

**INTERVIEWEE: HENRIETTA REIFLER**

**INTERVIEWER: Rose Horowitz**

**DATE: July 7, 1992**

**RH:** We are at the University Conference Center of the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C., Canada. This is Friday afternoon, July 7, 1992. My name is Rose Horowitz, and the reason we are both here today is that we are attending a reunion of Old China Hands. Now, on behalf of the Old China Hands Oral History Project, I am interviewing Henrietta Reifler, who lived for awhile in Shanghai.

Netta, when did you arrive in Shanghai and what brought you there?

**HR:** I arrived in September of 1935. I came to join my parents in Shanghai.

**RH:** Your parents were already there? What brought them out?

**HR:** Yes, my father came at the invitation on behalf of the Ohel Rachel Synagogue to be their rabbi. He went alone at first to see if he would like it there, and then my mother joined him.

**RH:** How many years had they been there before you joined them?

**HR:** Mother was there for two years and then . . .

**RH:** And then you went out.

**HR:** Yes.

**RH:** You came out with your younger sisters?

**HR:** Right.

**RH:** There were two of them, I remember them clearly.

**HR:** Exactly.

**RH:** Had you finished school in England when you went to Shanghai?

**HR:** Yes, I went through the higher certificates. And my sister Lily, who was twenty months younger, didn't want to go to college so she was through. The

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only one who had to have more education was my younger sister, whom we called Peter.

RH: I remember her clearly because I was at school with her. Her name was Millicent, wasn't it?

HR: Right.

RH: Now, before I forget, can you tell me where you were born and where you had your schooling?

HR: I was born in London, in 1917, and I went to a grammar school, and for my secondary education I went to the Camden School for Girls.

RH: Excuse me a minute, please.

(tape is turned off)

RH: I'm sorry we interrupted. Could you tell us where you did in your secondary education?

HR: Yes, I attended the Camden School for Girls on Prince of Wales Road.

RH: In London?

HR: In London. It was the younger sister school of the North London Collegiate School. Now it's a building of the North London Collegiate . . .

RH: Oh, now it's part of it?

HR: Yes, and the North London Collegiate has moved to Hendon. It's just interesting that the school has continued all these years.

RH: Had you planned to do anything after school, or you just came out to China because you knew your parents were there?

HR: No. I knew we were going to go there.

RH: So you did not plan anything else, you just came to China?

HR: I just came to China.

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RH: And what did you do in China?

HR: Well, I did in a way have a plan, because I had an uncle, my father's younger brother, who was in the Palestine mandatory service and he took an external degree from the London School of Economics, and I knew I wanted to follow in his footsteps. So, when I came to Shanghai, I started studying for the B.A. honors degree from London University.

RH: By correspondence?

HR: By correspondence. And I sat for that exam in . . . I think it was July 1941, just before the outbreak of the Pacific war.

RH: Now, when and where did you meet your husband? Oh, didn't you teach at the Jewish school there, too?

HR: Yes, I should mention that. I taught at the Chinese school.

RH: Which one?

HR: Called Mary Farnham Middle School for Girls. It was in the Chinese city and later moved because of the bombing. After 1937, [the school] moved to Bubbling Well Road. So I taught there from 1936 to 1939, and then I married.

RH: And then you married?

HR: And went down to Hong Kong.

RH: With your husband. Now let's take a break and say when and where you met your husband. And tell us about him, because he was an unusual man.

HR: He was. Well, he was my Chinese teacher.

RH: Oh, is that where you met him!

HR: Did you know the Finkelsteins?

RH: No.

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- HR: They had a dress shop in Nanking Road and made custom dresses. Anyway, Mrs. Finkelstein was a friend of my mother, and her daughters were taking courses with my husband, Chinese courses for foreigners that he gave. We were thinking to go through the Y [YMCA, Young Men's Christian Association] to learn some Chinese, and this friend said, "Oh, don't go to the Y, have Dr. Reifler. He's a first-class teacher." That was the first time we heard of him.
- RH: We heard of him when we lived there, because it was so unusual that this Jewish professor came out from Europe to teach Chinese to the Chinese. I think he was the only one, in our generation anyway.
- HR: Yes, that's right. He also taught German at Chiao Tung University. That was his main living, and then he gave these courses to foreigners.
- RH: In Chinese?
- HR: Yes. I don't know whether he taught Chinese people in Shanghai, but he certainly did at the University of Washington--I know that for sure.
- RH: Now, you went from Shanghai to Hong Kong? Did he have an appointment at the Hong Kong University?
- HR: No, he just gave private lessons there. He taught the police chief, the secretary of the chamber of commerce, so he had enough students that he could make a living there.
- RH: So he could live very comfortably.
- HR: Yes. He also taught German.
- RH: In Hong Kong?
- HR: In Hong Kong.
- RH: Now, when did you come back to Shanghai from Hong Kong? Because I remember you were in Shanghai during the war.
- HR: Yes, that was because the Sino-Japanese conflict reached the borders of Hong Kong and the authorities there wanted the women and children out.

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RH: The Sino-Japanese war had reached you?

HR: Well, it had almost reached Hong Kong. It didn't really reach us until after the Pacific war broke out, but they had already taken over much of China at that time. Remember, they attacked in 1937 and this was 1940.

RH: Right, in 1940. Then how long were you in Hong Kong?

HR: Just about nine months.

RH: Not very long.

HR: No, because we had to go. You know, Victoria was born there.

RH: Your daughter was born in Hong Kong?

HR: Yes, the oldest one. She came early. I was expecting her in July and I got such a shock when Paris fell--and I can tell you the exact day, it was June 14 that Paris fell--because she was born the next day. That's how I know that date. My mother came down for the birth. In those days you stayed in the hospital two weeks, and I never went back to the house, I went right from the hospital onto the boat.

RH: And she brought you back? Then your mother came back with you?

HR: Yes, and my sister-in-law. My husband had a sister who had multiple sclerosis, unfortunately. Remember? So we went first. At that time, my husband was working for a radio station as a translator and he didn't want to be separated from his family and it didn't help him any, as far as citizenship then, so he gave it up and he came back up to Shanghai. That's how we got back together then.

RH: Where did you live in Shanghai after you came back from Hong Kong?

HR: I lived with my parents.

RH: You went right back into the same house with your parents?

HR: Well, when I left they were living on Avenue Joffre, and then they moved to Avenue du Roi Albert, Kelmscott Gardens, and that was a big house which they rented from Sassoon. My two sisters worked for Sassoon.

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RH: I knew Lily did. I didn't know that . . .

HR: And Peter did, too, until she got so ill she couldn't work anymore. And it's interesting what happened there. I don't know whether you want to put it in, but it's interesting.

RH: Please do, it's important to get it in.

HR: My father took out the lease for that house.

RH: The one on Roi Albert?

HR: Yes. The Avenue Joffre house belonged to Mrs. Somekh. Do you remember Somekh?

RH: Yes, I remember Mrs. Somekh.

HR: Well, she owned that house and she had to sell it for some reason, so we had to go. So then they moved, and my sister was working at Sassoon's then, so my parents got the lease from Sassoon.

RH: Through Sassoon.

HR: Yes, I was in Hong Kong at the time. And, of course, it was put in my father's name. Somewhere along the line, the lease got transferred from my father to my husband. I don't know how it happened and Lily does not remember. She thinks maybe it was one of the Japanese supervisors who took over, see?

RH: Ah, after the war, with the occupation?

HR: Yes, she worked for them. He was a very nice man, by the way. They weren't all terrible. And Ozuno, I think the other one was, and she's not sure, doesn't remember anymore . . . See, it might have been Mr. Ozuno. Anyway, that was a godsend to us that they did that, because when they interned all the British people and took over their homes . . .

RH: Your husband could remain in the house.

HR: Yes, it was in his name.

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RH: Now, when your husband had his first Austrian papers, which he probably lost after the *Anschluss*.

HR: Yes, he was stateless.

RH: He became stateless.

HR: Yes.

RH: But you kept your British nationality. There weren't many like you who could keep their British nationality.

HR: No, that's right.

RH: It was unusual that you did not lose your citizenship.

HR: Because he was stateless. See, there was no . . .

RH: Oh, I see. Because when my mother married, she lost her British nationality.

HR: Right, I would have done [so] if he hadn't been stateless.

RH: Aha! Now I get the story.

HR: Yes, and there's one more thing I should tell you--a couple more things.

RH: Yes, please do.

HR: He came up to Hong Kong on a British traveling paper because he was stateless.

RH: Right, that's right. For awhile my father had those. I still have his British traveling [papers]. Do you have yours? Do you have those?

HR: Yes, I think so. We were married September 20, 1939. The war in Europe, the European war, broke out in the first week of September of 1939.

RH: Right, the third.

HR: That's right, the third, and we married on the twentieth. So we were planning to go right back to Hong Kong, but they wouldn't let him go back.

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RH: That's right, because he had enemy papers.

HR: Right, but they knew he was stateless. They gave him a British traveling paper. You know, that was very harmful for us because we had to stay a month or so in Shanghai, we used up all this extra money, and he lost a lot of the adolescents.

RH: Yes, he had given up his students.

HR: Yes, that's right.

RH: Yes, the war started to make life difficult.

HR: Right, so things were not so easy for us. And if we hadn't married when we did, we wouldn't have married. He wouldn't have dared, you see. My mother was a little unhappy because he came up in July and [we] had a very short engagement, and she really wanted us to be engaged for six months.

RH: I'm sure she liked him as a person.

HR: Yes, she did.

RH: Because she told my mother that. I remember distinctly her telling my mother that.

HR: Yes. Oh yes, she did, and my father and he were very, very good friends.

RH: Yes, your father felt . . . But your mother felt that at first she was . . . she said something about being adverse, she told my mother . . .

HR: Well, he wasn't religious. He wasn't that religious.

RH: Oh, yes, was that it?

HR: And he wasn't British. (chuckling) Two things, I'd say.

RH: You know, that's exactly what happened with my mother-in-law. (chuckling) It's strange how these stories repeat. Now, you were living with your parents after you came back from Hong Kong?

HR: That's right.



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RH: But you were interned and your mother was not. Because I remember her coming by our house and she would rest. She'd come from the bus or walked, wherever it was . . .

HR: Yes, and look at the . . .

RH: And walk by the school to see you and your children.

HR: Yes, actually where she went was . . .

RH: How did this work?

HR: Greenberg. Remember Greenberg?

RH: Yes.

HR: His apartment overlooked the campsite.

RH: Yes, that was the Yue Tuck Apartments.

HR: And he invited them to come and look . . .

RH: Every time? And then she would stop over and sit down and have a cup of tea with us.

HR: Yes. I never acknowledged them because there were such gossips in the camp and I didn't want to . . . I was afraid they might go in there.

RH: You were afraid.

HR: I always pretended they weren't there, but I always kind of went to that field.

RH: That's right, and walked the children.

HR: So they could see us. And later luck came my way, that someone who had a hut that faced that field didn't like it, it was too small. So she wanted a bigger hut like I had, which I didn't like either, it faced north and that was the worst direction to face, and so they had that hut and I took theirs. And with great legitimacy I could leave there to walk in the field--Franklin was a baby at the time--I could leave right there on that field and not have to come

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. . . I didn't trust anybody in the camp. You know, they had nothing to do all day long but gossip.

RH: Well, they were all locked in and nowhere to go and nothing to do.

HR: Yes, and I didn't want anybody knowing.

RH: Because you had two little children on your hands, were you assigned a camp job, or you just . . .

HR: No, it was enough to take care of the children.

RH: It was enough to take care of the children.

HR: And we were put in the huts, sections of huts, which was a godsend.

RH: The huts were originally put up for the British soldiers' barracks in 1927.

HR: That's right, and we were much better off there. First of all, people were friendlier, they weren't so cooped up.

RH: Yes, as in the rooms.

HR: Right, and they weren't back-biting like they were in the other buildings, and more cooperative. Also, it got you outside. It's like being here. You had to go out for your meals, you had to go out for your shower and so on, which was healthy, you see.

RH: Right, so you had a feeling of coming and going.

HR: Right, and it was healthy to be out in the fresh air. And the joke is, when I came out of that camp, you know, I didn't have very good health in Shanghai.

RH: Well, none of your family did. Your mother had problems.

HR: Yes.

RH: Lily was the only one that didn't have problems.

HR: That's right. It was the summer, I couldn't take that summer heat. It knocked me out.

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RH: Too great of a change from England.

HR: Oh yes, and I still don't like it. I'm wondering how I'll take Cambridge this summer--well, it's only a few days--but I don't like that terrible humidity and the heat. That's why I like Seattle.

RH: But you didn't have a problem with your lungs. Your mother and sister did.

HR: Yes, I think--now this is guessing, you know, you never talked about all this in those days, and I think Mother had it as a girl . . . I'm not sure, I'll tell you why I say this . . .

RH: And it recurred?

HR: I think so. She told me once she was in a . . .

RH: Sanitarium?

HR: Yes, and she never said why, and I don't think . . .

RH: That was still in England?

HR: Yes, when she was a girl, in Manchester it must have been. She never said why, and then the doctors told her she had an old scar on her lungs; and putting two and two together, I think so. I'm not sure whether . . . Well, Peter got typhoid.

RH: Yes, I remember Peter had typhoid. They had to shave her head for it, didn't they?

HR: Yes, and at that time they didn't have . . . They have the drugs now for typhoid, but not then, and you either developed the complication with your lungs or with your heart. And that Mrs. Finkelstein--remember, I talked about her--she lost her older daughter through typhoid. It affected her daughter's heart. But it affected Peter's lungs, and I'm not sure whether Peter reinfected Mother or Mother reinfected Peter--it's hard to know.

RH: The story that went around in Shanghai was that Peter got it, and your mother's caring for her to such an extent that she got it too.

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HR: Yes, that she got it. Who knows, you know? This is my guess. The point is they both died, that's all I can say.

RH: So, Netta, you were interned. Your mother was not interned because she remained home to look after Peter? Was this the story?

HR: No, Peter wasn't . . .

RH: Why weren't your parents interned?

HR: Peter wasn't there at that time. They left in 1942. They left October . . .

RH: They left on the evacuation ship.

HR: First, the diplomats . . .

RH: Right, right, but your parents were not interned. Why weren't they?

HR: I know, because my dad had heart trouble, and so she stayed with him. I suppose I could have stayed out, actually, because of her then, but we thought that someone should go in, I don't remember now exactly. And they did let me out halfway through.

RH: They did let you out?

HR: Yes, I came out in June [1943].

RH: How did that work? I know they let some people out. You're the first one I'm taping who did come out, so please give us the details.

HR: Yes, because I had a non-enemy husband. That was the reason, no other reason.

RH: I see, so they let you out . . .

HR: Right, and they put my parents in. I came out one day and my parents went in the next day.

RH: You saw them for all of one evening?

HR: Yes, that's about it.

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RH: And you went back to the same house?

HR: Yes.

RH: You and your husband and children were in the house, and now your parents were interned?

HR: Yes.

RH: Where were they interned?

HR: I can't remember.

RH: Was it in the Chaipei camp or Lughwa?

HR: No, neither, it was another camp, where the Abrahms went.

RH: That was in Lughwa.

HR: Anyway, I can't remember.

RH: It doesn't matter. They were interned till the end of the war?

HR: No, my mother died from the camp, you know. She went in in June and she died in February.

RH: She died in the camp?

HR: Well, in a hospital from the camp.

RH: I thought she had gone back to England at that time.

HR: No. No, she's buried in . . .

RH: Right in Shanghai?

HR: Yes, and her grave was destroyed.

RH: You feel the same way.

HR: Exactly.

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RH: She was buried at Baikal Road then?

HR: Baikal Road Cemetery.

RH: And so she died in 1944?

HR: And so is Erwin's mother buried in Baikal Road Cemetery.

RH: In 1944?

HR: Mother was buried there in 1945. She died February 1945.

RH: My father was buried there in 1946. Right, and it's all gone now.

HR: I know, I'm so angry about it.

RH: My brother tried, he even approached Kissinger. You know, my brother was an Israeli diplomat; they contacted Kissinger and asked if he would contact the Chinese authorities, if they would at least allow us to place a plaque there so anyone who went there could say a kaddish. But they neither agreed to it nor denied it, they just ignored the whole thing. And this has gone on for fifteen years.

HR: Now, I don't know whether they moved the graves or they just covered it. It looks like they just covered it over.

RH: I don't know.

HR: Well, the two mothers . . . See, my husband's mother is buried there.

RH: Erwin's mother, too? I didn't know that.

HR: Yes, and then my dad was on his own till August, and I didn't know that he was the same man when he came out. He became so self-sufficient, because, you know, my mother waited on him and his second wife waited on him, and he did, you know, he did nothing really in the house. In the camp, he had to work

RH: He had to do something!

HR: I couldn't believe it was the same man.

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RH: Well, there was not too much about being a rabbi in camp, so he had to become active. (chuckling)

HR: And he came out looking quite well, actually.

RH: Yes, he had lost weight and he was bright.

HR: Yes, which was good. And my husband, who had not been in camp, had very low blood pressure. Isn't that the funniest thing? And there was my dad, all bouncy and bright.

RH: How the tables were turned!

HR: Yes, very funny. And then he went to London, of course, a month later.

RH: Did he leave before you?

HR: Oh yes, he went in 1945, in October or November. I can't remember exactly when.

RH: You see, I don't remember his coming out then without your mother because he must have gone straight home on the repatriation . . . There were a couple of repatriation ships and he must have been on one of those.

HR: Right, and he stopped over in Jerusalem to see his brother, and then he went home. And then he remarried, you know.

RH: I know that.

HR: Unfortunately, they didn't live long together, because he died in 1949. He had angina. See, that was already bothering him.

RH: Yes. So that's why he stayed out of camp at first?

HR: Yes, and, of course, the death of Peter was a terrible blow to them, you can imagine.

RH: For everybody.

HR: Yes.

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- RH: For those of us who had gone to school with her.
- HR: She was a very nice child. I've just come across a note that she wrote when we met and got engaged, such a warmhearted, lovely note. She really was a very lovely person.
- RH: Yes, she really, really was.
- HR: I know, my husband liked her very much. He wept when she left Shanghai. You see, she went by ambulance to the dock, and my husband wept because he knew he'd never see her again. He knew.
- RH: She was too far gone?
- HR: She was recovering, though. She really was, I would say. She had one lung collapse, see. So, once the other one went, there was nothing there. And Lily said she was recovering with the sea air and all that. See, the idea was for her to go to Johannesburg. At that time, they believed that being at least 6,000 feet above sea level, it was, you know, a "Magic Mountain" and that kind of thing. When they got to . . . What was the name of that . . .
- RH: Lourenco Marques?
- HR: Yes, that's it. It's now called the Mozambique area, Lourenco Marques. They refused her permission to go on, and the disappointment was so great for her that she started sinking after that. You know, the mind plays a big role, and the confidence and so on . . .
- RH: Then you stayed on in Shanghai until you left?
- HR: I left in 1947. We left in September when we came to the States.
- RH: And you came to Washington state immediately?
- HR: Yes.
- RH: Have you lived there ever since?
- HR: I was thirteen years in Pullman, Washington.
- RH: Oh, at the university?



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HR: At the university as a librarian.

RH: But this was after your husband . . . ?

HR: After he died, yes.

RH: Because he was at the University of Washington, wasn't he?

HR: That's right, as long as he was there I stayed. And it wasn't right away. He died in April 1965, and then I didn't go to Pullman until December 1969. Well, I gave up my job teaching. I just couldn't stand the papers anymore.

RH: Where had you been teaching, Netta?

HR: I taught at a private school called Saint Nicholas School for Girls. It wasn't a religious school; although it had the name Saint Nicholas, it wasn't.

RH: This was in Seattle?

HR: Yes, it's an old school, no longer in existence. Then I taught at Everett . . . at that time Junior College, it's now Community College. I taught there for two years, and I think of all my teaching experiences it's the one I enjoyed most. It was a lovely college at that time. It was fairly small, friendly, I really enjoyed that. But I couldn't stay with it, I had to commute.

RH: Is that when you went to Pullman?

HR: No, then I went to the University of Washington in the freshman English Department, and I didn't enjoy that as much as I enjoyed the Everett.

RH: What made you choose to come to this China reunion?

HR: You.

RH: Oh, really?

HR: You told me about it.

RH: Yes, I told you about it, but then you didn't have to come. You chose to come. Why did you want to come?

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HR: Oh, well, it's an excuse to come to Vancouver. I love Vancouver.

RH: Great! I love Vancouver.

HR: Also, I thought it would be interesting to see if I'd meet anybody.

RH: Did you now?

HR: Yes, I have. I've met a few people. None from the camp. I don't know anybody from the camp.

RH: You don't remember anybody from camp?

HR: No, but I know some of the Jewish community though, the Jewish people who were there.

RH: Netta, there is one question when you said Jewish community I wanted to ask you. Be very frank with me. What was your reaction coming out? Now, you had been born and raised in England in a fairly stable environment and your father came out to our Sephardi community to be our rabbi and you came. How did you feel about associating with Sephardim and about the changes in all the different customs.

HR: I've never had feelings against Sephardim.

RH: It isn't a question of against. Did you feel anything strange?

HR: Well, I don't know if I want to go into that.

RH: Did you feel uncomfortable in any way?

HR: Well, I feel they weren't as friendly as they could have been.

RH: You did?

HR: They were. When we first came, they were very, very nice to us, and I don't know what happened.

RH: Let me ask you one more question. There's another picture that came up in Shanghai, the [German and Austrian Jewish] refugees came. What was your feeling there, and how did you react, and how did your father react? Because

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I remember there were a lot of stories both ways, that those of us who were there did not do enough for them and they resented the fact that we were there before. What is your feeling, what are your recollections? I would like to get that.

HR: On the refugees?

RH: Yes.

HR: Well, I thought there was great sympathy for them. They immediately organized that committee, and I remember my dad . . . oh, he did a lot of work for them.

RH: He did?

HR: Yes, he did.

RH: Were there any expressions of gratitude to him from them?

HR: I wouldn't know. There was no hostility towards him.

RH: There was no hostility?

HR: Oh, no. I remember I went with him once to visit one of the camps.

RH: Yes? Now tell us about that.

HR: This was in the early days before Laura Margolis came.

RH: Okay, so that was before the Japanese put them into the ghetto.

HR: Oh yes.

RH: Okay, now explain how it went.

HR: The building itself, I think, was an old warehouse which they kind of renovated. That wasn't particularly comfortable, of course, because they didn't have little partitions and they were kind of separated by sheets.

RH: Almost like the rooms in camp.

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HR: Well, in the camp, of course, I was in a hut, so I . . .

RH: Yes, but others did have that. Others did have just that.

HR: Yes. Then we stayed for lunch, because I think he went to check the kashruth--I think that's why he went--and also to see how they do it. And there was quite a nice lunch--I remember it was a goulash. (chuckling) I still remember it.

RH: You still remember it. And so it was adequate?

HR: It was adequate food. The dwelling quarters weren't adequate, but they were a roof over their head.

RH: Do you remember anything about the attitude of the people?

HR: They were friendly. I never felt there was any hostility.

RH: I'm so glad you're saying that.

HR: My dad also invited people down for holidays. They were always friendly. I remember two young men who were very nice. I never felt any hostility from them.

RH: No friction, no anything?

HR: No, not that I know of.

RH: I'm very glad you said that. Thank you very much. I did want that for the record.

HR: No, oh no, and they did a lot. For instance, there was a . . . What was his name? Very generous, he was a nice religious man, very generous with money, a wonderful man.

RH: Speelman?

HR: And then others in the community also were on that committee. They pulled together. Remember, I pointed out certain things that brought them together? This was one of them, B'nai Brith was another. They brought the two communities together, see? And this was one of them. Maybe they weren't

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as efficient as they could have been. After all, they were not trained social workers, you know. (chuckling)

RH: Thank you for saying that.

HR: Maybe Sassoon could have done more, could have given more money. I'm sure he could have done . . . But on the other hand, he did give a building and he did give some money. He wasn't completely indifferent.

RH: Kadoorie knocked himself out.

HR: And Kadoorie, maybe they could have given more money, too--I won't say that they couldn't--but Horace was very interested in the educational aspects of it.

RH: He was involved personally.

HR: Yes, so I feel this came out of the . . . Let's see, what's that called, that overseas Jewish thing?

RH: HIAS?

HR: No, no, not HIAS. The American one.

RH: The Joint . . .

HR: Right. I think this rumor came out of the Joint, because I read an article that they wrote on Shanghai that was very unfriendly, and I felt it did not do justice to what happened.

RH: I feel very strongly in the same fashion. But then, you see, you and I see it from the Shanghai eyes and they saw it from the European aspect.

HR: Yes, and I think it had to do with Laura Margolis to some degree.

RH: Would you want that on the record?

HR: I don't know. I don't want to confuse your readers.

RH: No, it isn't a question of confusing, you just feel that when she got in is when she . . .

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HR: She felt that . . . I don't know whether it's fiction--I never felt right--but I met her later in Israel, and she felt the Kadoories could have done more, see? So I don't know.

RH: But all in all, what is your feel for Shanghai? I would assume there must have been some warmth towards it or you would not be here today to see other people from Shanghai.

HR: Oh, no. Well, I was there for twelve years.

RH: All in all, your family took a horrible licking there, because you lost your mother and your sister because of being there.

HR: Yes, right.

RH: Your father died an early death.

HR: Well, he got it from the war. I don't attribute that to Shanghai, because there's a lot of heart trouble in that family, so no, no. My father had a ball there, he enjoyed it. My mother didn't. Mother didn't like it there. Mother did not like it there.

RH: She never thoroughly adjusted.

HR: She wasn't happy there at all. She missed her family. I don't think the people were friendly enough to her either, but it might be because she was too reserved.

RH: The English.

HR: Yes. On the other hand, I found it a very interesting experience there, you know? Like my dad did. I think my attitude was more like my dad's. It was a very interesting experience.

RH: In other words, it's been brought to justice here.

HR: Yes.

RH: Well, I'm going to stop at this point.

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HR: I also would like to say . . . You asked me about strange customs. They were different but I found them very interesting.

RH: So it didn't bother you?

HR: Never, because I once went to pesah at Mrs. Somekh's place, and I found it very interesting. The matzo was different. You had real bread of the people there. Remember that doughy . . . ?

RH: Yes, right, with the s'durim . . . ?

HR: Oh, what's it called? The shmura?

RH: Yes, shmura.

HR: Shmura matzo. That really was something. (chuckling) And then I remember instead of wine she had date wine with walnuts. I loved the food. I loved the Sephardic food. I was often invited out to dinner. So though there was a coldness towards us girls, on the other hand there wasn't. It was a mixture. There was a coldness on Saturday nights, but there wasn't when we were invited into the Josephs' and the Sophers' homes.

RH: Into their homes? You felt completely at ease?

HR: Yes, so it wasn't all negative at all. It was a very interesting experience and I enjoyed it. I suppose that's why I came.

RH: That's why you came and that's why you feel so good amongst Shanghailanders?

HR: Yes, and I've kept in touch with news from my cousin who married Albert Shahmoon, see?

RH: Right.

HR: Yes, Edward's brother.

RH: I'm going to stop at that point. Thank you very much.

END OF INTERVIEW