HOLOCAUST TESTIMONY

OF

SARA ADLER

Transcript of Audiotaped Interview

Interviewer: Davida Glick
Date: April 22, 1985

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SA - Sara Adler[1] [interviewee]
DG - Davida Glick [interviewer]
Date: April 22, 1985[2]

Tape one, side one:

DG: Would you please tell me when and where you were born?

SA: I was born in Poland, Radom[3].

DG: Would you tell me your name, please?

SA: My name is Sara Apel, my maiden name. Now it's Sara Adler.

DG: Tell me a little bit about your family.

SA: Well, we had a very large family on both sides. I had a sister and a brother and grandparents, uncles, cousins, aunts.

DG: What was your life like before the war?

SA: A wonderful life. This is the few years I was at home made me survive. The morale from home, the goodness, the Jewish upbringing, this is what kept me going when I was in Auschwitz and in labor camp.

DG: Did your family belong to any of the Jewish community groups?

SA: Absolutely.

DG: Tell me.

SA: It was a very well-known family in the city of Radom. And pretty well-to-do. My father was very much involved in the synagogues, in the community, in supporting the poor and so on.

DG: Were there any specific organizations that you belonged to with any other names that you remember?

SA: Who, myself?

DG: Your family.

SA: I couldn't recall. I only recall organizations that my uncle, I was very young, they belonged to the *Betar*.[4]

DG: O.K. How would you describe your family's relations with non-Jewish in the community?

SA: Well, we happened to be surrounded only with gentile people. Our business was there and as a child I don't recall anything specific. I just know that we were in business.

DG: As a child did you have any gentile friends?

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[1]née Apel.
[2]Recorded at the 1985 American Gathering of Holocaust Survivors in Philadelphia, PA.
[3]Ms. Adler indicated on her personal history form that she was born July 9, 1927.
[4]*Betar*: Youth organization of the Zionist Revisionist Party.

SA: No, because I went to a school that we had mostly Jewish children and I don't recall any gentile friends.

DG: During the years from 1933 to 1939 how did the Nazi control of Germany affect your life?

SA: My personal life I can't really say anything, but I was going to school and we were hearing about Czechoslovakia and this and that and the other. So really I didn't know anything about politics because I was very young and till 1939 I went to school, till the Germans came in.

DG: Just one moment, before the Germans came in did your family ever talk about leaving?

SA: At that point I don't think so I heard anything, because they were very much involved in the community and in business.

DG: There was no question of leaving?

SA: At that time, no.

DG: And then what happened?

SA: Then in '39 we heard that the Germans are coming. They sure came in, like lions. And my father and my uncle, which my father had a family with small children and my uncle had a family with small children. The first thing we tried to go away from Radom because they were bombarding. The family was afraid that, you know, we might get killed right away.

DG: Who was bombarding?

SA: The Germans, the Nazis, and so we hired a horse and buggy, a man who carried these things. Then we put my father, my mother, we got together some clothes, and my aunt and uncle and my little cousins and we went away for a few days to a little town to escape the bombarding. I remember when they occupied already Radom I was crying constantly. It affect me terrible. So my father decided that he has to go back to Radom to see what happened with the business, and my uncle the same. He had a hardware store and we had a lumberyard. He was already in the family. We were a close family alright and my grandparents and uncles were still home. So I walked with my father a Friday morning, we decided, in fact a neighbor too we met. He had a shoe store and we walked home, if you call it home. We came back into the city we, we went home—of course, my grandparents were there, cousins and others. We talked and we saw that it's no good. So I overheard that my single uncles was worried and aunts, since my grandmother was a great person. She was so smart. She gave us a suggestion right then and there that they should escape and go maybe to the Russian side because we going to be killed anyway. Everybody's going to go to Treblinka, and maybe my father, my aunt and my uncle would go to Israel at the time with the children. But it was too late and it was too much to get started, to sell and get money, you know, you don't always

have liquid cash and this didn't materialize because it was impossible to get out already.

DG: It was impractical, but it was your grandmother's idea.

SA: She thought it should, but it was impossible as far as I remember and in a couple days my father went back and picked up my mother, my little brother and sister, my aunt and uncle, and they came back too, and shortly after that...

DG: And you stayed outside of the city, where you had been, or he brought everyone back to the city?

SA: No, when we came back to the city we went by car and at that point my father picked up my mother, and my uncle went back and picked up the two families and we stayed back in our homes for a very short time, like maybe weeks because right away they tried to make the ghetto.

DG: Tell me what happened.

SA: And right in the ghetto you started living like an animal because if you happened to be in the area where the ghetto was you could stay but you had to take in other families. But if you, if the ghetto wasn't in the area, if your house was not in the area then you had to go to another. You used to switch homes with Polish people. This is what happened: we had to switch and we lived like they gave you one room for four to five people and we stayed in the ghetto, but...

DG: You were in a room of a house that had been owned by Polish people?

SA: My house happened to be in the ghetto, but we were so close with my grandparents that we lived in each other's, but my grandparents had to give up their home, a big home, and go and live in a room and exchanged for one room with Polish people and this is what happened. But the families start talking first things first. They tried to hide all the furs, fur coats. There was a lot in the family. They tried to hide all the gold and valuables, let's put it this way. My father did a good job on it and they even tried—my uncle's store which was very close to my father's business, hardware, they made very large boxes like this room and put hardware in it and they put it in the ground in our yard. They digged big holes and tried to save it in case we need money to sell it or whatever. Well, this never came to realization, never. And we tried to hide fine China. We tried to hide, you know, valuables and crystals and so on. Anyway, after a while, maybe a couple of weeks later slowly but surely they took away the business, confiscated the business, the Germans. The schools stopped for Jewish children. I never could go back to school.

DG: Was there any education in the ghetto? Did anyone teach you...?

SA: No, no, no education. Since we were comfortable people my mother hired my pre-school—when I was three or four years old I used to go to a pre-school. She hired this teacher to come to my house in the ghetto.

DG: Was the teacher Jewish?

SA: Yes, and she used to come and teach me a little bit and even a language I picked up at the time. She started to teach me a little Latin.

DG: Latin? Isn't that interesting. How old were you?

SA: Eight, nine, ten. Eight, nine, ten, that's it. I only went to school maybe for three years, and, but she came in the ghetto, we continued. My mother tried to—because—Jewish families I understand they push education, education, that's all what you hear. And special [especially] in my family, I was never allowed just to sit down. Always pick up a book. Well, anyway, and after this there was in our city a factory from bicycles. This factory was trans—they remodeled it to a factory, a [unclear Polish word] *fabryka* [factory], [unclear Polish word] that means hard goods. They transformed it to ammunitions factory and soon this was—the family decided that we should start getting into this labor camp in the city because we knew a lot of Polish people who were clients of ours, and my father paid them under the table to take me in. For my age I was a tall little girl and my father and my uncle, the three of us went to this ammunitions factory to work.

DG: And you had to pay to get in?

SA: Not officially.

DG: Unofficially. You just took care of it. That's all.

SA: And we had a lot of clients there. We used to buy lumber to build houses, you know. So we stayed there. Occasionally we would go home like for a couple of hours to the ghetto, maybe to bring a little clothes or a little food or get money or try to get, make some liquid money from valuables and so on. So we stayed there till 1944.

DG: And you were at this munitions factory all that time?

SA: I worked night shift.

DG: And you lived there?

SA: I lived there. I slept on the floor and it was fortunate because every so often my father would talk to some of his clients from before. He gave them some money: please bring me a loaf of bread, bring me some butter for my daughter, and I always used to cry, after all I was just a little girl and it breaks a father's heart. And I worked. I took care of two big machines making munitions, night shifts. My feet were swollen and always with the guns, they were walking around the factory with guns. Anyway, till 1944 in July I went home that Saturday for a few hours. I never came back till after midnight, Saturday midnight. You know my father told me what to say and the rest of the family told me it was bad. Everything smelled bad and my mother gave me a package with food. She had to stay with the two younger children. My whole family was already concentrated in one house, at the grandmother's. Everybody was there. Whatever will happen, goes together and this was a mistake. Now I see this was a mistake because my aunts

and uncles were young people. Maybe if they would be separated, maybe one would be survived, but since everybody was together. So midnight I came back to that munitions factory which they asked my father where I am. My machines were empty, and if I don't show up my father and my uncle will be killed that night. He said I should be back from the ghetto. Anyway, I came back that midnight and I got on the—back to my machines and then I told my father what's going on, it's bad. So right then and there through the night when nobody was walking with the guns, the S.S., he tried to get a policeman who used to watch—take us to the ghetto. He gave him a few dollars that the first thing in the morning Sunday morning if we could go back to the ghetto for a few hours to see the family because was bad. And when we got dressed in the morning and we went down to leave they wouldn't let us out already. This was a transport getting ready for Treblinka. So a few hours before I just came back to the factory and we couldn't go out and while we were standing at the big gate, before we turned around we saw the trains passing by with our families from the ghetto going to Treblinka.

DG: Did you know they were there, did you see them?

SA: You can't see, honey, you are cattles. This wasn't a train, normal train; this was a train for cattles. If you saw the picture last night then you know they put you in like a, what did they care if you died till you get to Treblinka...

DG: But you knew that your family was there.

SA: This was it because they liquidated the ghetto. This was it. The whole family was there and the next day I even got regards from a man who came in and he saw that my dog, because when you have a big business like this you need a watch dog at night and I was raised with that dog, a giant. This dog was shot too because he was crying. He was running after the family and they even shot the dog. So it was a clear slate. And I just came back. And this shows you to have *mazel*.

DG: Three hours before.

SA: I came back midnight; maybe seven in the morning I was at the gate to go back with my father. Whatever will be we're ready to be there, to go. Anyway, this was it and we never went. This was before Rosh Hashana, September.

DG: This was *Erev* Rosh Hashana?

SA: This was *Erev* Rosh Hashana.

DG: Nineteen.

SA: Nineteen, 1943 I think—two?—I can't recall now the year. So anyway we were there. We stayed in that camp, in that labor camp, my father and my uncle.

DG: What was the name of the camp, did it have a name?

SA: [unclear] *fabryk*. I can't even recall if we had anything else. See, my husband he has a better memory than I; he was there too.

DG: That's alright.

SA: That's not important. Anyway, we stayed there till 1944 and in July and the Russians were coming closer.

DG: Before we get to the Russians, while you were at the labor camp what kind of food did you get, what did you do for food?

SA: Well, we used to get in the morning coffee and a slice of bread and once a day they cooked a meal, like dog meat or horse beef with water which I could not digest. I couldn't eat; I was already like this. I could not touch it, but once in a while my father would buy from a Polak, maybe a loaf of bread, maybe a few eggs, or maybe a piece of butter.

DG: Did you have any knowledge or contact with the outside world? Did you have any way of knowing what was going on?

SA: No.

DG: They didn't tell you anything?

SA: In a concentration camp you only a number, a slave. You a *Jude*.

DG: How many hours did you have to work?

SA: Twelve.

DG: And you were on the night shift?

SA: I was on the night shift a week at night and a week day shift. And it was very hard on me, on everybody that was there.

DG: What would you say in the labor camp, what helped to sustain you? Did you ever think of escaping?

SA: No, there was no place to go because the Polish people would right away put a finger on you, and even we had so many people we knew and while we were in the ghetto before we went to the labor camp my family decided to dress me up in fur clothes and took my mother's suit with fur collars and so on, blankets and bedspreads, velvet bedspreads this was the thing when my mother got married, to take it to a Polish family which we trusted them in case we have to sell it. They were very valuable things and I took it over...

DG: You did?

SA: Yes, I myself personally and I was in danger because I went out of the ghetto. I went to the Polish section. But I looked a little bit like a *shiksa* [non-Jewish woman] and I only worried they shouldn't recognize me that this is from the Frydman family.

DG: The Polish family took it?

SA: Yes, of course.

DG: And did they ever help you or give you any money?

SA: I'm coming to it.

DG: So you put everything with them?

SA: Not everything, but a lot of things. Anyway, in '44 they decided they going to take us to Auschwitz.

DG: How did you hear about that?

SA: My father told me that they're going to liquidate because the Russians are coming because what did I understand about politics. So we walked to Tomaszów.

DG: Could you spell that please?

SA: T-O-M-A-S-Z-U-W [Tomaszów] and we walked 100 miles. I cried through the whole walk. I thought my father is killing me. I want a little water; there was no water. There was nothing. We kept walking and walking and once in a while in the back we could hear a knock that somebody got shot because they couldn't walk with us—their own feet. They couldn't walk already. So when—we were passing my house where we used to live my father pushed me out from the walking. "Go in the house. Maybe they will help you survive because we are going to a death camp." I couldn't comprehend. I said, "Daddy, I'm going with you, you're killing me, you're killing me," and I cried and screamed. And I kept moving. I said, "I'm not going to stay here." We walked a few feet further. He pushed me again. He said, "Go in the house, go." I said, "They're going to kill me, they're going to shoot me," and I didn't go. So we wound up in Tomaszów. In Tomaszów they put us on a train.

DG: You and your father and your uncle, the three of you together? You were walking together?

SA: Just before we went in to the trains we were walking. There was a pile of carrots and I bended down to pick up a carrot and I lift my head up my father was gone and my uncle. In a split second they took the men away. This was my end. They took us to Auschwitz. They locked us up in another animal train for cattle. We couldn't breathe. It didn't make any difference anyway. Anyway, we got to Auschwitz. Immediately everybody got undressed. I never figured my father slipped me some money.

DG: While you were walking?

SA: A valuable piece of money. When I got to Auschwitz of course you had to turn everything over. There was a lady next to me, she knew me as neighbor's children. I cried to her and she said, "No, don't give it. Put it between your legs. If it falls out, it falls out. If you make it, you make it." I couldn't understand what she was talking to me because when you got undressed this side is to death—to the crematorium, and this side you have to take a shower. You dip yourself, shaved my head and this is it. And I did what she told me. I didn't lose it. I got out from the shower. They gave me those striped dress. Nobody recognized nobody. My friends, my neighbor, we didn't recognize. Then we got situated in the barracks and we had normal *Appells* [roll calls]. We didn't nothing. The animals were just—lice was walking all over us and that's it. This lasted till the end of '44.

DG: Could you tell me what you mean by normal *Appells*? I don't know what you're saying.

SA: *Appell*—every morning they come, they pick you up from the barracks and they count you by tens. And every day should be the same amount of people. If one is less, could get shot because maybe somebody is someplace behind the back in the bath room, you know. So that's an *Appell* twice a day, in the morning and at night, snow, [unclear], cold, shivering. This was till end of '44.

DG: Did you need a transport to Czechoslovakia?

SA: I don't know. First of all the food that they gave us. This particular lady she's now in Israel...

DG: The one who told you what to do?

SA: She said that I have to eat. The little water what they gave in Auschwitz I couldn't swallow. And she made me; she used to hold my face, put a little water on that can what she used to grab, the food for me and I couldn't swallow. She said, "You're not going to make it. You're not going to make it; look at you." I really and truly did not understand what she's talking about—you're not going to make it. I was talking to my grandmother; I was talking to my parents, "I'm a good girl and I'm going to do what you always taught me." I was praying to God. I used to go to Hebrew School already.

[End of tape one, side one.]

Tape one, side two:

DG: This lady held your mouth open, poured the water in and kept talking to you.

SA: Yes, to eat, to drink, because I will never make it. And I fully didn't understand because I still thought that my mother is talking to me. All those values, things they taught me, I was holding on to it. And that's the only way I made it, I swear.

DG: Tell me about the thoughts that went through mind. What did you remember that sustained you the most? From home.

SA: The good values that a family gives a child, the Jewish home, the freedom, the comfort when you need it. As a little girl the hugging the doll, that's all what I really remembered.

DG: And you relived that when you were there?

SA: And I was still holding on to those values and I loved it, I loved it and this is what kept me going. But one day they came from that *Appell* in front of 300 people and they caught me off from my landspeople and they took me to another wood and sent me away to Lichtewerden in Czechoslovakia. This was like end of December, first of January.

DG: They separated you from the lady who had been taking care of you also?

SA: All my *Landsleute* and I was sent away from the people from Krakow and I was in that camp Sudetenland till May 8th, 1945 when everybody was liberated.

DG: Tell me about that.

SA: We still were there.

DG: You were there.

SA: Yes.

DG: Did you expect that the war was going to be over, did you have any way of knowing?

SA: We were like animals; what did we know? We were called only by the number. Not that they called me by number. They didn't have no conversation with—animals, me in and out, that's all. But in Czechoslovakia they took us to a camp and from camp every day we walked like maybe three miles to work to a factory where they make string, to wrap packages, you know. And when we got there I was with all strangers. It was very hard for me, very hard. And I was like an animal going back and forth and working with these machines making string. The lice were all over me. I was shaking my head to shake off. It was a terrible scene. The food was the same like we got in Auschwitz. Nothing was better.

DG: How many times a day were you fed?

SA: Once a day. We came back for lunch, if you call it lunch. There was soup on the tables prepared. But this was, two ladies from Czechoslovakia, they were young women. They were the *Aufseher*.

DG: Overseers.

SA: *Ja*, but in German the *Aufseher.* They felt sorry for me, these two ladies, and they took me— when we walked in to the dining area they gave me their dish of soup because their dish of soup had a potato and mine was just water. So every day for lunch they gave it to me till some of the ladies noticed and they said that I'm buying them off, because they were jealous that they gave me the potato.

DG: The potato in the soup.

SA: In their soup, because they could go back and get another portion. So they gave me their first portion because I was like this and anyway they couldn't give me this potato anymore.

DG: After the other people in the camp complained?

SA: No, there was nobody to complain, but they just, "Hey, how come you have a potato in your soup?" I was a very proud little girl, but pride but what I had from my family—sticks today and I gave it to my children—pride, never be ashamed, speak out, do what you think is right. My pride even at that time, even if I was treated like an animal, nobody could take my pride away from me, nobody, because this was in me.

DG: Because it was inside. So how did you feel when you lost the potato, were you...?

SA: I couldn't care less because you knew there was going to be no tomorrow. This was today. Unbelievable, you covered with lice. That's all what, it's a terrible thing. And we worked till that day. One day the man who was in charge of that factory...

DG: The string factory?

SA: He arranged for us to come— a group of people— like every Saturday to work. They needed more strings to support the Germans. They needed to pack the gold with the diamonds from the Jews. So I was picked on Saturdays to come to work. His wife was the manager on the floor and he had a daughter, 15 years old. She was so big like a horse, with a big pigtail, strong, big. She was such an S.S. girl of Hitler *Jugend* it was unbelievable. One day she came up to my machine and she went through me twice like this over my face and I was bleeding. She busted a vein in my nose from hitting me on both sides. She was such a big elephant that girl.

DG: She slapped you without reason?

SA: You didn't have to have a reason. She's an S.S., she's in the Hitler *Jugend*. She was about 15, 16 years old, but a tremendous big girl. And I was full of blood and I had nothing even to hold on to or to stop— well, anyway, she busted a vein in my nose from which I suffer till today. And his wife was an S.S. lady too and plus he must have been from a party, the man, but he was an angel. He arranged for us to come on Saturday to work and he walked in, when he opened the door he was dropping from both packages potatoes so the girls could pick up a potato. We really didn't have to come to work.

DG: He just did that to help you.

SA: Here is a husband, a wife and a daughter.

DG: So different!

SA: And he did not like to bring his wife on a Saturday for her to see what he was doing. So once I was very fortunate to pick up a potato and I ate it up like in two seconds. And he such a nice man, just like that; he was nice. This went on from day the girls start talking, the ladies who are mothers and had children my size. They had girl children. I heard them saying, I understood German from so many years to be around that they were going crazy in my camp, the S.S. and the women S.S. They were beating us with the rubber hoses. They were completely [unclear]. I couldn't understand why. But it looked to us, we start talking. I overheard in the barracks that the Russians are coming and there were leaflets from the Russians and I understood there were leaflets saying if one person is going to miss from those 300 people who are in this camp the whole village will go on fire, but the S.S. people who were in charge they couldn't care less. They knew that they're going to go, they're dead. So this was going on a couple of days and this gentleman who was in charge...

DG: The nice man.

SA: Yes. I don't remember his name. He came in and he gave little tips to the older women what's going on so we could hear the children, the young people we could hear, so we knew that something is going on.

DG: You overheard them talking?

SA: Yes. No food, no kitchen. Something was going on and this was going on for a couple of days. Then one day they started cooking and they made such a thick soup of potatoes and horse beef we thought somebody got crazy. Anyway, no guards were at the doors at the camp along the...

DG: Barbed wire.

SA: The wires—you know where the S.S. sits with the guns; nobody was there.

DG: When you came out in the morning?

SA: In the morning. One morning a couple days later, but this gentleman came in every day and talked to us. He said that any minute that the Russians would occupy and not to be afraid. He said, "If you want to turn me in you can, I don't care (you know as an S.S. man,) but I want to stay with you till they come in."

DG: Wasn't that wonderful?

SA: The S.S. people, the woman S.S., they disappeared.

DG: The wife?

SA: No, no, the young women S.S. I'm not talking about his wife, they were in charge of that camp; they disappeared because they were afraid that we will turn them in and immediately they will get shot. And he stayed. The next morning we saw Russian horses coming in and one Russian was a Jew and he said, "Are you *Yehudim* [Hebrew for Jews]?" You know what *Yehudim* means?

DG: Yes.

SA: And he stayed with us because he was afraid that the Russians would take advantage of the younger children...

DG: …of the women and children.

SA: Like me 14 years old, 15 years old; we were a group of maybe 10, 12. There were people 17 years old, but myself and another girl was the youngest, the mother was with her. We were the two youngest, but the mothers already like women who, you know, they tried to protect little girls like us so he stayed. He told the women, they went out and spoke to the Russians. This was our angel and nothing happened to him. What happened to his wife and that daughter God should only punish them for me. I really had an opportunity to see her and they encouraged me to go beat her up, kill her, do something to her, but I didn't have the heart. I wasn't brought up that way. I just couldn't punish her. The girl who...

DG: What do you mean you had the opportunity; what happened?

SA: We found her a couple of days after we were liberated in the village.

DG: You found her in the village?

SA: She was in a house or maybe this was her house and everybody said that we should kill her. We didn't have the courage, nobody and I, personally was beaten up from her. The first thing I went out I didn't go for clothes or nothing. I went into a house and looked for a little bit soap. I didn't have soap for so many years.

DG: That was what you looked for first?

SA: That's what I needed. My body was so neglected. A drop of soap, I went into a house and took a drop of soap. We found in those homes so much food. They could have lasted for another ten years for those Germans. And barrels flour, sugar, cocoa, tea, potatoes in this basement, apples, preserves, food prepared for years. If the war would go on for five years they had plenty to eat and we couldn't get a drop of soap. So a couple of days later I didn't know where I'm going, what I'm doing. We left.

DG: Who is "we"?

SA: The people from that camp.

DG: Together.

SA: But they all went in groups because they went to Krakow and I was the only one from Radom. To a certain point, you know, I went with the group. I can't even recall how we walked. We used to hitchhike a ride from the Russians and it was very dangerous. After that I finally got to Radom to the railroad station and I walked home from the railroad station. I came to my house. I rang the bell because we had gates in the lumberyard, you know, so we had gates and I was ringing the bell outside. Just the way I went out of my father's house, and I went back to the house. It's a funny thing they didn't go my house I went to—my grandmother's.

DG: Your grandmother's?

SA: This is how close everybody always there. And I'm ringing the bell at 6:00 in the morning and a gentleman was passing by and he came over to me, he recognized the house, and he said, "Sara." And I said, "Yes." "Don't you remember me?" And I said, "No." "I'm Mescht." He was a friend of my family.

DG: You didn't recognize him?

SA: No. When he used to come in I was four, five, six, seven, eight years old. And here I'm coming from a desert; I never saw a human being in six years. So I talked to him in Polish, of course. He told me that my neighbors are home. They had a factory from hard-pressed toilet seats, dishes, and they home, they survived—the husband and wife. He said, "The only thing I can tell you, go up to the Rothenbergs and you see who is here and see what is going on." Anyway, I thanked him and this lady from my grandmother's house came out and opened the door and these were the tenants what was still living when my grandparents had the house, because there was an extra house for tenants, and I said to her, I remembered her name Atratska [phonetic] and she said—the first words she said, "You still alive! Uh!" And she remembered when I was born. I said, "Yes, how about it! I'm alive," and I kept marching in right to my yard and I walked into the kitchen, occupied the whole house, everything. So she gave me a lesson, "You know, all the Jews are killed."

DG: She said to you?

SA: Yes. She gave me a bed, believe it or not, and she told me to go to sleep. It occurred to me that they could poison me, you know. Now I'm thinking about it. So I went to sleep. When I woke up she had potatoes, and borscht and liver.

DG: For you?

SA: Well, for the family and I ate too. First time in my life I'm having a meal now and I was afraid to eat that I'm not going to digest.

DG: I understand.

SA: I don't know, I ate maybe a little bit. So I said to her, "You know what, since you live here and I know you from before, give me the best bedroom for myself and I stay here because I could go into the bedroom with another key." See, my grandmother's house was built you could go from the kitchen on one side all in the back from the bedroom to the other side. She said, "You know, Sara, it's not a good idea to stay here. They're still killing, if they find out there's a Jew around." I said, "Well, I have no place to go. I don't know." I just stayed and her brother was a teacher [unclear] and they told me to go to my, the Rothenbergs, to the neighbors, about four blocks. They were my neighbors across the street from my house, and to my grandparents I had to go about three blocks, four blocks. I thought to myself, "Well, let's go see a Jew." I came over to the Rothenbergs. They didn't know me. But they knew the whole family. I said, "I'm from the Frydmans," [unclear]. "Oh, my God," they kissed me, she hugged me and she said, "Stay here. It's not good because they're still searching for the Jews, the Polaks themselves." I said, "Look, I don't have anything. I have no clothes, I have no money. I can't buy food and I don't know where, what to do." They told me not to worry. As long as they here I eat with them. As I said I'm a very proud person and I hurted. I wasn't brought up poor, you know. There was always [unclear] so I said, "Well, I'm going to go to some of our clients and collect things or they should give me money so I have something to live on." And by the way, my money that I had in Auschwitz what my father gave...?

DG: The coin?

SA: I saved that until I came back to Poland and I sold it to buy a piece of bread.

DG: Oh my! All those years. Your father was smiling when you ate the bread. I'm sure your father was smiling in his heart when you bought the bread.

SA: He was dead already.

DG: I know.

SA: And I went to those Gentiles [unclear]. I walked in and I said, "Do you recognize me?" "You still alive!" Everyone. I said, "Yes, I'm alive, but I like to have my bedspreads back or you want to keep them, give me money. I have no money." I said, "I'd like to have my suits back, from my mother, my aunt." [unclear] and I was just picturing myself all I'm going to wear. They said the Germans came in and took everything away. I started crying, I was full of tears, so when I started crying the door opens and his daughter comes in wearing mother's suit. [unclear] "Look, you told me the Germans took it." I said, "I knew you had everything." So he said, "You know what I'm going to give you, a plate of lima beans." I took the lima beans and looked it over and I cried so hard. All my *tzures* from the whole time that I never cried. I was like an animal. I cried so hard, I didn't know where to turn, what to do. A day later I met my girlfriend with her mother. She came to look for her father. The reason I came back was because I thought maybe my uncle and my father is alive. So I met my girlfriend and her mother and I asked her if her father is alive because they, all the men went to the same camp. And a day later she heard her father is alive and he's on the way looking for her mother and her. So Mr. Weisberg came next day and I was there and I said, "Mr. Weisberg, whatever you do, I'm coming; you have two daughters now. Take me, do something with me, take me. I don't know where to go." Anyway, in a few days right away we left. We went to Germany to Stuttgart. On the way it was very had to get trains. I didn't have a piece of paper; I didn't know who I am and they wouldn't let you in the trains. Anyway, somebody was there and said, "I take her on my paper and then we'll survive another camp. I'll say she's my wife," and he told me to close my eyes when they come in to check the papers and I'm not to open my eyes.

DG: Pretend you're asleep.

SA: Yes. "So you're tired, maybe they don't wake you up because [unclear] from Czechoslovakia when they were riding the train. Maybe they don't wake you up." If they wake me up I was in trouble. Thank God they didn't wake me up and we got to Germany, to Stuttgart, and this is where I stayed with a lot of my *Landsleute*, the Radomers, man and women and I heard what happened to my father, how he died, day before the liberation. Some people took me in, I lived with the people. And then in Stuttgart my husband, thank God, he had two brothers, which one brother just passed away seven years ago and the other one is in Israel. They said as long as you're going together, we knew each other, why don't you get married? They married me off already. I didn't know what marriage is, I'll be honest. We got married and my brother-in-law was a big Zionist so they wanted to go to Israel. This part I understood. I just don't have the strength to work and I

said, "I want to go to the United States." So my husband, well, we were not married but we were talking. I said, "If you want to go with your brothers you should, I mean after all." I said, "I'm going to try and go to the United States on a children's quota so I can have a chance to go back to school and that's it." No, so they wanted us to get married and my husband decided that he wants to come too. So one of my brothers-in-law, my husband and myself came to the United States and we got settled in [unclear]. I raised a beautiful family, two children, professionals. They're very normal people: beautiful, not beautiful looking, which they are, but beautiful big hearts inside. We're very much involved with the second generation, the grandchildren now. I'm learning already about it. Whatever I see I buy for the grandchildren now so they will have and not to forget. I have books I give it to them. The mommy and daddy can read to them. Thank God I'm here. That's all I have to say.

DG: Sara, you were wonderful to share your experience with us.

SA: It's too bad that I have to share such an experience.

DG: Yes it is.

[End of tape one, side two. End of interview.]