Tape two, side one:

RH: Where do I start?

LH: Well...

RH: O.K., I'll start because it shut off. When the Jewish people of my town, when the Jewish people of my town, Krevitz, were rounded up to be executed, there was one very beautiful girl. There were lots of beautiful girls. But I know the story of one girl, that was told to us. I don't know who witnessed it, probably not Jewish people were able to witness it, because anybody who was there did not survive. Maybe from the local militia, from the local police, who were the boys from our town that helped the Germans. Maybe they saw it, and they told this to their families, and that's how it became knowledgeable to us. Her name was Merka. They call her Merka. Maybe it was Miriam, but they called her Merka. Her father's name was Shmuelka. Shmuelka was a *katsov*, he was a butcher. Merka was a very beautiful girl. She was in her early twenties. They told the people, all of them, or just her, I don't know, to get undressed, and she was undressed. And a German touched her body. She was very beautiful, had a beautiful figure. In revenge, she slapped the German. After that, not only they shoot her, they punish her father. They ask which one is her father, and somebody pointed out to her father, but, it was, I guess, a mistake, and they took the father's brother, which his name was Shinsel. They were neighbors. They were tall, good-looking men. And they poked out Shinsel's eyes before they executed him. From this family survived one son. His name was Micha. He must, oh, have been 19, 20, 21. I don't remember now how old he was then. And somehow he reached the partisans. And he was in partisans. And there was a fight between the partisans and the Germans. And he had either a rifle or a machine gun, and he was shooting. He was very excited that he could shoot a German. Whether he killed him or not, I don't know. I don't remember from the stories they told me. But each time I know that when he shoots, he said that this is in revenge for my mother, for my father, for my sister, for my brother, and he mentioned every time the names of his family. I remember he had one sister whose name was Beylka. [Unclear] in the family. And the commandeer told him, from the resistance, he should get down, because he was standing. He was very excited about it that he could take revenge. And he was shot. People who were in the resistance, in the partisans with him, told us what happened to Micha. It was after the war, when we survived, and we met other people in our town. And, of course, we inquired about each and every one in the family, if they know whereabouts, where they are, and who survived. And that's when they told us what happened to Micha. And Micha got killed in the partisans that time in [unclear].

LH: Did you hear from your farmers, did you hear much about what was going on with the resistance?

RH: From the farmers we could hear about the resistance, because at night the resistance would come to us for food from the farm, and also maybe for some information. We had a railroad not far from our town, and also not far from our hiding place. We would

see during the day trains, long trains, going to the front, to the Leningrad front, to the Vitebsk front, to the Russian front, going for ammunition. And every night partisans came, and they put mines under the railroad. So the Germans became smart. And the first two cars would be sent before the engine would be sent, so they were stepping on the mines, so that only the sand would get splashed, and the train would be survived, the ammunition and all. So the partisans learned to make time bombs that the first two cars and the engine would go by, and in the middle it would get exploded. So then the Germans [unclear] and they put on guard local farmers to guard the railroad. They were afraid to put there Germans. They put local farmers to guard the railroad. So the partisans would not destroy the railroad, because this was a connection with the front, with the Leningrad front. So the partisans would come, and tie up the people, and still do, and still do, put bombs or mines under the railroad, because the local people by then cooperated with the partisans. Besides they had no choice. The partisans would come with guns. And besides, the people didn't like the Germans anymore, because from the First World War the Germans were the good Germans with Kaiser Wilhelm. The people prospered. I remember my grandmother telling stories from the First World War, because I asked her once, "Whom did the people like better - the Germans or the Russians? Like the Czar, or the Germans?" [Unclear] she says, no, they preferred, because the Czar's army didn't come, or the Cossacks would come and they would persecute the Jews. But the Wilhelm army, they were good Germans. They, somehow, I don't know, they were different people, polite, whatever. They would come. So here, by this time, they already heard of the trouble the Germans were doing. They were scared of them too, because one doesn't know what's gonna happen. So then they gave out a law to cut out all the trees near the railroad, because we had lots of woods – forests - growing. Now, lots of forests. So the partisans come to the forests, and come to the railroad. And then they go on their stomach. So they cut out all the trees, I don't know how many feet from the railroad, cut out all the trees. But somehow the partisans always managed. The partisans are people, were patriots, and doing underground work. This is not bought for money like a, or anything. They did because they wanted it. They are volunteers. It's not that people are being drafted and they're forced to do. They are volunteers. They do whatever they, because they want to do. So, a lot of people, the young Jewish boys by then were in partisans, and, of course, they were very involved, and very active in the partisans. But we were hidden in the farmer's house. We didn't know where the partisans are. We wanted to join them, but we didn't know where they are. We could not get connections. But after being maybe a year-and-a-half, maybe twenty months in the farmer's house, they burned down her house, because it was a big house, and not far from the railroad. And the partisans were afraid that the Germans might make a base, might make a base there. And they needed a, they didn't want the Germans should make a base there.

LH: Oh, so the partisans burned down the house.

RH: Yes, but they told, came and they told her and she could take out her things, whatever she could, she could take out her things. They gave her time. But by then we were

gone from there. We were gone. The farm lady what we stayed, she had a man, it's called a *parobek* [Polish farmer], that he worked the land for her. And they had 50-50 arrangement. It's her land and his labor, and they divided the crops. And they were a young couple. They were young. They could do. But she couldn't do the work on the farm. She was a woman. In fact, either he noticed us, he heard noises. But every Saturday night he would go home to his village. And the one time he saw so [unclear] partisans and they found us there. So being he knew, the *parobek* knew--his name was Ignatz--that we are there, we were afraid to stay with him. Being there, we were exposed, that the Jews are hiding on this farm. So we were afraid to be there.

LH: So what did you do?

RH: So what did you do? So first of all, we had to decide quickly what to do. So right away after the partisans left the house and they exposed us.

LH: You didn't trust the partisans?

RH: No. No. And we didn't trust Ignatz either. What I do, Ignatz and his wife they know, and maybe he'll tell. [Unclear] they could be drunk one Saturday night and tell somebody else that she's hiding Jews. By then our town was executed completely. No Jews. From the fifth execution, some people ran away. Either they were at work during the day. Either they were, if they have a chance to run away, a few people ran away. They survived. Then they lived in the one house. It was a, the, a woman her name was Sora Meira. She had a big house. Everybody lived in Sora Meira's house. And this, a bomb was thrown into that house a few weeks later. A bomb was thrown into that house. So whoever was still there, they got killed by the bomb. But somehow the few people survived that, I don't know how. So once Ignatz knew that we are there, we didn't trust him. So what did we do? So my mother and I went right after the partisans of [unclear]. And Ignatz was with them. He didn't even come himself, maybe he would let it go. But Ignatz came with them. We're looking like into Ignatz' window, telling Ignatz, "You must take us in. She's throwing us out." But, we called her the pani, because in Polish, like here you say Mrs. or Miss. In Polish you use, you say pani, or pan. Pan for Mr. and Pani for Mrs. So we called her pani. Instead of calling her Mrs. we called her pani. We didn't call her the first name. When [unclear] we call her Pani Anna. But then with ourselves, we just, the pani, the pani, like the Mrs.

LH: How many of there were you? Were there still five?

RH: At one time, we were by the pani - eight. My uncle, Laber Kafla, was shot on the farm. So my aunt Frieda - who had two children - came to us. We were, oh yeah, I forgot to tell earlier, we made contact. My mother made contact with her sister, who was on a farm at that time, because a few weeks earlier, we sent her to the farm because her husband, head of *Smolarnia* [Polish pitch factory], is a, a factory, that they made out of woods of certain trees. I think *sosna*- [Polish for pine] I don't know which tree. Trees like you use for Christmas trees, that had a lot of tar in them. So he had a factory to produce tar, before the war. He was a rich man. He owned twelve factories like this. You put in a

big kettle the roots of the trees, and you hit them, and the tar leaks out. And this is being gathered into barrels, and the barrels are being sold to businessmen who are involved in shipping industry. They were going to Gdynia and to Gdansk, to the Polish ports. And this was very necessary to smear the boats, because this is waterproof, with this tar, to prevent them from leakage. Because in those days boats were made out of wood, not out of metal.

LH: So how many of there were you at the time this happened with Ignatz?

RH: Well, at the time of Ignatz, I don't remember, but I remember that my mother and I went to Ignatz. We knocked on his window, and we told him, "You must take, you must take us in." He didn't want to. I said, "Ignatz! You are gonna have on your con science - where can we go now in the middle of the night!? You're a Christian! You're gonna have on your conscience not to take us in now! She's throwing us out. She will not take us back. And where do you expect us to go now?" My mother says, "I am a widow. I have a child. You're a Christian, and you're supposed to help me. So at this point you must keep me." He said, "I'm scared." I said, "I'm not gonna go in the middle of the night. You have to take us in." All we wanted that Ignatz should feel guilty if he's hiding Jews just the same, so by then he will not go and report that the pani was holding us. We stayed with him at his house for two days, in the cellar. In the daytime they went to work. They would give us a little bit food to eat, bread, whatever they gave us. They gave us, whatever they gave us, food to eat. And then, he says, "Look, you can't stay here." So we asked him, "Where can we go? Where are partisans?" And he told us. But we pretended that we went. But we went back to the pani. But we wanted to shut up Ignatz, that he should not be able to call Germans to tell that pani's holding Jews, that he should be just involved, even for two days. But now he was holding Jews. He already was branded that he held the Jews. He couldn't go to tell the Germans. If he told the Germans that she was, that the pani was holding Jews, then she could say that, "Ignatz, you were holding Jews too."

LH: Hmm.

RH: Making Ignatz feel guilty. This was our aim, that we can get Ignatz to keep us here.

LH: So you stayed with the pani then for the rest of the war?

RH: Not for the rest of the war. We felt it's too dangerous to stay there. The partisans know. The partisans are gonna come. They're gonna burn the house, because Ignatz came one time. He said, "The partisans are talking of burning down your house." And this was in the fall, so this is in like fall. I don't know how long we stayed more, but we went from there. See, my aunt, the one who, Frieda Kafla, being her husband was shot, and she was in the village, and the villagers felt sorry for her because they saw with their own eyes when he was shot. And she happened to be away from there, factory, from this *smolarnia*. Every day she would go with her children to different farmers [unclear], go to visit them, in case a, because the Germans knew there's a Jew on this *smolarnia*, running the business, running the smo--even for them, she was afraid they might come. When they round up the Jews in the town, they come to round up here. He is a one man, he could run

away. But she was with small children. What's she gonna do? So every day she would, for the day she would go out, and at night she would come back. But the farmers knew her, and being he was buying from them this, the woods, the roots of the wood, he was giving them a living. So somehow she would come there and ask for food, and they were giving some bread or a bottle of milk or a couple of eggs. And somehow she got contact for us. And now we felt there was danger there with the pani. I don't remember exactly what, but we felt danger there. So we went away to different people. And then we tried, and then again she would go to the villages and find out, and they told her, "Oh, Jews were here, yesterday, Jews were here, Saturday. 'Where are they? Find me! Connect me!'" We contacted, you see, there were the partisans. In our area were islands, but not islands from water, but islands surrounded with, with, how can I say, with swamps. Swamps. So the area was swampy. But a little bit further, with their little, like a little hill, which is dry, and there are trees. But how do you reach the little hill? You had to go through the swamps. And the swamps could go as far as your knee, or even as far as your chest. So wintertime the swamps would be frozen, but in summer time they were swamps. So the partisans could not go there. Now, in a bigger area, there were already a strong base from partisans, and they already took in people who would do supplies for them, like tailors and shoemakers, so they could, and blacksmiths, so they could do their horses the horseshoes. And the tailors could sew clothing for them, or whatever they ever they needed. And the women could bake bread for them and make food. And there was like a base established. I was never there, but it was, the families of the partisans were provided, or protected in other words. So people told us, "There is a base of partisans." Now they didn't take in everybody. They only took selected people, either strong people, people who are young, and people who could fight. So the women and children they didn't need. So, on the other areas, on those islands, families were hiding and having to make bunkers in the woods. But by then it was already '4--end of '43, the winter of '43, like, the winter starts like maybe like October, November, December, '43, going into '44. So we were in one of the swamps, and it was very cold. And it was raining. And they made a shed out of leaves, and some twigs. And the wind blew and it blew all apart. And it was cold, and no food. So, from the farmers, and we, by then they already made trouble for the villagers, too, took away Jews to go to camps. They did not go to concentration camp, it was working labor camps. I believe there were not concentration camps, because, the only paper you could get was a German paper - printed in Russian or in White Russian – but German use. So they wanted to show in the paper their victories in Russia, there on to Moscow, the victories in Leningrad. But they did show the *mapoleh* [disastrous defeat] in Stalingrad, because they were wearing like arm bands. But mostly there was white, it's victory, victory, in Africa, victory in England, victories in the other, in Italy, wherever they had a victory. But wherever they had *tsuris* [trouble], they didn't show it. And, but a farmer would get news from the partisans. They had underground radios, in contact with the Soviet Union. And they might get news. So, from the farmer we'd get news of bombings of anything. We were very eager to hear

anything, hear if the war is getting near. But even if it's not getting near, at least, so the Russian army is standing near us, that we could be freed from the, from the Germans. But remember, I am near the Russian border. We waited for the Russian army. I'm not in France there, waiting for the...

LH: Well, Americans.

RH: For the Americans.

LH: Right.

RH: I am too far from there. If the Americans would have reached me, I could be dead ten times. So, my mother went, and my aunt, Aunt Frieda, went to a farmer. This farmer was a rich farmer. He was [unclear]. He had lots of land. He also was a, he was a farmer. He was a smith, a blacksmith. And the partisans would come to him to fix the horses, the horseshoes for the horses, because they were riding on horseback, to make it faster to get to their destination. Also fixing their guns or something fixing for them. So they would get spoiled. So we figured he's involved with the partisans, so maybe he wouldn't be afraid to meet with us. My mother went to him. And she begged him, and offered to pay him in gold, he should build us a bunker. We were undernourished. We were very skinny. I tell you as a matter of fact, we lost the menstruation. From being undernourished, my mother and my aunt, they were young women, and I was a young teen, we lost the menstruation. We didn't get any menstruation, because we were undernourished, no food. It made me stunt my growth. Maybe I would have been taller. Because no food in the growing years, in the years when I had to grow. He said he would ask his wife if he should do it. By then, that was, this was in Pilcaschidna [phonetic], Pilcaschidna, Pilcaschidna. My mother had to cross a river, and the bridge was burnt. So there was a lot of wood, to cross on that log. The log was frozen with lots of ice. She couldn't walk on the log. The log was all ice, my mother and my aunt. By this time, my mother's different sister, Frieda, her younger sister, was going with my mother, to, to cross the river. And this is almost a little bit more safe, because German tanks could not cross the area. There were no bridges, unless they, they crossed there, the army, which put up portable bridges. But otherwise, and this takes time. Otherwise, the bridges were burned by partisans. The local people would cross either on the ice, or on the log. So, now when they came to cross the river, my mother and my aunt were debating who should go first. My mother being the older, so she says, "I'll go first. And you see me, if I cross safely, then you follow me. Don't be afraid. You follow me." And Frieda kept saying, "No! I will go first, because if something happens to you, we are all lost. Me and my children, including your child. But if I go first, and I drown, and you survive, and you do not go across because you see it's dangerous, and, at least you'll be a mother to my children." So the two sisters were arguing who should cross first the river. Each one tried to spare each other's life, not to save their own life. My mother wanted to go first. In case she drown, so Frieda could be alive, could survive, and not cross the river any more. On this log, which was round, and icy. It was very slippery. And Frieda kept saying, "No Fanya. Let me go first. Because if I

drown, and you survive, at least you'll be able to be a mother for your child and my children." They were both widows. The two sisters are widows by now. Because Frieda felt my mama is more energetic, older, and Frieda was very depressed. She used to be very rich. Her husband was killed. She was sick. She had from the cold, she had no warm clothing to wear. She was dressed very poorly, in *shmatas*, in rags. Her feet were [unclear]. She wore, she had a robe, so she was in this. This was her only clothing. No coat. Nothing. So she got sick. Her blood was like it put a cold in her blood or something like that. So she had cysts all over her body. We had no medication to heal it, so people would give a little bit flour, corn meal or something. She would put it, it should dry. This was itching, in her head. Especially on her behind. She would sit on her back, on her arms. So the two sisters were arguing who should go first. Each one tried to spare each other's life. Finally when they crossed the river and reached the farmer's house, he received them very nicely. He knew who we were, from the family, that we are from a prominent family from our town. He gave them food. He gave them lodging, slept over the night. And she begged him, and he said he would ask his wife. And the wife was too scared. So she begged him that he and his brother who was, his bro--this was Yosef, and his brother's name was something else. But the brother already suffered from the Germans. The whole village where Yosef's brother lived, was burned down. They had no places to live any more. The whole village was burned down. Probably because they helped partisans. Or they were accused of helping partisans.

LH: So did he build the bunker for you?

RH: Yes he did, for 20 ruble gold. He built the bunker for us. And my mother and my aunt came back to us, and they told us good news. Promised by Saturday the bunker will be ready. And we had to endure, suffer through the few more days from the cold in this shack that we built from twigs and leaves. And we came to this bunker. But when we came into the bunker, it looked like a palace, like a mansion, to us. First of all, it was warm, made out of logs, in the ground. And to disguise it was sand and grass and twigs put over it. He built us a little window so we could see, so we had light, at least see what's doing outside. He built it from rocks a little stove. And in the woods we could chop wood, and we could boil a little water. And out of logs he made a table for us. Out of logs. He also made something like a deck. And he brought us fresh straw. So we slept on it. So one deck was small, for three people. So it slept my aunt Bushka and her husband Moishe and Shevi, their child, for three people. And the one side was longer, so I slept with my mother. And then Frieda slept with her two children, Sam and Annie, Shamma and Hannah. And then later on my aunt found her brother-in-law--her husband's sister's husband--that she was killed, with this one child Sorah. And Shmuli and Sorah and Labele they were killed in this execution in Krevitz. I don't know if it was in [unclear], I don't remember. But her husband Label and one daughter Sonya, they survived the execution, because they also were on the farm, in this *smolarnia*. They survived. So she found him and brought him to us, that he could be with us. Sonya is now in Israel. Label also lived in Israel, but he died of natural

causes about ten or fifteen years ago. As of age, natural causes, but Sonya lives in Haifa. She's a teacher. Her husband is a scientist. They have two children, and grandchildren.

LH: So you were in the bunker and, was that where you...

RH: So now we are in the bunker. The bunker was like a mansion compared to where we were there. At one time later we were someplace in a village and we found a man all alone, from Dolhinow. He was a blacksmith. He survived. So we found him. He didn't know where to go. So we brought him along with us. And we lived there, and we made food. And we lived there. So this was the winter '43 and '44. And by spring of '44 we heard like shatterings, from very far away, like shatterings. And I said, "It sounds to me that this is bombings. Maybe the front is coming near us." This isn't a joke. Because this was impossible. This isn't a joke. And one day, Label, he used to go to the farmer. He was well liked with the peop--local people. He was a joker, a likeable person. He liked [unclear], he was well liked by the farmers, by their local people. And, but this is in the villages, far away from our town. We are in the woods. This, the bunker is built in the woods. So you'd think all this, all this banging that we hear, this is the front. But it must be very far away. At night, when it's very quiet, we could hear boom, boom, boom, boom. And I figured by air you could hear very far. Maybe it's the front coming nearer. Then one time we heard the good news that the Americans had [unclear] in Normandy. We didn't exactly knew where it was, or who or how, but the Americans came out to war. So we were happy about it. And then all of a sudden the bombing, the boom, boom came nearer and nearer, and running into the village, they said, "The front is coming nearer, that this is it!" But we had to be very careful, because the German army is breaking away, and the soldiers are running where they can. They're not going together as an army. Each one for their own lives. And if they come to the woods and find us, they could shoot us. So we have to be very careful. Also, by that spring, we were growing up. Me, I was the oldest from my cousins, I tried to teach them, because you have to. So we didn't have paper or pencils. So on the ground, on the sand, we made it level, and take a stick, and teach. My younger cousin, Hannah, which, and, she lives now in Canada, teach her one plus one. Teach her the ABC, Russian ABC, teach her a little bit arithmetic. I had to teach her. We were at time four children: me, the oldest, Rachel; then my cousin Sam, Shein; and then my cousin Shevi, she is now in California; and my cousin Hannah, Henny, she is now in Canada. Sam died in Canada not too long after, with a heart attack. He was overweight, and he died about fifteen years ago.

LH: So when did the front come to you?

RH: Actually, we did not see a front. It was a *Blitzkrieg*. The Russians learned from the German strategy. And they did not stop fighting. The partisans helped in the back, and there was a *Blitzkrieg*. And every day later, when somebody else would go to the village, talk to the, to the local people, hear what's going on. And they told us this, it was the front Hastrevitz, so a little further. So one day Label went to Krevitz to find out what's doing, if any Jews are there. He went with somebody, or probably the Shmied [phonetic], Yankele Shmied from Dolhinow. Alone he wouldn't go, but he maybe went with Yankele

Shmied from Dolhinow, went to Krevitz to find out. Yes, there's already a government, a Russian government, local, from local people. And the front is already far away. And we decided that we are gonna come to town. A week later, a couple weeks, because in the woods was dangerous. Because it is broken up the army, two, three, four, five German soldiers, and they had ammunition. They could kill us. So one day we decided that all the people from this area who survived from my town, plus people from the next town, that were near us, they should all come with us to Krevitz. We should come in as a group, not as individuals. We should come in as a group. So we hired a wagon, a horse and wagon, this is for the children to ride. And adults walked. We walked the whole night. Because, let's say, "our" family, a few miles away at a different island, and a different few families, from a different town, from Yargov, we took them with us. Then from a different island, other families from our town, we took them. And we took them in. We came in to the town, on a Sunday morning. We walked the whole night. And as we came, we saw how they, the trees that were chopped by the railroad, they were growing like little bushes. So we knew what was happening. And we came to the town, and people were living in our house. So my mother went to the local authorities to tell them that we are back, and we'd like to, we suffered enough, wherever we were hiding, and we would like to have our house. So they told them, the people who occupied our house that they should move out. And, it was our furnishings. Misery because everything was robbed, taken. So we went to our house, and all the people that came along with us, our friends, moved into our house. I mean the local people in my town, from Krevitz, maybe they could get their houses, too, but they were too scared to be a one person in their own house. They'd rather sleep on the floor, but as a group. We still didn't trust the local people either. And the local people came running to see that we survived. And some people would say, "We thought you were in America, you're, because you were so rich, that maybe hi--you chartered a plane and went to America or to England." Some came with eggs and milk, butter with bread. "We're happy you survived. Thanks God you survived. It was terrible for you. It was terrible for us." And people came to greet us, with presents, presents of food. Because they were happy that we are here. Then a little girl was playing there. But she looked like a *shiksehle* [little Gentile girl]. So my mother says to me that, this is a *shikseh* girl. Whose child is this? Is she like from which neighbor? Because none, she says, *"Ich nicht a shiksehle. Ich a Yiddishe.*" [I am not a little Gentile girl, I am a Jew.] I say, "Oh yeah, who are you?, *wu bist du*?" She tells us, "*Ich bin fun Miagov*" [I am from Miagov.] "*Wer bist du fun Miagov*?" [Where are you from Miagov?"] And she told her, Miagov was a town, I don't know how many kilometers from us. But we heard of this town, Miagov. And I heard when the Germans came in to us in '41, it's from Miagov they took the *zwenzig beste baalebatim,* the twenty prominent people - the rabbi, the r*ov*, the *shochet*, the business people, and they tortured them. And how did they torture them? They put boiling water over them. And the rabbi's beard they pulled. They put vicious dogs, that the dogs should bite them, and pull them apart. But they were very tortured. Before they were shot they were tortured. And among

these twenty *balebatim* was this girl's father. My mother prayed to God being I was an only child, that He should spare my life, that I should not be killed during the war.

Tape two, side two:

RH: That he spares my life. She felt it's gonna be a lot of orphans after the war, boys or girls, that she's gonna take a orphan, and raise it as her child. So my mother wanted to take this little girl and raise her as her child. But she was with a different family. Her parents were, her father was killed in the beginning. Then, she had a uncle or a cousin in Dolhinow, who was involved in partisans. And he arranged to take out the Jews from that town one night. There were prepared horses and wagons to take out the women and the children, take them out from the town. And they did. And they were hidden in woods. And one day, the local people came to tell the Germans, that this is not an army, and no partisans, but women and children. And the Germans came, and they made a, they rounded them up. They were shooting them. They rounded up and they were running away. So this little girl, her name is Chayala. Her name is Chayala, was Chayala Gordon. Now she's married. She lives in New Jersey. She has four children of her own. So Chayala was holding her mother's hand. Her little brother, who was older than she, he fell. And she was [unclear] her mother, and her mother fell. She saw her mother trip over a wood, or a bush. She let go of her mother's hand, and she was running, falling, running. When it quieted down, she found a uncle, and she was with her uncle. And by the end of the war, the uncle knocked on somebody's window in the middle of the night, asking for shelter or for food, and German people were in that village, and they shoot him. Because she was little, standing next to him, they didn't notice her. And he was of natural height. And she was a child, maybe five years old. So they didn't shoot her. That's what she was telling us. And she ran away, and she found this, joined different people, and she went with people. And then my mother took this little girl Chayala from this family. My mother raised her. And she was with us in our town. When the time came for us to leave our town to go to Poland, we took her along. When we came to Poland, you see, Poland was not a Polish government. Maybe they speak Polish, but it was under Russia, under the Soviet Union. We did not wish to remain there, because we wanted to go more to a western. Our aim was to reach Israel or America, the United States. By then my mother had a sister in Canada, and a brother in the United States, and another sister in the United States. So we did not wish to remain in Europe. We could not stand walking on the sidewalk, which were blood shed on the street, and seeing our *shul*, which was historic. When the Germans first came in, they burned the *Sefer Torahs* [*Torah* scrolls], and all the stores in our town. They made a big fire. And they took out the *Sefer Torahs*, put them up like logs of wood. And they burned them. Even the local people felt that this was a shame to do, because they knew that for our people, the Torah is very holy. So one of the, maybe a few of the local people helped schlep the *Sefer Torahs* to be burned. Later on this guy, somehow, for whatever reason, the Germans shoot him. And when the people, the local people went to his funeral, and he was displayed in his coffin, they said that his right arm was hanging, like it was shot. And they felt, the local people, because he helped to carry the Jews' Torah to be burned. Even he was shot by the

Germans. He was punished. The local people were very Christian, very religious, at that time. Maybe now they're modernized and maybe they're not so. But at that time they were very Christian, and very religious, and believers in the Almighty. So they felt that to a Jew this is a very holy thing, the Torah. And because he helped the Germans burn it, he was punished for it. He was shot by the Germans, and his right arm was sort of, to the shooting, cut, or, was hanging down. It's funny. His name was Stavitsky. I forgot his first name. But I remember his face. I forgot his first name. My mother raised Chayala when we came to Germany to the displaced persons camp. We came to Foehrenwald. She came along with us. She was always with us. She was a little girl. She used to go to school. She was a blonde. She was beautiful. She was cute. And she did come to the United States. Actually, we sent her. Because, my mother registered in the Committee[3] of, all our names. And our relatives here saw the names in the Jewish newspaper. So they started making papers for us. Maybe they saw Chayala's name also, but they didn't know that she belonged to us. We registered her name as Chayala Gordon. Maybe some of the family would see her from Yardov. But they didn't know that we were raising her. We had no communication by mail with them. No communication with mail. So they didn't know. So for her we didn't have any papers. So that time they were taking children, orphans, and bringing them to the States. They signed them orphans. And my mother registered her, to send her to the States, to our relatives here. And when we will come, she is going to come to live with us. So when she arrived to the States, my uncle, my mother's brother, his name is Rabbi Mendel, Al, Nachum Mendel Altari [phonetic]. At that time he was in Worchester. And a social worker contacted him. And he took her, and he raised her. And he married her off. He wrote, my mother also had a sister, Tolador, Telagor [phonetic], in Worchester. She also wanted Chayala, to raise her. But Mendel wanted to raise her because Mendel was rabbi. The others were modern. He wanted to raise her in a religious way, that she should know that she is Jewish and why her parents perished, because of being Jewish. Now she's living a religious life. She married a Lubavicher. My uncle was a Lubavich, a Lubavicher. Her husband is a rabbi. He went, he made through college in his spare time, and he became a math teacher. For he, he, as, to earn a living he was a Hebrew teacher in a *yeshivah*. But in odd hours he would go to college and he became a math teacher. He was teaching high school math. And he works in computers in Manhattan. They have four children. Two daughters are married. A son is engaged. All went to *yeshivahs*. All very fine family. We are very proud of her, that she grew up on her own. I mean, with our help, of course. Chayala's children call me *Tante* Rocheleh. My name is Rachel, and they consider me as an aunt, as being an older sister to Chayala. They call me *Tante* Rocheleh and my husband is Uncle Moishe. And we treat her children as our own, and whenever there is a *simchah* [joyful occasion], with nice gifts, and we love them. Chayala already has two grandchildren. Her two daughters who are married: one is married to a doctor who is Lubavich. And the one daughter is married to a Lakewood student. And he is still keeping and studying Torah in Lakewood *yeshivah*.

[3]Central Committee, the authorized representative of displaced Jews in the American zone.

The son also went to Lubavich *yeshivah*. The youngest son, her daughter is named Hannah for her mother. And the son is named Michel [Michael], for her father, the two other children for different relatives, perhaps her husband's family. Well, she still has one son engaged now, and one son is about 16 or 17, went to the Longbeach *Yeshivah*.

LH: Just let me ask you something about, you said you were in a camp, a DP camp at the end.

RH: Well, this is a displaced persons' camp...

LH: Right.

RH: This is after the war. In the displaced persons' camp, we were in '45 till the end of '47, actually beginning of '48 we left the camp to go, to come to North America, which we arrived to Canada.

LH: What was life like in the camp?

RH: In camp? Well, remember, the camp life was after the war. It's normal times. We were supported by the Joint [American Joint Distribution Committee]. Right away we were organized . . .

LH: By the Joint.

RH: By the Joint.

LH: What's the Joint?

RH: In other, the Joint is some kind of American organization, HIAS or something, or Joint, or Jewish philanthropies or something like that. This is after the war. This is displaced persons' camp. They organized right away a school. Schoolchildren went to school. We taught them Hebrew and other subjects. They opened up an ORT [Organization for Rehabilitation and Training] school. I went to the ORT school. I learned sewing. Which I made beautiful gowns and beautiful dressed that I sewed. I work with it. I earn my, when I arrived to Canada I worked in a factory to sew, because I learned sewing in this ORT school. There was also knitting. I was working in a knitting school. Or the knitting, I was already professional, while being hidden at the farm. The farm there also had a name, the *agrono*, because he was an agricultural engineer. Another one who was hiding us, actually, the original people who owned this farm, his name was Kuchevsky [phonetic]. He was a Polish officer. And his wife was a teacher. Her maiden name was Kobinska. Now, to Kobinska came her sister Anna, for summer vacation. and to Kuchevsky had his brother, who was a [unclear] a little bit near [unclear]. Also, his father, who was a president of the bank in Lublin, came on vacation, and the war broke out, and they couldn't go back. Now, Kobinska, actually her name is not Kuchevska because she married the officer Kuchevsky and had two little girls--Marinka and Anushka. Anushka lives in California. Marinka is in Poland. Then Mrs. Kuchevska was arrested, and she was sent to Siberia. And Kuchevsky was arrested, and he was put in jail. And the father, through all this *tsuris* [calamities], he couldn't reach his family in Lublin - his wife and his other children - and the *tsuris* here. He couldn't take it. He hanged himself in a barn. Now, they left the two, they left the two, the two orphans - Marinka and Anushka, little children. And

Anna, which is their mother's sister, raised them, and her uncle, which is the father's brother, raised them. And we stayed with them. We stayed with them. And that, when we arrived to this, to the, that we came to our, in the States, with Anna, that's the Kobinska, which I call her pani for my conversations, I call her pani because, between ourselves, we always say the pani, the pani. We did not want to mention the name. So, she survived with the children. The uncle, he married and he died. And she came to Poland with the two children. Then their mother, Kuchevska, came from Siberia. She survived the war. And she came to Poland, to southern Poland. Anna lives now in Krakow, and Kuchevska lives someplace not far from there. I don't know exactly which village. And Marinka went to college, and she married a dentist. Anushka, my aunt Frieda helped bring to Canada, married her off, and she lives now in California. She started going in Poland to medical school--Anushka--but she didn't finish, so she's a nurse assisting at operations, in surgery. She's a nurse. [tape off]