

November 23, 1991

BOSTON

Name: Marie Rosenberg

Date of interview: March 6, 1988

Summary Marie relates her experiences as a Dutch Jew. She speaks of her rather innocent and happy life before the occupation, her years as part of the "Phillips Transport" and her completely different outlook on life that she maintains to this day because of these experiences.

Birth Information Marie Rosenberg was born in Amsterdam, Holland on November 26, 1926.

- 1:00 Marie states her name and date and place of birth. Her family consisted of her father Abraham, her mother Marianne and her sister, Sophia. They kept a Jewish household.
- 2:00 Marie went to Hebrew school. Her father was a clothing salesman and they had a very good life. There were no problems in the community with non-Jews. War broke out in May 1940. Germany took over Holland in five days and they had no way of escaping.
- 3:00 They did almost escape to Switzerland but the man who was to get them there was "taken." Marie's parents didn't tell her or her sister much and she found out about the escape plans after the man was caught. She was thirteen.
- 4:00 Very few Jews escaped from Holland. After the invasion, Jewish kids couldn't go to school..Jews couldn't go to temple and they mostly just had to stay in their homes. Their bicycies had to be turned in and Jews could not safely walk the streets.
- 5:00 All Jews had to wear a yellow star. A year into the war, Marie's father was taken to a Dutch concentration camp. He eventually came back.
- 6:00 They couldn't visit any of their relatives, but they still had their apartment. All Jews had to have an identification stamp.
- 7:00 Her mother had to sneak out to get food. In April of 1943, Marie and her family were taken. The SS came and got them.

- 8:00 It was a Friday night. They dressed in layers of clothing and they each carried a bag. They were put in a covered wagon and taken to a theater where they waited for three days to be transported. They were then taken to a Dutch concentration camp.
- 9:00 The camp was in Firth (ph). They had to walk through the woods to get to the camp. They had no idea about extermination camps yet. At Firth, there was a men's camp and a women's camp. They just "hung around" all day. Some days they carried bricks back and forth from one end of the camp to the other.
- 10:00 Every morning they had to stand outside to be counted. The fifth person in line was always taken out and exterminated. They also had to stand stark naked outside for hours while the barracks were deloused. Once a month the men could visit. One day her father came and she saw that he had been beaten up.
- 11:00 The Phillips Company, which makes Norelco, had eleven Dutch women working for them. They were trying to save as many Dutch women as they could.
- 12:00 Marie was taken to Firth in April and she was there about ten months. She continues again about the Phillips Company saying there was a test to take and if you passed, you could get on. Marie passed the test and it saved her life.
- 13:00 Even though she went to the camps she felt she was safe as she thought she must have been on a list from the Phillips Company. Referring back to the night the Jews were taken from Holland, Marie said her mother painted the kitchen and put a hole in the door to hide things.
- 14:00 Marie tells that on November 15, 1943 the Firth Camp was emptied except for the women who worked for the Phillips Company. They would now be known as the Phillips Transport.
- 15:00 Her mother, sister and father had to go on that transport. Marie was now fourteen. The transport went to Auschwitz. There were thousands of people on it. She stayed in Firth until January 1944.
- 16:00 She just carried bricks back and forth. The Phillips women wore blue uniforms. In January, they left in closed wagons for Auschwitz.
- 17:00 Auschwitz knew they were the Phillips Transport. They had showers and were then tattooed. There were twins with her and they were separated. They went into an experimental ward.

- 18:00 They went to the barracks. There was no water except for what dripped off the roof when it rained. There was a cage full of women screaming. Marie stayed in these barracks for one to three months. Then the Phillips Transport was called up. They were on the train for two weeks.
- 19:00 Gypsies were on one side of the train and the Phillips women on the other. The Germans would step on the Gypsies throats with their boots and kill them. In the morning the Phillips people had to take their bodies out. The train came to a camp called Eisenstadt (ph) There they worked every night on airplane parts, or, so they were told. They walked three hours to and three hours from work and worked all night. Marie stayed in Eisenstadt, which was in Germany, about three months.
- 20:00 Then they got on the covered trains again to go to another camp which Marie thought might have been Bergen-Belsen. Here they carried bricks again. She stayed here for a while and then was sent to a death camp for two months before she went on the Death March. They walked for two weeks with no water and no food. They had no idea where they were going. Marie kept to herself because she was afraid and because she didn't want to get any sickness from the others.
- 21:00 She was only fourteen but had no thoughts and felt like a zombie. Marie had had no bath nor soap for over two years. She said it was really beyond her how she survived.
- 22:00 Her first impression of Auschwitz had been of the red sky. There were Hungarians on her train. It was dark. She never saw or heard about her family. She repeats how she kept going from camp to camp. They spent three quarters of the day being counted and they were always being deloused.
- 23:00 In Auschwitz they had one piece of black bread and watery soup that sometimes had flies in it. No one cared as they were so hungry. Marie tried to save half of her bread for evening, but you had to be careful because people would steal it. All the Dutch Jews were on the Phillips Transport. She said there were Jewish Kapos who were terrible. Some Kapos were political prisoners, some murderers.
- 24:00 Marie had no punishment because she kept to herself. Some girls had their heads shaved and they were thrown into bunkers and dungeons where they were put into ice cold water. There were not attempts at resistance from the Phillips Transport. They felt they could survive.
- 25:00 Marie's transport remembered the Jewish holidays but they had to be careful.