

INA ROTHSCHILD [3-1-49]

Tape three, side one:

The army.

IR: They made out of it a soldiers hospital for, they said at that time, infectious diseases. And because it was located above the city up higher, it was more or less isolated. They made it as a *Lazarett*, as a soldiers hospital for infectious diseases. So we had to go right away.

FS: And you went back to Stuttgart.

IR: We went back to Stuttgart, found an apartment. We tried everything, couldn't get one. Then finally we shared an apartment with a young couple. The man was paralyzed, had multiple sclerosis, and an old lady.

FS: With a Jewish couple.

IR: Jewish. And I had to take care of this old lady at the same time, was bedridden. My husband took over the Stuttgarter Jewish school because the director of that school went to South America, and we had more and more children there. And they had to live there too, not only to go to school, because they had no home.

FS: Who supported these children?

IR: The Jewish...

FS: Communities?

IR: What shall I say, congregations, communities, the Jewish communities. There was no support any more from the state. It was all in Jewish hands. And we all worked together. They opened at the same time a kitchen because these children had to be fed. And people who couldn't afford, we had young employees who didn't have anybody, couldn't afford to go

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elsewhere and they couldn't go to a restaurant. They could eat there for a small amount of money. So women worked there as volunteers like always. The kitchens were taken care of. And we, one after another, would take over other jobs. I was a trained nurse. I visited sick people.

FS: In the community?

IR: In Stuttgart. And we couldn't do any shopping, marketing in any store. So there was one small store. They called it a *Juden* [Jewish] store. When you say West Philadelphia and we lived here. So we had to go with heavy shopping bags at a certain time with trolleys, had to stand, not allowed to sit inside, like it was years ago in the south with the colored. We were standing on that platform, summer, winter, all the time.

FS: To buy your food?

IR: To buy our food and I bought at the same time for three, four older people.

FS: Did you have ration cards?

IR: Yes.

EJ: Everything was rationed.

FS: Oh, everything was rationed.

IR: Everything. It was war anyhow and we got even less. I remember that we had once a week meat, [unclear] *fleisch*, 100 gram, the tiniest piece. And a good thing was that many Jewish people had some gentile friends who would bring something quietly at night. My sister brought us something from Frankfurt. We had people who had worked for the orphanage years ago and they would come in the evening and bring two bottles of milk or would bring something. Then there was one man, he was a conscientious objector, Seventh Day Adventist; he would bring us from his rationing rice, cream of wheat, a little bit of flour in tiny little packs that he

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could carry in his pockets. And now they had to be afraid to go into the house because on the first floor lived gentile people. Meanwhile, we had moved twice, not with a moving van but with little...

EJ: You had to move.

[Multiple Exchange]

IR: *Bismarck Strasse*, but that was a former Jewish house with Jewish families. But we had to leave there too. They took that over. And we moved in an apartment, don't ask me, we were seven different parties in one apartment with one kitchen and one bathroom, and each one had one room. And we were privileged that we had two outlets extra so we had a little burner, electric burner, where we could cook a little bit something for ourselves. We didn't have always to stand in the kitchen and wait until this one is finished or this one is finished.

FS: Did these people get along with each other?

IR: Yes. We all got along. We can't say otherwise. One family had two children, the Cahns. He was in prison, a Jewish man had a gentile wife and two children.

EJ: The other one, he was a Turk.

IR: The Turks, yes. And they had two daughters. They had one room. And then there was a Jewish couple, the Greinsheimers. Their children were in America, and they were one of the first who had to go with the transport. And we were there until August, '42.

FS: Which year?

IR: 1942, August 22, 1942 we all left with the transport. But there were three or four transports before.

FS: Did you know where the transports were going to go?

IR: My husband working in the school system and in the congregations knew about.

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And he every time was with these people helping, putting together that they had something to eat on the way, that they had clothing.

FS: And where did these various transports go?

IR: To Riga. I don't remember where to any more. I had that one paper. I don't know whether I gave it to you, so I still have it.

FS: It doesn't matter.

IR: And when there was a children's transport, and I remember my husband came home in tears. He said, "Today I know I sent all my former students to death."

FS: He knew then that they...

IR: We knew already these transports go to gas chambers.

FS: And that was when?

IR: '41, all year '41. It start in '40 already.

FS: You knew these children would die?

IR: We knew.

FS: Did you know where this children's transport was headed for?

IR: I knew it.

FS: But you have forgotten.

IR: They were mostly to Riga, to Poland, Lublin and these neighborhoods. There they had built gas chambers beforehand. Our sisters had to go in April, '42. The only thing we knew was one postcard that you got.

FS: When did you first hear that Jews were being methodically killed in gas chambers or otherwise? Can you recall that?

EJ: I know it from my husband. When he came back from Riga [unclear] and he

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came back and he told me. He had heard about it. And he said to me, "I will tell," this was my two older sisters still were here. "The moment when they have to go, they should take their lives. Better then to go where they take your life." I said, "Don't tell them." He said, "I have to tell them. I know so much about it. I heard it from all sides."

FS: I believe that you told us that on the last tape.

EJ: They didn't believe it. They didn't believe it.

FS: Your sisters did not believe it?

EJ: They didn't believe that that--they believed it but they had a hope. It wouldn't happen. Something would, a miracle would come. Then they came away in April--just before you.

IR: April, '42.

EJ: On the 18th of April.

FS: And where were they sent to?

EJ: Aschaffenburg.

FS: No, I mean where to?

EJ: They came...

IR: We had the name last week.

[Multiple discussion.]

FS: Well it doesn't matter.

IR: Near Riga.

EJ: It was Gratnikov [phonetic] or something--what you call?

IR: The destination, the camps.

EJ: No, no, where I got the card from. It must be near Riga.

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FS: When your sisters wrote to you what did they write?

EJ: One. It was a postcard it must be somebody brought out.

FS: What was in the postcard?

EJ: And the postcard was, my sister wrote in German. *Ich sitze hier auf meinem Koffer und hab bitter* [unclear]. [I am sitting her on my suitcase and have bitter [unclear].] Do you know what that means?

FS: Hunger, hunger.

EJ: Yes. She wrote it. *Sieben Stunden sind wir marschiert im Schlamm bis an die Kniee. Wenn nichts dazwischen kommt* [unclear]. [We marched for seven hours through mud up to our knees.] And I had to give it in Aschaffenburg for the *Todeserklärung* [death certificate]. I want to know something. I took this card with me.

FS: This was after the war?

EJ: After the war.

IR: That you could prove that there they were dead.

FS: Now let's go back. You sent off the children's transport? Then what happened after that?

IR: We never heard anything from them any more.

FS: What happened to you after? How much...

IR: We had to work. We had--at that time--in '40 or '41 the American consulate closed. We had, still had a few weeks ago our number that we had for America. We were never called. And we had to stay because my husband was needed. I worked--instead to work in a factory, I worked, was recognized as nurse being needed in Jewish families. The old age homes were there. They had to be taken away from these Jewish homes, beautiful homes that the

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community had built, to a small outlying old *Schlosse* near Heidelberg.

FS: Castle. An old castle.

IR: Yes. And they had one enormous fireplace. We brought these people there in the snow. I know that I just couldn't go further anymore. There was one woman who helped me up and she said, "If you don't go, I'll have to hit you now. You have to go on. You cannot lie there. Think about your husband who is waiting for you." We brought these people there. We cleaned that whole *dreck* [dirt] up. We had no beds. We just had old mattresses, whatever there was for the old...

FS: And you slept on the floor on these mattresses?

IR: Yes. And then they started these old fireplaces. Rieka, my friend who passed away last year, the other one in South Africa, they took care of them with a few other helpers, all Jewish younger people who were not yet called to transports. And this woman who was, what shall I say, a student, a pupil in the orphanage 20-30 years ago meanwhile had married a gentile engineer. That's why she's still there. And she had written to us if we ever need something, they are willing to help us. Here I didn't know her. She was with me and she said, "You go home with me. You sleep at night. Tomorrow morning I will bring you back. Then you can help." And the next morning when we came, we saw flames out of these enormous old fireplaces that hadn't worked for many years, and all the old people sitting out in the snow, until we finally-- there was no telephone--could send somebody who could walk better to the next village and tell them, "There is a fire. You have to come. You have to help." Now slowly we could arrange--I guess I was there for about two weeks, my husband alone at home in Stuttgart--and arrange that we could take care of these people. And in these small hamlets *Dorfe*, they helped.

FS: You mean the people helped?

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IR: The people, gentile people. They would come and help, brought beds, brought food, helped with wood that they could use in these old kitchens and so on. And that went on. That was in winter '40 to '41, '40-'41. And so were different places. *Tante* [aunt] Clara was in elsewhere. I don't remember the names any more. Everywhere where was an old dilapidated castle or old whatever you call it, or a wealthy farm was, that was used for the old people until they collected them and sent them away.

FS: And when did you first hear that you were going to be sent away?

[Multiple Exchange]

IR: We expected it all the time.

EJ: When the transport started, you knew. Look, my sisters in Aschaffenburg they were informed maybe in March they should put everything together. They should make big *kiste mit Lebensmittel...*

FS: Boxes of food.

EJ: Yes, and everything, and clothes [unclear]. Just they would take these with them. But they wanted only that they wouldn't give the things away, that everything was packed, but they never got something. *Nun das ging bis an Die Grenze*. [that went just to the border]. I saw in Frankfurt auction after auction every day where they auctioned these things from the Jewish people. Some people bought like *Sofakissen* [sofa pillows] and opened it and found rings, *Brillant* [diamond] rings, golden watches and everything.

FS: Let me ask a question. The people, the gentile people, the majority of the gentile people, were they glad that the Jews went?

IR: Some.

EJ: I think some who were Nazis. But a lot of people, they couldn't say actually.

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They must be afraid the neighbors would tell the S.A. and they would be taken away too.

Everybody was afraid of the others. Nobody [unclear], you know. But they knew, the people knew what was auctioned was from Jews.

FS: These auctions were advertised?

EJ: They were advertised in the paper, not that they were from Jews.

FS: But people knew it. Had you ever been at one of those auctions?

EJ: Never. [unclear] I wouldn't have gone. But I heard from people who told me what they found.

IR: We packed. We had the same thing. We were told a few days, maybe ten days before, on the 22nd of August will be a transport to the old age home, Theresienstadt.

FS: The 22nd of August. Which year?

IR: '42. And we knew all the time that these people never sent a card, never [unclear] the ones who had gone before. I had mentioned to you that these children, retarded people and retarded children were packed up in these enormous aluminum trailers and put away. And these nuns who had asked, "Where do you take the children?" they said, "Come along. You will see." They didn't come back.

FS: Did they kill them in Germany? Or do you know where they killed them?

IR: We know they went up...

EJ: Ravensburg was German; Ravensburg was in Germany. It was a big concentration camp with the gas chambers.

FS: And they took these children to Ravensburg?

EJ: And the grown-ups too. I know a lot of people who came into Ravensburg and never came back.

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INA ROTHSCHILD [3-1-58]

IR: Do you know where Ravensburg was?

[unclear exchange]

FS: In Southern Germany. Now where is this place where you said that some of the people complained of the awful smell?

IR: That was in Wurttemberg. This is Heilbronn...

FS: You're looking at the map here.

[Discussion]

IR: This was an awful summer *Stelle*.

FS: This is where they collected the Jews to send them away?

IR: No. They collected them in Stuttgart.

FS: In Stuttgart?

IR: In Stuttgart. They came from all these small towns and sent them further up.

EJ: But I never heard about them this.

IR: Elsa, I know this.

EJ: To tell you the truth, after the war I found out all over where they were.

IR: I heard it and I know it.

FS: Okay. Now you got notice on August 22...

IR: That we have to leave on August 22 and to be up there, I guess it was on the 20th, at the [unclear] that is the *Aussichtsturm* [Observation Tower], what shall I say, a beautiful place up there. All to be there.

FS: And what were you to bring?

IR: We had to pack separate, like my sister said, not only suitcases but little boxes with food and household items, a broom, a dustpan, a pail, pot and pan. And it was closed and

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had to be collected the next morning by the uniformed police or whatever it was and taken away.

We ourselves could have a small suitcase and rucksack.

FS: Now these boxes, Mrs. Jaeckel, these boxes were auctioned off?

EJ: It was not boxes. The people, like in Aschaffenburg, they could take other things, not only food, like a *Kiste*.

FS: Like a big box.

EJ: I knew. I was there. I came every day. I went down. They knew two or three weeks before. They took everything what they think it would be valuable that they would pack.

In *Kisten*.

FS: In boxes.

EJ: Yes.

IR: They would get it at the end station.

EJ: They took everything. They believed...

FS: That it would go with them.

EJ: That it would go with them, and they never--you heard what I said. [unclear] and they never heard anything and we never heard anything.

FS: And you say these things were then auctioned off to the German public?

EJ: Absolute.

FS: And who got the money for this?

EJ: The--bank?

FS: The German government.

EJ: The government.

FS: And would you say that the people were aware of...

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INA ROTHSCHILD [3-1-60]

- EJ: A lot of people were aware.
- FS: ...of where this stuff came from?
- EJ: Sure. How should I know? Otherwise I couldn't tell anybody else.
- FS: Had you actually been at one of those auctions?
- EJ: No, no, I never. But I know people who went there and told me. They said, "You know, we find a golden watch in that..."
- FS: In that pillow?
- EJ: They had to have money, you know. Money, or they thought, maybe they could get this for later on. Put money in...
- FS: In pillows and in clothing and in various items.
- EJ: People went away and put it in their coats.
- IR: In the seams they would sew money in, jewelry, whatever they had, valuable things that they thought maybe [unclear], we can use it.
- EJ: Everybody had a hope, you know.
- FS: That they would live. Now let's just step back two months. This was on the 22nd of August, 1942. On June 21, I believe, Hitler invaded Russia.
- EJ: I was there. On this day I was in Stuttgart.
- IR: But that was in '39.
- FS: In '41.
- EJ: It was '41.
- FS: Tell me what you remember about that day.
- EJ: I was in Stuttgart with my sister. And I went out shopping for her because I didn't wear a star. I was in the stores and I bought something what I could buy for her. And I went up,

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in *Bismarkstrasse*, I went up the street and I heard on a radio where a window was open--we didn't have a radio any more, you were not allowed to have a radio--that the Russian...

[Multiple Exchange]

FS: There was no declaration of war at all. But that's how you got the news, you heard it through an open window in the street?

EJ: We couldn't have a paper either.

FS: Now where was your husband...

EJ: My husband...

FS: No, no. At the time of the invasion of Germany to Russia, was he then in Finland? Still in Finland?

EJ: My husband was back already.

[Multiple Exchange]

I have to think about this. He was not away. Was he away at this time? I don't remember any more. I wanted him to meet me in Würzburg but I came to Stuttgart.

FS: Did people think that Hitler could conquer Russia, from what you heard in the street?

EJ: Yes, people believed it. German people were so sure.

FS: That Hitler would conquer Russia?

EJ: Yes. They can conquer everybody.

FS: You were in Germany during the entire war. When would you say was the first rumbling that Hitler might not win the war?

EJ: I think the winter of '42 or '43. [unclear]

FS: In Christmas, 1941--I believe it was '41--Hitler's troops were on the outskirts of

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Moscow.

EJ: And then they got--the Russians drove them back. They got the first hit from the Russians.

FS: So would you say that people--was it after Stalingrad or before Stalingrad?

EJ: It was before Stalingrad already.

FS: That people thought they might not win?

EJ: Yes.

FS: Okay. Let's go back, Mrs. Rothschild, and you tell me what happened when you were deported.

IR: We had to bring together...

EJ: Well, my husband was home already. He was home.

IR: Elsa, we talked about '41. It's '42 here. You came and you left us. [unclear] Wait a moment. My husband had to go to work in the morning from that apartment to--it could have been a [unclear] to that Jewish former synagogue where now the congregational offices were. He was not allowed to go straight there. He had to go to the red light circle in the morning at 6:00 in order to go to the *minyán* and then start school. And once on an awful day he thought, maybe nobody will see me in rain and bad weather. He tried to avoid that.

FS: To go where it was.

IR: To go straight there. And such fresh guys saw him and beat him. So he never dared to do that again. That evening I don't know how late it was until he came home. [unclear] to come back and I was standing behind a window and it was almost dark until he came home because he was afraid. Either to go there or there. And every few days there was something else going on that he'd get afraid. These people were called. They were collected [unclear] in small

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INA ROTHSCHILD [3-1-63]

groups, in bigger groups, it was constantly. And then we found out in time that there will be a big transport of Jews from all over Wurttemberg going to that old age home in Theresienstadt. We should take along as much as we can because there we will live. We had to give all our money, take out of the bank whatever there is, write it over to the bank where they had opened for the...

FS: The Jewish accounts.

IR: The Jewish accounts. And it was nothing but a fictitious name. The Nazis took everything. And we packed what we could in suitcases, a small suitcase that you could carry, each one. We had a rucksack. That's why I remember.

EJ: My husband.

IR: Her husband came and opened the rucksack.

EJ: He heard about Riga from people who came from Riga.

IR: He opened them, put folded 20 mark bills in all along.

FS: Into the leather of the rucksack? Into the straps of the rucksack.

IR: Into the straps of the rucksack and taped them together. And that was for a long time our help because that we had, the rucksack.

FS: How much money were you able to take along?

IR: A few hundred marks, that was all. And then, when we had to go with our bundles in a collective trolley car to be brought up...

(End of Side 1)

INA ROTHSCHILD [3-2-64]

Tape three, side two:

IR: They were responsible that nothing would happen, that everything would go in peace and quietly and in order. And that boy came up to us and said, "Let me have your suitcase. They take it away. Let me carry it for you."

FS: What kind of a boy?

IR: He was a former student of [unclear].

FS: A gentile or Jew?

IR: Half and half. We had many illegitimate children, a gentile father/a Jewish mother, and the other way around. And he helped us all day long. That was one of the things that I could keep, my nurse's scissors, knife, and all kinds of things. He said, "They will take it away. Let me have it. I'll go with you." They called my husband Herr Father and Frau Mutter-- and he left. He was allowed. He had volunteered before, to help. There were such children. And then he said, "Lisl and [unclear] are there too. They will come and help you. You won't lose anything. Can we bring you something?"

FS: And they stayed with you, these children. How old were these children?

IR: He was by that time 14 or 15. And they helped us in every way, these boys. They didn't have to go because they were *Mischling*.

FS: Half Jews...

IR: Half Jew, half gentile. And the next day we were all loaded into old fashioned trains.

FS: You don't remember the date?

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INA ROTHSCHILD [3-2-65]

IR: It was on the 22nd of August when we left, with the destination Theresienstadt.

FS: You knew that you were going...

IR: That we were told. These three men who were in charge knew that. They had to have a list from everybody. They had to have--they were responsible for everybody. We were more or less loaded together. Each one had that much room.

FS: Yes, very tight.

IR: On these old-fashioned wooden benches. And we had sick people. And for these we had again straw. They were *Viehwagen* [cattle cars].

FS: You mean the sick people were put into cattle cars.

IR: The sick people were in a cattle train and we had to go through and help, that we were five nurses from Stuttgart. There was my friend Rachael and I as nurses, registered nurses, in charge of so many. Others were elsewhere. And there were, as far as I remember, about 1,000 people.

FS: In this train?

IR: In this train. In [unclear] came one nurse with about 50-60 amputees taken out of the hospital, Jewish men and women in awful condition. It was Helga, the only nurse with all these people. And some of them died on the way. And when we came to Leipzig, what I mentioned, we could open one window and there were nurses outside marching by. We called to them, "Give us water. We have no water for the sick. We don't have a sip to drink nor can we flush a toilet, neither can we wash anybody." "We are not allowed to do anything."

FS: These were gentile nurses?

IR: This was in Leipzig.

FS: And did not help?

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IR: No help.

FS: Gave you no water and no food.

IR: No nothing. What we had, all right, but how long can you have water? We had a few such big pitchers with fresh water. That was gone in 24 hours, but we were on our way two and a half days.

FS: Were there stations where you could relieve yourselves?

IR: Toilets, yes, like always but no water.

FS: Then from Leipzig you went where?

IR: Further to Czechoslovakia, passing Prague. We were I think here.

FS: We're looking at the map again.

[Multiple exchange]

IR: Maybe we came from here.

FS: From Karlsruhe, from Heilbronn?

IR: Yes.

FS: Württemberg. In Prague you changed, you were...

IR: Nothing changed. The train was never opened. Outside Prague in Czechoslovakia was Karlsbad.

FS: Outside Prague is Theresienstadt.

IR: But in Czechoslovakia not far from Prague. It must be further over.

FS: About 10-15 kilometers would you say?

IR: That I wouldn't know.

FS: Okay, when you arrived in Theresienstadt tell me what happened.

IR: We didn't arrive in Theresienstadt. The end station was... [Skip on tape.] the

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INA ROTHSCHILD [3-2-67]

living and the dead. And the ones who couldn't walk any more were loaded on old-fashioned trucks.

FS: Who did that loading?

IR: Czech police who spoke German, and German. And they loaded the ones who couldn't walk. The others had to walk. And the police on each side with the *Reitpeitsche*.

FS: With horse whips.

IR: Walk, walk, walk. How much you can walk? And from Witzenhausen we had a few old people where my husband came from and they couldn't walk any more and they fell down on the side. We had to walk at least one and a half, two hours. And my husband went over to help that man who was his age. I cannot tell you how they treated him. You let them [German].

FS: You let him...

IR: We had to let them lie there. You couldn't help this man.

FS: You just had to let him lie and die in the street.

IR: And die all along the street. And the ones who couldn't make it until there collapsed. And when we arrived in old *Kaserne*--what do you call it?

FS: The soldiers' barracks.

IR: Yah.

EJ: And it was in warmer weather.

IR: We could do one thing, take their clothes off and try to let them get fresh air. How many fainted I cannot tell you. Then some people had heart conditions and had a little bit of schnaps with them.

FS: Whiskey.

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INA ROTHSCHILD [3-2-68]

IR: Whiskey. We would like to give them a sip. No, these guys wouldn't allow it.

FS: The police didn't allow it.

IR: No, they took everything away. And then they started and took our knapsacks, our rucksacks and looked through if there was anything in it that they could confiscate. And among other things, I had one shoe. The other one was left.

FS: One shoe, beside the ones that I had on.

[Multiple Exchange]

I had a pair. It was a slender man. I had a pair of good shoes. I had three pairs of stocking in there and these shoes. Now it was August. It was hot. And when I finally had my rucksack and I wanted to put a pair of shoes on, I had one shoe left. You know, they took everything, dumped it down [unclear]. For weeks I had nothing but this pair of shoes.

FS: Were you assigned to certain kinds of work?

IR: We were assigned right away, after we were fingerprinted, to an attic. We were given attics of old dormitories.

FS: Could husband and wife stay together or were they separated?

IR: No, no. They were separated. First of all, there were three or four or five different old buildings. They couldn't all go in one. And they were separated. [unclear]. Your husband, your wife, or somebody else. But we Württemberger could stick together and we were all together on that...

VOICE: But only women?

IR: Yes. But my husband was in that [unclear] and a few other men because they were in charge. They had the lists they kept. But my husband had a few weeks later the severest pneumonia because in that attic there were no windows. They were open [German].

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INA ROTHSCHILD [3-2-69]

FS: Yes, just open holes for air.

IR: Open holes. And they would lay on boards, wooden boards or straw day and night.

FS: There were no blankets?

IR: No blankets. What he had [unclear].

FS: Did people really think they would get out?

IR: The moment we were in that train, we knew it was over. Nobody returns--for a human being from such place under such conditions. We knew right away that was the end. But we lived there. It was better. It got better in the moment where the International Red Cross was interested in the so-called old age homes.

FS: When would you say that was?

IR: In winter '42-43. We arrived in August.

FS: You're a nurse. Were there any children born? Was it possible for young people, for boys and girls to find each other? Was there any sexual intercourse?

IR: Yes. Young people found each other. They had to work. Right away they were assigned to outside work. The young girls in the kitchens, the young girls working for the soldiers.

FS: For the German soldiers?

IR: For the German soldiers, for the Czech soldiers. They were not German. *Czechoslovakai.*

FS: Czech soldiers.

IR: Yes, but then most of them spoke German. And under supervision of these people, they worked. They had to start kitchens. Now in Theresienstadt were before Jews from

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INA ROTHSCHILD [3-2-70]

Prague.

FS: When you came they were there already.

IR: When we came there, they were there already. They had started to organize, but they had taken for themselves the best. What was left over, we got. And we had to work as nurses under these Czech nurses. But finally, like I said, either we got used to the *shlemozel* [unclear] or it got better. When they heard that the International Red Cross will supervise that, we could put in claims, suddenly there were doctors.

FS: Jewish doctors?

IR: Jewish doctors from Prague, from Brünn, from Linz, from everywhere. And they could bring a great deal of their own equipment.

FS: Yes, medicines?

IR: After a few months, it was already in December because I had my ear operated in December, '42, on the 23rd of December, there was the Munich hospital, a Jewish hospital arrived a few days or maybe two weeks before with their oldest equipment. And they...

FS: From München?

IR: From München.

FS: From Munich in Germany the entire Jewish hospital arrived in Theresienstadt.

IR: Not the entire but part of it with their equipment, doctors, nurses and...

EJ: Like the [unclear] came from [unclear]. Nobody came back, no doctor, no nurse, not one [unclear].

FS: Now you worked as nurse there.

IR: I worked as nurse there from the very first day. We all did what we could for them. There was food, but don't ask me what kind of food. You had to stand in line--soups, you

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INA ROTHSCHILD [3-2-71]

wouldn't give a pig what was in there, the potato peels, the straw and everything cooked. And the men were standing there. Everybody got a *Blechteller* [tin plate], a spoon and a tin plate.

FS: Now tell me if you know. It is said that there were 150,000 children-- or 15,000 children in Theresienstadt.

IR: Not at one time.

FS: Wait. In the entire existence of the camp, of the 15,000 I believe 150 survived. Tell me what you know about the children in Theresienstadt, the children you took care of or the children you saw.

IR: In the beginning I didn't take care of children at all. I was with our people from Württemberg. And then I was in so-called [German] where 20-28 women were together.

FS: Mini hospitals.

IR: That was no hospital. They were rooms. And at that time we got wooden bunkbeds. Then suddenly came mattresses from Germany that belonged to our transport. For each bed there was one piece. Do you remember the German beds? There were three parts mattress. One piece. I even found one of ours.

FS: You don't remember anything about the children in Theresienstadt?

IR: Later on, after my husband's death--that was on the 10th of July, '44.

FS: Did he die of natural causes?

IR: No. Natural causes and so-called malnutrition and the severest pneumonia without any help. He had no medication.

FS: How old was your husband when he passed away?

IR: Seventy.

FS: Were you there when he passed away?

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INA ROTHSCHILD [3-2-72]

IR: Yes. I worked daytime and at night I could go there. My friend in Israel--she lives there now--she took care of him. They were just the same--20, 28, 30 people in one room. And whenever I could, I had to work my 12 hours and then I could go there. And he knew and I knew it was the end. How soon? He would ask me again and again, "You still have some morphine. Why don't you give it to me? Don't let me suffer any more."

FS: Your husband asked you.

IR: I had it but I wouldn't do it because I had many things with me. I even took them to--I had them here. I didn't use them not because I was, what shall I say, afraid. I didn't want it on my conscience all my life. And at that time in the first few weeks people died every day and night and day and night. From our 1,000-1,200 people, there were 300 left. They either died or were transported right away.

FS: Were there many people who committed suicide?

IR: Every night.

FS: How did they? What methods did they use?

IR: They jumped out of the windows. Some had medication hidden somewhere, would take it.

FS: Who had the supervision...

IR: In Stuttgart already there were so many suicides before they went.

FS: Who had the supervision? Was it the SS or who supervised...

IR: The SS; it was Czech or SS. And they would come constantly and check, day and night.

FS: Were they brutal or were there decent ones among them too?

IR: There were decent ones when you could give them something.

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INA ROTHSCHILD [3-2-73]

FS: Do you remember any incidents where you found SS men who were good to you?
Can you think of any incidents?

IR: Yes. Like I said, we had money. They wanted money. You could give them something. Or from the people who passed away, their ring fell from their fingers. We were supposed to collect them and give it to that special supervisor, Czech supervisor. And they came and they knew that, they asked for that, some of these.

FS: You don't remember--or let me phrase it as a question. Do you remember any single Czech SS man or any single German SS man who helped a Jew out of the kindness of his heart, not for money or gold or whatever?

IR: That I cannot tell you. it was before, yes, in Stuttgart.

FS: I mean in the concentration camp.

IR: In the concentration camp, no. We were afraid that we would leave anything when we went to work. We had a nail in the wall where we would hang our things. [German phrase] [unclear] And anything of value we would pin to us or I would take it. There was a woman from Frankfurt--what was her name, Elsa?

EJ: [Response is unclear].

IR: Under her mattress I hid all whatever I had precious--money, a watch, a ring, whatever it was. Because that they didn't do, they didn't touch the dying, the deathly sick. But the others...

FS: By they you mean the Czech SS?

IR: The German *Weiber* they called it.

FS: Oh, the German women.

IR: They came if there was anything they could...

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INA ROTHSCHILD [3-2-74]

FS: Where did these German women come from?

IR: From Germany. I don't know.

FS: They were in your camp.

IR: They were there to supervise.

FS: They were there to supervise you.

IR: They were there to supervise. They were always German. There were no Czech women. Like this Frau--what was her name? That sort.

FS: Ilse Koch.

IR: Yes, that kind. And we knew there was a camp for children. And there were newborns. They had nothing to wear and they would not take care of them, these German women. The girls who worked with these children would as much as they could take their dresses and their shirts and whatever they had to dress these little ones. They made a joke out of it. They said, when they are born, the only thing we have for them is--what you call it...

FS: A diaper?

IR: To put over the navel [pause], a band-aid. I couldn't find the word band-aid. Then later on as soon as somebody died, we collected what that person had in order to sew, to knit, to do something for these children.

FS: Were the children near? Did you know where they were? Did you have any contact with them?

IR: Where they came from? From...

FS: I mean did you have any contact with the children?

IR: Not at that time. I had contact with them, like I said, after my husband's death. There was a transport from Holland. There's 50 children who had come with typhoid or near

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INA ROTHSCHILD [3-2-75]

typhoid, completely neglected, in a condition that we had to cut their clothes from them. There was a question: Who will volunteer to take care of these children? After my husband's death, I said, what do I have to lose? I will go. And Frieda, a woman she was from Vienna. She was a baby nurse. She said, "I will go with you."

FS: You were not afraid that you might catch the disease?

IR: What could happen? What could happen? We saw death every day, day and night. At that time already most of the other Stuttgart nurses were gone already. Two were called. One, Elsa, at that time had some fresh remark to one of these German *Weiber*. The next day she and the other one were called for transport and there were four. The two other ones said, "We lived a lifetime together as nurses. We go together."

FS: And then all four went?

IR: All four went with another transport to Auschwitz.

FS: Did the people who went from Theresienstadt on the transports, did they know where they were going?

IR: We knew. It's Auschwitz.

EJ: Everybody knew where they would go.

IR: There was one transport called, children will go to Switzerland. Who will volunteer to go with them? Only nurses. It was the end, nothing any more. No word from the nurses nor from the children.

FS: So this was just a fake.

IR: It was a fake to get another few hundred away. The ones you saw everyday, trucks going by loaded with men in striped prison uniforms. We were not allowed, there were police standing on the trucks that were loaded with guns so nobody would look. Nobody would

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INA ROTHSCHILD [3-2-76]

look. Otherwise they would shoot right away into the windows. We could hear them coming and we knew nothing else goes by and we knew they go to death. Where or why nobody knew. I only know one thing. This guy that was hanged in Israel was in Theresienstadt.

EJ: Eichmann.

FS: Eichmann.

IR: And Hei--Hei...

FS: Heydrich.

IR: They would come. There were no hearses. There were old-fashioned hearses. The men had to pull these hearses. There were no horses. The men had to pull them. The men were the [unclear].

FS: They carried the bodies.

IR: They carried the bodies on that thing. They had to carry them out. And there were mass graves.

FS: Had you actually yourself seen Heydrich and Himmler?

IR: That's what I just wanted to say. After my ear operation, my husband came--it was in winter '42-43--and said, "You'd better start to work whether you can or cannot. We all are on the list." His brother, his sister-in-law, his sister, and me too are on the list to go in the next few days. Dr. Loewenstein told him. It was a doctor who did everything for us, a Czech who was...

FS: A Czech doctor?

IR: A Czech Jewish doctor who was in Karlsbad Marienbad, one of these elegant doctors. He was there too. And my sister-in-law knitted for me or sewed for me an *altmodische Kapuze* [hood].

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INA ROTHSCHILD [3-2-77]

FS: Old-fashioned hat.

IR: Whatever you can think of, to cover my bandages because I still had the bandage on my operated ear.

FS: And this operation had taken place where?

IR: In Theresienstadt. And I was standing and we all had lice and fleas, and standing-when somebody died you went out and there were such big balconies all around. The steps lead up. And I was standing there shaking these things out from somebody...

FS: What things?

IR: Clothing. When somebody died, you had to take it back and they were taken away in a shirt. And I think, my God, what's going on down there? The men standing there like sticks pulling their caps down. And the one who didn't, he shot. It was Heydrich.

FS: Tell me. I didn't understand.

IR: As soon as he saw one of these guys, the men had to stand still, take their hat or a cap, whatever...

FS: The Jewish prisoners had to stand still?

IR: Yes, the Jewish inmates. And if they didn't do it, they would shoot them right away.

FS: Yes, and Heydrich shot...

IR: Heydrich and his five, six guys behind him.

FS: They shot this man right in the [unclear]...

IR: They shot these men right away if they didn't stand straight, left everything they had in hand stand still, take their hat off and stand there like soldiers. And if they wouldn't do it in that split second, they shot them, let them lay there. This was at Theresienstadt. Now can you

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INA ROTHSCHILD [3-2-78]

imagine what other camps were? Now I just wanted to tell you. We went there and these children came with two 16, 17 year old girls from Holland and one old doctor, a Jewish doctor who was years ago in the tropics like so many in Holland were. And we were given a small house. That was at the time when it was a fortress, a tuberculosis hospital. And these children were put in there and we even had beds for them because that was still there. Naturally we were scared to death that they'll all catch tuberculosis, and we too. And this old doctor said, "As far as I know, there is one thing we can do for these children--blood transfusions." They had typhoid fever. And he did what he could. He went from everywhere that we got bread, that we could put on a stove, a wood stove, dry it this way. And he said, "This and cottage cheese will bring them through. Bring me what you have, money or what it is, that I can give it to these guys down there."

FS: The guards?

IR: To these guards, they will bring it. They promised me we will get cottage cheese, we will get bread for these children." And I can tell you not one of them died.

FS: The children...

IR: Had typhoid fever.

FS: ...pulled through?

IR: Pulled through. And he gave every day direct blood transfusions from us to these children.

FS: And how long to the best of your knowledge were these children in the camp?

IR: What age?

FS: No. How long were they in Theresienstadt until they were...

IR: When we left in '45.

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INA ROTHSCHILD [3-2-79]

FS: They were still alive?

IR: They were alive. They were well. And there were children from 8 months up to about...

(End of Side 2)

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INA ROTHSCHILD [4-1-80]

Tape four, side one:

FS: Can you just repeat quickly how the doctor gave the transfusion, the blood transfusion?

IR: He gave blood from us to the children, direct transfusions, something that isn't done anymore.

FS: And you said he collected money.

IR: He collected whatever we had in valuables to bribe these guards to give him plain bread.

FS: These were Czech guards?

IR: Czech guards. And we could have that and boiled our water, no milk, the cheapest cottage cheese that they could get and rye bread. And that was what we fed these children and they pulled through, to stop this awful diarrhea. That was what they had day and night, diarrhea. Completely dehydrated bodies, little bodies.

FS: And you say these children had no names.

IR: Some of them knew their name, but they all had only one, a first name, around their neck on a string. And there were little ones that couldn't even talk yet. So we knew this one was Magda or Lisa or whatever, Holland names.

FS: You gave them names?

IR: No, that was their name around their neck, the first name, but no family name. Because the families had given these children to gentile people to hide them without names, and the younger ones didn't know a family name.

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INA ROTHSCHILD [4-1-81]

FS: And how many were in this transport?

IR: Fifty children.

FS: And you say all 50 children survived?

IR: Yes, all 50 children. Some went with us to Switzerland that people asked, "We have no children. We would like to adopt these children." And a few among other ones was this Schwester Rita [unclear] in New York. You know the story. When she came to New York where afterwards her husband lived with another woman. He wanted a divorce.

IR: She had a little boy taken along. And that one couple in Chicago that I met later on had that little boy. I have a picture of him still there. And the others were adopted by Jewish people and gentile people in Czechoslovakia after the war.

FS: By gentile people too?

IR: By gentile people too. All these children were saved. We knew that. We found out about that from Switzerland because there were a few nurses who had worked then afterwards.

FS: Did you stay in Theresienstadt until the end?

IR: No. In February, '45 we were liberated, about 600 people and I was one of them.

FS: How were you liberated?

IR: That nobody ever knew correctly. We were called one night. We all had to come to that special like city hall what they had there, had to come there because there will be a transport to Switzerland and we are called--my name, my friend Rike Schmaltz' name [phonetic], my sister-in-law. I didn't know they were elsewhere. There are different houses, old houses. And when we got there...

FS: It was an assembly point where you had to go?

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INA ROTHSCHILD [4-1-82]

IR: We were called in the middle of the night. And my friend Frieda, who was not called, said, "I promised your husband I will not let you go anywhere alone. I will go with you." And she went. And we both--they said, "Your name isn't on." And she said, "I go with my friend. I promised. I won't let you go alone." He said, "All right, if you want to." So we thought, all right, we know already what that means. Then not far away was my sister-in-law. I said, "Helen, what shall we do?" And she said, "You can refuse but did you ever have a chance to say you want to go and you can't go? I go. It might be a chance that we are safe."

FS: Did you expect to go to Switzerland or did you expect to go to...

IR: We didn't expect anything. They told us Switzerland because...

FS: Did you believe them?

IR: I didn't. Some people had hopes. And we were the next day called again and told from all these many that they had called, 600 will go. And we friends and my two sisters-in-law were in the transport.

FS: How many were called?

IR: About 1,500.

FS: And 600 went?

IR: Six hundred went. But at the same time what we didn't know, the same amount was released in Bergen-Belsen and was there too then in Montreux [phonetic].

FS: This was when?

IR: In February, '45. We knew already that it was going down with Germany. Some of these Czech police were decent. They told the Czech Jewish people, "We are afraid what will be." They knew already there were revolts in Germany against Hitler. By the grapevine you would hear such things.

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INA ROTHSCHILD [4-1-83]

EJ: [unclear] the 20th of July... [unclear]

IR: That was '44.

EJ: Then the people got suspicious.

FS: All right. Now you got on this transport. Did you get any clothes or anything to go on?

IR: Whatever we had while we were there in Theresienstadt. We could buy our own stuff. I showed you the money. Everything we had taken was taken away from us and then they opened a store where you could buy with paper money, with ghetto money, something that you saw.

FS: Now you got on the train? When you got on, this was a train?

IR: In '45?

FS: Yes, when you went to Switzerland.

IR: That was a train, a normal train, like these third class trains in Germany were.

FS: Now how many people--there were 600 people altogether.

IR: Six hundred people.

FS: Out of the 600 people, how many children?

IR: About ten.

FS: And the rest of them were what age?

IR: They were still there. They were about between 4 and 8.

FS: Now out of the 600 people, how many children? You say only 10 children?

IR: Only 10 children.

FS: And the rest of them were older people or younger people?

IR: Older people, middle aged people, and we were in our 40s.

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INA ROTHSCHILD [4-1-84]

FS: How did they select them?

IR: Ask me.

FS: You don't know.

IR: They asked you questions--what did you do before? What did you do now? How long are you here? Do you have relatives? The shorter you answered, the safer it was for you. They would say, "Go to this side. You are taken." As soon as you started to tell them a story, you were out. What did you do before? I was a nurse. Where? Down there. How did you come here? Whom did you have here? I had my husband; he died. Finished, go. They didn't want to know more.

FS: Now tell me about the trip from Theresienstadt to Switzerland.

IR: The trip. Each one got a loaf of bread--what else? At that time there was water in the train. Something else to eat. I don't remember. Everybody got something to eat. The men got razors. And when we came to Friedrichshafen, no, before, my sister-in-law who was a Württemberger and Rika my friend, we were from Nordheim they said, "We actually come closer to the Schweizer [Swiss] border." Suddenly everybody thought, all right, maybe it really is true after 24 hours. And then they came and told us not far from Friedrichshafen, somewhere, I think I wrote it down, that all the women--we all had short cut hair for the one reason everybody had lice. And there so many people died, what I never mentioned before, from these *kleider* [clothing] lice, from these--what you call that...

FS: Lice which nested in the clothing.

IR: And they died from that, eaten up by that. And then they had DDT. When DDT came and they could spray--what you call it, when they come to the house, what do they do?

EJ: Exterminator.

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INA ROTHSCHILD [4-1-85]

IR: Exterminator. Then suddenly the health was better. People could live. People who vegetated before couldn't go on living because they were full of lice all the time. And there was so-called baths. What did they do? They took a cold shower. The next day they had pneumonia and died. So we came near Switzerland and these Czech police changed to German police. And they came and said, "Here is soap. Here are razors. Who of the men has a razor?" Nobody said they were. They were afraid they should kill themselves with razors. "Here are razors. You shave yourself." The women had to comb their hair. "Here are combs. You make yourselves decent looking. We are coming to the *Schweizer* border. You have to leave this train. Take everything you have and change over to a Swiss train." Then we knew.

FS: And then you got out where? In Friedrichshafen? It doesn't really matter.

IR: In Kreuzlingen, the other side of Konstanz.

FS: And then you got onto a Swiss train?

IR: To a Swiss train.

FS: Were there nurses on this train?

IR: No, the first nurses we saw, we got food.

FS: On the train you got food?

IR: On the train. I can tell you that in Kreuzlingen we were standing at the windows. My sister-in-law Helen had been in Kreuzlingen before and she had relatives there. And she called out to one of these train men and to people out there, "Do you know the Marxes? They have a corset factory here in Kreuzlingen?" Yes, over there is Benny. And that man ran and said, "Benny, Benny, there are people coming from Theresienstadt." And there was like a fire running through. The women came with baskets with apples and all kinds of things bringing us to the train. We were still locked in the train, in the Swiss train now. And I know that Benny

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INA ROTHSCHILD [4-1-86]

said to me--he didn't know me, I was standing next to my sister-in-law Helen--"I have some stamps here. If you want to write to somebody, write right away. Nobody knows that you are still alive." And that was how I wrote to Frankfurt. I had stamps.

EJ: I didn't get it. Next November I got your...

IR: And then from there we came to St. Gallen. In St. Gallen we were three days in full quarantine because they couldn't let us go. They didn't know if we have lice or fleas or what else, and we were in full quarantine there. And there we had nurses. And there were the Steiners from St. Gallen and a friend of Rika we saw the whole Jewish community coming, helping. And from there we were transported to Montreux. And in Montreux, what we had, our packages, we went up in the highest snow, on the 5th of February, up to the Matterhorn. Do you know the Matterhorn?

FS: Yes, I was in Montreux twice.

IR: That was in February of '45. And that was from August.

FS: Those that didn't have relatives, with whom did they stay?

IR: Nowhere...

EJ: You all had to stay there.

IR: We all had to stay there. You couldn't...

FS: You all had to stay there?

IR: We all had to stay there. The war wasn't over. We were still in quarantine. But we started to work there just like we did before because we had old sick people. And everything was...

FS: You took care of your own sick then?

IR: We nurses Paula Rotschild, Rika *und ich* [and I] and then we had one doctor who

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INA ROTHSCHILD [4-1-87]

came with the people from Bergen-Belsen. And we opened right away--what we could do at that time, it was unbelievable. Everywhere we had sick people and we took care of them.

FS: These people from Bergen-Belsen physically what kind of shape were they in compared to you?

IR: By that time they were there a few days already in pretty good shape. [unclear] through the high snow.

FS: What you're telling me now is the experience in Theresienstadt.

IR: In Theresienstadt where we still would--we worked there for about three months, three and a half months until the children were so far so much better that we were relieved by other nurses.

FS: These 50 children came from Holland you're referring to?

IR: Yes. And then we worked there in daytime and could go back to our own room in that *Kaserne* [barracks] Hauptstr. 8. And we would take with us, because at that time we would get better food there for the children. And I remember and I wrote to Freda last winter when it was cold here, "Remember when we went back with our boiled potatoes and had them in a towel or something packed in our coats and went through that park and it was so frozen that we stumbled and lost our precious potatoes." We had nothing to eat that night. I know in the beginning when I was here I cannot throw a bite of bread away. You ate your potato with the peel so you don't lose anything. And I have letters that my husband wrote as a birthday present, that he had given away his weekly ration of margarine--that was that much, that high--to get a few flowers from boys who came in from the outside ghetto. They had to work there in the field.

FS: Are you saying flour or flower?

IR: Flowers. A few flowers that they had found in the field. He had given them, the

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INA ROTHSCHILD [4-1-88]

two boys, his sugar and his margarine ration that he would have something for me for my birthday in May. You would try to do everything for each other. I worked nights because I got extra rations of something like *Lebkuchen* and I would bring it the next morning to my husband. And he wouldn't eat it alone. He would share it with his brother who was next to him. It was a life that brought you together where the best and the worst came out of people.

FS: Were there many Jewish inmates who stole from their friends?

IR: That's what I was just going to say. The worst came out in many who stole.

FS: Do you remember any particular incidents?

IR: No. And even if I had known, things are forgotten, like I don't know any names. I know the name of my doctor who operated on my ear, a famous, a Dr. Hyatt that everybody in America knows.

FS: We will now finish the story of Mrs. Elsa Jaeckel. Just as a reminder we left off when her husband, who was a German soldier, had been in Finland and he had been transferred to Latvia. And there he had gotten the news that Jews were being killed by the thousands, Latvian Jews were being killed by the thousands in order to evacuate the barracks and the ghetto and make room for the German Jews. The next voice you hear is Ms. Jaeckel.

EJ: Then he got relieved because they said everybody who had a Jewish wife had to come out of the army. And he couldn't wait until he got...

FS: And this was approximately when?

EJ: This was when my sister came away he was...

FS: Approximately, 1942?

EJ: It was '42. It must have been beginning of '42.

FS: Were there many in Frankfurt who were released?

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INA ROTHSCHILD [4-1-89]

EJ: We had 600 *Mischehen* [mixed marriages]. And I had to work and we had to work, all the Jewish women for the Gestapo. We were called to the Gestapo and had to work in a factory. They learned us sewing. What should I say? We had to go to work with like the people here they work for the welfare, for the welfare, with welfare people, people who got welfare. They worked for this what they got. We had to go, this was in a factory maybe an hour away from Frankfurt. We could go to a certain place with a street car, then we had to walk to this factory. And we worked eight hours there, all the women who had gentile husbands. Then every day something happened. They found out somebody had still a maid. The other one was by a hairdresser. The other one they found something else. There came a man from, he was an SS man, told us in the morning, you know maybe--I cannot tell names any more, I don't know it--they came, "They will not come to work today because they got in jail." They found out something.

FS: You're referring to individual women?

EJ: Yes. You know, they told us. Like my girlfriend, she had still a maid. She was in jail for three-quarter years. And when she came in jail, they were sitting like rats in a cage. It must be terrible, I tell you, what they told us. They got their golden teeth. At this time people had--you know we are all young--golden teeth. They were counting the teeth, because when they came to Auschwitz they had broken the teeth out, the golden teeth, to get the gold.

FS: Did most of these women who were put in jail...

EJ: Mostly to Auschwitz.

FS: They were not all released?

EJ: No.

FS: But some of them were released?

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INA ROTHSCHILD [4-1-90]

EJ: Some who had connections with the Gestapo and could pay the Gestapo.

FS: To the best of your knowledge, were any of these women...

EJ: I know three who were released.

FS: No, that isn't my question. To the best of your knowledge, were any of the women able to bribe their way out individually by giving sexual favors to the SS?

EJ: No. I heard only when some came back from Auschwitz that they got maybe better food for this reason.

FS: But not in the Frankfurt jail?

EJ: No, no. They were treated not like human beings in the Frankfurt jail.

FS: When you came home at night--your husband worked in Frankfurt?

EJ: Yes. I came home after work.

FS: You came home after work.

EJ: But I was always afraid that there was a card in the mailbox that I have to come to the Gestapo. You know, everybody was afraid of everything. We had to leave our home where we lived. We lived in the West End. No Jews. Where you had a Jewish wife, you were not allowed to live in the West End. We found somebody who belonged to the sector--what do you call it here I don't know any more.

FS: It doesn't matter. It doesn't matter.

EJ: And she took us. We got two rooms.

FS: And there you got two rooms?

EJ: We got two rooms. I told you my husband got his license taken away, as I told you.

FS: But he was able to work?

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INA ROTHSCHILD [4-1-91]

EJ: Yes.

FS: And he got paid?

EJ: He got paid because this man belonged to a lodge but not with Jewish. That was not Jew. And he knew my husband. When his manager was in the army and he was glad to get somebody. My husband was introduced to him from a friend, and he got this position of wholesale coal business out the Main under a Kohlenlager. I don't know what you would call it here.

FS: Wholesale coal business.

EJ: Yes.

FS: Now were you able to buy sufficient food for your needs?

EJ: I had my cards for a Jew. My husband had his cards for him.

FS: For a German citizen.

EJ: So he could buy, but he didn't need these. My husband could, you know, he'd give somebody coal who came. The people were rationed. And we could get from the butcher and everything. And I had some from our ladies where I knew I could trust them and they need it badly. I could very often assist people because we didn't need it all, what we could get.

FS: Did you get German newspapers?

EJ: Yes. We had our radio and everything. But when the *Fliegerangriff* [air raid] came, then my husband--I was not allowed to go in the *Luftschutzkeller* [air raid shelter] in the house because I was afraid I was a Jew.

FS: So you stayed in your apartment?

EJ: We stayed in our apartment. My husband heard the *Auslandsender* [foreign radio station]. This was the only time we could hear it because nobody was in the house.

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INA ROTHSCHILD [4-1-92]

FS: Now when they had these air attacks on Frankfurt...

EJ: The first was in October...

FS: No, no, no. When they had these air attacks in Frankfurt, aside from having fear, did it give you any satisfaction that the Germans were suffering?

EJ: Yes. It gave me the satisfaction. Then the people--it was whole streets was then in flames. And the people had in a bed sheet the whole thing what they could get out of the burning house. And I thought this is the way my people went away. I saw in Frankfurt so often when the people had to leave to the concentrate camp. But not like you with a suitcase. They were allowed only to pack in a bed sheet what they could take.

FS: What they could carry?

EJ: And so I saw the people. On the one hand I was afraid that it could be, what shall I say, *mein lieber Gott hat mich* God hid me here in the house. I cannot go for a place to be safe. And on the other hand, I was thinking He could this whole Frankfurt take away.

FS: How often would you say did you have air attacks, once a week, once a month?

EJ: Sometimes in daytime two, three times and at night. In the morning I had to go to work. We had to walk. There was no--the whole street, you can just not think what this was. The street was open with holes like houses in. No street car could go, no bus. And we had to come to work, the Jewish people. Otherwise the Gestapo would come to get us. We had to walk two hours to come to this place and two hours home. What could we work much? It was just to punish us to come.

FS: And this lasted until the end of the war?

EJ: I was then away. I had to go--I wasn't here. I was in Bad Homburg. But Bad Homburg never was except 17 miles away. But constantly they came to Frankfurt. They

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INA ROTHSCHILD [4-1-93]

bombed the *Hauptbahnhof* [main railroad station]. And this was a main line maybe to the Rhine where they put ammunition. And sometimes they got the whole train with ammunition.

IR: Ammunition?

EJ: Yes. You cannot think what we heard, this explosion from this ammunition. This was the main thing, to cut them away [unclear] what they called.

FS: Did you stay in in Frankfurt until the war was over?

EJ: No, I was in Bad Homburg. Because I should come away...

FS: Why did you leave Frankfurt?

EJ: I had to. I should come to Theresienstadt. All Jewish women should come. Everybody first they said the women who had children, I didn't have children, they could stay; who had children who were not Jewish. They would stay. We all worked together, who had children, who had no children. And at this time you could find out what we had for nice Jewish people. We were maybe 150 women who worked there. They were sitting one this machine, two there, and they said, "Oh, we never have to go away. We have children but the other ones pretty soon will be called away." Can you imagine? People were in the same boat like you.

FS: And were any of the women sent away?

EJ: We were only maybe ten who got connections with the Gestapo. My husband got through a friend who was with him in the army who had [unclear]. The other man--I remember his name, his name was Scholl--he got sick. He was released from the army.

(End of Side 1)

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INA ROTHSCHILD [4-2-94]

Tape four, side two:

FS: Why did you leave a note? You were told to leave a note? A Gestapo agent told you leave a note.

EJ: Leave a note, for him, that he is safe. Nothing that nobody would think, he had given me--what shall I say, advice. Then he had to come to pick me up normally.

FS: OK, now you left a note?

EJ: I left a note.

FS: What did the note say?

EJ: I take my, I go away and I will take my life. I don't want to go to concentration camp. In between I had a note from the Gestapo that I had to go. Because we all there had to go [unclear].

FS: And of the 600 women, how many went to the concentration camp?

EJ: They all--we were maybe ten who could pay the Gestapo. And on this day...

FS: In other words, ten were able to bribe their way out.

EJ: Yes, yes, yes.

IR: And the other ones, the whole group went to Theresienstadt.

EJ: They went to Theresienstadt.

FS: Now tell us what happened. You left this note and then what happened?

EJ: I went to, I walked to Bad Homburg. This was 17 miles from Frankfurt.

FS: From Frankfurt.

EJ: And I left from the house like every morning I was going to work.

FS: To work, yes.

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INA ROTHSCHILD [4-2-95]

EJ: We were the day before released all from work, we were told we have to go to concentration camp.

FS: And then you walked to Bad Homburg?

EJ: I walked to Bad Homburg and I knew where I had to go. My husband had paid. This man was with the S.A., a S.A. man. But he only had in Frankfurt before a restaurant years ago. And he went to the S.A. because otherwise he couldn't have his business. And he sold his business and went and bought a house in Bad Homburg. My husband went to him and he took me, but for money.

IR: And you were hidden in the attic.

EJ: I was hidden in the attic.

IR: For the whole time.

EJ: For the whole time.

FS: When did you, do you remember approximately the month and the year when you came to Bad Homburg?

EJ: It was in '45, the beginning of '45.

FS: The beginning of '45. And then you stayed...

EJ: Until the end, when the *Americaner* [Americans]--in the morning on *Karfreitag* [Good Friday], '45, the army...

FS: The American army. Did you have a room or where did you stay?

EJ: I had a room but a cold room. I had my ski...

IR: Outfit on.

EJ: Outfit on and warm shoes. And a French soldier, what do you say, prisoner of war worked--they were all with my husband. They were, you know, people there were all in the

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INA ROTHSCHILD [4-2-96]

army.

FS: They worked in the coal yard?

EJ: They worked in the coal yard for my man, for my husband. My husband was not allowed. He couldn't come to me because he was afraid of the Gestapo. They'd come constantly in our home looking if I would be there. So my husband could draft these French men. And he brought me my *Lebensmittel*.

FS: Your food.

EJ: Yes.

FS: This was a French prisoner of war?

EJ: Yes, a French prisoner of war. But the war with the French was to end already. But they were in, like in a camp, and had to work and they worked, a lot worked in my husband's place.

FS: Did you have any socializing with the former SA man who hid you?

EJ: No. I never saw him. I never saw him. My husband knew him.

FS: And who else was in the house where you were?

EJ: A couple, this couple. And later they took a lady in from Frankfurt. She worked; she censored the letters and so was all the letter that came, were people not trusted. They were always opened and censored. And she worked there. And somebody must have--she must have, I don't know.

FS: Given information perhaps.

EJ: Something. And she left too. And she came up to these people. She knows these people, and then she was there in this house too.

FS: Did you meet this woman there?

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INA ROTHSCHILD [4-2-97]

EJ: Yes, later on.

FS: Did you speak to her?

EJ: Yes . She was the same. She couldn't get out anywhere. She disappeared from Frankfurt.

FS: But you were alone.

EJ: In my room.

FS: In your room.

EJ: In my room. And in the evening I went down and cooked something for me.

FS: You could go down?

EJ: Yes. But the wife from this man, I think she was a Nazi but she was afraid she would be sent to the concentration camp if she was to say something. She liked the money what she got from my husband.

FS: What made you think that she was a Nazi?

EJ: It was a terrible way that she acted to me. She didn't let me go at daytime that I could make me a cup of coffee. There was nobody in the house.

FS: Did she speak to you?

EJ: She spoke to me but not much. He was a very nice man. His name was Ruf [phonetic].

FS: Do you know what happened to these people after the war?

EJ: After the war, each man, I could give my thanks back to him because everybody who was in the SA and so on was later--what shall I say...

IR: [unclear]

EJ: No. He was retired. They had their own home. [unclear] No. Was called, their

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INA ROTHSCHILD [4-2-98]

rehabilitation. If they had done something, then he said, "I hid Mrs. Jaeckel." And I gave him, what shall I say, a rehabilitation letter. I could do it. I didn't say I did it for money. I was glad he saved my life.

FS: That he hid you.

EJ: Yes.

FS: So when the war was over you went back to Frankfurt?

EJ: I couldn't. Before the Americaner came, they destroyed all the bridges in Frankfurt.

FS: The Germans did?

EJ: Yes. And nobody could go. My husband was, our home was across the bridge. Nobody could come. It was maybe two weeks until they made, you know...

FS: A temporary bridge.

EJ: Then he came with a bicycle and he picked me up.

FS: Did you come to America together?

IR: No.

EJ: I was divorced.

IR: I came after the war in '47.

EJ: No. I came in '57. I was divorced in '50 from my husband.

FS: In 1950?

EJ: About a girl from--the mother was Jewish and the father was gentile. And a mother who was three years in Auschwitz and came home was one of these who had to do the favors for--what you call--what you were asking before. I heard it from other people, from some who came back, who had the same reason who came back.

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INA ROTHSCHILD [4-2-99]

FS: This broke up your marriage.

EJ: And they had a daughter. She was 16. And the mother and the daughter--my husband was a good looking man. And you know, what shall I say. I had lost everything. Can you imagine. I was not to go out with my husband. My husband was later, the war was over, he could start his business again. But I was not up to this.

IR: So the mother and the young daughter, they snatched her husband away.

EJ: They snatched my husband away.

FS: How old was your husband then?

EJ: My husband was as old as the girl's father. With this girl's father.

FS: It's very sad.

EJ: Can you imagine. I was living there without anything. We had a divorce without anything. I said I want to give you back, you kept me alive. But here I got a fair share you know. What shall I say? At this moment I knew I wanted to go away. I didn't want a monthly...

FS: Stipend.

EJ: I wanted a whole sum and I had a Jewish lawyer.

FS: Thank you very, very much, ladies. There isn't much I can say. There isn't much I can add to what you've told me.

IR: You look so much younger. Were you here in America?

FS: I came to America in 1939. In February of '39. My brother came over in November of '38.

IR: Are you a relative of Dr. Stamm?

FS: Yes, he sent the papers for us. My one sister was killed in a concentration--she was in the Warsaw ghetto with my mother. My father had a heart attack just before they were

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INA ROTHSCHILD [4-2-100]

deported. My mother was a very gentle woman. She wasn't a sickly person but not a very strong woman. I'm convinced today that my mother never got to the to the gas chamber. She probably starved to death on some corner in Warsaw. God only knows, one is as bad as the other. And my little sister was born in 1921. She stayed with my mother and she was also in the Warsaw ghetto but we don't know what happened to her. My brother who had come over was one of the first soldiers drafted in Philadelphia. And the last time I saw him was on Pearl Harbor Day, December 7, 1941. On December the 8th he was shipped to Iceland with the American infantry forces or engineers. I've forgotten now. And from there he was sent to England two years later and then to France. He was three weeks in France. He was killed in Lorraine. And I...

EJ: In the war?

FS: In the war. I volunteered for the American army and I was put into the air force. I went to China. I was very [unclear] in the United States and I went to China. And then when the war was over in the Pacific I wanted to go to Shanghai. My outfit was then shipped to Shanghai and I wanted to go to Shanghai but my commander--there was a ruling from the Pentagon that all men who had lost two or more members of their family during and because of the war were to be shipped home and released, and he wouldn't ship me to Shanghai. So I came home and picked up the pieces. And my sister was a kindergartener in Ulm in a Kinderheim. And she was fortunate enough, she took the--you may remember there were 8,000 German Jewish children shipped to England just before the war.

EJ: Yes.

FS: And she was one of the people who took the transport from Germany to England.

[German -- Multiple Exchange]

FS: Thank you very much, ladies.

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