changed overnight.
I remember we ...

Q: Wait until I've finished
because, as I mentioned to you

HIRSHFELD: It changed overnight really.
We

...

HIRSHFELD; The life changed very rapidly really overnight as the Germans were approaching. I remember we had to dim the lights and the next morning the Germans were there. The whole night we watched er a few Polish soldiers with horse and buggy going back and forth the street and then the next morning the Germans were there already. And at the beginning they behaved very nicely, if I may use the term. They didn't harm anybody and er they told us they they are soldier and they don't want to harm the civilian population. Nothing of that sort. But that honeymoon lasted a very short time. And a few weeks after that they already came to a Jewish er centre, let's call it. This would be similar to here, a Jewish centre, and put their demands on, and this was the beginning. Then one thing follow another and then there were the searchers on er - in Jewish neighbourhood and of Krakow and the gathering of silver and er sending people away all ready at that time, some to concentration camp, to Dachau and other camps, already then - and cutting Jews' long beards with scissors or course cutting a part of cheek with it. And er little by little they - they formed a ghetto and er I wasn't sent to ghetto at the

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132/1 MRS HIRSHFELD INTERVIEW CONT'D

HIRSHFELD: ... beginning. You were supposed to be working at the certain projects or certain factories and I didn't qualify, so my brother stayed in the ghetto, but my mother and myself we went to a little suburb and we stayed there, till they brought everybody to ghetto.

Q: In March 1943 they insisted that all Jews came to live in the ghetto. Perhaps you can tell me about what happened to you then, and if you started by saying in March 1943...

HIRSHFELD: In March.. March of 1943 of course they ...

...

HIRSHFELD: In March of 1943 they brought everybody that was still around the ghetto - to ghetto and er they crowded us in very small quarters. I remember being very, very unhappy the first um few weeks. It came about the Jewish holidays, and I remember like today standing with my mother in a little synagog and crying and there were all strange people around us, and - but little by little they reduced us to nothing. So ..

Q: How did they do that ?

HIRSHFELD: Very systematically. They were coming with all sorts of gimmicks. They - first of all had what we could an 'action'. Every so often they reduced the amount of people living in ghetto, simply by selecting, this one will stay and this one will go. And I lived through a few of these. At that time I had my mother still and

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132/1 MRS HIRSHFELD INTERVIEW CONT'D

HIRSHFELD: ...er we tried to stay together and we had to go and show your credentian to some Germans and one rejected me so I try once more and once more, finally the third one gave me the pass for life and so did my mother and so we stay. And then my mother unfortunately died, in ghetto. And the cemetary was where later on the concentration in Plashov was and in order to - to go to the funeral you had to obtain passes from the German and when my mother died, half of the ghetto marched to the funeral, and this was the last time they permitted something like this because they said that er many German soldiers are dying and nobody goes after them and here one Jewish woman died and a procession walked after her. And then already this was toward the end and we were only young left, you know, old people, we really had no worry, we try just to save our skin.

Q: In fact I got the date wrong of course it was 1941 that the ghetto was formed, but that's not important. But um in March 1943, two years later, the ghetto was demolished..

HIRSHFELD: Yeah.

Q: So although we're gonna use the same date I know that ... Er so ... Tell me very briefly your memory of the destruction of the ghetto in March 1943.

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132/1 MRS HIRSHFELD INTERVIEW CONT'D

HIRSHFELD: I don't remember too much because I was one of the first really to leave the ghetto in the morning. We were marching - if you can call it marching, er we were pushed like cattle. But I remember some people still in the windows and we were told that everybody has to leave. They were old and sick people and people with children, and I don't remember ever going back to ghetto. I just know of stories that happened, um young lady doctor was shot because she was attending to some sick people in the hospital, you know. And they were going periodically and taking these people out.

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SLATE 133/1 - HIRSHFELD INTERVIEW CONT'D

Q: (NAME) ... perhaps you could tell me about what work you did while you were living in the ghetto?

HIRSHFELD: I was living in the ghetto, I had a few different jobs. At the beginning because I came later than all of the people that already had got their jobs, I used to go every day some place else on a truck, a German truck. So one day it could be unloading coal and another day it could be peeling potatoes for an army, you know, German soldiers. Or it could - doing something, this was the original function I had. Then little by little I got a job in a paper - box paper - er paper bags factory and this was pretty easy, pretty nice. Didn't lasted very long. Then I worked in (NAME) ... I'm sure er people mention it. This was er chocolate factory before the war and it was converted by Germans into a place where they make uniforms and where they repaired all the torn ones, and all of a sudden I became er .. not - what do you call it in English? ... A dressmaker. I learn how to make er inside pockets in uniforms and things like this. But because I was not er professional one and I didn't have enough money for influence for diamonds, when we went to Plashov, of course after I think two or three weeks they tell me there's no more work for me in the (NAME) and I stayed in Plashov. In Plashov, though we had our different chores. Once I remember sitting for a week on - on the road and hammering stones for a road, and because we'd been, according to Mr. *Goeth* provided enough of it, so there was a punishment for us. And they - at the beginning wanted to kill every tenth one or whatever and then they... were very nice about it and changed it to a twenty-

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SLATE 133/1 - HIRSHFELD INTERVIEW CONT'D

HIRSHFELD: ... himself the people for the lashes, and whoever turned his head away from him when he was passing the rows was the one that was picked for the twenty-five lashes. Er I didn't turn my head away. I looked straight into his face and I was lucky enough not to get this. Lovely marks.. And then this was er .. the spring time. I worked for a very short time in something similar to (NAME) ... and then I went to Amalia.

Q: Tell me a little bit about your memories - the early memories of Plashov, when you were there the first time.

HIRSHFELD: It was frightening. ~~It was~~ very sad. Er I think the first time I realised that there is no way out ... people were committing sui..suicide, right then and there, I remember, and that this mother took some poison in the same barrack where I was staying. This was the beginning. And then er one day they came and they told us to give everything that we own in way of money and jewellery and things like that. And we had to put it on the pile, and that was the end of it.

Q: You were selected to go and work at Emalia, which I thought must have been a great relief for you. Tell me a little bit about how you came to be working at Emalia.

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133/1 - HIRSHFELD INTERVIEW CONT'D

HIRSHFELD: Emalia was a factory before the war. And my brother er knew - rather was going - was a girl that later on became his wife. Through her he had contact to *Bankier*, and actually we got there because of *Bankier*. So we were on the first list, not the original one, not the people that went when they opened the camp, but the first group of people that went in June, was my brother's name and myself, and my sister-in-law, which was my husband's name .. er the sister. And we went - we went then.

Q: Can you describe to me the conditions that you remember at Emalia as - and if you can compare them with what life was like at Plashov, and perhaps you could start that by saying the conditions at Emalia when I arrived there were like so and then this was different from Plashov, do you understand (NAME)..

HIRSHFELD: Of course the conditions in Emalia were entirely different from Plashov. Er we had nice barracks, clean. We were told right away that we would be working, that we would get food, that there was a big kitchen in camp itself, and then we were allowed when we worked at night, especially to eat in the kitchen or the dining room, or whatever that the other workers were using. And for the first time we felt safe. We somehow knew that all the things that happened to us like that the twenty-five lashes and things of that sort can never happen there. And they didn't. They never did happen. Whenever the Germans came to Emalia er some how Schindler was able to give the message to us, let's say somebody was cooking something, to remove everything from the stove and even when

Goeth

came the doors and the shutters were

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HIRSHFELD:.... closed and he always.. from the barracks were the people - worked for Schindler, were closed when the Germans came. And he explained to them, this is the barracks of my company, and no soldiers, no S.S. men ever walked into our barracks. They went to the other ones, where other people worked, because in Emalia, in the camp itself, not only Schindler workers, where there were other people who work in two or three other er places. But this is how he treated us. So this is the fact that I am telling you now... (TELEPHONE RINGING)..

CUT

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SLATE 134 TAKE 1 - HIRSHFELD INTERVIEW CONT'D

Q: (NAME) perhaps -
just so we can get back into it again - you can
tell me about the early impressions of life at
Emalia compared to life at Plashov.

HIRSHFELD: The life in Emalia of
course was entirely different from Plashov. Er
we felt safe from the beginning. The place was
clean, was kept nicely. There was a kitchen in
the camp itself and er after work we were free
to stroll, if you called it, around the barracks.
We felt completely different. There was never
that - that moment of er being afraid of our
lives.

Q: What role did the S.S.
play, the S.S. guards play in your lives at
Emalia?

HIRSHFELD: Very little at all. It
was a sign ...

...

HIRSHFELD: The S.S. guards had very
little really to do with us except for sitting
on those - for how many towers they had - never
access to the camp itself. I never remember
seeing one face to face. Of course there was er
commandant from S.S. - from Plashov. Er that er
was not always the same one. I think, if I
remember correctly, we had about three of them.
Er I don't remember ever anybody being beaten by
any of the commandants that were there.

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134/1 - HIRSHFELD INTERVIEW CONT'D

Q: Do you remember - do you know the story about er when Goeth came to Emalia and he saw someone doing something wrong and said that he had to be shot and Schindler intervened with a bottle of vodka to stop it? Do you know that story?

HIRSHFELD: I think the story was er - the man that was supposed to be shot er by Goeth I think this was a slightly retarded man. His name was Lamus and er - maybe in a way he was a scapegoat because he was retarded. But I remember Schindler intervening and I remember that Lamus on his knees calling to Schindler (FOREIGN) ... meaning, 'dear, dear darling .. ' in - in Jewish, 'director save me'.

Q: What I'd like to do is to hear that story again about Lamus .. and if you can tell me ...

HIRSHFELD: Did anybody tell you that story?

Q: Yes, but not ...

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INTERVIEW WITH MRS HIRSHFELD

SLATE 135 TAKE ONE

INTERVIEWER: (NAME NO CLEAR) was asking you about the incident which you remember observing with Mr Lam s and if you can explain it from the beginning about, one day I was looking through a window or however you want to start it .

HIRSHFELD: I remember one incident that happened while Goeth came to Emalia to (NOT CLEAR) ofcourse we were all afraid but still we peeked through the windows and I notice Goeth and Schindler standing in the the courtyard and Lamus one of the jews that worked there that was slightly retarded on his knees begging Schindler in Jewish, save me, save me, what happened before why was he chosen or or whether he really did anything wrong I don't remember right now but I know that nothing happened to him in the long run.

Q. You yourself had an incident which you remember Oscar for, don't you and perhaps again from the beginning you could describe that, telling me a bit about the work that you did at Amaliha as well cos ' that's relevant isn't it.

SLATE 135 cont

HIRSHFELD:) At the beginning when I came to Amalia the part where they made ammunition didn't exist so we all work at the part that made pots and pans and so on and it was a very hard physical work, I wasn't able really to do it so a couple of times I (NOT CLEAR the board with wet parts that were supposed to go to the oven and they were destroyed so the Polish foreman cursed me ofcourse and told me here is a broomstick and a bucket with water and you're gonna sweep and and spray the water all night long, I don't want you to touch the (NOT CLEAR) anymore and this was what I was doing for a while till they open the part with the ammunition and I was transferred there and I work several type of machines er um among others on a press, a small electric press that you had to push with your foot the pedal and er um one day I dunno how it happened but I burn my hand I think using some hot water whatever and I had blisters all over my hand and it was bandaged completely but just the same I had to go to work and on the nightshift I was sitting again against the press and pushing the pedal and all of a sudden Schindler came, he used to come unexpected and come from one worker to another and noticed the bandage on my hand, so he immediately came over and asked me how it happened, what had happened, he thought maybe I injure my hand on that press, so I explained to him that no that really I burned myself and

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SLATE 135 cont

that its healing, and this was the end of it. But he took the interest, he knew everybody by name and er he ... treated us rather like his property to certain extent but not er like Jews that you have to punish or dat you have to er er belittle, he.. I think I mention it before, he referred to us on many occasion as children and he was a father figure to us.

Q. Sitting here in 1983 you must try and explain to me, if you can, why it was so remarkable that a boss coming over to one of his workers to look at her hand, was such a big deal.

HIRSHFELD: His coming to me and looking at my hand really at that time was very unexpected because after all he was my enemy, he was the German and I was a Jewish woman, and er such an er expression of interest or concern was not something you come across with normally the opposite. You were treated as as er nothink. Goeth's dogs were treated better than any Jewish human being.

Q. What kind of feeling when you were in Emalia did Schindler inspire in his work as opposed to the feeling about Goeth and if you can make that comparison for me it would be very useful.

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SLATE 135 cont

HIRSHFELD: I was always afraid of Goeth just the mention of his name was enough to scare me to death, because I knew what he was doing and ofcourse Schindler was the protector, we felt safe whenever Schindler was there, when there was an action, when there was something till Schindler showed up we were always afraid, but once he was there we knew that nothing drastic can happen to us and it didn't. ~~Until of course the time when he was arrested himself and we had to go to Prashov little by little, we had the taste of what was going on in Prashov and later on in Auschwitz and so on.~~

Q. In those days you were a smoker, I think and I wonder if you can tell me about why you have reason to be grateful to Schindler (UNCLEAR) perhaps you can start by when we were working in the factory and then...

HIRSHFELD: When we were working in Amalia still..

Q. Sorry that's the noise of the Siren..

TALKING IN BACKGROUND...

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HIRSHFELD: When we were working in Amalia we still had contact with some Poles that were working there and for a big amount of money they would provide say, some additional food, or cigarettes or things of that sort. But later on when we were not going down any more and even later when we were in Brinnlitz a cigarettes was a very rare and very precious commodity and this is where Schindler was to come in. Drabdos hardly lit cigarettes and (UNCLEAR) further up and this is, this was his small way of trying to ease maybe urge for a cigarette for some people. For me it wasn't so terribly important because I felt hungry all the time, I couldn't eat horse meat and the piece of bread was more important

Q. You told me earlier about the time when a group of people from Amalia was selected to go and view something at Prashov, could you tell me that story from the beginning.

HIRSHFELD: The one point, three people escaped from Prashov and unfortunately they were caught and hung, and they left them for viewing purposes for the whole camp and they brought some people from other concentration camps to scare people from doing that and from

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back. He was just there to see it, I remember when he came back how other Jewish men were hugging and kissing him and er er um crying, feeling sorry for him that he was exposed to view something like that.

Q. Not everyone from Amalia either got onto Schindler's list or was even saved and I wonder if you can tell me what you remember about when the people were sent to Mathausen.

HIRSHFELD: I think when the Russians were coming closer we knew that the camp will be moved further into German territory and at that time they made a list of people that were supposed to stay and the one that were going so the idea was to keep all the women and the family of women together, unfortunately some never made it, men or women for that matter, and the list was made in a very funny way, I think everybody had something to do with it, whether it was Schindler or Mr Bukier or the Jewish Policeman or er er even the German engineered the work for Schindler. A little bit of personal vendetta went into it, and this is how it happened that people that worked from the beginning they gave their best never made it to Brinnlitz, never survived.

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Q. Do you remember the day that the people were sent off to Mathausen, what happened.

HIRSHFELD: We stayed in Amalia and the people that were not chosen went to Prashov and very shortly after went to Mathausen. I just recall the father of one of our people dying of heart attack that day already in Prashov when they took them there.

Q. Did any of the people who stayed on, did this incident make you doubt Schindlers ability to help you.

HIRSHFELD: The image of Schindler you know was er um destroyed to a certain extent when he was arrested ofcourse, because up to that point we thought that he is indestructable, nobody can really harm him, but then we saw that he's human too, but he came back and he told us that they tried to hurt him but this was already at the very end and then they took the men the part of the men that were sent to Brinnlitz through ^{Gröss-Rosen} and we stayed in Plashov quite a while longer.

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INTERVIEW MRS HIRSHFELD

SLATE 136 TAKE TWO

INTERVIEWER: Erika I wonder if you can tell me the story about what you remember of the aeroplane crash at Amalia.

HIRSHFELD: I recall one night really, it wasn't during the day. My brother running into the barracks, my barracks specifically and shouting, get out, get out, the barracks are on fire, and for it looked to me it was like a lightening in the summertime. So I ran out the way I was in my nightgown and sure enough part of camp was already in flame and then we were told that there was an aeroplane really that er was shot down by Germans and landed on the barracks itself. // 7413/2/2 The gates were locked to the camp and we couldn't get out till the proper authorities came and we tried to move away from the flame as far as we could further and further and in the meantime flames were coming closer and closer finally Schindler was awake and he came and he made us get out together with the camp Commandant a German SS man. The next day we were permitted to go back and to sift through our belongings so as to speak and I remember seeing the body of the Australian pilot burned down completely. There was no face

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really but the corpse sort of to see,
you could see and part of his uniform
and I could see the name Australia on it.

The next day a German group of Generals
even , big tops came and they er viewed
the men and sort of gave him recognition
whatever. This was all. (SPEAKING AT
SAME TIME).

Q. You said something quite
surprising there, which was, you were in
your nightgown.

HIRSHFELD: Yes.

Q. Now the picture of being in a
concentration camp and someone having a
nightgown does not seem to go together.

HIRSHFELD: Ofcourse we had nightgowns.

Q. Perhaps you could tell me a
little bit about the conditions there for
you individually.

HIRSHFELD: We still brought to Amalia
(UNCLEAR) some of our belongings from Ghetto,
our really good things, like bed linen and

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dress I remember having a beautiful dress,
(UNCLEAR) and somebody painted a number,
now I remember I had a number and I tried to
sell the dress and everybody tried to wash
the number from er er we were halfway
decently dressed, I remember I took one sheet
of mine and I dyed it dark navy and I made
a little housedress from it or whatever you
call and I had shoes but the shoes were
wooden, wooden shoes. I felt dressed very
well because er I sacrifice a leather pocket
book to make these shoes, the upper part was
cut very nicely but the soles were leather
er wood ofcourse.

Q. Its a pretty strange
concentration camp that allows you to have
nighties, bed linen.

HIRSHFELD: Oh we did. We did have, but
they had it in Prashov too, at the beginning
sure. . .

Q. I want to ask you now about
what happened after you left Prashov, the
men had gone already and tell me about what
happened to the Schindler women, and if you
can start that by saying, the Schindler
women were put into the (UNCLEAR)

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HIRSHFELD: About three weeks after the men left the Schindler women were put on train ofcourse, not a regular train, a train that you use for cattle. And we were told that we are going through Auschwitz to Birmlitz where our men are, er the people that are not going to Schindler will get off the train and the group will go further, ofcourse nothing of that happened. I remember arriving to Auschwitz at night and they opened the door from the train and they said, everybody out. So everybody got out, and we march in silence and right away I notice the chimneys with fire coming out of them and I didn't say anything, I just motion to my sister-in-law to my husband sister and showed her the chimneys. And they brought us closer and closer to the area where the chimneys were to some barracks, I don't know exactly what it was and they told us to get undressed completely, to put our belongings on one side and to enter the room for a shower. And we stayed there and we stayed there, there was no shower really and because it took such a long time the people that worked there, the Jewish people were sure that the next morning they would really finish us off. They would put us to the gas chambers and burn us. But

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to the next room, they gave us some clothes, ofcourse we looked like halloween group dressed incredibly and it was November and it was summer clothes and we were told to go out, and we were still insisted that we are a list, Schindler list and that we are going to (UNCLEAR) because we were told like that and they put us in two rows ofcourse and the German that was called Angel of Death came on his motor cycle.... and lock everybody up.

Q. This is Dr Mengele

HIRSHFELD: Mengele ofcourse, sure. And he locked everybody up, and he was to ask a woman that was much younger....

Q. Can I stop you a second. Perhaps you might start that by saying the next day Dr Mengele came, and he was called the Angel of Death.

HIRSHFELD: OKay.

The next day when they put us outside, Dr Mengele came over to review the parade, and I remember people referring to him as Angel of Death, and we went through the first selection in Auschwitz he was to

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ask women that were younger than myself today, how old are you granma, or children that were in the group what's you're age, and then ofcourse they took the old people on one side and the rest of us were pushed to the good side. And they took us to Birkenau which was one part of Auschwitz and we stayed there for three weeks, and through those three weeks I think I must have been at least three times undressed naked for a selection. I was very skinny at that time and I didn't know really which part of my body to push out more to look heavy and healthy, but I survive all this three selections.

Q. ~~All of the Schindler women~~
survived it, didn't they.

HIRSHFELD: Except for one that was hid I think by a German woman in Auschwitz and (UNCLEAR) and she was a very old woman in her eighties and she stayed in Auschwitz in the hospital and subsequently died there. But other women even children all went to Binnlitz three weeks later. Ofcourse there were many tricks, one day they came and asked for ten very strong ones for work, so instead of

was one of the ten strong ones...

the work they wanted it was not work they wanted our blood. So they took quite an amount of blood but I was always afraid of anything that hurt so I was pushing myself toward the end and toward the end the final time my time came they had enough blood so they never took my blood really..... What else can I say.

Q. What did you think about Oscar Schindler when you were in the third week at Auschwitz and you were still there.

HIRSHFELD: I was still hoping that Schindler would take us out because we were still as one list and people said that this is most unusual they were laughing from us that never a thing like this happened before.... that we are going to be very much disappointed but it happened that after three weeks they finally put us on the train, they dressed the children, they gave us coats and they put us on the journey to Brinnlitz that took also about three or four days and it was November, it was bitterly cold. When we arrived to Brinnlitz

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Q. Let me ask you that question
what was there when you came to *Binnulitz*
and if you can tell me when we arrived at
Binnulitz there was Schindler with his
hat and so on..

HIRSHFELD: Finally we arrived to *Binnulitz*
and they march us to the factory and we saw a
group of men.

CUT.

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INTERVIEW MRS HIRSHFELD

SLATE 137 TAKE ONE

Q. Erika perhaps you can tell me after three weeks in Auschwitz how you all looked and then the story of your arrival at (NAME UNCLEAR) and being met by Schindler.

HIRSHFELD: We looked to say the least, grotesque, some of us had shaven heads, some had half shaven, I had my hair. Apparently they found it clean enough not to cut it but the clothes we had ofcourse was not the proper one it was big or it was ridiculous or somebody had a evening gown and somebody had er um um a short summery outfit and the some people really couldn't take it. They were emotionally not strong enough to cope with it. Some wanted to go straight on the electrical wiring and commit suicide, even from our group. I don't know maybe I was younger then and I was stronger and one day I remember somebody came and ask who knows how to knit, and I said yes, I do. And they gave me a set of needles ofcourse improvised, they cut my fingers but I was knitting, they gave me some sort of yarn and I was knitting gloves for somebody , and whenever there was a countdown they had to in the middle of the night, two o'clock in the morning, everybody out and they counted the

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people, I didn't have to go out because I was the one that was making the gloves. So you see there were really moments er er that you never anticipated what will save you, what will help you.

Q. When you came to Brinnlitz there was this harlequin haloq halloween party looking people looking very strange, tell me about that.

HIRSHFELD: The procession was unbelievable the way we looked, the men that were expecting us to come were standing in the factory building and screaming there are some women coming but these are not our women, they didn't recognise us at all. And because we had relatively good in Emalia we expected the same thing to be in Brinnlitz but wasn't so disappointment was right away there. We had no contact with our men and we did have it in Emalia all the time er we could see each other at the factory but outside of that nothing and er the place itself, the so called (UNCLEAR) were awful, we had er um three storey bunk beds..

(TALKING TOGETHER IN BACKGROUND)

Q. Do you remember, did you

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INTERVIEW MRS HIRSHFELD

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Q. Okay if you can tell me about your arrival at ~~Brunn~~ Brunnitz again, and about being met by Schindler.

HIRSHFELD: Er when we arrived to ~~Brunn~~ Brunnitz we were let into the factory itself and I remember seeing Schindler then er he approached us and looked at us and there was one girl that was with him from the beginning, her name is (NAME), she lives now in Canada, I can give you her full name also if its of any importance.

Q. Can I stop you again....

(TALKING TOGETHER)

HIRSHFELD: In the group with us was a girl..

(TALKING TOGETHER)

HIRSHFELD: When we arrived to ~~Brunn~~ Brunnitz we were led into the factory and er Schindler was there and he looked us over and one of the girls that was all the time with Schindler from the beginning caught scarlet fever in Auschwitz and she looked awful she was allnot herself completely, er her face was full of blatches and she run a very high

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temperature, normally she was a beautiful girl and Schindler took one look at her and you could see the disgust on his face, that something like this happened to her, he probably remember her and everybody clean and and well groomed and looking like human beings and I remember that they put her right away into the Infirmary and she was getting good food and she was nursed to health.

Q. What were conditions like generally at Binnlitz and you can tell me the story about your brother there getting the lashes.

~~HIRSHFELD:~~ ~~The main thing that I~~ remember from Binnlitz was we were all very very hungry and that you were punished for any little thing that you could have committed, like lets say stealing a potato you were punished by having that potato stuck in your mouth and standing for hours with that potatoe. This was one sort of punishment. Er er you were punished er I remember it happened to my brother, he was offered a cigarette, the cigarettes came ofcourse from Schindler to Bankier and from Bankier to my brother and Bankier offer it to my brother in a warehouse, and somebody saw him doing it, so ofcourse

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they were punished for it. My brother
got twenty five lashes for it and so
did Bankier

Q. Was there the sense of terror
at Brinnlitz at any time, was there a fear
that you might.....

HIRSHFELD: Much more so the the feeling
of fear existed in Brinnlitz of course er there
were rumours er the graves are prepared and
that we are all going to be er shot er um,
we were hungry most of the time er the
sanitary conditions were very very poor,
very bad er um and I think that Schindlers
er er power sort of was reduced at that time
already it wasn't that almighty God that he was
to be the king of Amalia and er we knew that
that the war is coming to an end we had er er
um small radio at night and we listen to the
progress and finally it came, the end.

Q. You remember Schindlers' birthday
just before the end of the war, perhaps you
could tell me about that occasion.

HIRSHFELD: Shortly before the end of the war
I remember Schindlers' birthday and we I think
somebody baked even a cake and we observed ...

the his birthday on the factory itself and we sang to him Happy Birthday and he had er a little speech. He was very good at it I must tell you this. He um pointed out how safe we are in that corner of the er world where there is no war and that we are er really protected and er he made us stand at silence in memory of our dead people.

Q. You were in a concentration camp of the German Reich even then, and here was a German telling you to stand in memory of the Jewish dead.

HIRSHFELD: Er ... you see this (UNCLEAR) incident somebody might tell you that it was a very smart trick on his part, on Schindlers part that this was strictly propaganda for the future to save his skin, er ..I don't know what was going through his mind I won't tell you either way, these are the facts, this is what happened, what was his motivation I don't know, I won't praise him extremely for it and I won't condemn him that he did it for his personal gain.

Q. What did you feel when Schindler packed himself into a motorcar at the end of the war and left you.

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HIRSHFELD: When Schindler left of course we knew that this is the end of the war and we were extremely happy and elated that we survived er er but we wanted Schindler to stay with us we were ready to testify for him (UNCLEAR) he saved the 1200 people plus the er er train with the sick the hospital that they travel from one concentration camp to another and nobody wanted to take in and he did take in. And Emilie took care of sick people er ..we we felt that he was supposed to stay he was part of the whole thing but that time the Germans left already, the SS men and everybody, he was the last one to leave.... and then I saw him in Paris.....it was a funny reunion, we met in a little bistro and I know that he got money from (UNCLEAR) the first installment of money I think he got \$15000 at that point.... and he was he wasn't Almighty God anymore.....he was a human being like like all of us. There was no need to be afraid or extremely polite or nothing of that sort we were free people, we were even.
CUT.