HOLOCAUST TESTIMONY

OF

HASIA AUFSCHAUER

Transcript of Audiotaped Interview

Interviewer: Josey G. Fisher
Date: May 10, 1982

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HA - Hasia Aufschauer [interviewee]
JF - Josey G. Fisher [interviewer]
Date: May 10, 1982

Tape one, side one:

JF: Can you tell me where and when you were born and a little bit about your childhood?

HA: I was born in Lodz, Poland, 1923, January the seventh, 1923.

JF: January?

HA: The seventh. And it's a big city, Lodz. My maiden name is Honikman.

JF: How do you spell that?

HA: My real name is Chaya Sara Honikman. "H" Honikman. You spell with a "K."

JF: K-O-N-I-G?

HA: "K," Honikman. K-M-A-N, Honikman. H-O-N-I-K-M-A-N.

JF: What kind of area did you live in in Lodz?

HA: Well, I lived in area, it was say like here it was called the northeast, it was called Chojny. I'll spell it to you. C-H-O-- wait a minute, you write it down.

JF: And that's spelled C-H-O-J-N-Y. Can you tell me what that community was like?

HA: It must have been there about 200, 250 Jewish families. Majority of them were middle-class.

JF: Was that the Jewish section?

HA: No.

JF: There were several.

HA: There were several. There was a very religious section where the ghetto was. I was on the opposite side of the city. It was a new section. It's like here, where the ghetto, the Lodz Ghetto was, was the old section, mostly were the butchers living there. My father was a butcher.

JF: In the section where you lived . . .

HA: Where I lived.

JF: Were mainly butchers . . .

HA: Butchers and the majority were Gentiles. But Lodz was divided. There were Poles, and there were Germans, because Lodz belonged at one time to Germany.

JF: So you were living then in a community that was mixed religiously?

HA: Yes, very much.

JF: And what was your experience with that?

HA: Well, I grew up with them. I had girlfriend Gentiles. I went to a strictly Catholic school.

JF: Catholic school.

HA: Yes, because it was close by.

JF: Was this a public school?

HA: A public school.

JF: But it had mainly Catholic children.

HA: Yes, the nuns were teaching their religion and got up and before classes they had to cross themselves and say the prayer.

JF: What happened with you when that . . .?

HA: Oh, we didn't pray, at religion we went to a rabbi. We had our own religion. We had to bring in our marks, but . . .

JF: Was there any antisemitism in that kind of setting?

HA: It was, it was. We grew up with the kids. But once in a while you could hear Jew, Jew go to Palestine, Jew this and we were raised not to go too much between the *goyim* because they will beat you up, push you around. I had a family, we were six children at home, I had two older brothers and one older sister, so my brothers were raised differently already. They were not told, they were not told, not to go with the *goyim*. If they hit you, you hit back, but still you could feel. I suppose when you get older when you understand what antisemitism is, you feel it.

JF: When you say your brothers were raised differently, was that because your parents' approach was different or the times were different?

HA: No, my parents were already--they said, "Don't, don't let be pushed around."

JF: And what happened if your brothers hit back?

HA: Nothing. The, the neighbors would complain, a *Sheygets* [Yiddish - Gentile], a *Lobuz* [Pol. rogue], you know what that means. But they didn't let themselves--my oldest brother they said if he would be here he would be a movie star. He was over six feet tall, slim, tall and strong. So it was a different, but it was terrible antisemitism. I went to school and you know, you know, you finish seven classes and then I went to my mother and my grandmother decided I should be a milliner. So they sent me to be a milliner and I hated it, but I was about, you know, finished school. I was thirteen and a half.

JF: And the millinery training was a school program or an apprenticeship?

HA: Well, it is apprentice. You go in for three years. And I went twice a week to evening school. You had to go because first if you want to open a store for yourself, you had to have a diploma and you couldn't get a diploma if you didn't go finish that school. But the war came, I didn't finish it.

JF: Let me go back for a minute, during your public school years, did you also have Hebrew school training outside of the public school?

HA: Yes, outside, outside.

JF: Your family belonged to a synagogue?

HA: Oh, sure, we had a synagogue in the same building where we lived. First, we walked a long way to the synagogue where my grandparents were going.

JF: This was an Orthodox synagogue where your grandparents went?

HA: Where my, where my, yes, very Orthodox. But then there was a group of butchers living in our neighborhood and those butchers made their own synagogue. You know, the Jewish thing, and this was in the same building where we lived. We lived in a big building. So we grew up with it. It came *Simchat Torah*, you know when, when they were reading the Torah, they were reading it in our kitchen, in our living room, like you say. Because *Simchat Torah* you read three times the Torah, you read it, you know, so for the kids, for the little kids, they read it in our apartment. So my mother prepared cookies and all kind of things. So it--I grew up with the synagogue. Friday it was my duty to clean out everything and see that the lights work and and everything should--the candles should be prepared and so we grew up with it.

JF: So there was a special room in the building that was the actual synagogue?

HA: It was not a room, it was a beautiful, big place with big paintings on the wall, you know the 12 how do you call it, the Jewish *shevotim*, how do you say? I forgot already, you know, Levis, you know.

JF: The tribes.

HA: The tribes, see. That was beautiful paintings on the wall, it was a beautiful synagogue. In the middle was like a thing standing there--then they were reading the Torah. My sister got married in that synagogue. So . . .

JF: But this was built as a part of your apartment building or this was built…?

HA: No, no, in the, in the, building.

JF: After the building was already . . .

HA: Oh, the building was a three story big building. There were a lot of people living there. But one side of the building on the, on the, on the first floor was empty, that was the synagogue, was divided one part was for the men and the other part was for the women.

JF: Was it originally constructed that way?

HA: No.

JF: This was built, this was constructed after.

HA: Constructed, yes, inside. Ya.

JF: What was the name of that synagogue?

HA: The Katsuvish, the synagogue, the Butcher Synagogue.

JF: And it was only for this community of butchers in your area?

HA: Well, anybody could come in but mostly the butchers supported that synagogue.

JF: Now did you go for some kind of Hebrew school training within the synagogue as well …

HA: Not in the synagogue. We went to a rabbi. We had, there was a rabbi

who was teaching kids, you know, the boys. We went to a class. And the rabbi was an old man, I remember him, a skinny little guy with a long beard and he was teaching the *alef bais*. The beginning the *rebbetzin* was teaching us, then when we came up on higher class the rabbi took over.

JF: This was an after school class?

HA: After school.

JF: And this was for girls or this was a mixed class?

HA: No, no. Girls were separate and boys were separate. Because the boys were taught at that time differently and the girl was taught in Europe to read and to write, that's all. A boy was taught Torah, it was different. So we had to go there, the class demanded, the school, we had to have our marks and then the Jewish upbringing. We had to . . .

JF: Your family was observant?

HA: Very much, very much. My father was a kosher butcher. I didn't go to bed if I didn't say the *brokhes [blessings]*. I didn't get up in the morning if I didn't say the *brokhes* and I didn't take a piece of cake or bread in my mouth if I didn't have to say it, but you know, you change a little bit.

JF: Now, you were telling me about your time in the millinery apprenticeship?

HA: Yes, well, I went there and I didn't like it. I, I was very good in it, but I didn't like it. You know, children don't like to be taught to do things, but I went there for two and a half years and I went to twice a week to school at night, but the war started and I had to drop out.

JF: You had mentioned to me before that your father had not been in the service in Poland. No members of your family were called.

HA: No, no, my brother--when my brother was called to, to the service, his--this year there were so many born that the quota was--he wanted to go so badly--for what, for Poland.

JF: This was in the 30s?

HA: Yes, for big Poland. But he wanted to go and he was the type to go. But they rejected him. Not that they rejected him. He didn't be capable, but they had enough.

JF: What was the thinking in your family when Hitler came to power in Germany?

HA: Well, my father, may his soul rest in peace, had a, like a premonition. He said there is a big cloud coming over our head. He said something bad is going to come and I remember as children, I was too young, but my older sister and brothers, "Father, you always bring the worst out." He said, "Look, I know what, what life can be." And he lived on this. You know, when they remember Germany, my father and my mother, because Lodz was under Germany in the First World War. They were gentlemen. They were staying in my grandmother's house, somehow my Jewish paper was always in the house and they were reading a lot and they heard. My mother had two sisters and a

brother living in Frankfurt am Main, Germany, and they were writing the letters that it's not good. In 1936 one of the sisters came back with two children to visit the family from Germany and she said she thinks that's the last time she's going to come because it is not good.

JF: Were they thinking of leaving Germany?

HA: They, they were thinking, but it was not so easy to run, but they, they, left, they were-- she lived through in Shanghai. But my parents knew something bad was coming.

JF: Did they think it would affect you in Poland?

HA: Oh, you see, we lived in, in that city where the *Volksdeutsche*, the German. Every second person was a *Volksdeutsche*. People I grew up with, my sisters and brother, they grew up with them. They were considered Poles. Soon Hitler came, they were *Volksdeutsche*, they were part German and they were going around with machine guns in the street, so you couldn't trust nobody.

JF: What do you mean they were going around with machine guns?

HA: The *Volksdeutsche* could go around with machine gun in the street looking for Jews.

JF: Were there incidents before the war of the *Volksdeutsche* attacking…?

HA: Not before, that was during the war.

JF: Okay. Before the war, were there Nazi groups in your town?

HA: They were. I don't--I heard they were. I know my oldest brother had contact with them. They knew there were, there were Germans, real Germans who lived there and they grew up with the Poles and with us and had business and then you saw three, four weeks before the war, six weeks, the store closed up and they disappeared. When the Germans came to our city, the first things they came in as generals and they seeked out everybody who did them something, just talked to them bad. This was in the--because the city--why--I comes from there was, I would say, 60% German.

JF: Was your father ever in a position where he thought of leaving?

HA: No, my father didn't want to leave, but my brothers, my sister wanted to leave for Biro-Bidjan/Birobidzhan[1] He was so desperate, my brother, because my brother and I, my both brothers and I belonged to *Betar*, you know the organization. My sister was *Hashomer Hatzair*. She wanted to go to Israel, but where the parents let go a child in Europe? My oldest brother, I remember he was about 16 or 17 years old, packed his things, short before the war and went to a port, a city, a port city in Poland where boats go to Palestine. And he wanted to go on a boat worked. A man could go it, a girl

[1]Biro-Bidjan/Birobidzhan - Project for Jews from Russia and Poland - 1926 - 1935. Territory in Russia on Amur River made available by Russian Authority to establish a settlement for the Jews fleeing Europe and elsewhere. Yehuda Bauer: *My Brother's Keeper, History of the American Joint Distribution Committee, 1929-39.*

couldn't do that. He came to Gdansk, a port city and he came back. He couldn't leave his family. And he came back. And then I remember, remember, Saturday, when we ate at the table and the boys always brought up and my sister, that we should go. My father knew a lot about farming, because where he came from they had a lot of farmland. And…

JF: This was where?

HA: Before the war.

JF: In the Lodz area, outside of Lodz?

HA: My father was not from Lodz. My father was from a different town. He was from Dombrowa, that was Oberschlesien and they had a lot of ground, his parents, so he knew a lot of things. And my brother said, "Let's go to Birobidzhan. We get a piece of ground and we-- and my father said, "No."

JF: So, you would not go without your parents?

HA: No, my brother, the second time, did the same thing. When everybody escaped to Russia he went with them. My brother-in-law went and some friends of his. He went until Lvov. He came back and some of them lived through and they're alive until today. He couldn't leave his parents and he perished in the war. He perished in the partisans. So, it's--we were too much of a close family. I had my grandparents there and my aunts and uncles and cousins so it was too close everything. So it was not so easy. But you felt the, the Jews were hated and what did I know, I was too young. I did my things and I, mostly I belonged to *Betar* and mostly while I had my spare time I spent organizations between Jews. Parents had troubles. Kids, what do the kids know? I was through with school. And mostly I spent--but I know what was going on was bad and when I worked with the millinery and I came home--you know, in Europe you closed the store seven, came home at nine. My mother always said be careful where you go the *sh'gootzim*, the *goyim*, staying there in the corner, they shouldn't hurt you. I know what was going on and it was very bad. But a child has a different feeling about such things.

JF: Were you talking about the mid-thirties now?

HA: '37, '38…

JF: Mmm hmm.

HA: '38.

JF: What happened right before the invasion? Did you have any feeling that things were going to be that involved?

HA: How could you know? How could you feel? Could somebody imagine it's going to be like that? We know it was bad. I was still working and I remember there was in the street big mobilization and everybody was running back and forth and the stores started to--you see this city [unclear], they didn't even bomb them. They're pretending they're bombing it. A few planes came over and they dropped some bombs out of the city because they knew that will belong to them. There was a big--where I came from, they used to call Polish Manchester. There were just factories of making

materials and all kind--why should they bomb it? They knew they're going to have it and 60% was German, belonged to the Germans so it was not wise to bomb it. And I remember some boys went to, to they called them to military, a lot of friends of us. But that was such a turmoil. The Poles were running this way and this way and people came from [unclear]. I never saw them in my life, I was too young so I could not understand. I knew something was going on. It's bad.

JF: So there were not actually bombings then? Of your town?

HA: No, not over my town.

JF: Was there a physical invasion of the German Army into the town?

HA: Then it started, when they came in. 1939, May 3. It wouldn't last long the Polish war, 10 days.

JF: May of 1939?

HA: September, September 3. The Poles are such nothing people. You tell them to holler, they will holler. They don't think for themselves. They will go into the front and will screaming [unclear]. We will show the Germans. Two days later, they were Germans themselves. So, the war didn't last long.

JF: What happened to you and your family during that time?

HA: My family was right away affected by that.

JF: In what way? Can you describe it?

HA: Short before the war, about two weeks before the war, my father, being a butcher, they used to bring wagons of cows and all kinds of thing. They let him out from the wagons and one bull started to run and my father came on and the bull fell on him, stepped on him and pushed him down to the ground and broke his leg and his leg was up to here in a cast.

JF: Up to his hip?

HA: Yes, and my father was a very--he was tall. He was six feet tall and he weighed about over 200 pounds. He was not fat, but he was strong and can you imagine with a cast like that and then the war? And…

JF: But he was at home in his cast?

HA: He was home. Walking with a cane, and my two brothers and the boys from the neighborhood, even Poles, they said right away, you know before the war started they said if they invade someplace, the Germans, they take the young boys and send them right away to the Army or they send them someplace. So all the boys escaped. All the boys run away.

JF: You're talking about the Polish and the Jewish?

HA: The Polish and the Jewish. You know, like my brothers grew up with a bunch of Polish boys and went to school. They hated each other behind the backs, but they went out together. So they run away.

JF: Your brothers went?

HA: My both brothers and a bunch of other boys and a bunch of *goyim,* the, the

Gentiles.

JF: Where did they go?

HA: They run to the direction of Warsaw.

JF: So what you're talking about the brothers who tried to go to Birobidzhan and to Palestine--you're talking about before the war. Those, those instances happened…

HA: Happened before the war.

JF: ...before the war? And they came back.

HA: Before. And they came back. Now this happened 1939, September 4. They run away already. September 4 they run away and they were running just the direction where they were bombing, shooting and bombing and shooting. They run with everybody. And they came back with such things. This one saw my brother killed and this one said it was not true. People were talking, and mine brothers were and I was running around and looking for them. God, and I couldn't tell my parents.

JF: You stayed in Lodz?

HA: I stayed in Lodz.

JF: And your brothers went on their way to Warsaw?

HA: Yes.

JF: And you were getting these stories filtered back?

HA: That's right.

JF: And your parents didn't know that they had gone into Warsaw?

HA: They know they run away. They went this direction but they didn't hear. And there were places in Lodz where they kept prisoners, you know they caught a bunch of such boys, say for instance, and they kept them in, in outside in a big yard or somewhere.

JF: Who is they?

HA: The Germans.

JF: This is after the Germans were already in the city.

HA: Yes. And they kept them there and I was running from one corner of the city to the other looking if I could find my brothers then. Then somebody told me, he said, "Hasi, you know what, they're bringing in wounded." You know, people who were shot, people who were killed and in this and this hospital there is a Honikman, Martin Honikman. It was so far and I was only 16 years old, and I didn't want--and the Germans were already in and you not allowed [unclear] a curfew and you had to wear right away the white band, white arm band with the Jewish star. I took it off and I went very far and it was a curfew. You had to be by seven o'clock at home and I went and till I came to that hospital and till they let in, a little nothing. I was a very skinny little girl. I went in there and I was looking at list from top, such long lists were hanging there. And I found a Morrick Honikman, but I went to the room and there was a little baby. It was not my brother and I came home and my mother was crying, "Where were you?" She thought that the German caught me and took me away. But I didn't tell her and I never told her

and I was looking around and then short before the Holy Holidays, my oldest brother came back by himself. Somehow my two brothers were separated on the road and he came back and he said, "You know what, I was staying at the, at the trolley" -- we had the trolley coming through and my brother came off the trolley. And he said, "You know what, I didn't want to come home because I heard it's all flattened. It's bombed." Such things were going around. And then two days later my older brother came home, so the holidays were terrible. My father, somehow he knew he wouldn't have another holiday in that synagogue. Synagogue where this was his place. This was his sons' place. And I'm staying outside and watching, and they were praying. And I was staying outside with other kids and watching the Germans shouldn't come and see that they were not allowed to pray. And then it started, then it started terrible, it's just, my grandfather had to right away shave off his beard.

JF: This was an order of the Germans?

HA: Ya, *peyes* and beard. He never went out the street because he was wearing Jewish habits and all those things.

JF: Your father . . .

HA: My father was clean cut, he was already a little bit more. But he was very religious and he was frightened terrible. He was so frightened. First, he was with a leg in a cast and there was no place to change the cast because with everything was, you're not allowed to go. And I remember the cast started to itch. You know that cast and he opened a little thing and he was scratching it. Eventually he took off the cast, after the days where they told him to take off and his leg was crooked. He was limping, so . . .

JF: What other changes occurred when the Germans entered the town for you?

HA: For me, first I, I didn't work anymore. A German took over the store where I was working.

JF: You had to stop your training?

HA: Sure, no school, no nothing for nobody. I had still a sister and a brother who were going to school. There were no school for nobody. They shot the principal from the school and the Gentile they took out like they call them the Intelligentsia, the intelligent people, and they shot them. It did not matter if they were Poles or . . .

JF: They shot them?

HA: Yes.

JF: Where? Was this a mass shooting?

HA: It was a mass shooting. They took everybody, the banker, the doctor, the principal, the teacher, a priest, they took them behind, where was it, behind the cemetery or somewhere, and they shot them. The rest escaped, who had a chance escaped. And it was day by day living.

JF: The Germans, the German soldiers were in the streets?

HA: The German soldiers were everywhere. Where it was a big building, where it was something, they took it over and it was their law. You walked in the center

city, they, they shot right and left. They saw a woman, dressed a young woman, nice, they made her lie down and clean the pavement with a toothbrush. I saw it myself.

JF: This was a Jewish woman?

HA: Yeah, sure. They…

JF: Did they also do things like this to the Poles?

HA: No.

JF: You said they shot some of the Polish Intelligentsia.

HA: Just the Intelligensia.

JF: The rest of the Polish people…

HA: The rest of the Polish people were living. The rest, they just everything what they wanted to do.

Tape one, side two:

JF: This is Tape one, side two of an interview with Mrs. Hasia Aufschauer on May 10, 1982 with Josey Fisher.

JF: What about food? Were things rationed immediately?

HA: Well, yes, and you had--it was black market right away and if you stayed in the line for food, if there were Poles in that line who know you or you grew up with them, you had a chance to get something. But if there was a line for food or for something else where they didn't know you, they recognized right away that you're Jewish. I didn't look Jewish, but they knew right away that they smelled out that I'm Jewish and they pushed you out.

JF: Were you not wearing your armband?

HA: If I had a chance not to wear it, I did,

JF: What about your father's butcher shop?

HA: My father didn't have a butcher shop by then. It was a corporation. He worked in that corporation. It was closed.

JF: That was closed?

HA: Nothing.

JF: When? Right…

HA: Right away, right away. September 3 it was closed. You know, when a, a country goes to war, mobilization, such things are closed. It was right away. It was so mixed up. It's just impossible to describe how it was right away. Mixed up. Kids ran away to Warsaw, people ran away to Warsaw, they were leaving, people were running to other countries. It was, you know, just hard to, to say how, how it looked. This house was closed up, this house was closed up. Other people came to the new city, people from the new city went someplace else and then the Germans right away started to evacuate people. They came in at night and they took out a whole building of people and they sent them someplace else. I had one girlfriend I grew up with her from childhood, mostly. One day I got up in the morning they took the whole block of Jews and sent them someplace away. I could never find them. After the war about a year ago I found out where she was.

JF: How did you find out?

HA: A friend of ours survived and he lives in Canada and he was here. And he was in the city where there was a ghetto there and I was asking about her. He said she was shot in the street.

JF: At the time you had no idea where these people were being taken?

HA: No, I wanted, I wanted so badly to find out where she was. I didn't know they took the father and the mother and there were two sisters. One died during the way, before the war. And they sent her away and I could never find out where she was. And there were a lot like that. They just made their own terms, they took people from there

and sent them to this city and the rest run.

JF: What about the Jewish leadership in Lodz?

HA: The Jewish leadership was-- how can I--? Did I know a lot about it? You see the whole-- how can I tell you? This was the ghetto. That was old Lodz. You know, a city starts, like Center City. [Mrs. Aufschauer marks out city on table.] Behind that center city was that ghetto, they put Jews, a lot of Jews they stuck together in little homes, in big homes they were there. There were the leaders. I lived farther down there. You see, like City Hall here and the Northeast here.

JF: So none of the leaders were in your community?

HA: In my com--no. We just representatives, but they not leaders.

JF: What did that mean then in terms of your community? Were you cut off from the Jewish leadership or did you have some kind of tie through your representatives?

HA: We had some tie, but it was like cut off. It didn't help too much. We were too few to get German power to accomplish something.

JF: You mean, too few in the whole city of Lodz or in your specific area?

HA: In our, in our area too few. So they came, this was 1939, they came in December 16, December 16 they came. Sixty of them, SS men dressed up in leather coats with such big, how you call it--forgot--you know, what Gaucho use.

JF: Swords?

HA: Not swords.

JF: Bayonets?

HA: Not bayonets. On the tip of my tongue. It will come later. Alright, they came in and they gave us 60 minutes to get out from our, from our house.

JF: Was this your…?

HA: Our section.

JF: Your section? The whole section?

HA: The whole section. They started the ghetto by then. The ghetto started already in Lodz. So took sections and pushed them to the ghetto.

JF: So, you were in December, on December 16, 1939, this section of the city…

HA: Had to go to the ghetto.

JF: …was evacuated into the Lodz Ghetto.

HA: The Lodz Ghetto, yes. It was not a ghetto by then. They were pushing all Jews together. But my parents, my father came from a different part of Europe and they had a house there and this was not the Third Reich. This was called the Protectorate. It was part Poland and part-- so my father and mother hired a farmer, a Gentile, with a wagon and two horses and put how much they could in 60 minutes on this wagon. My brother, the one who passed away, packed anything he could and I remember we had a little canary, he opened the window and he let it out. And what could you pack?

JF: This all happened within this hour that you were supposed to leave?

HA: A few days before we knew it was not--so my mother made us little sacks for kids, you know, the smaller one. We had a birth certificates, there was a little bit money. We wearing this behind our clothes. And . . .

JF: You hung this around your neck?

HA: Yes, because we were kids, we were three. I had a little brother and a little sister and I was the next. I was the middle child. And one sister, my older sister was married and she went with her husband and her in-laws. And my oldest brother were with us and the middle, the next one to me. So we got the wagon with the horses, put everything on and we went. I'll never forget it. It was so cold, it was so slippery and many wagons went over the, the road and we could hear the children screaming, "Mommy, Mommy," at night.

JF: Now, you weren't stopped from leaving in this wagon?

HA: No, because it was too soon. You see, later they did. You could have gone anyplace you wanted just out from there and when we left our friends, the Poles, were staying and clapping, applauding. [Claps hands.]

JF: These were people that you had known…

HA: I grew up with them. I grew up with them. So we left there and went to Czestochowa. From Czestochowa we were there, I remember. January 1, my brother and I walked out in Czestochowa, the bells were ringing, that was 1940.

JF: Now, was this where your family home was or this is on the way?

HA: On the way.

JF: On the way.

HA: On the way. And we knew somebody who had a big farm there, a Jew. That was the Protectorate. And they gave us a corner in the kitchen, so my parents put us on the straw sacks, they put their belongings in. They were there until--in the spring I couldn't stay longer. I went to find my, my father's relatives where the--in Oberschlesien [Upper Silesia], that was in Dabrowa, where my father came from.

JF: This was the area where the house was? [Unclear]

HA: Yes, so I went there and I met my aunt, my father's sister, and but that was the Third Reich, too. I had to smuggle through the border. I went in.

JF: Did you have any trouble doing that?

HA: I was a devil. I went through the woods, such deep woods and the dogs were barking and the SS were running around like crazy, but I was a little girl…

JF: So you just took off your armband?

HA: Not myself. I had a leader, I had to pay to let me through the border.

JF: But you went without your papers?

HA: Absolutely, nothing, you had to just on your own. And I went there and I met my father's family. They were very poor people. It was a little town, a hamlet, it was nothing. They lived there. But my father lived in a, a bigger city, he came from a

bigger city. His relatives, his brother's wife with the children lived there and I came to them because my uncle was dead.

JF: This is in Oberschlesien?

HA: Yes.

JF: Where you father's home was?

HA: My father's home was in Gornicza.

JF: In Dabrowa.

HA: But before Dabrowa after the border where I crossed was a small town, Myszkow. It was nothing, a hamlet, a little piece of nothing. And my aunt with her children lived there and I came to visit them before I went further.

JF: The person that you had to pay to cross over this border was a Pole?

HA: A Pole. Sure. Just Pole.

JF: And this kind of thing was going on fairly regularly?

HA: Constantly. Oh, ya. And I went and I saw everything and I was there six weeks and I went back to my parent to Czestochowa.

JF: Did you feel that you were in danger being there?

HA: No, I just wanted my parent to come to go to the house where my [unclear] is, but…

JF: What was your purpose in going? To make sure that the family was still there?

HA: To go back?

JF: To see, no, no, when you went there to begin with, to your father's home area, were you going to make sure that it would be safe for your family to go there?

HA: Well, my father said there's a house, let's go there, we're gonna be there. But when I came there, my father's sister was an old maid, the house was run down and Oberschlesien was 99% German.

JF: So you went to assess the situation then?

HA: Yes, and I came back and I told my parents how it was. And you know, they didn't have a--in such situations you lose your ambition to live, to continue. My father was dragged out in Czestochowa to dig ditches. I have pictures from him there with an armband.

JF: You have photographs?

HA: Yeh. And he was, he felt nothing. He felt--here in Lodz he was Mr. Honikman, big thing, and here, he's nothing. He lives in a--at night he pulled out a straw sack. I remember the first *Pesach* we celebrated in that Czestochowa on that farm and I remember my father picked up the [long pause] he picked up the first, you know, *Becher* [Ger. - cup] of wine. He cried. [long pause]

JF: This was…

HA: This was 1940.

JF: This was 1940 and his life was radically changed.

HA: He was, he was, he was always such a strong man--full of wisdom, full of compassion, but then he just shriveled up.

JF: He was still limping.

HA: He was limping.

JF: And in pain from his leg.

HA: He saw his family falling apart, this was the worst thing for him.

JF: What do you mean his family was falling apart? You mean his children?

HA: Well, yeah. I was away. My oldest brother was--he couldn't stay on that farm constantly, so he was a fighter. He was organizing partisans. He was always involved in something, and my brother next to me, he was, he was working in the ditches too. He was a very delicate, very intelligent boy and he came home broken up. He was only three years older than I. So, but that *Pesach* my father said, "I'll never live to see another *Pesach*." But he did, another *Pesach* was another *tsores* [Yiddish - troubles]. So I went back to the Myszkow. My father took me to the bus. I remember, like today, and he said, "Remember Chaya Sora, take care of yourself."

JF: This was after you had come back?

HA: Yeah.

JF: And you advised your parents not to go to this area.…

HA: I didn't say not to go. I just came back and I told them situation what's there. In Dabrowa they cannot be, they cannot live there.

JF: Because that was a part of…

HA: It was part of--it's Germany and the houses run down. But you know what I did? I took my father with me to cross the border to go to see by himself and it was, you know, sometimes everything is against you. It was such a storm, such lightening, it was such thundering and the Germans were crazy running around with those dogs on the border and my father with that leg. He was crying like a baby and I took him through that border and brought him to my aunt, to his sister-in-law in that little hamlet. She almost died at night. We came to the window, we looked at the window, because you know you're not allowed to knock or something. We were soaking wet, both of us. And my father saw what's going on and he went back, again to the border. He went back to my mother. Then it started. Czestochowa had a ghetto too, not a ghetto, they had a camp and they were pushing everybody again together. So my, my brother was older than me came to that hamlet where I was. 'Cause I started to smuggle that time. Somebody had to make a living.

JF: Explain this again, you were put by your father, into this small border.

HA: Yes.

JF: Which was in the Protectorate?

HA: Yes.

JF: This was in the Protectorate?

HA: No. The small town was not Protectorate, this was Germany.

JF: This was Germany, where you were?

HA: Yes, my father was and my, my parents were Protectorate.

JF: Now what was the name of the little village where you were?

HA: Mysckow. M-Y-S-C-K-O-W. Mysckow.

JF: Okay, and you were smuggling. You were living there and smuggling.

HA: This, because this was a little town by the border, there was going on a lot of smuggling there. People had to survive so you took-- say I was a big smuggler. I took 10 pounds of flour. I took it to another city. A piece of meat, a piece of this, and you sold it on the black market.

JF: Now how was this smuggling organized?

HA: By train. You had to go on train.

JF: But who was organizing it?

HA: Nobody organized it. The, the Pole, the Polacks brought from the farm eggs and chickens to the Jews and they bought it. Then the people came from another city and bought it from the Jews and took it back to the city and they were selling it this way. I used to put two ducks around here at, at my waist.

JF: Ducks.

HA: Ducks. Dead ones, you know. And tied around with a string and put on my coat, and I was going--you had to take the train and you had to go by about 45 minutes by train to a big city, what's called Sosnowice Bendin, there the big black market was going on.

JF: And you would sell to the Poles?

HA: To the Jews.

JF: You would sell to the Jews.

HA: To the Jews, not to the Poles. We bought from the Poles.

JF: You bought it from the Poles. Your family, the family gave you money to do this or …?

HA: No, my cousins, the first money what I got, I didn't have any money, my cousin's husband gave me, lent me some money. I saw what was going on and my parents needed to eat in that Czestochowa. So I made money. I lived with my aunt, she took me in. And I made a packet and I sent it out by Red Cross to that Czestochowa and they got it there.

JF: Through the Red Cross, the Polish Red Cross, and they delivered this to your parents?

HA: Yeah, yeah. My father needed tobacco, saccharine or something like this. I made a package and I sent it out. I was the provider and my father cried. He said, "My provider." Then it started, the ghetto in Czestochowa.

JF: How long were you doing this?

HA: Oh, I did it until they took me concentration camp.

JF: So about what month--this was 1940?

HA: This was 1940 and I did it until, well--you see, my parents came to the little hamlet after a while. I did it until they took me in '40, in the middle of 1941. And then the ghetto started, my brother came from Czestochowa to Mysckow through the border because they were catching boys and putting them in concentration camp. But a boy didn't have a chance and he was staying with my aunt, my father's sister-in-law.

JF: Your family was still back in Czestochowa?

HA: Czestochowa, just my brother came. And he was staying with my aunt and one day he couldn't go out and I was again the provider. He needed cigarettes, he needed shaving lotion, and something like this. And I gave it to him and one night there was a big, we called it *oblawa* [Pol - raid], you know catching boys, sending them . . .

JF: This was called?

HA: *Oblawa.*

JF: *Oblawa.*

HA: Yeah and they took all the boys.

JF: That was when the Germans would get the boys to go to a work camp or to…?

HA: That's right and I saw that my brother ran out from my aunt and he was running somewhere to hide. They caught him and they took him concentration camp and I remember like today. I was running after them and I was begging the Germans to take me to concentration camp that I can [taps on table] be with my brother and they didn't want it. Then, they didn't want it. They took away my brother then I'm going to explain to my parents, I'm going to write to them that they took him concentration camp. What do you do?

JF: Did you know where he was being taken?

HA: Yeah. I know Markstadt[2]. He was, he was not in Markstadt. He was, yeah, in Markstadt concentration.

JF: And you knew at that time that he was . . .

HA: He wrote that. He wrote to me.

JF: I see.

HA: He wrote to me and I sent him packages.

JF: Was it fairly easy during that time to communicate with family in different parts of Poland, to write letters?

HA: Yes, it was not bad. Then it started to get bad when my parents were in Czestochowa. They were making . . .

JF: This was towards the middle of 1941 or . . .?

HA: The end of '40.

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[2]Markstadt - Labor sub-camp of Gross-Rosen; Armament Industry run by Krupp. Benjamin B. Ferencz. *Less Than Slaves: Jewish Forced Labor and the Quest for Compensation*, p. 76, Indiana University Press: (published in Association with the United State Holocaust Memorial Museum) April 1, 2002.

JF: The end of ’40.

HA: So, they went through the border. I sent them some money. They went through the border and they came to Myszkow.

JF: And they brought the other children who were with them?

HA: Yes, the two children with them. They didn’t have where to live. First, they couldn’t be there because they didn’t have the registration. They didn’t have the *Lebenskarte* [Ger - ration card], you know, to live to get bread and milk, because it was stamps like here. You had it.

JF: How did you get those papers?

HA: Ha, I took another name. My name was Andaluzia. [phonetic]

JF: This was…

HA: I was paid. I paid a German and they gave me temporary thing, you know.

JF: Now was that a non-Jewish identity? You had non-Jewish papers?

HA: Yeah, but I didn’t go by it. I was wearing a band.

JF: You wore your band?

HA: Oh, sure.

JF: But you had papers?

HA: Papers. It was papers. They were not like in the, in the, Jewish, how you say, magistrate with the Jews. You know, if you were in the, like in City Hall, you got your stamp card, you lived on it and you got bread. I didn’t get this. I just had a registration that I live here. Really, I was not registered there. Can you understand what I mean?

JF: Could you have been registered with these papers?

HA: No, no. I couldn’t. I tell you later a story about it.

JF: In other words, if someone stopped you on the street you could use these papers?

HA: A German I could show it. A Jew from the *kehilla*, from those big shots they knew I wasn’t legal because I wasn’t registered with them. I didn’t existed.

JF: What was your feeling about the *kehilla*? In this...

HA: Not too good.

JF: In what way?

HA: They just took care of their own, that’s it.

JF: You mean the Jews who were living in their hamlet?

HA: In that hamlet, that particular hamlet. They were just family, very close-knit family, one took care of the other one. Outsiders didn’t have a chance.

JF: So, somebody like you who is a Jew from another town did not…

HA: I didn’t exist. I just had a registration, if somebody stops me in the street, that’s it. That’s my identification. But if he goes deeper he will find out that I don’t even exist.

JF: Do you think the *kehilla* was helpful toward its own?

HA: Yes, positively. I went to the concentration camp for one of the sisters because I didn't exist, you see. I wasn't registered so when they caught the sister they exchanged me for her. I made a deal with it. If they will give food stamps to my parents if they registered, I'll go for her in concentration camp. And they did it. When I was in concentration camp already, I wrote to my mother and asked--she didn't know what I did because I didn't have to go. I could escape because I wasn't registered.

JF: How were your parents living in this village during that time before they were registered?

HA: I was smuggling. I was the provider.

JF: And they weren't questioned, they weren't stopped, they had no papers?

HA: They didn't go out too much.

JF: Did they live with your aunt, also?

HA: No, no, no. I found them a room in a basement, a basement room. And I had a girlfriend, she passed away a few years ago, and we were going around, we found a bed and a table. They brought with them a little bit linens, what they still had. They had to sell everything to live and they came and somehow I organized. Then I went to my aunt, to my father's sister, who lived in Dabrowa and she had linens still there and I took all those things and I brought it to my parents and how we could we furnished them. We could live there.

JF: Was the *kehilla* in Czestochowa helpful in any way to your parents?

HA: No, not to my parents.

JF: Because, again, they were not from there?

HA: That's right, that's right. So then it started to get harder to smuggle. Every time a train came to Bendin where it was the main city where all the smugglers go off, the SS was waiting. They grabbed them, sent to the concentration camp. Somehow I escaped twice. I was lying in a ditch all night long and in the morning got up and walked away with the other ones they took in concentration camps. But it started to get bad and bad and bad and my father and my sister went again to dig ditches and they got paid a little bit.

JF: Now digging ditches, they didn't need to show any kind of papers during that time?

HA: No, no. They didn't need it, so they paid them something there. But I always could manage something to bring home. Then it came they caught me in concentration camp. They sent out like invitations. Each home and you would say this and this name. You come to this, this point, to this hall. I mean and go to concentration camp.

JF: Now, who sent out that invitation?

HA: The Germans, the Germans.

JF: The *kehilla* was not involved?

HA: No, the *kehilla* was not.

JF: The numbers…

HA: No. So it came. I was registered as Andaluzia living at my aunt's house. So a letter came there to her, but there was no Andaluzia, so I didn't have to go. But I was walking in the street and two SS caught me. They stopped me and put me in that same place with the rest of them.

JF: You had your band on?

HA: Oh, yeah, that time I had. I didn't look Jewish. I had my braids around here so I looked like a German. I spoke a good German, a good Polish, so any time I had a chance I took off my band. But they caught me and brought me in there and I could escape. I could walk out like anybody because it was not guarded, so. You know it's a little hamlet. Where would they go? But then, one from the *kehilla* came to me and said, "Look,"-- they knew I was not legally in that place. He said, "My sister was called to go to the concentration camp." I said, "I know she's here." I knew it, she was my girlfriend, same age, but she was a--she lived there all her life and I was a newcomer, and I said, "Look, I'll make a deal with you. If you register my parents and give them the food stamps, like anybody else, I'll go for your sister in concentration camp." And they did. She's not alive.

JF: The sister didn't live.

HA: No, didn't have a chance.

JF: She was deported later?

HA: I don't know where she died. I think in Auschwitz she died. But I, I went in concentration camp.

JF: But the *kehilla* kept up their side of the bargain?

HA: Yes. Because, you see, somehow when I came concentration camp I kept myself nice.

Tape two, side one:

JF: This is Tape two, side one of the interview with Mrs. Hasia Aufschauer on May 10, 1982 with Josey Fisher. You were deported then in the...

HA: Concentration camp.

JF: …to a concentration camp in the middle of 1941?

HA: Yeah. The end of, that was the end of 1941.

JF: The end of 1941. What month was that?

HA: That was December.

JF: December.

HA: December.

JF: And did you know where they were going to be taking you?

HA: No, how could you know, they just--I remember one of the SS men said, "Some day you will be grateful that we went there."

JF: That you went to the concentration camp?

HA: Yeah. And I remember my mother went with me and she said, "Can I buy you something?" I know she didn't have money. I said, "Mom, just a toothbrush." I remember like today. We went in to here you call it a drugstore, *apotheke*, and she bought me a toothbrush and I packed what I had and I went.

JF: How much time did you have to get ready to go?

HA: Oh, we were there two days in that place.

JF: And you could come and go? But you had…

HA: I could.

JF: You could?

HA: I could. People would come in. My parents came in and talked to me, but…

JF: How much were you allowed to take with you?

HA: Anything you wanted. That was right away in the beginning. I don't think there were too many women going to concentration camps by then.

JF: And what kind of place was this where you were kept for the two days?

HA: It was a synagogue. That was their synagogue, a Jewish synagogue.

JF: How many do you think were deported with you at that time?

HA: From this hamlet maybe 100, maybe 120 or 150. I didn't know everybody there, but mostly like a few. Then we went, we didn't go right away concentration camp. Everybody had to, who was caught, had to go to Sosnowice[3] and it was like, like recruits going through a, they didn't take everybody that time, you know.

JF: What is the spelling of the name of that town?

[3]Also spelled Sosnowiec - Polish spelling.

HA: It was Oberschlesien. Everybody went through there. S-O-S-N-O-W-I-C-E. *Durchgangslager*. [Ger - transit camp]

JF: And they sorted out.

HA: They sorted out. You know, the Germans made a contract with those factories. They needed so many, so many, so they sent 150 here, 200 there, 3000 there. So we went there and a lot of them…

JF: How did you get there?

HA: By train.

JF: By train.

HA: By train and a lot of them Jewish people who had pulls, who had money, were taken out from those camps. They were free. Understand?

JF: What kind of train did you take?

HA: Oh, we took a, it was a…

JF: A regular passenger train.

HA: Yeah, at that time.

JF: A passenger train.

HA: Yeah, sure.

JF: And what happened when you were in this center?

HA: Nothing. In this center there was bunk beds. It was pretty decent. What did I know, I was with my girlfriend and they were selecting this one here, this one there. They were called, they were called for a nurse. You could've been a nurse, anybody could be a nurse. I didn't want it. I didn't want it. I was high and mighty. I was always taking care of myself so I didn't--so my girlfriend and I, we stuck together and two days later they put us on trains and we went to Czechoslovakia. From Oberschlesien we went to Czechoslovakia. *Sudetengau*. [Ger - Southern Province] I was about eight kilometers from Prague, so far, and we went, we came there, they took us off nice. I don't say, I have nothing to say. We were in, it used to be a factory.

JF: *Sudetengau*?

HA: *Sudetengau*.

JF: Was the name of the town?

HA: No, it was Parshnitz. *Sudentengau*. Parshnitz.

JF: P-A . . .

HA: P-A-R-S-H-N-I-T-Z.

JF: And *Sudetengau* was the area?

HA: Yes. And *Sudetengau* was Czechoslovakia. It was a part of the German part of Czechoslovakia.

JF: Now, was this a town or this was a work camp in Czechoslovakia?

HA: Parshnitz. The, the camp was, it was Parshnitz. In Parshnitz was the camp, but this was a town where I was.

JF: And what was it like?

HA: Well, it was a factory. It was clean, cleaned up.

JF: What kind of factory?

HA: That must have been a factory. They cleaned it out, I was on the third floor.

JF: You mean you were staying in a factory?

HA: Yes, bunk beds and we had little closets, you know, half closets. And one thing was right away the problem, there was no water to bathe or to bathe, out of the question, but to wash it was just dripping. And then they selected to what work you're going to go. We didn't know what was-- I was between 36 girls, tall girls, you would have been one of them. Somehow I was wearing good boots, you know, rubber boots, remember those boots with the zipper? And I was still young so I put in the heels pieces of rubber that my shoes came out higher and I was tall and they took me then and I was working at night in a factory.

JF: What kind of factory?

HA: We were--you know what flax is? Where they're making linens? Well, they start from the beginning, in such a factory I was working and all the time I was in concentration camp I worked at night from six in the morning to six at night, from six at night to six in the morning, always at night. And then we had a half an hour lunch, to eat, what we had to eat and we walked three kilometers one side every day.

JF: You walked through the town?

HA: No, out.

JF: Out. Outside the town. How many girls were with you?

HA: With me were 36.

JF: And this group came together from Sosnowice?

HA: Yeah. We came…

JF: From Sosnowice you stayed together.

HA: Yeah.

JF: And how many people do you think were in this factory that you were staying in the camp?

HA: Three and a half thousand. There were five camps in the vicinity, five camps of women, just women.

JF: In that same area?

HA: In the same area.

JF: And these were all women who had been parceled out to work in…

HA: In different places.

JF: Different factories in areas.

HA: Some of them had the factories in the same place where they had the camp. They didn't have to walk. I was the lucky one, I had to walk. Three kilometers one side and three kilometers the other side.

JF: When you walked to work did you pass people, natives, native people, the

population and what was their attitude?

HA: Nothing, they turned their heads away. They pretended they didn't see us. In the beginning, you know, when I first came, there was still 56 girls there, 156 girls in camp already. No, it was not so many because I had number 56. A few of them were. We opened that camp. Our transport, when we came, opened that camp.

JF: You were #56?

HA: Yes.

JF: From that camp.

HA: Yes.

JF: And you said you were able to keep your own clothes?

HA: Yes, all the time.

JF: Were you able to keep your possessions?

HA: Yes.

JF: The ones you brought with you?

HA: Yes, because we were from the first one. I was the only one who came out with long hair. They didn't cut it off.

JF: The never cut your hair?

HA: No.

JF: Did you stay in that camp the entire time?

HA: All the time, sure, I was the lucky one. If you were evacuated, nobody--few of them survived, because I was too close to the, to the, Prague. The Russians came right away to Prague and stayed there behind Prague. So where did you go? All the other concentration camps were walking around when you were evacuated. They were walking like this and on the way they were shot. They all came to Prague. We stayed there. They passed our camp at night thousands and thousands of people used to come there, just to stay for the night, and you could hear a whole night, *Shema Yisrael, Shema Yisrael*, all night long.

JF: They wouldn't actually come in your camp?

HA: They didn't let them in. They were just outside and it was so cold. It's in the mountains, that was in the mountains. You got up in the morning and if you were allowed to turn your head to look you saw such stiff little boards lying there, people, dead people. And they took them on little carts, like stiff boards, and they ditched them in a hole and buried them because they couldn't go farther. They died there, but we didn't go anywhere. They didn't evacuate us.

JF: Can you describe in as much detail as you can, first, your living situation and then your working situation?

HA: Well, the living situation was--we were three floors. I was on the third floor. My luck was that when the majority went during the day to work, the 36 of us, we had one corner, we stayed together. The whole camp was for us. There were not too many of us there, so it was peace and quiet for a time.

JF: You were in a bunk bed?

HA: Bunk bed, my girlfriend slept on the top and I on the bottom. But, you see, when I came to the concentration camp it was *Arbeitslager* [Ger - labor camp]. It was a different story. We had a guy, an old guy, took us to work, a civilian. It was diff-- we didn't have our freedom. They didn't beat us, we got our meals, but then . . .

JF: What kind of meals were you getting?

HA: We got stews. It was not bad.

JF: This was a Czech man who was . . .?

HA: No, it was a German.

JF: German.

HA: But then the SS, SS took it over.

JF: This was not a soldier then.

HA: No, but then the SS took it over.

JF: When did the SS take over the camp?

HA: '42. The SS took it over and it was a whole different story.

JF: What happened?

HA: Right away, we had wires, electric wires around there, on the outside. We had SS people outside. We had curfews. We had to give up everything what we had what it resembled gold. We had to--no communication with the other world, no letters, no nothing.

JF: Before that time you were able to write letters?

HA: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

JF: You were able to receive mail from your parents?

HA: Packages, packages too. Nothing when the SS came.

JF: You received news then from your parents?

HA: Yes.

JF: And did you learn anything about how things were going?

HA: My parents--they didn't want to write how they suffering. But my little brother wrote, he wrote me a letter. "Today is my Bar Mitzvah, but I would like one time in my life to eat enough bread that I feel I don't want to eat any more." And they evacuated the little hamlet again. They evacuated to a bigger city and my parents went to Auschwitz. They couldn't survive. They had to walk from that little hamlet to the big city. They pushed them like cattle on the way and I think that my father and mother and my little brother went to Auschwitz. My younger sister was in that city, survived, and she went to work in a factory that kept--but she got typhus and died there.

JF: How did you find all this out?

HA: People told me after the war. People who survived. So my sister died and she's buried somewhere on a fence who knows where. But my oldest brother escaped to-- how can I tell you?-- it was Kielce. It's Poland, Poland [unclear] German. Over there it started the Jewish partisans and because my sister, my married sister, was not far away

there and he organized that partisans, because it started already the uprising in Warsaw Ghetto. And he was organizing those partisans and somehow they got in contact with the Polish partisan and the Poles, partisan, killed a lot of Jews. And they got the Jewish partisans and then surrounded them and killed them all out and killed my brother.

JF: The Polish partisans killed the Jewish partisans.

HA: Killed the Jewish partisans, sure.

JF: And how did you hear this?

HA: After the war, I went back home, after the war. I went to Lodz when I was liberated. I was liberated, I was liberated in concentration camp because we didn't evacuate. We were sitting our camp, our building where we lived was so hollow like that table underneath, but it was full of dynamite. The girls put it there. They told us to put in there. But what it was, the Czechs had partisans too and they were watching our camps, five camps of women, each camp had about 3,000, 2,000, 5,000, so somehow it happened that the Germans escaped and they didn't dynamite our camp or none would be alive.

JF: Who was going to dynamite the camp?

HA: The Germans.

JF: The Germans were going to dynamite the camps?

HA: Sure, sure.

JF: If what?

HA: If they didn't run away. That was a turmoil in the last few days between the SS too. One was blaming the other and one was running from the other so they run away and the Czech partisans, the partisan, were watching they shouldn't ignite anything there, so somehow we survived.

JF: Let me go back for a minute. Your, your brother who joined the partisans, who was killed by the Polish partisans--had the Jewish partisans in that area tried to link up with the Polish partisans?

HA: Yes, yes.

JF: What was the reason for, the, for them turning on them? That they couldn't have…

HA: No, they didn't want the Jews. They wanted all Jews to be killed. The best Pole, the best *goy*, wanted the Jews to kill.

JF: And how you understand that they were killed? Was this a mass of …?

HA: I had two stories about my brother. One told me that my brother made it to the Warsaw Ghetto, to the uprising and got killed in a bunker. They threw in grenades and killed him. Recently a friend who is in Canada, who lived in our neighborhood where I came from, said no, he linked up with the Polish partisans, and the Polish partisans took all the Jews and killed them, the Jewish partisans, and then brought them back to the city and threw them in the middle of the town.

JF: In Kielce?

HA: In Kielce. So I don't know whom to believe. He's dead, that's all.

JF: And your other brother?

HA: My other brother survived, my older brother.

JF: The oldest brother?

HA: No, the next older.

JF: The next older one, and he…

HA: He was in nine concentration camps, nine concentration camps. And I, I was looking for my cousin and I found my brother and…

JF: This was after you went back to Lodz?

HA: No, no, this was in another town. You know, after the war, people started to come to the concentration camp. I was not far from Theresienstadt. So who survived in Theresienstadt came to, you heard about Theresienstadt, came to our camp and there were a lot of girls from Sosnowice and Bedzin, came a cousin, a brother, an uncle, nobody came to me because I was from Lodz. I had nobody, but then I started to ask around if my cousin who lived in that Myszkow didn't survive. And somebody said, listen, wait a minute, you asked me about a Honikman. With me in camp there's a Honikman-- and I got up one day and I walked 150 kilometers to find my cousin and I came in the middle of the little town and my brother was staying there. So…

JF: Let's back up before we get to, to that time. You said when the Germans came in '42 and took over the running of the camp…

HA: Yeah.

JF: …that they put barbed wire around the camp, before that time could you have escaped?

HA: No. Absolutely not.

JF: Who was guarding the camp?

HA: Nobody. But no *goy* will give you a chance. If they find out that you Jewish they would right away tell on you.

JF: Germans were…

HA: Germans and Czechs.

JF: …were guarding the camp.

HA: Czechs, yeah.

JF: And who was immediately in charge of you before the SS came in your…

HA: German.

JF: ...in your living quarters?

HA: The Germans. We had, we had a *lagerführerin* [Ger - female Camp Director]. We had somebody who took care of the kitchen. Then we had somebody took us to work. We belonged to a factory. Hasse. Hasse.

JF: Can you spell that?

HA: H-A-double S-E.

JF: That was the name of the flax factory.

HA: Yes, we belonged to him

JF: Okay. Were there, were there, also non-Jews who were working there who were employed in the factory or was the factory totally staffed by . . .

HA: No, no, they were just people who were watching us.

JF: All the workers were inmates in the camp?

HA: No, the Czechs, Germans, Germans, were watching us.

JF: But were there also people who were working along with you?

HA: Yes, Germans.

JF: Other workers.

HA: Germans. Yes, Germans. They got paid.

JF: That's what I mean.

HA: They got paid. And they lived in the vicinity. Yeah.

JF: And how did they respond to you?

HA: Nothing. They were not allowed to look at us, but you know, once in a while, somebody would left an apple, a sandwich.

JF: And there were Germans who did this.

HA: Yeah, but they were afraid. Not that I feel sorry for them, but they were afraid.

JF: What other changes occurred when the SS became in charge of the camp?

HA: Oh, was a madhouse.

JF: Were there roll calls?

HA: What?

JF: Were there roll calls?

HA: Roll calls four in the morning, and three, came Saturday, Sunday, there were three, four times roll call. You had to run, you had to be quiet and you had to--all kind of things. You were a shadow, you were not nothing.

JF: Were there any beatings or public punishments?

HA: Beating and hanging and punishments and...

JF: For what, for what offenses were these done?

HA: If there was a group to clean the, the toilets and if you didn't do good you got beaten. I had--I worked at night with the girls, so one time came about four or five SS, young SS. And they were dentists and they were learning how to pull teeth. They were just so lucky that the, the rest, the day shift, who worked the day, the majority were at work. I was a night shift, so we were in camp, we were not sleeping. We had to scrub the toilets, we had to scrub the rest. Some of these SS came and put us all out and they selected two, three, four and they were learning how to pull teeth on us. And I was between them and they pulled two teeth out from this side here.

JF: Molars.

HA: Yes. Specifically. I had good teeth, very good teeth, and those two teeth must have been very healthy because they wanted just those two teeth. And they were

holding on, you know, holding my hands and feet and they pulled out those teeth. Well, I cannot tell you, you can't imagine, because nobody can imagine and I was bleeding and they threw me out. I had to go to work. My girlfriend said, "Listen, just don't pass out. If not they will shoot you." And they wetted some cloth and I was holding to it and I had to go to work. And the woman who was behind the *Lagerführerin,* you know, the *Lagerführerin* was the queen, she was behind and I said to her how about if I stay back and I cannot go to work. She beat me so up, she threw me down all the steps. They were marble steps. At that time I broke my nose. My nose was like this. And there was no help. Nothing to do. I just did it myself. I straightened out myself the nose. And you can imagine. No, you can't, nobody-- such a face, how I felt with that nose, and I went to work like that, at night, and I worked, walked over three and a half kilometers to work. And somehow I survived and I came to work and I worked and there was a man, a German man, a Czech German, he knew the Torah inside out.

JF: Why?

HA: I don't know how. Some girls had so much confidence in him. They were very religious girls and they talked to him Torah. He remembered every-- he reminded us every holiday, when it was Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and everything. And if a girl had *Yahrtzeit* he said, "Listen today is *Yahrtzeit* for your mother." If they passed away before the war, you know, the girl told him, he remembered. And when he saw me with that face, he said, "Honikman, *geh mal zurück*. [Ger - go back]," and he put me in a little *Kammer.* [Ger - small closet] You know, a little closet, and I slept there for about four hours and he took care of my machine where I was supposed to work.

JF: This man was a German Czech?

HA: Yes.

JF: He was not Jewish?

HA: No, no, no.

JF: He was in charge of your…

HA: He was like an *Aufsehe*. [Ger - supervisor]. How you say it?

JF: Like a foreman?

HA: A foreman. Oh, he was after the war, he was, they gave him so much recognition because he was, he was just outstanding, outstanding.

JF: What was his name?

HA: I don't remember, so long ago. He was very nice.

JF: Now, when he was so helpful in reminding you when the holidays were and *Yahrtzeit,* what was going on in terms of religious practice?

HA: Absolutely not.

JF: Was there anything that you could do to celebrate the holidays or say the prayers?

HA: Well, the two, three girls was always--we got together a few and they were praying and a few were staying in the hall and watching that somebody should not come

up.

JF: This was for the holidays?

HA: Yeah, and if somebody was coming we gave a signal and then we stop. What is there to celebrate? You couldn't celebrate nothing, except pray. If you had a *Machzor* [Yiddish - holiday prayer book] or something you had to hide. How could you show it to them?

JF: But you said prayers at the times of the holiday.

HA: Yes.

JF: On Shabbat?

HA: No. Where was Shabbat? We worked. No, just Pesach, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, such things. You constantly talked and talked about how it was, how it was, and how it was, it was just like a prayer, so…

JF: That was its own prayer?

HA: It was such a young people. The older was about 25. So it's a different attitude. You know there were a few who were married already, had families, but the majority was just…

JF: These were, the majority were young women in their twenties, early twenties . . .

HA: Yeah, women, sure all, all were young. If not, there wouldn't--there was no prayer to survive if you were older. It was cold. If your clothes got wet, there was no way you could dry it. You just had to wear it on your body until it dries out.

JF: What would happen if somebody got sick or kind of …?

HA: Nothing. If you went to *Krankenstube* [Ger - sick room] they send you away next day to Auschwitz. You just were sick. I had, one time I had tonsillitis. My throat was so white like a, like snow, full of pus, I went to work, I had to. If not, next day they send me away to Auschwitz.

JF: So there was no way of getting medication?

HA: Absolutely not. You know, in the beginning, before the SS came, when I got a, a letter from my sister, a postcard was it, that my parents went to Auschwitz and my nerves-- I just collapsed altogether and I got a rash all over my body. It was pus coming out from me and the *Lagerführerin,* you know she was responsible for the camp, that was before. I said, "Send me to the hospital." I was in the hospital.

JF: But this is before the SS?

HA: Before the SS. I had a special--I took care of myself. My hair was clean and my bunk was clean.

JF: How did you do that without the water? You said there was no…

HA: Well, there was no--it was dripping. I told you that was my luck that I didn't work with the rest of them during the day. There were just 36 girls at night, so when they went to work, we came home, to the camp, and there were just 36. In the beginning, she did, nobody let us up there in the third floor. She used to say, *"Die*

Schichte schläft, las Sie zu ruhen." [Ger - The shift is sleeping, let them rest.] So, we could do something, but it was impossible to survive, it's impossible. We used to go in the snow, in the water, so deep. Where we were it was just mountains, so the air was good, but it was terrible cold and there was nothing to wear. We wore shoes, the wooden shoes, you walked on snow, until you walked out you felt that you getting taller and taller and taller, because the wood stuck to the snow.

JF: So the woman who was in charge of you before the SS, then did not stay with you after the SS arrived?

Tape two, side two:

JF: This is tape two, side two of an interview Mrs. Hasia Aufschauer on May 10, 1982. So the *Lagerführer* [sic] stayed with you then, after the SS took over the camp and she continued . . .

HA: Yeah [unclear]. She had a husband and then she had a little girl too. But from time to times she made it, you know, was called an *Appel.* An *Appel* would get everybody together.

JF: A roll call.

HA: A roll call and she used to say, "You going to be here so long until you have such long gray braids." But she was not bad, she was not bad.

JF: She was not then responsible for reporting girls who…

HA: No, she never did. She never did.

JF: …who got in trouble?

HA: No, she never did.

JF: Were there any girls who tried to escape from the camp?

HA: Was no--where would you go? Where would you go? We were so deep in Czechoslovakia. Where would you go? Even if you want escape you couldn't. Who would take you in? We didn't have any money to take a train to go anywhere and then there was nowhere to go. Big cities have ghettos. The rest had--parents were not there so what, what's the use to go?

JF: After the SS took over the camp, was there any way of your continuing to get news from the outside?

HA: No, nothing.

JF: You had no idea what was going on?

HA: Nothing. Nothing came in and nothing came out.

JF: The war…

HA: Oh, the war, sometimes the girls who worked during the day with the women, with the German women, they dropped some words. They could say, "Oh, we're so frightened. The Russian planes come over and they're so mean and…" We heard the Russian planes coming over, you know, but…

JF: So you had some feeling about the war itself but you couldn't get any personal news?

HA: Then, in some camps, you had to have somebody to fix the motors with the--you know it was a factory. So they had prisoners from Poland, from Hungary, Gentiles, French, a lot of French were there and they were fixing something got wrong in the factory, so they knew more about what's going on outside than we did. We, when we went to work we passed a house where there were French prisoners, soldiers, they used to be soldiers. And they used to stay always outside and wave to us. But then the SS could shoot them on the spot, but somehow they gave the girls some kind of letters or told

them, you know, when they worked with them. I didn't have that, that kind of luck, because when I worked at night there were one paralyzed guy and one was on the belly, couldn't walk, and that foreman, the only one who worked with me, then he went on day shift and I was at night shift, so I didn't have any--I had it very rough, very rough.

JF: Did your food change also--the amount of food you were given?

HA: Sure, sure. When, before the SS came, we used to have for breakfast, we had a piece of cheese, a piece of bread and coffee. Sometimes we had different things, a roll. But then the SS came we had soup and you got the soup in the morning and you got the soup and a piece of bread when you went to work and that was your meal. And then was no bread either. Then was the bread, just from the peels, from the potato peels was the bread. Was already put, I don't know what they putting in, was so gooey. But you eat everything. You were lucky you got this. The only thing, when you're young and you had to watch yourself not to get really, you know, dirty or like I had a friend who let herself go and the lice went under her skin and she got infected, poisoned, and she died.

JF: When you said, when you say to let yourself go, you feel that it was your choice, your effort that kept you clean and therefore healthier?

HA: Yes, yes, yes. A lot.

JF: Why do you think certain people let themselves go?

HA: Because they didn't want to fight anymore. That was a…

JF: It was a way of giving up?

HA: Yes. It was constantly a fight, minute by minute. You see, the partisans who fought in the ghettoes were our heroes. But the people who survived the concentration camps were bigger heroes. You didn't have what to fight and you fought every second.

JF: And keeping yourself clean was part of that fighting?

HA: Part of, yeah. A woman--I think they put something in the food that we shouldn't menstruate, because nobody menstruated and everyday was that age who menstruated. Nobody menstruated. Then the desire, if you eat good, and you have a clear mind, the sex for desire, look at the prisons with the homosexuals. That didn't exist in concentration camps because you, you didn't eat, you, you had to watch yourself to survive. You came in the camp, you were soaking wet. I came one time in camp and my hand, my fingers, until today I have--and my feet were frozen stiff. My fingers, my toes and my feet were blue, and my fingers. If I would scratch it or hit it, they would fall off, just like this. There were some girls there who older than I was and they came from little town where they had their own remedies and I don't know they know such things. You know how they healed me? Excuse the expression, they pissed all in a bucket and they put my feet and my hands in that urine for hours and that helped me, so today if I put my hands in water, in cold water, I scream. I still have blue marks from that, so you see, and if you don't watch yourself some girls got TB, maybe they had it before the war too, you know, they came from poor families. But you had to fight. I had one time tonsillitis, and

then I had a terrible cold. I was coughing and a fever. My girlfriend had kidney infection and we both together, we pushed it through. But if you let yourself go you died.

JF: What do you think kept you going?

HA: I had a very big drive to survive. My girlfriend, may her soul rest in peace, she used to say, "Hasia, one of those days I'm gonna kill you. I'm gonna kill you." I used to say, "Paula, you will, see we will meet in the street and say, 'Hi, how are you? I didn't see you for so--those are your kids?'" She said, "You're driving me nuts." I said, "Paula, we will survive. You will see." I just, just had in me a feeling. I'm gonna survive and I, I wanted to survive. That was the main thing, if you wanted to survive. I wanted to go home. I went home. After the war, I met my brother. I left him there. Then I met my husband, too.

JF: Did your girlfriend survive?

HA: My girlfriend survive and she lived in Springfield, Mass., and she died three years ago. She was younger than I am. She had a vein busted in her head--what is ansomi, anso something [Mrs. Aufschauer is probably referring to an aneurysm], beautiful woman.

JF: Tell me, is there anything else, before we get to your liberation? Is there anything else about those years in the…

HA: Camp?

JF: …camp? Can you tell me exactly what work you did, for instance, in the factory?

HA: I had a machine was so big, like from here to that corner and, you see, when they make linen first they take the flax and rip it, then they put it in barrels and they come out such bands, then the bands go to another machine they come smaller bands; and then it came to me on big spools about this high and it was like thick, like strings.

JF: Like a spindle?

HA: Yeah, and there were about, I would say, 46 spools. And you had barrels in the back with those bands of that flax and they went through some kind of gadget and when they came on, on those spools, they came out like threads. And then I had to fill them up and when they filled up the machine stopped. I had to take it off, put it in a wagon, and put new spools up and worked it.

JF: And you did that same work…

HA: I did that same…

JF: …for the entire time?

HA: Yeah, three and a half years.

JF: What was the thread used for?

HA: Linens, to make linen.

JF: Private?

HA: Hasse had that factory.

JF: Private factory, was still, was still selling this.

HA: Yeah, yeah.

JF: Was there anything else, any other stories that you might be able to tell me about that time?

HA: Well, there were lot of Hungarians there. They came the one time.

JF: And then what happened?

HA: Well, they brought in, they looked horrible. They cut their hair off.

JF: They did not cut your hair, you said before.

HA: No, not mine.

JF: Was later that they started shaving…

HA: You see, the Hungarian it happened to them one, two, three, the whole thing. So they took the people, took them to Auschwitz, cut the hair off, put the tall girl in a short dress, and a short girl in a long dress. Kept them outside on that for days and they had blisters all over the faces and when they brought them to us they looked like animals. They were hungry. They were wild. The most intellectual people became the biggest animals in the concentration camp.

JF: So you were getting shipments of girls in from Auschwitz?

HA: Yes. And they worked in a different factory. They worked in different place. They worked with ammunition, but…

JF: Could you talk to them?

HA: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

JF: You found out then about the details about Auschwitz from the Hungarian women?

HA: Yes. We could speak to them in German. A few of them were very religious, very Orthodox religious, and the rest didn't know what they were.

JF: These very religious girls from Hungary--were they able to make any attempt to observe any kind of prayer?

HA: Yes, they did. One of them was, she was like a cantor, like a rabbi. I always went. She was so good. They all went back after the war to Hungary.

JF: These girls survived?

HA: Yeah. We, the whole camp survived. We didn't go anywhere. Those camps who didn't evacuate had a 90% possibility to survive.

JF: So that the girls who died were girls who died from illness, primarily?

HA: Yes, yes.

JF: Typhus?

HA: Typhus, bronchitis, you know, something like that or they were sent to Auschwitz.

JF: If they were very, very sick, then…

HA: If they were sick, when the SS came, if a girl was sick and went in the *Krankenstube* and she was in bed, the SS came in the morning, he took her and made a transport and sent them away. If not you could survive. Just, you could survive. The,

the stomach gets so used to it, believe you me. You eat once or you drink a little bit of water and if you have the will and a little bit of mazel from God, too. That the main thing.

JF: So what happened then when you were liberated? At what point was this?

HA: Well, in May 8, I was liberated May the 8th. The SS escaped at night and we were a half a day without anybody.

JF: This was 1945 now.

HA: '45. And then the Russian tanks, Russian tanks came in. The Russians liberated me. You know, the English came in before the Russians. It was a patrol or something, they came in on horses and they looked us over like freaks and turned around and went back. They didn't even lift a finger.

JF: They didn't give you anything?

HA: Nothing. And there were hungry, sick people lying there. Then the Russians came on tanks. I remember like today. I went to town with a bunch of girls. There was nobody there. There were no Germans, nothing, and we went to town. They told us, don't go, they're going to shoot you on the spot. I said I'm going to go. I went to town and I looked on and I said on my own I have to feel how it could to walk by myself on that, where I would walk, where the--and I came back and then the Russian tanks and they looked so huge. And somehow when the Russian came, my will, my will, my desire just collapsed. Just like you give up, that's it. And I was like walking around like in a daze. I, I just didn't have any more fight in me. Some girls were running around with the Russians, they were going here, they were going there. I had another girlfriend. Her mother took very sick. I had one desire always. When I could be liberated the first thing what I want is to sleep in a good bed, take a good bath, eat a good dinner and wash my hair. And I have a girlfriend in Israel and she was working day shift with a woman, a German woman, she had two daughters and they went in the army, the German Army, but she was good to that girl. And she said, my girlfriend said, Hasia, you want, come on we go there. She invited us to dinner." We came in, after so many years, into a house and she had a big, deep basin standing on the, on the floor with hot water and I washed my hair and I washed myself. And she gave me other clothes to put on because I haven't, and she made dinner. I remember she made pudding and we ate and I slept in a -- oh, I remember when I, when I lie down in that bed, not you just jumped in, you slowly-- and next morning when I came back to the camp it was a whole turmoil. That night the French soldiers came and the Czechoslovakian came and the girls had a bonfire from the *Lagerführer*'s car in the back, but I wasn't there. I missed all that stuff and then it started, one went here, one went there, and somebody told me about Honikman and I went there. During that time they confiscated the whole, they closed up the whole camp. They took all the girls, put them on a train, and everybody went where they wanted to. I missed that.

JF: You left before that happened?

HA: Yeah.

JF: You took what you had?

HA: Not everything. I didn't take not even the pictures, because I thought I was going to come back right away, and I went there and I found my brother. I didn't need any of that. What I'm going to took, a brother, and I had a cousin there, too, I found a cousin too, a girl.

JF: So you went back home with your brother and your cousin?

HA: No. And then we settled down, my brother had a place there and I was with him.

JF: This was where?

HA: This was in Raichanbach[4].

JF: How do you spell it?

HA: R-A-I-C-H-A-N-B-A-C-H. Raichanbach. And I left my brother because my brother had a very bad experience. His face was full of sores. He went through, they caught him and they supposed to shoot him and they didn't and he was confined and the whole thing. He died here seven years ago.

JF: This was in Germany, Raichanbach, or this was . . .?

HA: It was Poland one time.

JF: This was Poland.

HA: Yeah.

JF: But during the war, I mean this…

HA: It was Raichanbach, it was Germany.

JF: It was taken by Germany.

HA: Yeah. There was a camp there. That's why brother was there.

JF: But he had a place, he had been liberated and he had a place outside of the camp?

HA: Yeah.

JF: And this was where you found him.

HA: Yeah, my husband now, was with my brother in the same camp. That, that's why I met my husband there.

JF: I see.

HA: So…

JF: How long did you stay in Raichanbach then?

HA: Oh, we stayed there about a year.

JF: What were you doing during that time?

HA: Nothing. I, I was so sick. I was there sick most of the time.

JF: Physically sick?

[4]This is probably Reichenbach, Germany, a subcamp of Gross-Rosen was located there.

HA: Sure. I had a kidney stone and then I had sores under my, my arms, you know from-- I got married there and living with a man and my blood, my whole thing changed and I got boils like that under the arm from changing.

JF: Your hormonal balance changed?

HA: Yeah, sure.

JF: So you met your husband then, immediately after you were liberated?

HA: Yeah.

JF: When you went back to Raichanbach?

HA: Sure.

JF: And you were married.

HA: Three months later.

JF: Three months later.

HA: In August.

JF: In August, 1945?

HA: August. Sure, yeah. I made it fast. He's--it was good from the beginning.

JF: And was he working there during that time?

HA: He was in camp.

JF: No, when he was…

HA: Liberated?

JF: Yes. No. When you were married. Was he doing some kind of work?

HA: There was no work. Nothing.

JF: How were you living?

HA: We are living, my husband's boyfriend had some pull with the Russian soldiers and they took over, they took over a big building where the, the Germans were living, some family, some very wealthy family. They were making linens and all kinds of thing and the Russians came and they bought it, they bought those things. But were were, we were not staying too long there and we went to Weiden from there, Oberfaltz, that's Germany.

JF: This was after a year?

HA: We were not there a year. We must have left in December and in Weiden, my husband is a furrier and he opened a shop with another furrier, with a German and a Jews. There were two Jews and a German and he worked in the fur business.

JF: Two Jews and a German.

HA: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

JF: This was a German who was sympathetic to the Jews or it was a business [unclear]?

HA: He didn't have a choice. The Americans were there and when you went and you register yourself and said, "Look, I'm a furrier and I would like to work." They went to the German, said, "Look, or you let him work for you and you pay him or you get out and they're going to take it over."

JF: And the name of this town is spelled?

HA: It's Weiden. W-E-I-D-E-N.

JF: Okay, and how long were in Weiden?

HA: In Weiden, we were, we came here '48. '49 we came…

JF: So you were there until you came here?

HA: My daughter was born there.

JF: What was it like living in German territory during those years?

HA: Well, I'll tell you what, too much my husband and I didn't have with Germans to do. We just kept between a group of we always were ready to go to Palestine that time. But my husband had family in England and I had family here. And we said, what comes first, there we're going to go. So first came to go to the United States, so we went to the United States. But we were ready just to leave. We didn't do nothing. We didn't have any connection with the Germans, not to get--you know, you--the black market in Germany and they caught you in the American, on the America Zone, and they put you in jail. You couldn't go to United States.

JF: Who were you selling those furs to?

HA: The Germans.

JF: So you had business, you had business deals?

HA: The Germans have--it was an open store. It was an open store.

JF: And that worked out all right?

HA: Yeah, for the time being there. You know, we got some conserved boxes and cans from the UNRRA they sent us. It was all right. We, we didn't, we didn't starve.

JF: How did the Germans treat you? What was it like when the Germans came?

HA: At the beginning, they were afraid. Not that they were afraid, but they were, they had one answer, we didn't know. Do something to them. They didn't know what was going on. Can you tell them what was going on? First, they pretended they didn't know, that was the whole story, so we didn't tell them, and then-- my husband and I didn't have anything with them. We, we just stayed away from them how much we could. We just between the Jews, which we were organizing something and my husband and I were active in the Jewish movement…

JF: What do you mean?

HA: …to go to Palestine.

JF: Was there a synagogue that was developed in your town?

HA: Oh, sure, sure. They made one, yeah. There was a Jewish club where the Jews got together. Who didn't want it, did what they wanted.

JF: This was a social club?

HA: Yeah, because where could you go. The majority of them didn't speak German. So it was all right.

JF: You spoke what then together?

HA: German.

JF: No, in this--you spoke Yiddish?

HA: Yiddish, Polish, mostly Yiddish, mostly Yiddish.

JF: Were there Jewish schools that were developed?

HA: There were no kids that age. The oldest was my daughter. There was one family who they found the daughter, four, five years old, the little girl after the war, but there were no kids.

JF: They found their own child?

HA: Yes.

JF: She has been hidden?

HA: Well, somehow, like I remember the story, when they were grabbing the kids, the mother let out the little girl in the street and somebody picked her up eventually, and after the war, she was looking for her and looking for her.

JF: And she found her?

HA: She found her.

JF: She had been taken care of by a non-Jewish family?

HA: By a non-Jewish family, yeah.

JF: That's a blessing.

HA: Yeah, it was something. It was like a celebration in the whole town. You know, you come to a city where there are no, to a town where there are no children, no laughter, it's so -- I remember that.

JF: You had your own daughter then, right away?

HA: A year after we were married, I had my daughter.

JF: In 1946?

HA: No, no, no. I was married 1946. She was born, yeah--she's 30. What is she, she be in September, 37, sure, a year after the war. To me, she still is a little girl, so I don't remember her age.

JF: Is there anything else you want to add to your story?

HA: What can I tell you, what can I tell you? I just went home to the house and I asked somebody, "Somebody survive?" And they said upstairs on the second floor where a landlord used to live there, a few Jews. So I went up and they were older, older than me, people and they recognized me. They remember me and I went downstairs and went in. I, I wanted to go in apartment where we lived. And I walked to the door and I wanted to knock and I couldn't. I couldn't walk in. I just said I can't because we left a lot of furnitures, clock, you know big clock I mean, the beds, the tables. Everything was there, you couldn't take such things when we evacuated. Even the curtains were the same in the window. And then I walked over where my sister used to live, the married sister. She lived in such a Cape Cod home nearby where we were, and the windows were open and the curtains were moving like this. I remember I went to buy the curtains with

her. And then I walked around where my grandmother used to live and I looked up the balcony, and there was nobody there. And I said, no, I wouldn't stay. I couldn't stay there. I met a girlfriend. She said, "Hasia, please stay here. I have pulls. I can provide a nice apartment for you." I said I couldn't, I don't want even to see them. Nobody came out to say, listen, what happened? Some *goyim* lived there when I left. And the second day I left. I couldn't stay there. So I went to Myszkow where my parents were during the war, where they lived in that basement apartment and that basement room was all board up. And the daughter from the landlady came down and she said to me, "Are you still alive?" And I figured I was such a proud little thing, I didn't have the heart to ask her how did my parents perish. I didn't want to say to say. I say, "Yeah, I'm --" And I said, "I have a brother, too." And I walked away. And I have such a guilty conscience, maybe I should have gone down there. Maybe my parents left something there, but I didn't want to give her the satisfaction. So you see, those good *goyim* who grow up with us and if there is a *goy* now who says has a conscience, don't believe him. The same thing could happen here if we don't watch it. The same thing. Your best *goy* friend is so good to you with you nobody pushes him around. If somebody will push them around and they won't have this what you have, you will see what happen. That's what I keep telling my children. You watch it. My kids know everything. So, that's it. We came here and my husband started to work and we had a son.

JF: Your son was born in '53?

HA: Yeah. '53.

JF: Okay. I want to thank you Mrs. Aufschauer.

HA: Oh, what for?

JF: Everything you've told us today.

HA: My son called me in the morning. He said, "Mother, talk, you will feel better." I don't feel better. I don't, but I want the kids should have it. I cannot talk to them. I don't want to upset them. I'm not the one to build a--be, you know, vicious and be--I want them to be nice, human beings, but they should never forget it and they should never . . .

(End of tape)