

Unauthenticated

Interview with Helen Goldkind  
May 21, 1992  
Kensington, Maryland

- Q: Why don't you just state your grandmother's name and the date of birth if you can remember that.
- A: My grandmother's name was Etta Moscowitz.
- Q: Etta?
- A: Yes.
- Q: Moscowitz, can you spell that for me?
- A: Uh, let me write it.
- Q: Okay.
- A: Do you remember where she was born?
- A: She was born in Volosyanka.
- Q: And do you remember how old she was?
- A: She was about eighty.
- Q: She was eighty years old?
- A: Yes.
- Q: And that was, she was eighty, do you remember when?
- A: When they took her to Auschwitz.
- Q: In 1942?
- A: Between '42 and '43, I'm not, you know. I think it's been documented when these people had been taken to Auschwitz from where I come from.
- Q: Let's see, she grew up in Volosyanka.

- A: And she lived there. You see Jews lived there for years.
- Q: Did she, she was married to your grandfather who you were telling me about
- A: Right.
- Q: Can you tell me his name?
- A: His name was Sander. Matter of fact my grandchild is named after him. They call him short Seth.
- Q: Seth?
- A: Seth.
- Q: S-E-T?
- A: Yes. SETH. Seth. But at home they used to call him Sander Moscovitz.
- Q: Okay.
- A: He was eight-six. That I know for sure. Because he would cry. Oy, what happened to him.
- Q: Um, now you said your grandfather was a very religious man. Was your grandmother also?
- A: Sort of. But women didn't show it. Women didn't worship as much as men did. He was terribly upset with God that he didn't die. You know, he had no fear of death. He had no fear of death because he was so religious. He felt he goes to, you know. I remember in the ghetto when they took him to the square. More older people that had beards. He had a long beard, not just a small beard, but a long beard. He never got cut his beard because of religion. So, they got these old men on the square and they were cutting their beards with scissors and they were beating on him. So um, you know he was bloody and my mother was the daughter, so my mother finally got to him. You couldn't go to rescue him because you would get shot. I mean you wouldn't get beaten up, you would get shot. So she couldn't go rescue, but when they were finished beating him up and cutting his beard, we brought him home and he was just crying terribly and we thought he was crying because he was full of pain. You know, his face was bloody and black and after a few days the man just couldn't stop crying so, uh we told him we understand he must be in terrible pain from the blows he got. He says no, he doesn't cry out of pain but he, it's not him, he felt so humiliated. So my mother took a scarf and she put around his face and tied it on the top and put

his hat on, he wore a black hat and somehow that made him feel better. He stopped crying. So, so. And that's how he went to Auschwitz a few days later.

Q: That was just before.

A: Just before. I just don't understand. I don't understand why they needed to do this to him. They knew that he would wind up in Auschwitz. What happened was that they kept us in a ghetto until they accumulated enough Jews to put in transport. Because you know the trains were many and long.

Q: Um, do you remember what your grandfather did for a living? What he had worked at before?

A: Yeah, they had a store, they were selling flour there and sugar. It wasn't a big store.

Q: Kind of like a grocery store?

A: Yes, a small grocery store. Yes, small. It wasn't a Giant.

Q: And both your grandmother and your grandfather worked there?

A: Yes.

Q: And that was in the town?

A: Yes.

Q: Do you know when they got married?

A: No.

Q: And, um how many children did they have?

A: Oh, they had ten boys and two girls. And the two girls, when I was growing. You know, I have pictures of about six boys and one was in the United States and a few of them died, but they had a lot of children.

Q: Yeah.

A: I have pictures. My mother was the daughter and then I had an aunt.

Q: Um, was your mother, in that family. Was she one of the older ones or one of the younger?

A: Well, in between.

Q: Yeah.

A: Do you remember, I know it is probably difficult for you to remember, but do remember them talking about, or even your parents talking about when the Germans, the Nazis, came to power in Germany in the '30's.

A: Yes.

Q: Do you remember, were they frightened at all, were they apprehensive?

A: Very, very. But I'll tell you, as I talk in the tape. If you see the tape. We knew somehow the Jews have suffered through the last 2000 years, I'm sure you know history. But this has never happened before to no group of people. So as much as we were frightened and scared, but we didn't fear actual death and destruction, the kind that has happened. You know they felt, well, they are going to take the manpower and they are going to work them, or they are going to do things like that. But to take small little kids and gas them. We did not expect that.

Q: Right. But your parents were scared?

A: Yes.

Q: They were frightened of them.

A: Of what he was saying. He was actually saying what he was going to do. But, you know, I think human nature has a way of protecting themselves. They don't want to think of the worst.

Q: Yeah, you said something about what he was actually saying, what Hitler proclaimed and these kind of things in speeches. Were there radios and these kind of things in your town? Not many?

A: When we were Czech. Then when the Hungarians came in, there was no radio. We had to hand in the radios. And the newspaper, the news was just not available any more. But there were some people who had hid a radio and they would come with some news. But, people wouldn't even believe such things, you know what I mean? If the person that had the radio, and they would come and they said they surrounded some Jews and threw them down the balcony or killed them for no reason, it was a little bit difficult to --- to.

Q: To believe?

A: To believe in the beginning. But then again and again, and again and again they would clean out a town. Then they started cleaning towns. Then we ready understood.

- Q: Did refugees from Germany, German Jews or Polish Jews come in to Czechoslovakia, do you remember seeing any?
- A: No, no. They didn't. But you know, of course, I don't think this has anything to do with my life. But when the Germans occupied Poland we lived near the Polish border, at that time that was. So the Polish soldiers were going through our town.
- Q: They came through your town.
- A: Yeah, when they had the war within a week or 10 days they occupied Poland. I mean, I don't know, maybe two weeks.
- Q: A very short time.
- A: Yeah. So, I remember that.
- Q: When did the Hungarians come in and occupy?
- A: '39.
- Q: Um, do you remember especially, you told me about the cutting of the beard of your grandfather and things like that. Do you remember any other instances of anti-Semitism directed against you or either your parents or your grandparents or anything like that before^?
- A: Well, you see it was sort of quiet while the Czechs were there. It was sort of, you know, we had a democracy. So we were allowed to go to school. Matter of fact I have an uncle that was a Czech officer and he was a college graduate because they allowed the Jews to go to school. But then the Hungarians came in in '39 and that was already, the schools were closed for Jewish kids and the synagogues were closed. But, you know I remember I had a teacher, there were so many children we had a teacher in the house who was teaching us. You know we called it a cheder.
- Q: Yeah. So, did your grandparents live very far from you?
- A: No very close, that was my happiness.
- Q: But you didn't live in the same house or anything.
- A: No, I had very good grandparents. We were also seven kids so I had loving parents, but you know I was the sixth child. So I wasn't getting that much attention because there was no time. They loved me, so my grandmother would give me all the attention, she would talk to me. I remember she was a big comfort to me.

- Q: Do you remember what kinds of things you would talk about?
- A: The fear. The fear. As little as I was, I remembered she feared. She worried, when the war will be over, what will happen to us. That's what I remember the most.
- Q: Do you remember talking to her in the late 30's.
- A: Yeah, when the Hungarians came we already felt that. The Jewish young guys were taken to a work camp. They weren't soldiers anymore. The Czechs, they did take the Jews to be soldiers. We sort of had, the Czechs we were sort of treated like first class citizens.... Not first class. I mean we didn't feel it so bad. It's the Hungarians, when the Germans came there was already murder, it was already completely disaster.
- Q: Do you remember, can you describe for me your grandparent's house?
- A: Yes.
- Q: Do you remember and where was it situated in the town?
- A: They had a stone house, a stone house. And they had lots of cows and horses and goats and you know, it was like a family in a smaller town. It was like a normal family, a big family. And on Saturday nobody worked so we would get together and we would have meals together.
- Q: At their house?
- A: At their house, yes. And I'll tell you, me as a child. I thought I was a happy child because you know, my uncles loved me and I was a child and it was, to me it looked like a happy situation.
- Q: Was the store that they owned separate from the house?
- A: No, it was sort of ----here were the living quarters and there was like a long room and they kept the ----that's where the store was
- Q: Can you tell me a little bit about how things changed once the Hungarians came in? especially for your grandparents, how it changed their lives.
- A: Well, you see, I'll start with my grandparents. That's why it's better when you ask me because I go in from one to another. Um, when the Hungarians come in the Jews could no longer have stores even. The Jews could no longer do things, you know, because when you had a store you needed a permit. And you know, they took it away from you. So they had to close the store. And, you say, how

did they live, but they had some piece of grounds, and they had the cows that made milk and made the butter and potatoes, they put potatoes in the ----- you know, they had potatoes. It wasn't a wonderful life and you know, they didn't live in a house like I'm living. They had two rooms. You know, they would survive. To give you an example, my parents by the Czechs, they had store, it was a shoe store.

Q: This is your parents.

A: My parents had. They made a living room out of that. But as soon as the Hungarians come in it was taken away from them.

Q: They took the store away.

A: Yeah. I mean, I'm just showing you an example.

Q: Sure. Were there restrictions. I know that when the Germans came in to many towns they put restrictions on what the Jews could wear, when they could be outside, where they could shop, that kind of --- did the Hungarians do the same thing?

A: No, we didn't have to wear a yellow star by the Hungarians.

Q: I remember in Poland, I've spoken to people, they say they couldn't walk on the sidewalk, they had to walk on the street and they couldn't do certain things, go to parks.

A: When the Germans came, but you see when the Hungarians came they restricted us to certain extent that we tried not to be invisible. Who went to the park? I mean, we wouldn't do that. We wouldn't. Even when they wanted to worship, it was in secret. It was in somebody's room. And then you watched, you shouldn't be seen going in there too many times, you see. Then they didn't worship every day anymore. If they could get to it on Saturday they would be glad to do it. I mean, you know these old religious people because they were afraid of God.

Q: Did, so your grandparents then would worship, they couldn't worship every day or they would do it.

A: Well, he would do it by himself but not anywhere in a group.

Q: So they closed the synagogue.

A: Oh, yeah.

- Q: Do you remember anything else under the Hungarians that your grandparents may have had to do, or were they forced to give up some of their property or any of their livestock, that kind of thing.
- A: Well, because it was a war. They were taking it from the non-Jews too actually.
- Q: So, they were taking it from everybody.
- A: They were taking it from everybody, because the war was going on and there wasn't enough food so, it wasn't that people lived by laws, there was no law. I mean, any hooligan. If you beat up a Jew, he wasn't persecuted. There was no place to go to complain. There was a place, we did have police. But, you couldn't go complain somebody beat me up, because you would get more.
- Q: Right, did that happen often? Do you remember people getting beaten up?
- A: Sure, sure. Children, you know, it was very funny. It was very funny because by the Czechs, you know, when we went to school we went with our neighbors. And who were our neighbors, the non-Jews. And I always thought, I walk to school with this non-Jewish child and I really thought, I mean, I always thought it was my friend. You know, as a child you play with this kid, you know, this is my friend that I play with. But as soon as the government has changed and gave the red light to vandalism, maybe the people were scared or something. You see, I don't know. So I lost my, I immediately lost my friend, my play, you know, my playmate. You see, they didn't want anything to do with me. I mean, I'm telling you from my point of view, as a child what bothered me. My father bothered because he didn't have to give us a piece of bread. But ....
- Q: Did your grandparents ever, um, did they ever tell you things like you were saying --to try to be invisible. Did they say things like that to you, tell you not to go out in the street at certain times or anything like that.
- A: You know a child is now looking back on it. If there was a wedding, let's say there was a non-Jewish wedding. By the Czechs we would go and watch the wedding. I liked to go and watch a wedding, so I went and I watched a wedding and I came back and, you know, I was let free by the Czechs. But when the Hungarians came, you know, my mother wouldn't let me go anymore. I'm just giving you a small example that she wouldn't let me go because everybody in town knew I was Jewish and therefore I was \_\_\_\_\_. Do let's say there were even 10 good non-Jews, but you would always find one that would want to get me over the head. You know what I'm saying?
- Q: Uh, huh, okay let's see. So.
- A: I jut gave you an example. Or let's say, lots of examples.

Q: Go ahead.

A: But, I don't want to take too much ---- I mean this was just that a child's, especially because I was a little girl I liked to look at a bride or something. But many things, at night definitely you wouldn't go out. Oh, definitely you wouldn't go out. Like, you know, if we needed, then if went to the store they would sell us, they would sell us if we had the money, they would. But, well, we're still talking about the Hungarians now or the Germans?

Q: The Hungarians, yeah.

A: Okay, like, I wouldn't be allowed, the children weren't allowed no more to go like to the store. Sometimes my uncle would give me 25 cents and I would go and buy an ice cream. I no longer, they wouldn't allow me to go by myself. You know, if they brought it into the house, you know. At that time there was no money to, you know. At that time if my mother could get some different things to survive, but you know, they wouldn't let us go out. My brother would go and get--- then they also took him away too, uh. I had an older brother than this.

Q: Older than this?

A: Yeah, I had an older brother. But then they took him away to work, you know.

Q: What was his name?

A: His name was Larry, my son is named after him. We called him Libel, but my son is named after him. His name is Larry.

Q: uh, huh. Can you tell me a little bit about when the Germans came? You know, what year it was and what happened, how life changed at that point.

A: Well, when the Germans came, they right away said that the Jews can not only, they could only go out, let's say, a couple of hours a day. Not only at night, a couple of hours a day and if you found a Jew on the street, you know, wanting to buy something you could be shot for that or you could be taken away to this concentration camp which eventually wound up in Auschwitz. So the Jews had to wear the Jewish stars, even children. And then the non-Jews were not allowed to sell to Jews or aid them in any way. You see they gave, when the Germans came already, I'll tell you, I don't blame the non, at that time, you know I read now, I know there were some very righteous non-Jews that really, what they did, I don't know if I would do it today when I have children and grandchildren because would they aid a Jew, they would be taken away to a concentration camp. So the punishment was so tremendous of aiding a Jew that he himself wasn't safe. I'm talking the non-Jew wasn't safe. That was by the Germans, by the Germans.

Q: Do you remember when the Germans came to town?

- A: I think it was between '42 or '43, but you know, I am not sure exactly.
- Q: I can look it up.
- A: Yeah, because you have the town and I'm sure.
- Q: Uh, how long, now you said, and you told me the story about your grandfather having his beard cut and everything before they were deported.
- A: That was after they took us away from home into a ghetto.
- Q: Okay.
- A: That wasn't while we were home. But, when the Germans came, though, they worked so fast, they worked so fast. If I, within weeks they took us to a ghetto, within weeks and they put us into the ghetto.
- Q: So you were taken away to the ghetto within a few weeks of them coming into your town.
- A: Yes, within weeks, it wasn't months.
- Q: And they took every Jew in the town, whoever was Jewish in the town they took to the ghetto?
- A: Yes, yes. Now you see, it's true. You know, I've always had this color, now I have to put a little color because I am white. But I was always this color so when I talk many people ask me, you don't look Jewish. I say how is a Jew supposed to look? So, it wasn't, what happened was, the non-Jews handed us over to the Germans. You know what I'm saying?
- Q: They pointed you out.
- A: Yeah. Even we had to have a Star of David on the house too. But, let's say they didn't know that my parents had seven kids. But, the non-Jews, so there was no place to hide and they were afraid to hide us because if they're gonna find us then they'll go where we are. So it was a no-win situation there.
- Q: Can you tell me the name of the town that the ghetto was in?
- A: Uhzgorod, it was a bigger town. It was a city, I would call that a city already.
- Q: How far from your town was it?
- A: I'm not sure.

Q: Not very far or a long way.

A: No, it was maybe an hour ride with a train. It wasn't ----

Q: So they put you on trains. Was there a train station in your town?

A: Yes, there was a train station in our town.

Q: So, did you all go together -- your family, your grandparents?

A: My grandparents and the stronger uncles were taken away to work. My brother Larry was taken away to work. My brother Saul was taken away to work. But the rest of them, the smaller children. That's another thing, you know they planned that so by the time they came to take us to the gas chambers that there wasn't enough strong manpower, they left the old people, the little kids, the women, the older, you know. They planned it so just in case ----

Q: So there wouldn't be any resistance.

A: And another thing that they ask me many times, well how come you didn't fight back? Jews were such law abiding citizens that not only that, but if somebody would have found it was against the law to have a gun in the house. So, you know, Jews just didn't keep guns in the house. I spoke in front of officers, Navy officers, and that was their first question and I understood what they were saying, it's just that I don't know if I could have given them a sufficient enough answer of the situation that was there. When you don't have a gun and you don't have the manpower anymore, how can you fight? Then nobody really knew that you're going to a gas chamber, it was a big secret.

Q: Often times a German would tell you that you were going to work or something like that.

A: Relocated. They said they need manpower to work.

Q: Uh, huh.

A: But, I'll tell you, the way they dealt, we should have known something is horribly wrong. The way they dealt with a human being, if they wanted to make us work, you don't go and beat someone to death or beat someone half dead, you know. It was, you know, we weren't dealt like we were human.

Q: Yeah. Can you describe to me a little bit about what you remember of the ghetto in Uhzgorod?

A: Well, also again they didn't keep us long in the ghetto either because it was like, you know. I think they knew when we were there that the war, now looking back on it they didn't keep us long in the ghetto either. But, the living quarters, the ghetto was a brick factory, they emptied out a brick factory, it was big. There were no beds or kitchens in a brick factory, so we brought some blankets with us, you know we carried certain things and they gave us a little place there in the ghetto where we stayed, where we had our little place on the floor. Then they gave us rations, soup, you know, in the morning coffee, and at night soup. Of course the living quarters were horrible, there was no place to wash and the kids, there were no bathrooms. So, it was a horrible situation. And the worst of all, we didn't know what would happen next. All we saw is that every day they brought in more Jews, more Jews. We just didn't know what they were going to do with us.

Q: How long did you stay there, do you remember? Not very long?

A: probably months, just maybe, I don't know. Maybe a month or two at the most. From what I remember, it wasn't, you know like the Polish Jews were in ghettos for years, but this wasn't a work ghetto. The Polish Jews were in a work ghetto. This was not a work ghetto.

Q: This was more like, maybe a transit point?

A: Yeah, they got us together and shipped us to Auschwitz. Because at that time already they had the capacity, you see with the Polish Jews they didn't probably. They didn't have the capacity of destroying that many, so they had to kill them by bullets. So, you know, it was different. But with us, they could gas thousands of them.

Q: So, let's see, you were there for a month maybe two months?

A: Months, I would say months.

Q: Somewhere in there. Now, would this be in '43 or still in '42 or right around ---

A: Right around the middle, between '42, '43 maybe. Let's say '43 already.

Q: And then you were deported to Auschwitz.

A: Yes.

Q: In a train?

A: Yes, in a cattle car train.

Q: Uh, huh.

- A: And then, I'll tell you, when I think back on that ride, you know they put so many people into that cattle car. We had no bathrooms, small kids, sick people, they just packed us in there. You know, if they would have taken us to work someplace they wouldn't have done to us what they did. Just even the transport, that in itself should have said something to us. But we couldn't imagine, we couldn't imagine that we're going to the gas chamber. We couldn't imagine that.
- Q: Did, so your grandparents are still with you. Were they in the car with you?
- A: Yes, yes.
- Q: Can you tell me what happened when the train came to Auschwitz?
- A: Well, it stopped. It stopped and the smell. You're probably going to see, I think I do tell ---
- Q: In the tape.
- A: I tell the day in Auschwitz, one day in Auschwitz I think I tell. And, um, you know. If you want me to I'll tell you.
- Q: Go ahead.
- A: I can tell it again? Because I want to tell you new stuff, not repeating myself. When we stopped in Auschwitz they didn't open up the door, we didn't know where we were. We just saw a big sign that said, you know, a round sign. It was like this, and it says "Arbeit macht das Leben süss", and that means in English, work makes life sweet. So, but still the smell was terrible, the smell was terrible and there was a big fire, like a big building or something was on fire. You could see far in from the tracks, but they didn't open up the wagons until it got completely dark, I mean it was dark, dark. All of a sudden floodlights came on the train and we saw these SS there on the platform, you know, and dogs, dogs. And they opened up the doors and started screaming, "Heraus! Heraus! Heraus!" And, you know from that trip a lot of people died because they threw in sick people and old people and so whoever could run out from this train, they were going out. If not you were beaten up. So they rushed so that they shouldn't get beaten, but a lot of them that stayed there they just carried them out and put them on the truck. There was a truck, a big open truck, was right there, you know, not far from the platform. Everybody tried taking out the few things that they had for them, not that it was anything but, everybody is trying to survive, so they think they'll be needing it.

So there was a ditch and they were yelling at the people they should throw away the luggage, and people didn't want to part with it. One was screaming "I don't have the name on it!" They were worrying that they'll never find their luggage

because they don't have the name on it. So there was sort of a commotion, so they were hitting on the people and they got beaten up, they threw away those few little things that they had there. But, with my grandfather he didn't want it, he was getting beaten up, but he wouldn't part with it. And so, you know what they did to him. Should I repeat, should I say it again?

Q: You can, go ahead.

A: The tape is on? So he didn't want to part with these Ten Commandments, with this Torah. So they were beating on him. We were pleading with him "Throw it away! Throw it away!" He didn't want to do it, so they beat him, they kicked him and then he could no longer get up. He was there and then they were beating on us to go to the right, to the left. And what I remember seeing is that they just took my grandfather and they threw him on the truck because he couldn't get up anymore and the Torah, the Ten Commandments were in the ditch. And me and my sister they put us to ride with my mother and my mother held on to my brother, she wouldn't let go of him.

Q: Now, this was your youngest brother?

A: That was my youngest brother, he was six years younger than I was. She wouldn't let go of him, so they started beating on my brother so she let go. But, she didn't know that they're going to put him to the left, that they're going to put him on the other side and my brother screamed and cried and there were other cries from other children. But, she sort of, she must have recognized his cry so she looked back and, you know, he was trying to go to my mother, so they were hitting on him and so my mother ran to him from the right to the left and they wouldn't let her go to the left. So, they were beating on my mother, she fell and she was crawling and pleading with the SS, "Please let me go to my kid! Please let me go to my kid!" So, finally after she was on the floor and pleading with him and, I don't know, change of heart, he kicked her and she went to the left. You know, he kicked her and she sort of moved to the left. She ran to my brother and she got a hold of him, and, you know, my brother cried anyway because he saw my mother so beaten up. And they walked off, I'll tell you the truth, you know, when I think if, sometimes, moments I said, I bet my mother would survive. But, right after the war I knew she would have not survived anyway, so I say to myself maybe a good thing that happened, you know there were so many kids they went to their death so frightened, so scared because they didn't have their parents with them. Now, the little infants, they didn't know, but the four, five, six year old child, it was dark, it was dark. In the beating, you know, they were hitting on children. You would think they would leave children alone. If the child, let's say didn't obey what they said, if it wanted to go here or there they were they were hitting on kids like they hit on adults. And why they needed to do that I don't understand, why they needed to hit on kids. And, so I say to myself, maybe she was a comfort to another child there, I'm sure. You know, she had seven kids and, so ---- so that's how my mother left to her death.

- Q: So when they split you to the right people who ended up, at least at that point, surviving and the people who were on the left went to the gas chamber.?
- A: They went to the gas chamber right away.
- Q: Was your, did your grandmother also go to the left?
- A: Yes.
- Q: She went to the left also?
- A: Oh, yes. You know the parting was difficult, you know times were terrible, but we were together, you know. If you tried to separate families it's just --- I can't tell you how painful. The price they had to pay while they were separating them, you know, beside the physical pain, the emotional pain was horrible.
- Q: Do you remember, you said you and your sister were on the right. Did your father also go to the right? Was he on the right?
- A: The men were separated separately.
- Q: So it was men and then women, and then divided again between left and right.
- A: Left and right. So that was the end.
- Q: So that was the last time you saw your father.
- A: When they opened the trains. It was so chaotic, you know, they let the dogs bite, jump on you, you know, you're scared. I can't tell you, it was like hell on earth.
- Q: Okay, why don't I ask you some questions about your parents before the war and a couple of things about their parents and things like that. Could you just tell me their names, and the same thing for your grandmother, when they were born and where they were born and that kind of thing if you remember.
- A: Okay, my mother's name was Rose, I mean her maiden name was Moscovitz, but then when she was married to my father it was Leibowitz.
- Q: Do you remember when she was born?
- A: No, but she was, in this picture she was in the late thirties, early forties, when we were taken to Auschwitz.
- Q: And she was, your mother was born in Volosyanka?

- A: Yes.
- Q: But your father was born somewhere else?
- A: In Nod Berezna, another town.
- Q: You spelled that for me.
- A: Yeah.
- Q: Can you give me your father's name?
- A: Martin.
- Q: Martin Leibowitz?
- A: Yes.
- Q: Do you remember how old he was, do you remember his birthday?
- A: I know that he was six years older than my mother, but I don't know exactly the dates. He must have been in the late, sort of ---
- Q: Mid-forties?
- A: Mid-forties, yes.
- Q: Okay, do you remember when they got married? You don't remember"
- A: No.
- Q: Let's see, you said there were seven kids in all.
- A: Seven kids.
- Q: Do you remember how many, there were how many girls?
- A: Three brothers and four girls, including me. There were three sisters, but I was the fourth girl.
- Q: Okay, four girls and three boys. Can you give me their names?
- A: Yes.
- Q: The four girls, including yourself. So we have Helen and ---

- A: Shall I give you from the oldest down?
- Q: Sure.
- A: Well, Larry, shall I call him what we called him?
- Q: Sure, tell me both, you can give me his real given name and then ---
- A: We called him Lib, and then he, I named my son after him as Larry.
- Q: Okay, so Lib would be L-I-B.
- A: Yes, B.
- Q: And he was the oldest.
- A: He was the oldest. Actually, wait a minute, I had a sister, she was the oldest, but she came to the United States so she didn't go through the concentration camps.
- Q: So she came before the war started?
- A: Before, in '39, would you believe it? Just before the whole disaster.
- Q: What was her name?
- A: Her name was here, we called her Lya (side B, tape 1), but Frances they called her in the United States. Frances.
- Q: So you were in contact with her after you got her?
- A: It's another story.
- Q: Okay.
- A: That's why it's good you ask questions because I can sit here for half an hour telling you how we got in contact.
- Q: Right.
- A: And then, I had a sister, her name, uh, my God. Her name was Sura.
- Q: Sura? S-U-R-A?
- A: Yes. And she had a child, and, you know, it was at night so she just walked away with the child. Some children were torn, you know mothers were torn away ---

- Q: You mean when you came to Auschwitz?
- A: And probably she was the lucky one. She just walked off with the kid.
- Q: She had the kid with her?
- A: She had the kid with her. And then my brother, my brother, this is my brother. His name was Saul.
- Q: Saul? Did he have a nickname or did you call him just Saul?
- A: No, his name ---Shlomo actually we called him, in Jewish,. And then this is my sister that I live through my life during the war. Her name is Sylvia, we called her Zeisl.
- Q: How would you spell that?
- A: Spell it? Zeisl.
- Q: I would say Z-E-I-S-L.
- A: Yeah. In Jewish we would call it shorter. And right now her name is Sylvia, and then it's me.
- Q: So it was Helen, Sura and Sylvia and then the oldest was Frances?
- A: Yes.
- Q: And then you had, we've got Larry and Saul and what was your other brother's name?
- A: Efraim.
- Q: Efraim. Okay, now you said your parents had a shoe store?
- A: Yes, it was like, it was like a franchise, there were lots of places. That was only by the Czechs, and then the Jews weren't allowed to have no franchise.
- Q: Did he, was he like, did he repair shoes, or did they just sell them?
- A: They just sold them, you know there was a factory that supplied these batya stores. Like Hahn's.
- Q: Sure.
- A: But it wasn't that big, you know everything was smaller there.

- Q: Were there, I didn't ask you this before, were there like Jewish youth groups, or kind of community groups in the town, or was it just people saw each other at the synagogue and that kind of thing?
- A: The synagogue and then, you know, we had to make our own schools. So we saw each other in the schools.
- Q: Did you, your brothers and sisters, go to private Jewish schools or did you go to public schools or ---
- A: by the Czechs we went to public school.
- Q: But under the Hungarians you went to ---
- A: Private, because we weren't allowed no more to go to school. And the schools were held at home, it wasn't a private building. It wasn't a building where the kids could go to, it was in different homes.
- Q: Did your, you said father was in about his mid-forties in 1940, did he, was he involved in World War I or anything? Was he a veteran?
- A: Yes, believe it or not that's why he didn't understand.
- Q: He didn't understand why the Germans were treating people the way they did?
- A: Well, he kept on saying he fought for the Hungarians actually.
- Q: the Austrian-Hungarians?
- A: The Austrian-Hungarians. That's why he thought he was safe.
- \Q: He thought the Germans were ---
- A: Yeah, that they'll recognize that even he's a Jew but he served his country.
- Q: He fought on their side.
- A: Yeah, he served for the country he lived for, he lived there. Matter of fact he was wounded.
- Q: Uh, huh.
- A: Right here. You know, a bullet went through his leg.
- Q: So he fought against the Russians?

- A: In Austria, I was a little kid so I don't really remember but I know that he was in a war.
- Q: Did he used to tell stories to like your brothers and sisters about the war and things like that?
- A: Yes, war, yes he did. Yes.
- Q: So he believed the Germans were just, they couldn't do the things that people were saying? Did he believe that the Germans were ---
- A: You know, we believed maybe it would happen to one, to two, maybe a German that isn't educated. We didn't think it would be an organized situation. You see what I'm saying?
- Q: Right.
- A: How can, how can a country or whatever organize to eliminate a people? You know, we thought it would be like, one person that will vandalize us or, you know.
- Q: Were your parents fairly well educated?
- A: Well, they were educated in Jewish, very much so.
- Q: Did they go through school?
- A: You know, I'm Jewish but I'm not that religious, I have difficulties today. I have difficulties today. I'm afraid to think that there is nothing because it can be worse, but ---I don't think I am as religious as my people. My parents, my grandparents, they definitely believed, they were definite believers. To them, a sin was maybe doubting God. I mean ---
- Q: Did your parents, do you remember if they went to public schools or did they go to Jewish schools?
- A: I don't know, but I know they were well educated in Jewish. They would quote things from the Bible, maybe that was their way of educating us to be human beings. I'm not sure why they did that, but uh, if there was any correction in our behavior, you know kids act up sometimes, so they would quote us from the Bible what is right and what is wrong. The Bible says this, the Bible says that.
- Q: Now you said when the Hungarians came in they seized the shoe store, they seized the store and these things. Did your parents, can you tell me a little bit

about your house and where you grew up and that kind of, like maybe how much land you had, where it was, was it a wooded area or ---

A: We had a house and we had also ---

Q: Was it also a stone house like your grandparents?

A: No, no. It was a stucco house.

Q: uh, huh.

A: Oy, if I would go back there I bet I would recognize it because I remember it so vividly.

Q: Have you been back?

A: They wouldn't, I went back to see my brother in Russia because he was, I was in Bergen Belsen when the English ---

Q: When they liberated you?

A: They liberated me. In Russia, when my brother was liberated he was liberated under the Russians and then he could no longer leave.

Q: Does he still live in Czechoslovakia?

A: No we brought him over here, well he was in Russia for many years, but then we brought him over here and he died.

Q: Not long ago?

A: About three years ago.

Q: So, let's see, you said you had a stucco house.

A: Yes, and we had cows and, you know, sheep and we had a different house for the animals.

Q: Like a barn?

A: Like a barn, yeah. And we had some, near the house, we had some. You know under the Czechs, the reason why my grandparents had more cows and all kinds of animals because they had land, they had, we were allowed to own land by the Czechs. When the Hungarians come nothing was ours, you know what I'm saying? They took it away.

- Q: Did you all have chores that you had to do, like to milk the cows?
- A: Oh, yeah, yeah.
- Q: What did you do, do you remember?
- A: Well, I used to like to play with the little calves. They were my favorite. Oh, I loved them.
- Q: Did you all have pets, like a dog or a cat?
- A: Yeah, yeah. The kids loved it. You know we were so many children, so that was our life sort of, to uh ---
- Q: Did you live right in the town or did you live like on the outside of town?
- A: No, in the town.
- Q: In the town?
- A: Yes.
- Q: Now you said your grandparents had their store, was connected to the house.
- A: Yes.
- Q: Was that also the same way in the shoe store?
- A: No, the shoe store was in a different building because it was a franchise sort of.
- Q: Did many people in the town speak German, did they know German or no, just Czech?
- A: Yiddish, Czech and Yiddish.
- Q: Czech and Yiddish?
- A: Yes. From what I remember, because most of my life, most life in Europe I was under Czech. Under the Hungarians it was only three or four years so, then I was so, I didn't see much of the outside world. So, to me the Czech life was more so - --
- Q: Do you remember what your parents might have said, or do you remember anything they may have thought about the Hungarians when they came in? Were they frightened or were they apprehensive?

- A: They were apprehensive, they were apprehensive that we weren't allowed, I mean we were a second class citizen, you know. We were limited, we were even limited to worship, I mean that doesn't hurt anyone. What can a person do with worship in God? I mean, we prayed for better times. And then, you know, we were preoccupied with how to survive, how to feed all these mouths. That was our preoccupation and our safety.
- Q: When the Hungarians seized the store, your store, what did your parents do to try and make a living then?
- A: It was really very difficult. We had to live off, again like my grandparents, we had a little place near the house that we planted carrots and potatoes and you know, just barely. And then we had our cows, so we had our cows for milk. People there lived mostly on potatoes and milk and bread, oh bread was a big thing. And we had poultry, we had ---
- Q: Chickens and things?
- A: Chickens and goose, white goose I remember.
- Q: But they couldn't have, your father couldn't have a job after the Hungarians came.
- A: Oh, no.
- Q: Not in a regular job sense.
- A: No, he had, you know, odd jobs here and there. I think my father was more educated, I think he had, you know, because he --- I think my mother was less educated, but she was educated in the Torah, she was educated in Jewish. She went to a cheder (side B, tape 1). But, I think that my father did go to some school because I think he was an officer in the ---
- Q: In the army?
- A: In the army, yeah.
- Q: Did you all have a radio at home?
- A: We had, but the Hungarians you had to hand them in.
- Q: They took it?
- A: You had to hand them in.
- Q: So you had to bring them in?

- A: We were scared that they'll find us, you know, where can you ---
- Q: Did your parents also read a newspaper in the town before the war?
- A: Yes, there was newspaper, but not after the Hungarians, there wasn't no ---
- Q: Was the newspaper from the town or from a larger town elsewhere?
- A: It was brought in from the larger town, you know like the New York Times, you could find a New York Times in Washington. There was no place where they made it.
- Q: So your parents knew about things that were going on in Germany and Poland or that kind of thing.
- A: More or less, when Hitler, we knew when the German, uh, what was his name, uh, when Hitler became, got the power, the leader, we knew. We knew.
- Q: In 1933, yeah.
- A: We knew when Hitler got to power.
- Q: Was there ever any, when the Hungarians come in, was there ever any discussion in your family about possibly leaving at all? There was?
- A: We wanted to come to the United States, but, you know, because I had my sister here. But, we couldn't no longer. Now where could we have gone? We were surrounded, in Hungary the Jews were treated like we were treated, in Romania, Jews were treated like we were treated. If you see Czechoslovakia in the middle - --
- Q: No place to go?
- A: No place to go. There was no place to go.
- Q: Okay, now let's see, we talked about your father and your mother and how, what happened to them once they went to Auschwitz and they were with you the whole time when we talked about you going from the ghetto in Uhzgorod and then on to Auschwitz`. So, I basically know their story, you've told me that. And your father, you said, you were split so the last time you saw your father was when you came off the train, but you don't know what happened to him at all, okay.
- A: But my brother, my brother, told us when he came that he met up with a man that was with my older brother and my older brother ---

- Q: Now this was Saul, your brother that you were talking about?
- A: Yeah. Now, I'm going to talk about Larry, that he actually survived all this time, but when they were taking him back as the Russian or the ---
- Q: After the war, you mean?
- A: No, that was almost the end of the war, he died of starvation in a train because they were taking him away. You see, what they were doing is that they were picking, you know you have these grenades on the floor, let's say, you know when the Russians retreated, when the Germans, before the Germans would make any steps they would send out these Jewish boys to the mine fields.
- Q: Right.
- A: So they would pick up, you know. So that's what happened. He survived that.
- Q: He went through, he was actually in one of those, your father was?
- A: No, my brother. But, what happened was he died of starvation because when they had to retreat, they were retreating and taking these, whoever was left, a handful. They weren't giving them to eat or anything or sleep, so he just ---That's what somebody told my ---
- Q: Told Saul about Larry?
- A: Yes. But, you know, could he have survived maybe the starvation he would be alive because he survived ---
- Q: He got through the camps.
- A: Yes. But, you know, I wasn't there.
- Q: Sure, I understand. But the last time you heard anything about your father was when you got off the train?
- A: That was it.
- Q: Why don't you tell me about, well, we can start with Saul since he survived. Do you remember, let me. Saul Leibowitz was his name. Do you remember his birthday?
- A: Uh, I should, I think he was born in '23.
- Q: Uh, uh. So he was about five years older than you were?

A: Yes.

Q: Do you remember what month and day he was born? Do you remember when you used to celebrate his birthday?

A: Uh, I don't know exactly and I don't want to tell you when I'm not sure.

Q: Do you remember if it was in the fall or the spring or ---

A: I can find out.

Q: Okay. If you have a record of it somewhere you can call me and tell me.

A: All right, all right, I'll do that.

Q: Let's see, so basically, did your brother go to public school under the Czechs?

A: Under the Czechs, yes.

Q: Is there anything special about your brother's childhood that was maybe different from yours, that maybe stands out in your mind?

A: Well, he had more responsibilities than I did.

Q: What kinds of things?

A: Well, let me tell you, he helped my father with small little jobs like, let's say, a non-Jew, it was forbidden for a non-Jew to ---by the Hungarians they were allowed, by the Hungarians the Jews couldn't own anything. But the Jews were allowed to work for the non-Jews sort of. So he used to ---

Q: And this is under the Hungarians?

A: Yes, we are talking now about the Hungarians. So he would go and help my father to ---

Q: Oh, so you did, you mentioned something about after the Hungarians came your father worked to try to help support.

A: Little jobs.

Q: Odd jobs or something?

A: Yes.

Q: And so your brother helped him?

A: Right, right.

Q: Did he also have more responsibility on the farm, did he deal with the cows or the sheep?

A: Well, I'll tell you under the Czechs we had a bigger farm, but under the Hungarians we no longer had the farm, except they let us have a few cows and a few chickens. But, as I said, even under the Hungarians they were taking from the non-Jews too, but the non-Jews, the grounds still belonged to them. You see what I'm saying? They took the livestock. But the ground, they could own the ground, but we no longer owned the ground.

Q: Okay, had your brother completed school, had he finished the public school before the war started, or before 1939 when the Hungarians came in?

A: You know what, we can figure that out.

Q: How long did people go to school, when did they start school?

A: He went to high school.

Q: He did go to high school?

A: My oldest brother finished high school.

Q: Larry did?

A: Larry did, I don't know if he fully did finish.

Q: Do you remember what age they would have finished high school?

A: Well we started at six.

Q: At six?

A: Yeah.

Q: And how many grades were there, do you remember?

A: Like here.

Q: So it would be about the twelfth?

A: Yes, it was like here.

- Q: So, let's see, in 1939 Saul would have been about sixteen, so he would have been close.
- A: Yeah.
- Q: Did he, so I guess he never had a job, like a real job before the Hungarians came.
- A: No.
- Q: Saul I'm talking about.
- A: No, he just helped my father, you know.
- Q: Was he involved in any activities in the town, like a sporting club or something?
- A: No, there wasn't such a thing.
- Q: There wasn't any clubs?
- A: No.
- Q: What did he do for amusement, do you remember what he liked to do? Did he like to fish or did he like to ---
- A: You know, it is so difficult to explain a child's life then and a child's life here, when I see my grandchildren, may God keep them well. Um, it's just like, children were just not children, children were like old people. What they worried about is how to survive, how to see the sadness. Let me say this, by the Czechs it wasn't so visible, but as soon as the Hungarians came in, the children were no longer children.
- Q: They grew up fast.
- A: They grew up fast, they grew up fast.
- Q: Did he like to do, did he have any hobbies when he was younger?
- A: Well, he liked reading.
- Q: He liked to read?
- A: Oh, he loved reading, he loved reading. Any book that you know, books were scarce. I know that, you know, a Torah is a holy thing, but you wouldn't believe that a book to us was a holy thing. Any book that you got a hold of, I remember we had a breakfront, what do you think was in that breakfront, a book that we got a hold of. It was, everybody read it, and we read it. We used to dust the book, the

dust shouldn't fall on it. That's how scarce a book was. So I tell you when I came here to this country and I had my children, I kept on telling them how, you know, privileged. My children knew when they go to school they are privileged to be able to go to school. They are privileged to have an access of books that they could have.

Q: Could use, yeah.

A: You know, it's like, to us books were like jewels. Yeah, that was a good word, like jewels.

Q: So he like to read a lot?

A: Oh, we all, in that respect, because there wasn't that much that kids could do. So, what do you get? You know, so when you read a book your mind was preoccupied. Your mind was occupied.

Q: You could get away.

A: From your sadness, from your uh ---

Q: Before the war, before the Hungarians came, did you all like to do things, in the outdoors, did you play a lot or did you go fishing or ---

A: Well, we played like kids play. You know, we hop scotched I remember, and I played with non-Jewish children hopscotch, I remember.

Q: Did your brother, did he have some, a lot of, non-Jewish friends, or did he have mostly Jewish friends?

A: Well, when we went to school by the Czechs we had non-Jewish, we thought they were our friends. You know like kids, you don't think which synagogue, which house of worship you go. Kids don't think like that, so who cares?

Q: Okay, when you were deported to the ghetto, okay, you said something about your brother being taken away for work.

A: That was before the ghetto.

Q: Okay, can you tell me a little bit about that, what he was doing, do you remember?

A: That was another thing, you know. My mother, they took them away and we didn't get mail from them, the mail wasn't coming. So, I remember, in the beginning, the mail would come, maybe, very, the beginning we would get a

postcard from them. So, my mother, we didn't have much, so my mother used to bake cookies and send them little packages, you know of cookies.

Q: And this was under the Hungarians, that you said the mail wasn't coming.

A: Right. But occasionally we did get, in the beginning. So then the mail stopped, so I remember how she carried on. She felt that they are not alive anymore because we weren't getting any mail. So, my mother was preoccupied with that, that they took away her sons and, you know, that they're not alive. There was no way to find out where they were.

Q: So both Larry and Saul were taken away to work?

A: Yes, yes.

Q: Was your father also taken away or no?

A: He was taken away to work in town, but he could sleep at home. You see what I mean? But the boys left and we didn't, you know, we didn't see them again.

Q: So they were in the work camps and when you were deported they didn't come with you, they stayed in the camps or whatever.

A: Well, wherever they were, yeah.

Q: Did you know because of the little bit of mail that came where they were?

A: Golly, I don't remember. That was just at the beginning, you know, just as a child I remember my mother was excited baking cookies to send to them and then she was sad because she could no longer send them cookies and being that they don't write, they're not alive anymore, so she was mourning. You know, I remember her crying over that, that her boys are probably not alive anymore because we didn't get the mail.

Q: When were they taken away to go to the work camps, do you remember?

A: that was after the Hungarians came.

Q: So, it would have been in 1939?

A: Well, maybe a little while later.

Q: Maybe 1940?

A: Something like it, yes. I was a little kid so I don't remember the exact time.

Q: And you said that Saul survived.

A: Yes.

Q: Did he tell you where he had gone, what happened to him?

A: Yes, he worked in different places, in different places under the Germans. Then, the Germans took over these Jewish ---

QW: Was he in Hungary still or, I mean in Czechoslovakia still or ---

A: No, he was in Poland and in Russia and all over the place, all over the place.

Q: Was he also in any concentration camps?

A: He wasn't in Auschwitz, he was only in the work camps and they got liberated by the Russians, marching,

Q: Do you know where they were marching, do you remember, did he tell you? Was it a death march?

A: Well, sort of. Yeah, they were marching them and then one night the Russians just showed up, yes.

Q: So this was in 1944 maybe, or 1945?

A: The dates I've got a problem. Let me tell you how he survived. What happened was when the Germans were marching these guys, at one time they rested up someplace. You know, it was a place, I don't know what, a farm. He called it, let's say a farm. So he sneaked away and went in under the hay, you know he covered himself up with hay until the next day the Germans left with the group, but he had a problem, he had a problem when the Russians came, he had a problem to explain himself, where is he coming from, where has he been? So, you know, when he would tell me these stories I, myself, couldn't believe what this guy had to go through just, even, after the war, how the Russians kept him locked up. But then he was telling the story how, you know, so finally they caught up with the group, so they knew that he must be telling the truth because he knew about the group and it was lucky that they caught up with them a short time later so they told him to let him go because, who knows, they could have thought he was a spy and they could have killed him.

Q: Right, sure.

A: So that was the lucky part, so even if he wanted to survive he could have gotten killed after, after war for different reasons.

- Q: So he survived and then he was kept in Russia after the war?
- A: Yes.
- Q: Do you know where in Russia he was?
- A: Well, the last place he lived was Uhzgorod.
- Q: Oh, so that was in the part of Czechoslovakia that turned into Ukraine.
- A: To the Ukraine, and the Russians occupied it.
- Q: So he lived there and then he came to the U.S.
- A: Yes, I can call you up and tell you exactly when he came because we brought him out.
- Q: Okay.
- A: And did we have a time, also.
- Q: Was this in the seventies or the eighties?
- A: Seventies, I think it was the seventies when we brought him over. I'll tell you the exact dates because we have the papers. That I can give you the exact date.
- Q: Okay, that's good. Why don't you tell me the name of your sister, who was Sura, or is that Sylvia?
- A: Sylvia.
- Q: Sylvia's in the picture?
- A: Sura never went to that accidentally, you know, you see what the Germans did in the beginning they just gassed everybody that came to Auschwitz. But, when we came at that time the German munitions factory already said don't kill them all out, send me the manpower. That's where I worked the munitions factory. But, so that's how I survived. But, my sister, they probably would have grabbed the kid out of her hand but she was short and skinny, sort of, so you know, they weren't paying much attention to her. So she got away walking to the gas chambers with her child. I mean, it was like, you know, a freak accident. Probably would have been worse for her if they would have taken the kids out because her kid was really small.
- Q: Sure.

- A: Who knows what was worse, who knows?
- Q: Okay, do you remember when Sylvia was born, what year she was born in?
- A: Yea, 1925.
- Q: Do you remember her birthday?
- A: February the tenth.
- Q: February the tenth?
- A: Yeah.
- Q: She was closer in age to you.
- A: Yes, I was born in '28.
- Q: And, let's see. Did she, was she also in public school there, under the Czechs?
- A: Yes, but, you know she didn't finish. But you'd be surprised, we tried so hard to study even in our own little private cheders, what we called them.
- Q: Yeah.
- A: And that was our outlet, you were asking me whether we had ---this was our outlet, to get a pencil and paper and write or, you know, number work. I used to love number work, actually I loved it. A piece of paper was difficult, so it was difficult all around. My kids grew up that they were privileged, they had enough paper and pencil. I didn't tell them the rest of the horror stories, but I just made them --- I really still feel that a child that is, that has the privilege of an education and doesn't take, that doesn't say, you know, my daughter went to college, my first daughter went to college, I said to her, you know, you are privileged to be able to go to college. And I really think she was there and she felt, you know, something terrific is happening to her. I really think she felt like that.
- Q: Do you remember, let's see, you said because your brother was older that he had some more responsibility in your family. Did your sister also since she was a little bit older than you?
- A: Yes, we would go and wash floors for other people and clean. I mean, because there were a few doctors there.
- Q: Now was this under the Hungarians or was this under the ---

- A: Under the Hungarians, not the Czechs. The Hungarians, a matter of fact, should I tell you, I remember even me, I used to go and help out, you know. We were glad, because what happened was when I went to help out, to do these chores, you know somebody gave me a slice of bread. You know, I don't know, I also felt good that they asked you to come. Actually, you felt good that they asked you to come in to their house to help them out with these chores.
- Q: It was probably nice to be away from the house sometimes, too.
- A: It was, it was ---well, I can't say it was nice because I had to wash the bathrooms, I had to wash the clothes and, you know, I was a little kid. I wasn't that old, maybe 12 or 13 years old when I was doing it. But, it was okay, because that's how we were surviving, you know what I'm saying?
- Q: Sure.
- A: And they weren't beating on us.
- Q: Right. Did you, I mean you and your sister, since you were closer, did you play a lot together?
- A: Yes, we fought a lot and we played a lot. Yes, but we were very close. Matter of fact, I think you're going to hear in the tape that, probably if not for her, I probably would not have survived. I'll tell you why -- because I'm not that strong willed and I, oh I know, many times I just didn't want to, like when I was in the munitions factory, I was tired and I was hungry and I was, I was half dead. So, I didn't want to get up in the morning and these people, that they didn't get up in the morning, they were left in the barracks when we worked. You never saw them again, they probably, you know, we just never ---nobody asked. We never saw them again. They probably just did away with them. So, I would want to do that and she would lift me up and she shook me in the morning. She dragged me out, but it was cold, you see where we were in Germany it was very cold and, here, you know, we had these wooden shoes and the one dress. So, she would drag me out to stay there for an hour, you know, and she would encourage me, she would give me, you know half a slice of her half slice of bread so that I should just go on, go on. She would do a lot of work for me that, you know, I could not work so hard, she just --- But, in the end, I remember in the end, you know, she said she's not going to leave me here alone. She would get angry at me, she would get angry at me because I say, "I'm going to die". You know, to her it was a threat. To me it was real, mentally, with me I think my mental stage gave up so ---you know, I don't care anymore, so if not for her I probably wouldn't be sitting here and talking.
- Q: On the tape, do you talk about her quite a bit and where you went, did you always stay together through the camps?

A: Yes, yes.

Q: Did she also survive?

A: Yes, yes. In the end, I don't know if I put that on the tape. When they brought us to Bergen Belsen, she was the first one to get sick because when we got to Bergen Belsen was when (tape ended)

(Beginning of tape 2) Let me ask you about your smallest brother, about your youngest brother. Now, let's see you said your, that was Efram, Efram?

A: Yes.

Q: Do you remember when he was born?

A: Well, matter of fact, I do remember when he was born, I was a little girl myself. But, it was like, we were already six, but there was sort of an excitement when he was born. You know, being that he was the youngest, all the kids sort of felt that he was their little toy.

Q: Right, he was the little baby, yeah.

A: So everybody was involved with him, you know.

Q: So, now you said he was born six years after you.

A: After me.

Q: So that would have been about 1934?

A: Yeah, right. No, '36, wait a minute, I was born in '28.

Q: So six years later would have been '34. If you were born in '28, six years would have been '34 because ---

A: Okay, okay.

Q: Do you remember his birthday?

A: No, no,

Q: no, okay. Had he started school yet in 1939? Probably not.

A: No, because we were under the Hungarians, you know, he used to come into the cheder and just, sometimes, annoy, they would throw him out of the room. But,

you know, most of the time they would keep him there. Sometimes he would be good and sometimes, you know.

Q: Was he mischievous as a little boy?

A: He was a little, yeah, he was a spoiled little kid because the kid it wasn't so much that my mother and father had that much time for him, but, you know, he was like the kid's toy. He was a loving little kid, so everybody picked him up and hugged him and I think that's what made him so loving because he had so many people.

Q: Did he have any special chores when he was younger, did he have to do things before the farm was taken away, or the livestock?

A: I don't remember the specifics that they would give him something to do. I don't remember.

Q: Were there games he liked to play with you guys?

A: Yeah, yeah. Hide and seek, you know, yeah. He would like to hide and we would have to run after him, you know and find him. You know, like a child.

Q: did he like to read too?

A: oh, he just had an aleph-beis book. I remember it, and I'm telling you he would carry this book along and he wouldn't show just anybody, he had to be your friend in order for him to show you that book.

Q: What kind of book was it?

A: Aleph-beis, it was like an A-B-C book, in Yiddish they called it an aleph-beis book, he called it the aleph-beis book, but it was the A-B-C book, A-B-C book, and he loved that book, he loved it, he carried it, he went to sleep with it, like who knows what. But, you know to get to a book like that wasn't so easy either in the war, so it's ---so, it wasn't like this book could be replaced so easily. You know, for my children's birthdays and my grandchildren's birthdays I always, well for my children's birthdays it was a trend, it was always a book. But even for my grandchildren's birthdays when they were little I always went and bought a few little books and send it to them for presents, I don't know why, but this was, they knew when their birthday would come, they'll get books from me, little books.

Q: Books are a good thing to give, they make you smart.

A: Well, I mean, you see, an American child does not understand that a European child, even a non-Jewish child was not that lucky to get this education. A lot of people don't, it was when I was raised, when I was raised, maybe now it's different. Probably it's different, here it's different too. But, when I was raised a

book was, or an education was scarce. People didn't have the money, and didn't have the means.

Q: Did your parents teach you, you said they were very educated in Jewish history and things like that, did they teach that to you?

A: They did, and they also used it. If I think back, like let's say I did something that they didn't like, they would bring out a quote from the Bible, what's wrong and what's right. Like they would tell me, you know, they would say God gave you that you can choose from right and wrong, now, do you think God would be happier with you if you choose the right or the wrong? They didn't understand that me as a child could not, many times, understand what I'm doing wrong. And it's not that I did such terrible wrong, you know, maybe I didn't like something that they told me to do and I didn't want to do it, you know ---so, what I'm trying to say is that they used their education sort of raising us. There was never physical, I don't ever remember, even when we were seven kids, there was never physical, you know, abuse.

Q: Punishment or anything?

A: No, no, there was no physical punishment but there was a lot of Bible quoting, we had to do the right thing. Children don't always know the right thing, and children sometimes they want to laugh, and sometimes they want to fight, you know.

Q: Well, I think I know your brother's story with your mother, so I think that's all the questions I have.

A: Okay.

Q: I think we're done, thank you very much for speaking with me.

A: Well, you're very welcome Tony and it was really a pleasure meeting you.

Q: Well thank you.