

This is an interview between Mrs. Harry Rosenberg of Claremont, New Hampshire now residing in Florida by Ted Belsky of the Oral History Center at AIC. It's being held in Mrs. Rosenberg's home in Claremont on this 30th day of June, 1984.

We are doing it for the Holocaust Project of the Springfield Federation. Mrs. Rosenberg, I want to thank you for making yourself available for this interview, and based on our conversation that we've already had around the table, I'm definitely looking forward to it.

Mrs. Rosenberg, before we talk about your years and how you survived in Holland during 1940 through 1945, I'd like to find out a little bit about yourself and your family. Could you begin by telling me what was life like in Cologne when you were growing up?

Life in Cologne seemed, in comparison to what took place later on, totally normal. My father was in business. My mother was a housewife. I grew up in a very orderly household. I went to school at the-- first to kindergarten and then to a Catholic grade school. In Germany, it was customary to go to a grade school in walking distance. I actually did not realize that I was Jewish at that time. My father was born in Germany, I believe in the fifth generation, a very proud German indeed.

In fact, he had a decoration from first World War, the Iron Cross 1st Class, of which he was extremely proud and also later on kept me in high school for reasons of his decoration. And I might smile a little bit at this, knowing the things that happened afterwards, but life was totally normal.

And we proceeded until 1929, when my parents sought a divorce, and then life became a little unsettled for me, personally. My mother went to work. My father kept residing in Cologne. I lived with family and assorted friends.

Unfortunately, one of the people was politically-- that I lived with was politically very, very active in Cologne. He was the editor of a social democratic newspaper and was persecuted very severely already in the early beginnings of Hitler, and that consequently-- I was removed from that household, and then I was sent to Belgium to live with my grandparents in 1933.

My mother then was thinking of remarrying, and it was a good time to be away with all the unrest in Germany, to be away from Germany, and to have a different environment. And my grandparents took me in.

I went to school in Liege and stayed there until mid 19-- or the end of 1933, when I returned to Cologne to a different type of household, my mother finally being settled in a new marriage with a stepfather that I really adored, and into this marriage came a son of the stepfather, who was married prior to this marriage to my mother.

However, the stepfather remained with us for a very short time, and consequently, in 1934, I believe, immigrated with his mother to Australia. We have lost contact for a long, long time, but just about 10 years ago we got in contact with each other. He is living in Brisbane. He is a lawyer, has four children, and for the longest time we've tried to get together but unsuccessfully so far.

Can you remember any of your childhood friends? Can you remember some special events at school that were important to you, that--

I certainly can, and returning in 1933, as I mentioned before, to Cologne, I was entered into high school. I spoke fluently French, to the amazement of our French teacher, and I met two girls that I'm still in contact with. And we found-- we went to camp together. We spend a lot of time. In fact, we were inseparable in those days.

And coincidentally, I just-- about four years ago we found each other back after having lost track in 1938. We did not know that any of us had survived and, through a strange coincidence, found our way to each other, one of the girls living now in Connecticut and the other one in Fort Worth, Texas. And it seemed like the 40 years vanished. We have a wonderful contact. We see each other on every possible occasion, and this is the childhood friendship that remains most

vivid in my mind from the days in Germany.

High school was very traumatic inasmuch that we were just a handful of girls whose father had gone through World War I and were allowed into a non-Jewish school. However, some of the teachers who were members of the party were very mean to us, I would almost say, and the grades were consequently not always the finest, depending on their political outlook.

And in Easter 1938 it finally had come to the point that we had to leave school and had to either seek employment somewhere or go to an all-Jewish school, which I did for a few months. It was very difficult to go to a Jewish school because the children at that time had many, many years of Jewish training, which-- I had none, not in a Jewish school.

And at the end of the first semester, it was very obvious that I could not maintain myself in the Jewish school, but we already at that time had visions and were searching for a way out of Germany. For months I had at home heard very, very strong desire to go into different parts of the world.

One was South Africa. In fact, we also-- I was thinking of emigrating with some friends to Bombay, India, but my mother didn't want to let me go alone. There were thoughts of different countries of America, but we didn't have a sponsor. We did not know anybody at that time who had come to America and give us the proper affidavit of support.

And the only way that we really could get out of Germany was by the mere fact that my mother was a Dutch-- born Dutch and married a German in 1921 but had become a German citizen. Now, the question was, how was she going to become a Dutch citizen again?

Before I ask you to continue about that sequence of how you were able to, along with your mother, go to Holland, flee to Holland and avoid the discrimination and the pressures that were going on in Germany, could you tell me a little bit about your mother's background, about her family, about herself, her own years in Holland, perhaps?

Well, my mother was born in Maastricht, Holland, which is a small town not far from the German border. And when she was a very young girl her mother died of cancer, and consequently, her father got remarried to a Belgian widow, also with a daughter of six years my mother's junior. The stepmother was not very much older than my mother, and it seemed my mother was sort of in the way. And it was seen to it that my mother was sent to what they call a pensionnat, which is Lausanne, Switzerland. You could call it now a school where young girls-- it's like a finishing school where young girls learned how to cook.

And my mother at that time was 17, and it was very advantageous for her stepmother to get her out of the way and have a household with her own daughter.

And my mother really did not want to return to that household, was invited to Cologne to an aunt's, and the aunt consequently fixed up a marriage with my father, who was 15 years her senior who was very handsome and was very anxious to marry an 18-year-old girl with a dowry in guilders since Germany at that time-- the mark was devaluated, and this is how this marriage was consummated. It wasn't a marriage of love, I would say, and therefore resulted in divorce six or seven years later.

What about your mother's marriage to your stepfather? You said that you became quite close with your stepfather. How did they meet?

My mother and my stepfather knew each other socially even during the marriage of my parents, and I think my stepfather had a very unhappy marriage as well. And it was a very unusual situation in those days compared to today that a divorce in this type of milieu was even thought about. But everybody tells me now that my mother was very unhappy, and she felt she'd rather go to work than stay with my father.

And of course it was very upsetting to my grandparents on both sides. And my parents got married-- my stepfather married my mother after he got his divorce. I was extremely fond of him. He was a very cultured man, a very bright man, a man who cared greatly about me, and I remained close to him until his death.

And I was very fond of him, and actually, I was very pleased because I was very little in contact with my father after the divorce. It was a occasional Saturday afternoon. But being an older man and having a little girl come Saturday afternoon to visit, he really didn't know how to handle that. So he took me to the movies or for ice cream, but it was difficult for him to handle a little girl at this particular point when he was trying to make a life for himself and looking also to get remarried.

And sometimes I was confronted to see him with his girlfriend or-- I always had the feeling, in this case, I was a bit in the way because it was awkward for a single man to be saddled with a little girl, so to speak.

What did your stepfather do? How did he earn a living? What kind of a life did you, your mother, he, and your stepbrother share?

My father was the heir to a haute couture clothing store, very large, that was existing in Cologne. There were branches in Frankfurt and Berlin. The firm is known in Germany. It was founded by my stepfather's father and mother, and he was active in the business.

And after the marriage, my mother was very active. In fact, during the years of the-- during the divorce, she worked in stores in this type of situation in order to prepare herself to work in the business that she would marry into. It was one of the finest clothing stores in Cologne, strictly made-to-order, a huge corner complex that I have recently visited. Unfortunately, the corner is still standing, but it's no longer the same store that it once was.

But people in Cologne even today remember the name [INAUDIBLE] with great reverence. And as I said, the years with my stepbrother were very short, and I remember really only parts of it, going on vacation to a seaside resort.

I remember very vividly during our stay in Cologne wonderful vacations in Switzerland. We had sort of intended, if all would have gone according to plan, to emigrate to Switzerland at one point. But the Swiss were very hesitant to take in German refugees. My father had gotten some money out to Switzerland, but he-- the permit to reside in Switzerland was never given. It would have been very difficult.

So the Swiss dream was very short-lived. That was also on our agenda for possible immigration. We knew in 1936 already, since we saw on the store very often the signs of "Dirty Jew" and "Don't Buy in Jewish Stores" that our days in Cologne were numbered. Also, the employees started turning against [AUDIO OUT] and the customers in Cologne, which were high government officials, or became so, hesitated to buy from Jewish people.

When your stepfather and your mother got married, Hitler was already in power.

Yes, yes, just shortly-- just about six months later.

The Nuremberg laws were '35.

Yes.

To what extent could you watch your lifestyle change during that period?

The Nuremberg laws actually were laws that meant that household help could no longer be Christian because they were afraid that the Christian or Aryan blood, so to speak, was being blemished by working in Jewish households. And the only thing I really remember is that our nice Christian help had to be let go, and we got a German girl to help us in the household.

Your father and mother, stepfather and mother, must have had intensive conversations about their options. You had mentioned you're considering the possibility of going to South Africa, to India. What about themselves? Before 1938, had there been a debate in the family?

Constantly. It was constantly a debate because family members had already left. I had an aunt who left for Israel, which at that time was Palestine, and people left and right. Our friends were leaving, and there was-- this was a constant conversation and a very upsetting conversation, and various options were being considered.

And also, at that particular time, it became very obvious that my mother had to regain back her Dutch citizenship because, after the options of other countries were sort of exhausted, we thought the most logical way would be to emigrate to Holland since my mother spoke Dutch, since she had distant relatives in Holland, was familiar, the only problem remaining that my father was German and my mother was German. And how are we going to go about going to Holland?

And somehow the thought came of a fake divorce, and it was arranged in such a way that my mother would have my father followed by a lawyer so that a divorce could come about. And at that time, if you got a divorce from a German, you could regain your citizenship of the former years, which meant, since I was a minor and my mother had then successfully regained her Dutch citizenship, that we could leave Germany and go to Holland in a sort of legitimate, orderly fashion. But that did not solve the problem for my father.

Your papers at this time-- would your papers-- would your mother's papers have indicated your Jewishness? In other words, to what degree were you able to-- your mother and yourself able to escape that-- trapped within the Jewish registration?

The minute my mother obtained her Dutch passport, there was no indication of Jewishness on this passport. The Dutch did not issue any papers of a religion. However, at that point, my father had gotten a German passport, and the letter J was affixed to it as well as on mine. So we were sort of already set apart.

As a minor with a German passport I could leave with my mother, but my father could not leave legitimately any longer. So he had classmates of all the years in Germany who knew our plight, and it was discussed at home very frequently how this would take place, that he could leave illegitimately, clandestine, over the border and join us.

There were a couple of other problems and that was, how do we get a permit-- it was a residence permit-- in Holland? The minute my mother got her Dutch papers back and her passport, she was able to travel back and forth to Holland and made the acquaintance of the mayor of a very small border town called [PLACE NAME] How she made the acquaintance and how she got a hold of him-- that must have been by some type of recommendation.

And we could only go to this place where my father could get a permit to reside, and this is where my mother and I traveled to by train. This was not without problems either. We were searched on the border for jewelry, and we could only take very little money. And my father consequently, two days later, left Cologne with a friend who had arranged an escape over the border.

And just before he had reached that border the friend said, give me all the things you have on you, valuables, money, and as you cross the border and come to the other side, you will receive everything back, but I don't want you to get caught with all these things on you.

Well, the friend was never seen, and my father didn't have enough money to call us. We had already reached Cologne, and we never heard from him for days. He walked to [PLACE NAME] Was penniless. And then we settled into [PLACE NAME] for quite a few months. There were others from Germany who were in [PLACE NAME] It was quite a settlement of German Jews because this mayor was very kind.

And eventually, since we had a shortage of money, we had to look to see how life would be further. And my mother traveled to The Hague and got a very good position in a very fine ladieswear store in The Hague, where she resided. But that didn't mean that my father and I could come, so we stayed along for quite a while until we got a permit to reside in The Hague as well.

And then we moved into an apartment in The Hague, and those were really-- that was 1939, and those were-- it was a happiest year of being together, seemingly free, and with normalcy resumed to some extent. For some reason or other

family helped, and my parents opened a little business, also made-to-order clothing in The Hague.

However, my father could only work behind the scenes. My mother officially worked the store. My father never got a work permit in Holland.

But did he have official papers at all for Holland?

No, no. He just had the German passport.

So the threat was always that even if the Holland officials identified him, even they might return him to--

No, no, because they knew-- the Dutch people at that time knew that we came with passports. So did I. And eventually, we had hoped, if things would have stayed the way we had hoped they would stay, that we would become Dutch citizens, which was very much thought about. It might have taken five years, but that was our aim, to remain in Holland and become that citizen, which would have been faster for me, being a child of a Dutch mother and from my father.

The work permit was another matter. It's a small country, and people came in droves from Germany. And it was very difficult to find work for everybody, so they were not too generous with work permits, and it was some sort of behind-the-scenes. And it was a little degrading for my father. I found it very sad for him, very sad because his wife had to make the living and her daughter was not in a position to help out officially.

One of the questions that raised in my mind-- weren't there any of his German friends? He and his family had such an established reputation within Germany. Wasn't there any of his circle of German business people that offered to help, to intervene, to do something during this period when it was so clear that his ability to survive in Germany was coming to an end?

Well, if you are referring to the Christian population, I think at that time the scare tactics had taken a hold in such a way that the slightest contact was becoming difficult for the Christian population as well. And by 1936, '37, people really couldn't trust their own families.

If they were the same as in my school days when Christian girls were talking during the recess, it was frowned upon. And even when people befriended us in Germany, it was done very hush-hush because everything was geared to, you have to belong to the party, and you have to hate the Jews, and you shouldn't have association with Jews.

So the association with Christians by and large-- there were even friends from school who began to stay away. People in the store, employees of long standing, became frightened of consequences in those days.

We're almost at the end of this side of the tape. Before I let us go on and talk about Holland after the German invasion, what was it like for yourself? As a adolescent, young lady going through this traumatic experience of being forced to flee to Holland, it must have been extremely unsettling. You had left your girlhood friends.

And I also had left the school long ahead of graduation from high school. I really was a sophomore, and leaving the school-- having to leave the school I should really say-- was traumatic in itself. But I felt, as long as I was able to leave with my family-- and I certainly was old enough to realize why I was leaving with my family-- things seemed fine.

It was very difficult in a country where I had to learn the language to establish a contact with any girls my age. In those days, you look for girl friends and didn't become aware of boys. I felt very left-out, very alone, and really associated more with adults, and my parents had made some friends, and some relatives were in Holland as well.

But I felt very lonely being an only child to start with and contact with other people around me because in Holland they were not looking for people-- it was very-- let me put it this way. It was difficult for me to meet young people because I did not enter school. When everybody was in school in Holland at age 15 and I was not-- I helped a little bit in the store when the store was opened, but that was about the only contact I had with people. And that was a very strange period.

But it became a little bit easier after we lived in our home, our apartment in The Hague. There was a girl in the neighborhood I started talking to. It just became eased a bit when--

All the sudden in May--

--all of a sudden, May 1940 came about.

I'm going to turn the tape over, even though it isn't quite at the end, and we'll start fresh on the other side.

--the Hague, your mother, your father living in The Hague. What else happened during this period that might be of interest?

One of the most pleasurable events during the very lonely year of getting accustomed to a new language was a visit from an old boyfriend, I should say, not old in years but some of long standing, from Cologne, who is my husband presently and has been for 38 years. He had to leave Germany after the Crystal Night and had a permit to go to England and, on the way, stopped in The Hague to see us and stayed with us for several days.

That was really a wonderful event for me and brought us closer together and also established later on our contact many years later and led to a marriage in 1946.

And it obviously was a great period for your husband as well.

Exactly, exactly, childhood sweethearts who saw each other back, and it was a wonderful highlight of the year 1939, where I had so little contact with young people.

September of '39 was the invasion of Poland. May of '40 was the invasion of Holland. Were you still living in The Hague at the time that the German invasion of Holland and the overrunning of the Low Countries took place?

Yes, very much so. We lived in our apartment. We seemed settled, at last. And one morning we woke up at 5:00, and German airplanes overran The Hague in innumerable masses and flying as low as cars go through streets. There was absolutely nothing to stop them.

And any military installation was laid flat in order to scare the Dutch people and bring them to their feet. History, it is known that Rotterdam was bombarded heavily. We stood on the roof of our apartment house and saw Rotterdam burn.

Holland capitulated, and the Germans overran, consequently, Belgium and France, and history will tell the rest of the story. It was a very upsetting time for us, but we really didn't know where to go. And we did not intend to go anywhere and were sort of on a holding pattern until September of 1940, when there was talk that the British might land in France, Belgium, or Holland, which unfortunately didn't take place until much later on.

And the Germans were aware that they had Jews and enemies in Holland by all of the German Jews who had emigrated, and they felt they had to deal with this problem in the coastal area, which meant, again, a very unsettling situation for us in as much as we had immediately to leave the coastal area, meaning my father and myself with the German passports.

Well, we knew very few people in Holland, and due to some contact [INAUDIBLE] was helpful, we found a place in [PLACE NAME] Holland, inland, away from the coastal areas where people, Dutch Jewish people, took me in. I served as a girl in the house, a girl Friday. I helped out. I stayed there for quite a number of months, a lovely, lovely family whom I have visited many times since the war. Unfortunately, they lost their son to the Germans.

This was a Dutch family?

A Dutch Jewish family. And my father got a room away from The Hague, too, in the nearby community, and my mother could remain in The Hague and pursue her business and came to visit us occasionally on a weekend when she could get away. So again, I was away from Home, alone, in a completely new environment, this time really strange because

nobody spoke German, totally different backgrounds, very difficult situation to fit into a completely different type of family milieu. And those were very difficult times.

I've tried to talk to these people about what would face them if Hitler really would get a foothold in Holland, and they thought, we fabricate the horror stories coming from Germany. They really did not want to hear what I had to say. We were sort of in the ostrich policy type of life. And they had lived in Holland for many generations as well and couldn't believe what was eventually facing them, too, and we had told them about it.

How long were you living with this family? The registration-- the required registration of the Jews, I believe, took place in January of '41.

So I left The Hague in September '40, and I believe, at that time, the Germans made us stateless, and I had already a stateless passport. I don't exactly remember the date that that occurred. In 1941, mid '41, we could no longer stay in small towns along many part of Holland. We had to sort of find a place in the major cities. This was already in lieu of having us closer together and having us in one position that the grip could tighten on us.

And at that point, I had an aunt in the small town. I found I was getting acquainted. Again I went a little bit to school. I took French lessons. And again, this was cut off, and I had to seek a family in Amsterdam to take me in as well.

Meanwhile, my father had also-- who also emigrated in 1937, already ahead of us, lived in Amsterdam, and I was able to visit him occasionally in Amsterdam. But this was a very short-lived period because the Germans had different things in mind for us.

There was the anecdote about your natural father and his attempt to live within the ground rules in declaring his valuables, that type of thing. Would you mind sharing that?

My father absolutely was already very cautious, I would say, coming from Germany. He had taken and taken illegally a very valuable postage stamp collection with him because you could only come with 10 marks to Holland. That was all allotted to us.

And we felt that taking the stamp collection and selling it he would have money enough to establish himself a little bit in Holland, and that was done consequently. And he started a little manufacturing business. He was in the [INAUDIBLE] clothes manufacturing business.

He was very frightened about it all, and when-- one of the first orders of the German was, when we all were in Amsterdam, to bring our valuables to a bank, so-called Dutch bank called Lippmann, Rosenthal, and everybody said, well, we'll only take part of it. But my father saw to it that everything was bought because he never wanted to get-- if he should get caught, we never wanted to be in a position where they said you did something illegally. So he was already very frightened and trying to do the right thing, which backfired in the end anyway.

In 1941, the crucial year that the German occupation went from tolerating, even though oppressing the Jewish population, to beginning the extermination and absolutely eliminating the civil liberties, any of the liberties of the Jewish population, how long were you able to stay in Amsterdam in relative freedom?

Well, there was-- both my father and I decided that we don't quite want to go into hiding. However, my stepfather did at that point because he did not want to go to Amsterdam. He wanted to go to The Hague, where my mother was residing. You have to understand that it wasn't a real divorce, but they were married people.

And he wanted to be closer to her but could not officially go to The Hague but choose a hiding place near my mother in The Hague. So I said goodbye to him the moment we left the small country town of [PLACE NAME] And he said, well, I don't think it's very wise for a young girl to go in hiding. You will never stand it.

We don't know how long the occupation will last. He was very optimistic. And I think I'm older already and I can stand it, so I will go in hiding now. And I remember saying goodbye to him at the train station, and of course I never saw him

again.

I went to Amsterdam, again to other people, staying there, until, in '41, I got the official notification to report for so-called "work" in Germany. And having come from Germany, I knew it spelled something else than work in Germany.

And I then got in contact with a doctor that we were friendly with and I knew of, and I begged him to find some type of means to place me in a hospital, a Jewish hospital, because I couldn't even think that the Germans would touch sick people in a hospital.

He was very cooperative, and he immediately saw to it that I was accepted or, rather, admitted to a hospital. And I stayed in this hospital for almost six months, totally healthy, in bed and slightly out of bed but very weakened by this type of thing. And he came, actually, very often to see me so it would be not obvious that I was not really sick.

There was a very traumatic happening, too, at that hospital, aside from being sick in bed. I had then thought-- with the few remaining things we had and having a boyfriend whose parents had kept a few pieces of jewelry, we had thought of a way of escaping. And by buying-- there were people who were very interested in helping us to escape to Switzerland, and that was done by, please give us your jewels and money, and we will show you the way.

Well, when I was in the hospital this friend tried to tell me-- he assured, you'll get out, I'll get you out of here, and we will escape together. And having turned over all my belongings to him, this was the last I saw of him. He turned to the belongings over to the proper he thought [BOTH TALKING} The people took the belongings and betrayed him, and I've never seen him again.

How long were you-- you said about four months.

I think four to six months. And then it became very evident that the Germans didn't stop at anything and took the sick and came into nursing homes, came into hospitals, and nursing homes not so much because the nursing homes weren't official. But a Jewish hospital in the center of Amsterdam was a target.

And due to this friend, I was in contact also with the Dutch underground, and they were very, very helpful. And one night the Germans came, and there was a lot of commotion. I could hear it since I was well. I was well-aware what the occupation was, not just to visit the sick but to take them on stretchers and take them out of the operating room. They took them--

Yes.

--out the table. I jumped out of the window without anything, and somehow-- how I cannot recollect-- the underground stood nearby, knowing exactly what the method was and when it was going to happen. They had feelers out everywhere.

They took a hold of me and placed me immediately in a nursing home, which was unknown to the Germans, and this is where I remained for quite a few months.

Are we at the end of 1941, the beginning of 1942?

Yes, yes, we are.

The first shipment of Jews out of Holland to Germany, as you had suggested, had already begun, some sent to their deaths, from the beginning of '41. By the beginning of '42, the planned operation was starting to be imposed. How long were you able to stay in the nursing home? Because at some point that German attempt to eliminate the Jewish population in Holland-- '42 is the year that--

Correct. And it was impossible to stay in the nursing home. It was impossible to stay in Amsterdam because it had gotten to the point-- first of all, I forgot to mention to you that prior to going to the hospital we had a curfew in Amsterdam. We had to be home at 8:00 so that they knew at all times where you were. They had complete files on



everybody, and they also-- we were wearing the Jewish star.

And to maintain yourself with a Jewish star, in and out of the hospital-- it didn't matter-- you were a target at any moment to be arrested, shot at, or whatever. So this whole period in Amsterdam had to come to an end. You could not stay in Amsterdam, walk the streets, or any of this sort of thing.

The main object at this point in my life was to have false papers that I could take the Jewish star off my clothing and become somebody else. And that was a very difficult way to do-- and at that point, the underground was unable to help me. But since my mother was still in The Hague and had some contacts there, she found somebody I had befriended for a very short time, a half Jewish girl who had Christian friends in The Hague, and she prevailed upon her to do what she could to steal identification papers from, which was done in a very odd way.

This particular girl went to an indoor pool, and while the girls were swimming, they had cabins where they left their clothes, their pocketbooks, and their belongings, stole from her best friend an identification card which served me for four years. I became-- instead of Liesel Kaufmann I became Lydia [? Smith. ?] And I can, to this day, remember where I was born, when I was born.

There was just one flaw-- her picture was on the identification and not mine. An underground stepped in there. The stamp was peeled off in the back. My picture was inserted. Another flaw-- his fingerprints were never-- my fingerprints will never be those of Lydia [? Smith, ?] and that was a difficulty inasmuch as the Germans were so well-organized already in '42 that all our identities were on microfilm in a building in The Hague, stored.

But if they would find me as Lydia [? Smith ?] and have any doubt of looks or whatever that I'm not Lydia [? Smith, ?] they immediately could find out by looking into these files who I really am. Now, the Allies were told many, many times by the underground where that building was, where those microfilms were stored-- they tried unsuccessfully many times to bombard this particular building in The Hague. Half the neighborhood went, but unfortunately the building remained until the end of the war. It was very strange.

So this was the beginning of my really going underground. Once I had this picture with this identification in the hand, I traveled with the help of my mother into the nursing home. My father had already-- my stepfather had already been arrested, which is another story. And she came, and I took off the star. And she saw [INAUDIBLE].

I want to ask immediately about your going into hiding, some of the details there. But how much mobility did your mother have at this time?

She still had mobility. In fact, she had so much mobility she was able to visit my father while he was in hiding in The Hague. Unfortunately, he was not careful enough, and he was seen by neighbors who apparently were in need of money.

And for money to betray a Jew was a thing that was very much growing. There were people, even in Holland, my dear Dutch people, who were very sympathetic to the Germans and needed their support and money. And for a Jew's life there was a very high price.

And my father-- the Gestapo came, and unfortunately, my mother was present, being divorced and having another name. She saw the Gestapo coming. She saw them taking my father away. And they asked her, who are you? She was a stranger, and she was not involved. And she was left behind.

And having been witness to this and consequently knowing the fate, she was very determined to save me from the same fate. And mobility as far as hiding was concerned was non-existent. The only time that there was the slightest bit of movement was when both my stepfather as well as my father were arrested and there were dangers of Germans questioning them as to other relatives in hiding.

I am impressed that you were able to contact the underground so successfully. What was-- how could the underground make themselves known to you from your position of hiding and still protect their own security from the Germans?

The underground was everywhere. They somehow were in contact with us and even were able at the very beginning to supply us with ration cards, interestingly enough. It was a network that was incredible. The underground were not just underground. They were Dutch people that knew exactly-- somehow they had knowledge of what the Germans were about to do. It was very different than from Germany because they had so many enemies in Holland that they had their ears and eyes wide open and were very interested in helping us every which way they could.

It was incredible, the help we received from Dutch people. People who were helpful to me, personally, lost their own son. They were Christians, and their son answered a call for work in Germany when they needed people in Germany. And everybody was in the army already, and unfortunately their work was [INAUDIBLE], and never came back, and they saved me. It was very tragic to see this happening, that the Dutch people lost their own people and saved us.

And you can't call it that everybody was part of the underground. Most everybody in Holland was underground inasmuch that they spied on the Germans and knew what the next day would bring or what they had planned for us as a Final Solution.

This family that took you in-- and I take it this association with the family went down for some time, went down-- am I right? This is the family that you lived with till liberation? Or is there a gap--

Not all the time. There was a time after my father was arrested that I had to be placed somewhere else because there was a whole situation where the Germans placed Jewish people in-- there was a transport camp by the name of Westerbork and Vught in Holland, where people were held ready for transport to Auschwitz or places in the east.

And prior to even going to Westerbork they had so many people in hand that they-- in these camps. These detention camps couldn't handle it all. So some of the Jews were held in prisons around Holland. And they've shipped people out, and other people they held in the prisons that when Jewish people came into prisons with other prisoners they said to them, for instance, do you have any relatives still that are in hiding?

When we get out, if we get out, can we give them messages, for instance, from you, how you are feeling, how you're feeling? And would you like some clothing sent to the camps? What can we tell your children, parents, brothers, or sisters?

These were people placed by the Germans in prisons, and somehow we were aware of this happening. And when this particular person said, well, I have a daughter who is still in hiding in such and such a place, the Germans immediately had a whole other part of the family that they could take prisoners.

The underground was very, very much aware of this, so each time a member of my family was seized and that was known, these names were known-- I cannot tell you. The network was incredible. But when my father was arrested, the next day we knew it. The underground knew and took me from one place to the next, that there would be no succession of arrests.

And then I lived for a whole while until the underground knew my father was on transport from Vught to Auschwitz-- at that time, we didn't know the name "Auschwitz--" to the east until I could return to the original hiding place. This occurred two or three times during those years, that I was shifted for safety's sake. Or there were other incidences where people were tortured until they gave names away of large other families.

My father was arrested in a very strange way in Amsterdam. He was actually-- he had all kinds of permits, but I had a cousin who was lonely-- alone also without family in Amsterdam. And since everybody had to be at 8:00 at home, my father said, well, why don't you stay with me? It's so lonely for you.

Consequently, my nephew-- or rather my cousin-- stayed with his uncle, and according to the German dictates, that was not allowed because they wanted to get him a his place. So when the Germans came to arrest people downstairs in the apartment of my father, my nephew-- my cousin woke up.

And they say, well, how come there is somebody-- another voice? And that in itself prompted the Germans to arrest my

father. That was enough of a reason to arrest my father, to have clandestine-- somebody else after 8:00 in his home.

And then other things were rolled up, like, for instance, that he took-- immediately found out that he took a valuable stamp collection, and he was really punished very badly for taking currency out of Germany. So he had a very difficult time to even maintain himself for any length of time in the Holland detention camp.

We're coming once again to the end this side of the tape, and what I'd like to do is we'll stop now and take a small break. And then we'll go on to a new tape.