BAY AREA HOLOCAUST ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
Interview with RENEE DUERING
12/2/92

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Q: TODAY IS WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 2ND, 1992. I'M JUDY ANTELMAN, AN INTERVIEWER WITH THE HOLOCAUST ORAL HISTORIES PROJECT, IN SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA AND TODAY, I'M INTERVIEWING RENEE DUERING. ASSISTING ME IS ZUZANA GOLDSTEIN AND THE CAMERA ASSISTANT IS LAURIE SOSNA. RENEE WE'D LIKE TO BEGIN WITH EVENTS LEADING UP TO YOUR GOING TO YOUR FIRST CONCENTRATION CAMP, WHERE YOU WERE, IF YOU WERE WITH YOUR FAMILY - IF YOU CAN - IF YOU CAN START WITH THAT IN DETAIL.

A: Yes, the Germans occupied Amsterdam, which was my second home, so to say, because I was born in Cologne. And the Germans came there and they started to work on the Jews. They occupied the entire Holland and then, Amsterdam. They restricted us to give away the bicycles - to give away the rights of a human being. We couldn't be on streetcars anymore. We had no rights at all. And I mentioned maybe, in one of the other tapes that I got married, therefore, not at the regular city hall but in an office, in the zoo. I remember I said that before. And it got tighter and tighter and we had to move from Amsterdam south, Noorde Amsterdam, which was later renamed to Churchill Lane, after the war. And we moved to Amsterdam East and I said to my parents - that is the best moment to disappear. Pretend you move and then, let's go somewhere else. And I was, in the meantime, married and I moved in with my in-laws. And also, they had to move and it turned out that we lived not far from each other. And we visited each other if we could - you couldn't be on the street, anymore. We had been bombarded once in the other apartment. And three bombs fell in the same street. I talked about that too - so I just remember myself now, remind myself. A simple answer is not possible - to your questions.

It was then, that one day, in the summer time, that area, East Amsterdam was completely

surrounded by the Nazi's, and the trains were waiting for us. On a Sunday, I saw my parents walk by, with what they could carry. And I wanted to wave to them and my father-in-law said: "Are you crazy?" And they hadn't rang our doorbell yet, that day, and so two days later we were caught. We were sent to the [Scharborg?] - and it think I mentioned that we were sent to Westerbork after that. And then, in Westerbork, I had been working at night, because I was in the sewing profession. Then, my mother had to work in the daytime. I didn't know what she did actually - I found that out later. Many things I talk about I found out later. My father got a job, for - like a half a doctor. He knew so much about medicine from his profession and from the First World War, when he was fighting on the German side.

And then, I mentioned that the first wedding day was in that camp, Westerbork, which was actually built for refugees, that came from Germany to escape Hitler and now, when the Germans came, they took possession of that camp - and made it a camp to send the Jews wherever they wanted to send them. I spent some time there - several months. And, in mid-September, my parents were to go to Thereisenstad because that was a camp where there was no gassing. We were told that it was an honor to go there. We were told it was a privilege, because my father had been wounded in the war, and he had iron crosses, and so on. And then he - and my mother was ready to say 'goodbye' to us. But then, somebody came at the entrance of that barrack where we all were and said that Renee Duering has to come too, to the trains - packed and everything, and my husband too.

So we were, practically on the same train, only they were in the last wagon. And they didn't end up in Thereisenstad. They ended up in Bergen-Belsen. They were disconnected in Hanover and it's possible that I said it before in the other tape. I'm sorry about that.

So, finally, I arrived in Auschwitz, and we were separated at the train, and my husband said: "This is the end. I will never see you again." And I said: "Keep your head up." So he was right for himself, he died after three

months, and I made it. I arrived in the experiment block - Mengele was at the train. He picked out one hundred women - and then, we marched off to that old Auschwitz where the blocks are second stories.

And what I saw on that way, that was so terribly sad. I saw some men there that looked like robots, or animals. They were skeletons in some rags of striped clothing. And they were hammering some stones for the sidewalks, maybe. Here and there I saw somebody working, by himself, and I thought: 'How is it possible?' And they looked at us, thinking - oh, all, there they go - and, what will they do to them, how will they look in a while? I can now understand what they thought, ja. And up to that moment, we were still in our civil clothing. And then, when we had to take a shower - between block one and two there was a shower there; and they gave us all clothes. And I picked some clothing that was there laying on the big table and some people picked stripes and some people picked civilian clothes. So I picked civilian clothes. And that was also a privilege, I found out later that only the women had, from that block ten, because we were really treated differently from all the other prisoners. Did I answer all your questions?

Q: OH NO. WHAT YEAR DID YOU GET TAKEN TO WESTERBORK?

A: 1943, in the summer.

Q: AND WHAT YEAR WERE YOU TAKEN TO AUSCHWITZ?

A: The same year, in September, mid-September.

Q: CAN YOU DESCRIBE YOUR JOURNEY TO AUSCHWITZ?

A: The journey was in a cattle train, but it was with a roof and my husband - he was honored by a white bandage on the sleeve so that he was kind of, made like a [koska?] inside of the train - somebody had to be in charge. And since he had already been working there, in Westerbork, for a year, so somebody put that white bandage on him. But therefore, we had a place near that window. It was a hole in the

top of the ceiling. It didn't have wires, but it was a narrow kind of thing where the light and the air came through - and we were underneath. There were forty people there and some of them had also been working with him - they survived, and it was very dark in there. It was terribly dark. And we sat all around in a circle like, when you can say a circle, and then, we promised each other as good as we could get acquainted there, in the dark, to stick together. And, later on, I followed up on that, because some of these women came together with me, into that block ten. But, considering a thousand and five people in that train, it was hard to know who is who, but somehow, when we stepped into the train, we must have gathered as a group, and then got together into the train.

So, when we arrived… ja, no - the usual, you have heard it before I guess. They told us we would get our luggage back, which was a lie. And there were dogs and they were screaming, and Dr. Mengele, the good-looking guy, he stretched out his hand and he said: "Are you married?" I said: "Yes." "Go over there."

And the married women went to one area, and when he had the number - hundred, he made us march away, and that was when my husband said: "I will never see you again." And maybe I did see him later on, on an open bed truck, standing up - I think I saw him looking into block ten, thinking - maybe there is Renee. And I think it was him. But nobody told me who is who, you know. Oh you can't recognize a skeleton anymore in strange clothing. But I think… he kept on staring through the window. And, because we had mesh in front of the window, so I couldn't be seen - it was very hard for him to see me, if it was him. I don't know, until this day. But that was about the time when he died - later on, you know.

Q: ?????

A: About three days and three nights.

Q: NOW YOU SAID THERE WERE FORTY PEOPLE IN YOUR CART? WERE YOU SITTING COMFORTABLY, OR WERE YOU ?

A: We sat on the floor. And then we sat with our back against the rucksack in the - our luggage was, you know, and then… I was…

Q: DID IT SMELL POOR?

A: We were clean, and it didn't smell bad. We were under a window, my husband and I, and I cannot recall any smell. I cannot recall any un-decency. I don't remember if there was water there - I think, I assume there was something there to go to the toilet - a barrel. But we never used it. I think we never ate anything because we were all scared to death. And it was so dark. It could have something to do with the light - if there is no daylight and you want to only sleep - maybe. I don't know. It was very noisy - that train, you know. And I remember in Hanover that one screeching noise and then that last screams when my parents were in was disconnected. And that was in Hanover, so I thought: 'That's wrong.' And I heard later on, that they didn't end up in Thereisenstad, they were sent to Bergen-Belsen instead. And then, they had to fight in Bergen-Belsen to get to Thereisenstad. And from Thereisenstad, they were killed in Auschwitz. They were sent to Auschwitz.

And while I was in Auschwitz, ja, I heard that they coming from Thereisenstad, and the person who told me was a Polish man, who did sign language, with me. I mean, the old-fashioned alphabet is different from the modern sign language. With one hand - we did it with two hands, because the distances between the blocks were great. And then, that was about as much as we could see it. And so, I had to come close to the wire, that is not - not the wire of the fence, but we had [cyclone?] fences in front of our windows. I called it wire, cyclone fence on the window, close. So we couldn't throw anything out and we couldn't catch anything from below. We were the only women in that camp.

And block eleven was the [bunker?] where the people who were caught in - outside - those partisans. We saw them when we marched out sometimes, we saw them standing between the

wires. They were electrically loaded, so they had to stand very quietly between those wires. And then they were brought to block eleven, ['bunker'?] - we were block ten, and we had on one side of the house, er, windows closed with wood, so that we couldn't see what was going on in the next block. And we still heard the screaming of them, when they were beaten there.

And then, we heard, every Thursday, when they were shot against the black wall. And I said: "What is this," you know, we came in the beginning of the week, and then one day, we got the numbers on our arms - we had to stand in line and some prisoners did it. And, I have pictures of that, that I painted, draw for the classes, in the... And then, when this guy gave me my number, I said it hurts. You know, the needle was already done, they used the same needle for everyone. And he said: "Be glad to get a number. If you wouldn't get a number, you would go right in the oven." Yeah, that's what he said.

And on Thursday, the shooting, at eleven o'clock in the morning, and I said: "Oh, what is that?" you know. And they said: "Oh, you'll get used to it," those that were there before - in that block. You know, when I came there were already three hundred people in there. And we were four hundred, and the next week, came another four hundred. And "Oh, you get used to that." How can you get used to that? And then, there would come a truck and they would haul the bodies away. And we couldn't see it, because they mounted that wood. But in the other room there was some wood that had holes, you know. And if you knew someone from the other room, they would let you peek. But I never was eager enough to peek.

So, slowly we had to face the facts of life, and the only way to life is to have a logical mind on your head. There was one girl, Alma Muller, and she said: "Renee, how long will the war last?" It was '43, and I said: "Two more years." And she told me - when the war was over - she did survive, and I met her in Amsterdam, and she said: "I wanted to kill you for that." She said she gave herself two months, with the way it went. And, she said -

but I gave her a story that she never forgot and she always thought of me when she was in Birkenau. She was sent to Birkenau, because she refused to be experimented on. And that was kind of a certain death. But she took that chance; she didn't want to be sterilized. She knew more than I did. They told me: "We take x-rays."

I said to her: "You know - history is like that. Some people survive and some don't." And I said: "If you think of the Chinese Wall, when that was built, it took hundreds of years, and then the people that died in the process, they were buried inside of the wall," to make up a fill, you know. And then, that's what my father told me. So I said to her: "If you want to survive, you have to concentrate on it. So, give yourself two years, and think of the Chinese Wall." And she told me that when she was in Birkenau, every time there was a misery and they had to stand outside for punishment, in the mud and all that - she always thought of me and the wall, the Chinese wall. So you see, I made an impression there on somebody, and maybe, she said "I stay alive." She said that - well, that was good. And there are some rewards in life about all that.

Q: CAN YOU DESCRIBE MENGELE - YOU SAID YOU SAW HIM IMMEDIATELY…?

A: I didn't know who he was, he must have been very young. And when I came into that experiment block, others knew who he was, and they asked us: "Did you see Mengele, did you see Mengele?" I said: "He was god."

Q: AND WHAT DID HE LOOK LIKE?

A: He looked gorgeous in that uniform. [laughs]

Q: THAT WAS YOUR FIRST IMPRESSION.

A: Ja. And they were kind of envying after, because you see Mengele. And then, later on in life, I learnt that he was up to no-good, you know. He was a murderer and he was a sadist, and he was, he didn't feel guilty until he died. I read somewhere in the junk papers, that he recently died, and he was a hundred and

three years old, or something. They found him in Argentina, I think. And there was a picture of him - I don't know. But I think he did get out of the bunker. He didn't have the guts to shoot himself in there. I think he did escape, that's what I think now.

Q: SO YOU ARRIVED AT AUSCHWITZ, AND YOU WERE PART OF THE ONE HUNDRED WOMEN WHO WENT TO THE EXPERIMENT BLOCK.

A: Yeah.

Q: OKAY, AND WHAT HAPPENED WHEN YOU ARRIVED?

A: Well, it looked like we had little jobs to do and I didn't know what they were up to, but they said they do work on our bodies - that it would not kill us, you know, something like that. It would be for a medical use, and if we did refuse, we could go to Birkenau. And Alma Muller, she did that - she refused, I didn't. I thought - I have to get out of here alive, and I felt I'm more secure there, because we had hygiene in this block; we had toilets and shower, even though it was cold water, but we didn't have to suffer like in Birkenau, because many of these people had been in Birkenau - that came to fill up the block.

In that book 'The Experiment' by Laura Shelley, there are some people talking, who worked for the Nazi's, and who say how terrible it was in Birkenau. And then, they moved to that block ten, and saw what really was going on, with those x-rays killing the ovaries and all that. Then, that woman refused, she is now in Vienna, and she was half Jewish, but she declared herself Jewish, so she suffered like a Jewish person. And she survived the war; and she also talks in this book by Laura Shelley. And I met her, last year. And - wonderful person. She said - her name is Sonja Fritz. Fritz is her last name - and she kind of sneaked out of there. She found her self another position; she just disappeared, and she said she can't do that sort of thing. She refused to work for those German doctors.

But you see, everybody survived for a reason, and she was to tell her story, so that's why

she's in the book. And she said, in general, she doesn't want to talk about it; she wants to live a quiet life, and she has no husband anymore and children. And I think that people who go through these things are basically, now different, even if you cannot tell right away. But their opinion - I think this is what it's all about, to hear people talk, who went through hell, came out of it, and want to be living in a better world. And they want to hold onto life, so that we can see a better world. And that's a privilege to survive such a thing. And I think also, that we make a difference, in that respect that - thank goodness, there are people who do listen, and who do care what we have to say.

And I hope that President Clinton elect is going to do the right thing. There shouldn't be any wars anymore. To avoid wars, you have to take away the guns, and so on. Not sell them, but destroy them. So, I hope to see that day. You know why? Then the extra-terrestrials can come and help us, but they can't come before, because they also are vulnerable to be killed. They just humans like us.

Q: GETTING BACK TO BLOCK TEN, CAN YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCES THERE?

A: Well, they did on me? Or the medical experiments.

Q: YOUR EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCES, MEDICAL EXPERIENCES.

A: Well, emotion is still alive to tell about it. And don't expect anything personally from life; just survive this thing. And I didn't know what was ahead of me. But, I think because I picked the right clothing for me, I could escape at the end. Because, in the striped clothing inside of Germany, later on, you couldn't escape. So that was already looking into the future, all the time. Looking to not be seen - you kind of behaved in such a way that you were not seen. You were no special person, you know. But I'd go out and picked leaves. That was wonderful, even though we had nothing to eat all day long. They saved the

little soup what we got, and even, cold for us. But it was worth it because, after, at the camp, it was like becoming like a human being again. And until this day, I like to pick leaves in my back yard. I pick them because they are sick, from the airplanes - so, from the air pollution. And then, I catch myself thinking of - 'Oh, I did that before. I put a basket full of leaves.' Where was it - oh, Auschwitz, ja, mmmm... it is this way around, you know. And it is not intentionally - I don't go out there because I cares about Auschwitz - it's the other way around.

And what shall I tell you - the experiments - yes. And, a woman doctor came, [Brevda?] and I don't know her last name - she's also in this book. She was a Polish doctor, who also didn't know what she was going into when she took this 'job.' Naturally, everything was no pay, you know. There was never any money exchanged. Never, there was no money.

She did take the job, thinking she could help us, but she didn't know what she was going into. And she had, in the end she helped the Germans rather, you know, in her position as a doctor. I don't know what it was, but we were sick one night. Next to me, a girl died of diphtheria. A young girl - younger than myself - a Dutch lady. And I called for emergency, that she should get some help, because she couldn't breathe anymore. And Dr. [Brevda?] stuck her head in the door; she got up out of her bed, and I don't know who called her - I didn't, I was also sick with diphtheria, which was deadly, if you had many other diseases. This girl had other diseases before, so she was weakened. I didn't have all these diseases, because, like typhus - we had the shots before. My father-in-law made a doctor come to the house in Holland, and said: "All of us get shots." There was no shot against diphtheria. And it went around - I happened to be next to this young lady and she died. I made also, a picture of that. And the doctor - she could have opened - slit open the throat here to get the air in her lungs, you know. But she stood there and said: "No, I can't do anything." She let her just die there. It's terrible. Then I tried to get her

into the bed, and then, she wanted to sit on the pot, and it was a terrible sight and I want to say what it looks like - diphtheria, when it comes to a height.

And then, in those four weeks that I was also sick, after two weeks, I was supposed to go upstairs, in the room again, and my girlfriend that I made there - mother knew that girl before I did. She said in Amsterdam: "I want you to meet Margot Myer. She is your age, she's so nice, and she's the daughter of a ?? man." And my mother was learning to get a new profession. And she - this mother was a teacher. And then she said: "Renee, I wish that she would be your girlfriend." I never had any friends, because I always worked in Holland - from age fourteen on. And, anyway, I met this girl, Margot, in that block. And she happened to be a nurse in that room where I was sick. And we - "Ja," she said, "I know your mother. I met her once." And she told me about this. So we met there. So two weeks after this girl, I still had my throat bad, and then, she went to this lady doctor, [Brevda?], and she said: "[Brevda?], will you please look in Renee's throat - she is still sick. She can't go up there." And she said: "Give another two weeks down here." So I stayed my four weeks. And I got out okay. That was good - good luck.

But I made a lot of jokes while I was there because I didn't have to stand outside. We were counted everyday, you know, in the morning, in the evening. And in that time, they counted us laying in bed, you know. And so, because we didn't have to go outside, and stand there for hours, that was like a vacation. And because I wasn't that sick; I was the least sick of all these people. Many, many died, you know. They gave them shots, okay, but they got bubbles from these shots.

There was one girl, Mimi, and then before she died, she sang - all night, all day, she was singing. She was in high fever, delirium, you know. And she sang, and then she died. The energy left her. And she had so many bubbles on her body. I've never seen anything - just from getting shots. I don't know what shots

they were. Because we were a medical block, you know, otherwise we wouldn't have… The doctors did what they could. And I don't know - I got something to gargle with, a red pill. That was all the medicine I got. Something red that made the urine red. And that was what I had to take against diphtheria. But while I was there, and Margot, she said to me later - after the war, she survived too, and we still are in touch. She said: "Renee, the time that you were sick was the best time for me." She said: "You make us laugh."

So - in that misery, but one day, one day - in that time, we heard noises. Everybody in the block had to leave. And we heard all the trampling from the feet, from the shoes - out. And we didn't know what was going on. And one lady, and I still want to meet her, I'm just thinking - her name was Margot Kirsch from Berlin. She's alive somewhere in Switzerland. She jumped up and down and she was holding her fingers in that wire, ?? there, and we now below, you know. We were not in our bedrooms upstairs, our one bedroom - two hundred people, you know. Downstairs - sick room. So we were in the sick room, and then, she heard the trucks coming. And all the women left the room - left, that was clear. We heard that, and then it was quiet, and then she said: "Oh we are going to be gassed. Everybody out." And all these trucks came. And she was jumping so hysterically that - like a baby jumps, higher than the body. She was jumping on the bed, so high, tried to look through the side of the fence, which was impossible. It was impossible to look through that [cyclone?] fence that was nailed on top of the window opening. So you know what? I pulled her down from her jumping and I said to her: "You are not alone in this room. If we are being gassed, then there is time to get angry. But don't make all these poor people that lay here, sick and dying, so anxious." You know, don't do anything, just calm down.

And I was recently talking to other survivors in Cologne, and they told me that she is alive. She was one of the Berlin people, you know. I hope to meet her one day, but I haven't done anything yet. They were going to give me the

address, but… I was in Switzerland too, but I didn't know about it then. But she survived okay.

So okay, the experiments - what was it? What was it? That terrible noise, what it was, was they emptied our mattresses, because they saw that we worked in the camp, and we looked better, every time, in that men's camp. And the men had smuggled things into our block. They had smuggled clothing and stuff. They had smuggled old sweaters - we ripped them out and we knitted them anew from the better part of the sweaters. And we made gloves for the men, we made socks for the men, and I, I picked up a wire on the floor. We worked outside one day - the first time we worked outside, I saw a piece of wire on the street. And I was walking on the outside of the five, so I go and grab it. And the woman that was behind me - either she looked away, or she didn't punish me, but otherwise, other people, if they went out of the line, they would have been punished. So I was lucky. And when I came back to the block, I trimmed this wire into four pieces, and then socks could be made from that. So that is why until this day, I pick up things. I always think what that is of some use, or somebody's use - you have to pick this up. Yeah.

Q: COULD YOU DESCRIBE, IF IT'S POSSIBLE, COULD YOU DESCRIBE A TYPICAL DAY THERE. LIKE FROM THE MORNING, WHEN YOU GOT UP - DID ANYBODY WAKE YOU UP, BEFROE THE TIME - OR THE OTHER GIRLS???

A: That's a good question. In our block, we had the Greek girls that were in charge of that service, because they were sooner in Auschwitz than we were. So we were - they had this duty to wake us up, and they said, they said something in Spanish and in German, and I said: "I thought you speak Greek, but it sounds to me Spanish." And she said: "Yes, we speak Spanish." And she was - Bella was her name, beautiful girl. I said girl - we were all married women. She would say: "Raus aus die beddens, raus aus die bed. Raus aus bed." And then she would say: "Arrive, arrive," that is on top of and you on top of. And she said it in Spanish because that she couldn't say in German and… But she tried very hard and she

was in charge to wake us up. And that was every morning - her voice.

Q: WHAT TIME WAS THIS?

A: Maybe five thirty, six, I don't know. Ja, early, early. And then we had to go downstairs to the toilet and wash up a little bit, and if you were lucky, you could catch a little warm water. There was a thing at the block over that was Margiet. Normally, she was in charge of the block of five hundred people, you know. And she had the women brought, her last name from Belgium was [Brood?]. And she was in charge to lead up the water. There was such a thing, in the washroom. But the heating material was wood. So if Margiet could take a shower and Margot took the shower - Margot was a French woman, who was the girlfriend of Margiet, the two were little bit different from other women. They were sticking together so much. Anyway, if you were early you could catch a warm shower. Some warm water that was left over in there. And I found that out only much later, when I met the same girl always there. We were kind of on the same timing. And she said: "Renee, we are lucky. We get some warm water today." So, that was a luxury.

But otherwise, there was like a big, long sink - like a big long tub, you know on two sides water, on two sides taps, I think. And the toilets, there were no walls in between, you know. But there were toilets. You could flush them. And there were no toilet seats. But there were toilets there. That was a big luxury compared to what I hear from Birkenau. And no, ja - we had to leave to go outside and be counted every morning. And an SS woman came with a dog, without a dog - I think she was with a dog, but the dog didn't bark very much. And we were counted and we had to stand still until it was done and over - sometimes over again, and over again.

And then, we were called - the numbers were called of those that were to be experimented on, and, the numbers were called of those that had to go outside to pick the leaves. And because I was kind of, late in the block, I was not in that group. But there was one French

girl, and I don't know her name anymore. But because my name is Renee, and my mother was born in France, and I speak French, she took to me, and she said: "Renee, would you like to take my job and go outside?" I thought: 'Ja, that's nice; look around a little bit, what is the camp like.' So I went out there and then, she wanted to go again, and the SS man asked for Renee, but it was the number thirty it. But if the thirty people were called, and so... But she let me have her job, kind of, you know. Sometime, there were people that couldn't go because they were called to the experiments first. And then you had to fill up the thirty people. So in the beginning, I didn't go regularly. And then, I went regularly.

And then, it was a thing that the women had to be chosen again. They wanted to make a new commando. And I was not in those thirty people. I was standing in the way, on the end and this Dr. Brevda, she took her thirty people and I was not in the commando. And I was sad. And the next thing you know, that SS man asked for me. I missed Renee in the group. She must come. And I was back in there. So I left quite a bit during the stay in Auschwitz. And therefore, I could orient myself. I knew how I could escape. But it was told - don't do it - because there are fourteen miles, or kilometers all around camp. Camps, camps, camps - you only walk from one camp to another. And the private homes were all empty - no people live there anymore. And the SS had taken possession of some homes. And I went one time, in a home like that, where Dr. Goebel, who experimented on me, was in. We went with a whole commando and cleaned his house, in one day. Everybody took a window and a staircase, and a room, and in no time that house was whistling clean - clean like a whistle.

And that is when I heard music, there. This SS man - he was seventeen years old and he had a wounded hand, maybe he crippled himself, you know, not to go to Stalingrad. And for punishment he were, you know, to give him a job - he had to guard us, a seventeen-year-old boy. His mother came to visit and we had a Jewish doctor, a prisoner, and he told her on one of those outings - picking leaves - they made for

teas, picking leaves. And he said to this woman, in my presence: "I want you to come back to your place, Emden," in Germany, near the Dutch border, "and tell what's going on here. You see the chimney, that is where the Jews are burnt." And she said: "No, no, I'm not going to tell anything." She said: "Do you think I want to end up in prison?" And she - she was allowed to visit her son, that SS man.

And that SS man, I saw that record player there - I said: "Could you play a record for me please?" And he said: "What do you want to hear?" I said: "What is there?" And I said: "Okay, here is one that I know, the 'Moonshine' sonata from Beethoven." And he put it up and the moment the music goes on with that concert, my tears start rolling. I hadn't heard music for so long. And I start crying, and he looked at me, and he said: "Stop crying, or I stop the music." That was my emotion, you know. He didn't know about Beethoven. He never had heard Beethoven, he said: "Oh I thought it was one of those modern songs, dance music - the 'Moonshine' sonata." That was seventeen-year-old boy; I made a picture of that too.

So, what else is there to say? The experiments went on; we had to give blood; we had to hold still for many shots in the back. And experiments were done to different people in a different way and they recorded for x-rays. And they wanted to see, under the x-ray which was running, you know, and they wanted to see how the result was, from that liquid that they did into our body.

The Red Cross made a film of me and it's only ten minutes, but they took pictures for a whole week in my house. They came from Switzerland. And they picked me because I had looked for a friend, what I heard, she lived in another continent. And I hadn't given up looking for her, and they thought: "Hey, here is a stubborn person." And then, the Red, they couldn't find her under the spelling I had given, and that brought up a problem in the Red Cross, and they changed their system. They started to spell all their names in a different manner, so that people who ask for people, they could be found that way. And then, they were thinking, maybe

they ran out of a job, I don't know. I said when they called my up: "Why me?" And they said: "Well, we have never done anything on that subject." I said: "Come on over, or I come to you." And they said: "No, we come to you." I said: "You found my girlfriend and I thank you for it, and I want then, this girlfriend to be in the picture too." And they said: "That's not possible because we were in Australia already, last year, and we can't go twice there - and we come to your house, if you don't mind." And they stayed in a hotel for a week, three guys and three expensive hotels, and they had all the equipment in my downstairs room, and they came everyday like clockwork.

Nine o'clock we would begin to film, then there was some intermission, where they took a smoke, and then at one o'clock it went on. And then the sun came up, into my living room. And then they said: "Now, we go upstairs." So, my grandson was filmed, when he plays ball. And he is now a ball player, by the way. He is a quarterback. And, very much loved by everybody - sixteen and a half. So this - they filmed that, and they filmed me at the beach in that, and then, they had to cut out so much, so that it came down to ten minutes, but in that film of the Red Cross, you can see it here on ?? if you like. It's called 'Traces'. In that film they show an x-ray or two what was done in 1952. I didn't bring it because I don't want to do the same thing all over again. And I don't want to do the same thing to you, you know. You have another purpose here, than the Red Cross. So anybody who wants to see that film can see it. But I think that the Red Cross had a purpose in doing this - that was to document one case, with three men in there, from Europe, and me from America; and, so that they wouldn't run out of a job - because nobody asked for the documents anymore.

But that changed with opening up the Russian area and the East Germany dissolved, now come new claims, and thank goodness, they are occupying, as far as I know, three or four buildings. Huge buildings in [Arulson?], in [Hesson?], in Germany. But the big Cross is still in Geneva. And those were the ones that came to my house. And a few years later, in

'89, I went to visit them. We were together and that's when I closed the window, eleven o'clock at night. It got cold, it was November already, and there was this UFO over my head, flying, in a blue light. A blue oval light and it was right over my head. And I said to everybody - we sat in the kitchen there, I said: "Did you see that?" And nobody saw it. I had to go to the window, and then see this thing. That was nothing else than somebody watching me. I think I'm watched. Call me crazy, but it will come out eventually that subject. And it occupies me so much that I'm happy now to see every week, something on the news about that subject.

And I do think that, deep down, we are Jewish, have gotten the job, by them, to begin with. We got a job when all the wars was redone - I mean, the dinosaurs disappeared and then, the world was livable. And then they came down and they planted us but, least they planted themselves here, to have a better world for themselves, because they were warriors too. And now we are in that stage of the newcomers, in their opinion. And they watching that we destroying our world. So, they come back now, but they have to be careful, not to be shot down. Ja?

Q: IF I CAN BRING YOU BACK JUST FOR A MOMENT. WHEN YOU WERE DESCRIBING - YOU WOULD GO OUT EVERYDAY TO PICK LEAVES OUTSIDE - OUTSIDE THE CAMP…???

A: No, we did other things too.

Q: YOU DID? COULD YOU TELL US ABOUT IT?

A: Oh, some, I remember one day we were given a basket made out of old rubber, inner tires, and - or something like that. And then we were told to get the dirt from one side, on the side of the street to fill up the potholes in the street. That I remember. We did that. And I did sew a lot, I mean - we were all dressmakers. Most of us were dressmakers, because the second group that came after us, the last hundred, they also came from Holland, and they had been in the concentration camp in

Holland named Vugt - V-U-G-T. I think that's the spelling. They had come from Vugt, they were also young, Dutch women, and so they were already taken out of a sewing command, and I had been sewing before, and so one day they put sewing machines in our block. And they also, they moved us within Auschwitz.

They build a new camp while we were there. And those new blocks - they were brand new and they were somehow, bigger, and higher, I think. And in that time, I did sew in the command. And one day we had to go where the machines were in another block. And there were men sewing - men. Male - tailors working there. And on side - no, we were all sitting mixed, and an SS man came inside and he said: "No way!" He said: "No way. You guys sit here, on that side, and you girls sit on that side." So, that was in the new camp. And then, sewing machines came into our block, and we had to work there. And then they build a stage in our block. They were going to put a stage up there, so all the prisoners could come to our camp, and that was already end '44, and they didn't gas anymore. They stopped gassing because there was a bombardment in Auschwitz, in Birkenau.

But now, the Nazi's had taken their SS men, next to us, there was only a high wire in between that long fence, and five blocks were for prisoners, and fifteen blocks were to be for the SS. And, five blocks already, were occupied by the SS, when that camp was bombarded. And somebody died in it; and hundred and twenty-five Nazi's died in their block. And I was under a table, and the whole block, number one… that was now from block ten to number one. That whole block, number one, was shaking like this [sways from side to side]. And I was under the roof, the third floor, and I had the emotional feeling that I went down into the ground. And that happened next door to the - [Kiki corner?] to that block. That happened to that SS block. And I was the last one to go down in the cellar, but when I came to the stairs, my knees were all bleeding from the cement floor. I just rushed under, because there was an alarm. There was an alarm and it took so long until these planes came, that alarm was heard fifteen minutes

earlier. And then you forget about it. It was just an alarm - nothing happens, and then comes this bombing and the hit, and then the shaking, and then, I ran down the stairs and everybody was standing on the stairs.

And then we had a drill later on to teach us to go into the cellar, you know. And these SS men, they were all in the cellar, and the whole house on them. They did the right thing. Ha-ha. But anyway, we didn't have a bombing there anymore.

But before this bombing, there was something in Birkenau that you could have heard from other people. There was one day, when there was a shooting - a shootout between prisoners and SS, and the SS ran away. And there were people in the gas chamber - they never got gassed that day, and that was the last of it. And I met a woman, her name is [Froud?], Margaret was her daughter, and Inga was her daughter, and Inga was a girlfriend of my brother in Holland. I heard she is alive, and I visited her in Amsterdam, and... Hannah Froud - and I think she was from Germany. Born there, you know, ?? I don't know the name, something like that. Don't write it down. She said to me: "You know Renee, I was in Thereisenstad. I met your parents. I want to hear everything. What can you tell me about your parents?" And she said: "Your father was called," and I told these men that they would build a new camp and they should have the women come later. And my father said to my mother, that was September '44: "Don't come after me on your own. Don't come voluntarily." But my mother was sent there in October '44, and she also was gassed. My father was gassed there, and my mother. And she told me about, that she met them there, because they knew each other in Holland, you see, because of that daughter with my brother, you know, going around.

So, Thereisenstad I visited later on. And there was a very tragic moment when I met a women who knew my parents and showed me where they stayed, where they slept. They could sleep together, okay, but when they were called away - and my mother refused to work in the factory. And that is why she came on the list

early enough to be gassed. And this lady was also in the gas chamber on that day when there was the bombardment and... not that bombardment where I - I'm talking about Birkenau. And she told me how terrible it was to have been standing in the train from Thereisenstad to Auschwitz, to arrive there and some of the people, they were all older people, were dead on arrival. When they emptied the train, they fell over.

And she got out alive, and she was told to take a shower, and take all the clothes off, like all these people. And she said to me: "Renee," and she was in bed, because she still was recuperating. And that was good - when I visited her it was already, maybe September - August or September of '45, because I also recuperated slowly. And then she said to me: "Renee, why was I in that Auschwitz for two days, no, one day only, and they took us on the train away and we went to Mauthausen?" "But," I said: "What happened to you?" So she, and then she told me what happened. You want to know what happened? She said it said 'brausen.' And they were gold, and she says the doors closed and it was pitch dark, and no water came out. And they started to freeze, and they stood body by body, they keep the... but it was so miserable, she said. Waiting there for hours for the water that never came. And instead, she says, she heard a terrible noise; they were bombing. She said: "All the shooting," she said. "And then," she says, after five hours, she saw the floor that there was no drainage for water, before she got in she noticed that.

But she says when they opened up the doors, I think they were double doors or something like that. They opened the doors and the prisoners gave her some clothing to wear. And they mumbled in front of themselves [covers mouth] and said to them: "You are lucky." Every time you know, she said that woman told her she was lucky. "You lucky." She said: "Renee, tell me, why was I lucky. There were no water came out and then we went on another train and ended up in Mauthausen, where also people died on the train again." I said: "You were in the gas chamber on that day when they bombarded it,"

and then from then on they stopped, evidently. So she came right after my mother. She was lucky. And she lived - and she didn't know she was in the gas chamber. I had to tell her that, and I said to myself: 'Thank goodness, she's laying in bed.' Because if I tell her that standing up, or something, she's going to fall down, you know. She was speechless. But she was happy. She was happy that she survived that hour, you know. But her two daughters didn't survive; her husband didn't survive. And then, she remarried somebody who's wife, also, didn't survive.

Q: ?????

A: Sure.

Q: ????

A: Well, I did bring some pictures. It was the entrance to the front and then, a long hallway, the length of the building. And left and right there were rooms. And they were for medical reasons. And in the middle was a staircase to the upper area, and left and right was a room for each two hundred people, and downstairs, also, were rooms where some of the servants of the doctors slept. And so I figure there were five hundred people in there, maybe there were four hundred and fifty or something. Maybe it varied. And in that block, like I said before, we had facilities. And when the soup came that was always the biggest event in the day, because the men wanted to bring the soup so they could get into that block. Because there - otherwise, you know, it was impossible for them to enter.

And there was one man in block nine, he started to give me a piece of paper in my hand, the day that Hitler was assassinated, maybe you know that day in the end of… or in '44 somewhere, or end '43. End '43, or May '44. Well, he gave me some kind of writing into my hand and a bottle of sparkling water. I don't know where he got it from. And then the girl saw that and then she said: "Give me some, and what did he write?" you know. And I shared a little bit. And then, it said in that letter, "I am watching you all the time. You are near the

window, but you are always busy, and you don't stick your head out" - we couldn't anyway. "You don't look outside, you just do your work. And you are sewing all the time." And so I sat on a big, broad windowsill and there was also my bed, right next to it. Not from the beginning, but later on, after I got - from the sickness, I come upstairs. And that was bed was available. So that's why I ended up there. He watched me every time he could, in the evening the camp was not with SS. They went home and we were alone. The prisoners, then, could walk around - the men. But they were forbidden to come by our block. And so, he was in block nine, so he could watch me. That was when I taught him that sign language, and then, we started to communicate that way. And the women started to respect me that I had a [korhannie?]. [Korhannie?] means what - a lover boy or something.

And then he said all the time: "Watch tomorrow when the soup comes in, I'll try to be there." And then he would give me something when I come running down the stairs as if I go to the bathroom. Then he would put something in my hands.

Sometimes it was that I saw things that way, like a barrow full with teeth, from the dead people. Full of teeth - they had to be dismounted in our block. There were dentists in our block from Poland, and Maruschka was one. She was a dentist at home. Here she had to dismantle all the teeth and put them back on the castings. And, by the way, I started to massage other people to make them feel good and she came with a little Vaseline that she had available, and I massaged her face, every so often. She came upstairs after we were counted, you know. We were counted like six o'clock and then, we were on our own. And then, in that time we could do what we wanted to do. But because we had to get up so early, we went to bed, also, you know. And we talked with each other. And so…

Q: WHAT WAS THE CONVERSATION? DID THE PEOPLE HAVE HOPE, DID THEY…?

A: Yes. Like I told you about Gerda Miller already, you know. That is an example. I would ask one woman, for example: "What is your maiden name?" And she said: "[Konkel?]" And I said: "I knew Max and Theo [Konkel?]" And she said: "Those are my brothers!" And then she said, she was much older, she said: "You know, Renee, Max has behaved very strangely and we didn't know what he was up to. That was probably because he met you. He probably intended to marry you. He bought a house on a big, fine street, across from the Amstel Hotel. And he bought a grand piano, and we didn't know why he did that, because he didn't play piano." But, I play piano - not too good anymore. I never did, but I learnt piano and he loved concerts, you know. So when I told her how I met her brothers - on Friday night in a synagogue in Amsterdam. And afterwards we invited them - my aunt invited them to come, and they were bachelors. And because of Max [Konkel?], I have had some kind of privilege in education. He gave me concert tickets to hear all these famous people that now - most of them are dead. It was ???? so I went there, to the concert. Once, he took me rowing and, otherwise I wouldn't have had that in my teenage years.

But he never kissed me - except one time. And that was when he arrived in Westerbork, in the camp, I went by… ja, you are laughing, but there is nothing to laugh about. Wait a minute, I saw him in a line there, and I said to him: "How come you come to Westerbork?" He said: "I was caught," you know like others, but he was caught because he had a canary on his bicycle. His mother and father went to hide, and his mother said: "I forgot the bird. Get the bird." And he went on his bike and he had a canary on his back, and an SS man stopped him and said: "Why do you… where are you going?" And he didn't - maybe he didn't tell where the parents were because they weren't there - he was there. And I saw him in Westerbork, in that line, and he looked very depressed. And then he grabbed me and kissed me. But not like a love kiss, he kissed me like an old friend, in an embrace. And he said: "Renee, I'm going to die now." And you know there was a woman working in that barrack where he was ending up,

that I knew from Amsterdam, Mrs. Cohen, and her daughter and me, we were friends. And they lived in Schillerstraat, in Amsterdam. I said: "Mrs. Cohen, you are in charge of that block where these prisoners came." Those that were caught like this, not picked up in a big… not even on lists, these people, they were punished more. So she said: "He refuses all the food." And it was two weeks already, gone. He didn't shave anymore; he didn't wash; he didn't eat; and as such, he went to Auschwitz, and was killed, right away, I think. But his sister was happy to meet me, because I could tell her that, that he was caught.

So she knew what was with him, but she didn't know about Theo. And Theo made it. He survived. And after the war was over, he wanted to marry me - this guy. And I had the jaundice, I was sick because I ate all of sudden something that was not… you know, and I got jaundice. And he visited me there in that place in Amsterdam, where I stayed temporarily. It was a diamond cutlery where they put beds between the machines. And there he visited me and he said: "Oh, if you have jaundice, I'm going to get it. I stay back here, in the door." Way, way back. And you know what? He got it. He did get it from standing in the door. And - the poor man.

But he wanted so much to marry me. He came to visit me when I had an apartment with my little sister, who survived - hiding. And, hiding in Holland. She was in seventeen places, and she was like a maid, so she could be booked like a maid, you know. And some people knew she was Jewish, and some people didn't, but nobody said: "You are Jewish." They just took it in stride, and they hide her. And after the war, she and me, we got a little apartment inside of an apartment. And this Theo [Konker?] came and said: "I want to marry you." And I ran away. I just plain, ran away. And he wanted to grab me, and I just - it was so weird, you know. And his brother was the one who did so much for me. I mean, but he didn't survive. Yeah, I get distracted. So, please ask me again about the block ten.

Q: I WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT BLOCK TEN. ????? IN DETAIL - YOU MENTIONED THAT YOU SAW A BARREL OF TEETH - ANY DETAILS THAT YOU SAW, OR ANYTHING TO DO WITH?????

A: Yes, yes. Okay, I'm thinking now of Dr. Samuel. I must tell you that I was born in Cologne, and that Dr. Samuel - the doctor for my mother, all those years; he lived in Cologne. And I heard later on, he also was a doctor already, in the First World War. And he was now a gynecologist. And all the women went to him. And also, my sister was born with his help, but when I was born my parents lived in twenty - they moved in 1920, in that house, that was built for a First World War veterans. So my father moved in there with my mother just in time, so I would be born there. And when Dr. Samuel came to that house there weren't any streets in yet. It was all soaking wet from the snow in winter - it was January 7th. And my father and mother had the first telephone. And they had it in the house so that they could call him. And it was going to be - so there was no hospital at that time, but he came into the house.

And he said to my father that my mother was in a very terrible situation, and that he had to save either the mother or the child. And asked my father this question: "Who do you want me to concentrate on, to survive?" And my father answered him, downstairs, so my mother couldn't hear it: "I want my wife," you know. There was already my brother - he was born in seventeen. And then, '21 I came to this world and Dr. Samuel just was very rough with me when he pulled me out of my mother. First of all, I was eleven European pounds, which is about thirteen American pounds, or something like twelve, thirteen - five hundred gram to a pound. Yeah, I was enormous big, for a baby, and my mother had struggled terribly. And then, when he finally came, he said that to my father and my father started walking up and down in front of my mother's bed door, she told me, whistling. He whistled. And she was in cramps and what you call that… I don't know English too well. What? Labor pains. And this doctor went to work with her and we both

survived, you know. And that is how I was born.

But later on, I read a book that on the 7th of January there was a light over Cologne - there were no airplanes in '21, flying. There were nothing like satellites. A light over Cologne, and I read in the same book that on my mother's birthday, in Paris, was a light in the sky, in 1890. And on the birthday of my father, in Cologne, was a light in the sky. My daughter has seen lights before she had her son, and her son has seen lights, my grandson, with me together, one time, and also when he was a baby. He didn't know what it was but, I have a feeling that we are watched. The family, my family, certain people in the family are watched.

And now, I have this hole in my leg that my mother pointed out the last day in Westerbork, before we parted. She starts talking about when I had been lost as a child - she's talking about: "Where is the wound that you had on your leg. Let me show you the wound." And she talks about those things, that - out of the blue, that I think that she meant something, that she had no answer for. Why I was gone - the whole village or city looked for me - police and neighbors. And I was lost; I was gone. And then I knocked the door, much later. She had given up. And I knocked the door and I came in. And she said: "Where were you?" And I didn't speak, I said nothing. I was too small. I couldn't speak, or I wouldn't speak. Something has happened to me and she said, from then on, I had a wound that wouldn't want to heal. And she pointed to my left leg around the knee area - let me show it to you, by your knee. And now this is here - up here. See you grow, the wound is higher now. And I asked the doctors here: "What is that?" And they say: "It's a wound. That's all." And I had some pain, lately. And the doctor said: "Never mind, what else do you have to talk about." He didn't want to know what the pain was in my leg, here, up and down my leg.

So, I have seen about thirty times - lights over my head. And that thing in Switzerland - that was so weird. And, you know, in a way, it

gives me strength, and I think I'm here for a reason, so… that Auschwitz is a long time ago, but I can't forget it. I would like to forget.

I tried one time, I tried to forget when living in Israel for ten years. I thought I couldn't have a child. So I went to Israel, and then, just to please my girlfriend, I went to a doctor. And he said: "You can have a child." And I said: "Don't you believe me, what happened to me in Auschwitz. I'm sterilized." He said: "I have to see that for myself." And then, I went through torture - I mean, everything hurt terribly. He made x-rays also. And he said: "It shouldn't hurt." But it did. And then he saw. Also, he blew my tubes. And it didn't hurt in the right side. It hurt in the left side and the shoulders. You know, here [indicates collar bone region] - I don't know if you had that done. If you haven't had it done, you don't know the pain. If you get air in your body from - via the uterus, it goes through the tubes, it goes through the ovaries, and air wants to go up. So it travels inside of your body. It ends up here [indicates shoulders]. So I had a terrible pain in my left collarbone, here underneath. And I had to stay a few hours in Haifa - and the dentist was the only person that I knew. I could stay there a little bit on the couch, and he said: "Come later, when the passig is over, and I want to talk to you then." And he didn't tell me, and he said: "Oh it hurts here," [collarbone] he said. "That's good," he says. I thought - what's good about that, you know. And then, he said: "Now, I need the x-rays." And I said: "Oh no that hurts. I've had x-rays in Auschwitz." And then he said: "You know what - one side is good. Your left side is good. Your right side can't be penetrated." You know, the tube was blocked, and therefore there was nothing.

And what they did to me with that hot material, the liquid like a quart of a milk can, you know, this much liquid.[indicates with hands] They spouted into my uterus, and it ended up in my right side. And that is where I had the terrible burn, in Auschwitz. For three days I was laying there - I was burning and burning and burning. It was terrible. And in that

case, they let me be in bed. You know, I didn't have to stand up to be counted. They counted me upstairs, in bed. And this man that always did the language with me - I didn't come even to the window, even if my bed was there. And when I came back to the window in the evening, he was so happy. He said: "Did they do it to you?" And I said: "Yes." And he goes like this [clutches both hands to cheeks], you know. He then knew what was going on there. So I survived that one and then, when they took x-rays of my liquid that was still running around in my body, they kept saying to each other, these Nazi's: "Oh, one side is good and one side has to be done, yet." So they knew that the left side was still okay.

But I was lucky they never got around to it. And I was so lucky - one time there was seven women standing there instead of ten. And this man that was supposed to do it wasn't the same man anymore. I don't know who he was. And he used that as an excuse, he said: "Oh no, I don't start with seven. There have to be ten, or I don't start my job." And then he left the building. He refused to work on us. And then, I was forced to come back again. And I was called and I wasn't that lucky. But the guy who did it was also another person again. And he said to me: "I don't know what I'm doing. I'm a barber." And you know he pricked me into my ovary. He kept pricking me and pricking me and my cramps were so that he couldn't find the opening of my uterus. So he pricked me and pricked me, and until this day I have pain sometimes, where the pain doesn't belong.

I had also, operation, I had a - what the doctor called a myoma removed. And the doctor who did that, in a French hospital, for him it was a matter of a little job in the room where you get examined, and not even in the hospital. And I said later on to that doctor: "Could you give me in writing what you did to me. I might need that for documents, for the Germans, you know." And he says: "I didn't do anything on you." And he took away from me... he made a knip, he pinched away with a tweezers or something, he pinched away that hard tissue that didn't belong there, from all this pricking into me. And this man couldn't find

the opening, he said, so he let me go without that injection. And then I was spared my left side.

But they were still doing experiments when we moved into block one. And one man by the name of Otto Gerber, he was in charge of block one. He was a German, German thief. And somehow he got to talk with me. We weren't allowed to talk to men, we could go to prison for that. But he was a big shot. And he was in charge, and I helped him sewing on the curtain rod, the curtain rings. So he said: "Why of all these women - sewing machines," - they refused to help him. I said: "I can help you because you are German - I was born in Germany and to be honest with you, I like to talk to a man, for a change." And he was flattered. And he said: "I help you where I can. I know what they are doing in this block. And if possible, I don't want you to be experimented on." I said: "How can you do that?" He said he shares his room with the guy that is in charge of the working command. And this guy will put me on his list to call me away from the block, into another command. I sleep there, but I work somewhere else. He said to me he himself is in charge of the stage and amusement and practices done in his block about music. He said: "Do you play piano?" And he said... "What instrument do you play?" I said: "I play a little piano, but not good enough for a concert." "Oh," he said, "that's okay. We have a pianist. Then, you know notes." I said: "Yes." He said: "Well, then I can use you to write notes for the various instruments, because we have only party tours, if you know what that is - for the..." They had the notes for the director, for conductor, you know. And I had to separate that for the various instruments. And that was a job. So he called me - I mean, I was on the list now.

And my number was called to come outside from block one - we were now in one. And then, there I was, standing there with a group of a few people. And that was this girl that was before, in Amsterdam, in the same class where I learnt... I kept on dancing in a ballet class. Because I was sewing all day - in the evening, I had to do some exercise. So I was allowed to

do that, twice a week or so. And Emma stood there and she said to me: "You!" That's all she said, like she would say - what do you know to come into an orchestra. She was playing the flute. By the way, she is also in this book. Emma [Spanjas?] is her name now. She lives in Holland, in Harlem and she... I talk to her on the phone only, when I was in Cologne and we talked about, something about the book. And she said: "You can come to Holland, but I can't take you in. I'm going tomorrow on vacation." At that time everybody goes on vacation, you know. So I never did see her, but she was much taller. She had blue eyes, and she was beautiful. And she says: "You!" So what I was doing there - that was the best time I had in Auschwitz. I mean, this is very personal; I like to remember the nice things.

The death march happened afterwards. I mean, I could have been killed any, anytime. But this happened before the death march. And I wasn't experimented on anymore. And I didn't know that I was spared my left side. I lived with the impression that I could never have children. And retroactive, I come to think about this, ja, this guy said: "One side has to be done, yet." But that didn't stick for the next twenty years. You know, it didn't stick - what that meant.

So when this doctor in Haifa said yes, I can have a child with one ovary, he said to me then, you know, "Why don't you have a child?" My second husband, I was married three and a half years now. And he said, after he treated me with blowing and with x-rays and scraping inside - all that he did to me. Then he said: "If you not pregnant yet, with one ovary, no matter what - I want to see your husband's sperm." And I had to come there and body temperature sperm. And then he says to me: "Get dressed." And he sat down and he said to me: "With that man, you can't have a child. That man has no life, no life, no life." And I was flabbergasted, you know.

And he said: "What are you going to do next? Are you going to plan something - we can have you inseminated." And I said: "Well, I have to discuss that with my husband. I told him I

couldn't have children, and now it's him. That's a big switch." That's like turning the tables around. And I thought I have to give him a chance. I said: "Is there a possibility…" "Well," he said, "It takes a long time, but he has to go to do something to another doctor. That's not my department." So he was to get vitamin E shots. And then he got tired of doing that, and then we had a restaurant, and somebody came in the restaurant and he says to me: "Are you happy?" And I said: "Yes, I'm very happy, except if I would have a child." And so it came that he was the donor but my husband didn't want a child. He didn't ever say that to me. He married me because I couldn't have children.

And now it was this way, and his mother called me a liar from the beginning, when I came from the doctor and she said: "Now what did the doctor say, after that x-ray was taken?" I said: "He said it wasn't me, it was Jehuda - Engel." And she said: "[ziese liegen.?]" - it's lie, it was Yiddish. [Ziese liegen?] - I never forget it. And I went on to my house, that was behind her house and I had to walk by her house every time and always I thought: "Ziese liegen." And I was living with this, you know - curse of hers, that I was the liar; the doctor was the liar; everybody was the liar.

And then, I became pregnant and the older brother came to visit the café and I had a letter in Hebrew, and it said I could adopt a child now, from Yemen, or so. And I had tried to adopt a child, you know, because I thought I couldn't have a child. And now I was pregnant, and I said to him: "Please, translate this letter for me." And I was laughing, and he said: "What are you laughing about?" I said: "I don't need it anymore. I'm pregnant." He said: "What's so funny about that?" And then his father died. And, his mother died later. And they all thought that I was the liar, but they lived long enough to see that I was not the liar.

And, my husband - he fooled around with all the women. And after, before the divorce… and this man who asked me if I was happy, he knew

that. He saw him on a motorbike with a woman in the back. And so, everything in my life, is inter-related with the concentration camp. I can't help it. Maybe you ??? I mean, my whole life is based on that past. It didn't go away. So, I didn't want to live in Israel anymore - I decided to go to America, but it wasn't easy. My brother struggled with his wife and two children to pay their bills. And they were not too eager to let me come, being pregnant. I thought, you know, if I have a child in America, that would be easy. I would have an American as a child. They said: "No, wait, wait, wait." So, I waited a long time.

Q: COULD YOU GO BACK TO AUSCHWITZ?

A: Ja, I did that.

Q: AND, COULD YOU DESCRIBE THE ???

A: Well, anyway, the experiments itself, from myself, were the ones I made drawings of - for the school children. And you can show them later on, if you like, if you have room on your tape. And if you have any questions, later on, I'll be glad to answer those.

Q: I WAS GOING TO ASK YOU - DURING THE DAY, WHEN YOU WERE NOT THE PICKING LEAVES, OR WHEN YOU WERE NOT BEING EXAMINED - WHAT DID YOU DO?

A: Well, they made you always do something. Sometimes, yeah, sewing, for one thing. I took the threads - from the same material, I pulled out a thread, and used that - and how I got a needle, I can't remember. But I one time, received a whole bread to make a big winter coat smaller. And then I put the bread in the basement in that block one, and then, that bread was gone. And then, I was one time in the basement, I don't I know why; and I saw the woman who stole, because that woman was touching all the bags and all the stuff that we had... We couldn't take them in the bed anymore - we couldn't sleep on the bread. We were forced, if you don't eat it at night, that we hang it downstairs in a sack. And she stole my bread, the whole bread that I worked for, for a whole week.

Oh yeah, and the hanging, you know. That they hang these girls; that we had to look and the SS woman was hiding behind us prisoners. And one SS woman says to her: "Look these women," - she didn't say 'the prisoners,' - she said: "These women also have to face the hanging. And so have you to face this." She was an SS woman who was probably new there. She had to face the hanging too, and we had in there - and the man that made the speech. He said - it was shortly before we left Auschwitz. He said he has to do his job and he has to show us that fooling around with ammunition, which was that case in Birkenau, when that lady was in the gas chamber. That fooling around was now resolved by hanging, for girls. And so that everybody could see it - the people that go to the shift and work, we should watch the morning and the others would watch it the evening. So that we all - all prisoners could see it. That was all the prisoners that were in the five blocks, in the new blocks. So we all had to watch the hanging.

And what I saw was that, that one girl didn't die right away. And I made a picture of that, and it was exhibited in Cologne. They exhibited ten pictures, or so, in a glass case. And this one girl was pushing this one foot against the pole - so there were two at the same time, the one was instantly unconscious. But this was twelve minutes - kicking. And then the man that took her down, he was from block eleven; he was the professional; he said later on, to somebody that he could have revived her. But he didn't want to do that. And then, she would have had to be shot, you know. So she became unconscious and died laying at that platform. And I heard, in that book about, or somewhere, that they were tied up on the hands and on their feet, when they were hanged. And I kept thinking how was that possible when I saw that girl kicking. But it was possible, because the other two girls - they were to be hanged in the evening. And they had learned in the morning, that she still can kick, so they must have bounded those girls by their feet. Ja. And we had to watch that.

And then came the 18th of January 1945, and Otto said to me - the man that put me in the musical

direction - and he says: "Renee," - oh, he told me everything about himself, what he did, why he was in the camp and how he survived. And I think there is no film about him. He was deceived, you know, that was the thing. And I will tell you later what his mother told me. But, on the 18th he said to me: "Renee, don't go anywhere, but stay at the fence, when I come, I give you the address of my mother." And if he would have given me that address, at that time, that would have been much easier for me, because I didn't get anything for that big march. Other people got sugar lumps and they got bread, and maybe more. But I got nothing, and I was heading for a six-day hunger. I didn't know it, but I went down in the cellar, after the bread was all given away, and there was and SS man, and he said: "What do you want? Again - bread again?" It must have been that people stood in line twice, or three times, you know.

But I was standing at the fence, just looking for Otto, and when he came, he gave me the address. And I put it down, on a little red paper, and I put it in the case where my glasses were hidden. And I have that case, exhibit, in the Holocaust Library in a glass [vitreen?] - did you see that. No? Many people tell me: "I saw that." It says Renee Duering, and I wrote, with a typewriter - these glasses helped me survive. If I wouldn't have kept my glasses, I'm near-sighted, you know… so I put it in the glass thing, in my glass - what you call - case, ja. And I did put it in my pocket, and I thought - now I have the address.

And then I went down for a bread and then, this SS man comes with a rifle and a bayonet on the rifle, and wants to stab me. And I said to him: "No, I didn't get a bread." And he said: "You are Renee, aren't you? I saw you in the block one, with Otto." I said: "Ja, that's why I didn't get a bread." I said, no, I couldn't explain it to him. I was thinking that. And he said: "Here, and I don't want to see you again." And he threw me a bread - and I had a bread. And he recognized me, can you imagine, that SS man. And he had to sit with me and him

while he also tried to be nice to me, and give me potato pancakes that he would bake in his oven. And I said: "I can't eat that, it's too fat - I can't, I can't eat that." I could - tonight, I ate potato pancakes, before I... coincidentally, before I came here. I thought: 'I want something to eat before I come here.' Funny hey?

Q: YOU TOLD US ALREADY THAT GETTING THE SOUP, THAT WAS THE HIGHEST POINT OF THE DAY. COULD YOU TELL ME AT WHAT TIME IT CAME?

A: It came in the block at eleven, and it was carried by four male prisoners, in stripes. And, you know, visualize a big ton with hot soup, and there was not only one ton - there were sometimes more than one ton. But it was basically one ton - I think it was one ton. Yeah, it could be two - you know. And then we had to stand in line, and then, there was one woman, and she was from some other country, Eastern country. And she didn't like the Dutch women, and she gave them the soup from the top, which was thinner. And when she saw someone of her kind, she would grab, deep down, where the soup was thicker. And you know, my girlfriend that I met after forty years, she told me, one day, I didn't know that - they took that woman by the feet and plunged her into the barrel, with her head down first. And then they ran as fast as they could. But I think she did survive that. Yes, yes, everybody knew that - that she gave us the thinner part, and that was the - something that you don't hear, and you don't read that in any book. If you want to know about what was going on inside, oh...

Q: DID YOU GET ANY OTHER MEAL, BESIDES THE SOUP?

A: Yeah, we got in the evening, a quart of that bread. But I heard, in Birkenau, they got only a third of that bread. We got a quart - that is as much as a very thick slice, you know. And, it was like a square, you know. And then, we got everyday, something - a variety of sausage, a piece of ??kase - cheese, you know. And then, on Sundays, we got nothing, because on Saturdays they gave us half a bread, and a bit of jam, and a piece of margarine - a slice, you know. And that was regularly, as long as

we were in block ten, we were… but in the morning, we got only tea, and that tea was made from the leaves that we picked. Blackberries. Those berries, they look like, those red ones, but they are dark, you know the… and on those leaves, they are for tea. It tasted a little sweetish, and the tea was kind of dark and brownish. And they were dried, in block ten also.

Above the bedrooms, upstairs, there was a loft with beams, and you had to walk on the beams. One day, I went up there, and there was Mrs. Levin. She was an old lady, but she had the honor to do that, all day long, to cut those dried up leaves. First they were dried, and then they were cut. She showed me her scissors, and her hands were all bruised and thick and awful. And those scissors were never sharpened, and one point was gone, completely. And with that she had to cut the leaves. And then I said: "Let me have a look outside," and there was a window to the outside of the camp, and I could overlook from there, and see the area where I sometimes worked. In the bushes and the nature, and so…

Q: YOU MENTIONED THAT YOU HAD MEDICAL FACILITIES IN BLOCK TEN AND YOU HAD MORE TO EAT, DID YOU ??

A: Ja, our beds were three on top of each other. First down below, second and third. And then they were put together like pairs. So we had neighbors, you know… in the beginning they put us up - two in one bed. And I shared with Pepper, with Mrs. Pepper, because that was the wife of one of those people that worked. Her husband worked with my husband in Westerbork. They were telephonists. And so, I slept with Bobby - Bobby. And then, Margiet came - the block alteste and she was sitting like this, on the bed dangling her feet, and Margiet came, without a word - she took those boots off her feet. And she said she wanted to see if they fit her and if they fit her she can have another pair of shoes. And I said: "Bobby, didn't you object to that?" She said: "No, they were too hard anyway." In the long run - to wear them all the time, she said: "Bobby…" she said: "No, let her have these - boots."

And then she got a brand new pair or something like brand new from Margiet that fitted her. And then they were both happy. But that's the only time that I know of a case like that, but I have heard that there was no replacement as a rule. If they did that in Birkenau, that was it - then you just didn't have any shoes.

But in our block, everything was a little bit better, because I heard that this Dr. Klauberg, what is written about here, in the newspaper, [Gestern?], that he paid for us. He made a contract with the German doctors, if he works for sterilization and that, as the war would be ending, they could still continue to sterilize the Jews. Then, in that case, he wants his medical people to stay alive, so he could follow up on them. And he paid a small amount for each of us out of his pocket, with that contract. And I didn't know all these things, but I heard them much later. So it pays off to get old.

Q: IN THE WINTERTIME, DID YOU GET COLD? DID YOU HAVE ENOUGH BLANKETS, DID THEY HEAT THERE?

A: Yeah, we all slept in one bed there, and we got one blanket there. And they did have, in each room, in the middle of the room, an oven, and they did heat it a little bit in the evening, because in the daytime, we weren't in that room. We were busy. And inside of the building, it was very much bearable. And because we had access to sewing we sometimes made the… maybe would have access to some material and would make something. And like I told you, they gave us all these men when they came in with the soup. They smuggled something. And then it was quickly ripped and it was quickly washed in that tea, when it was cold - the tea - it was already, you know, never was so hot, but that was also bought with trucks in the morning. That was our breakfast - that tea, only tea.

So if we couldn't save our bread from the evening, then that's what we had until the soup came, and that was eleven. So… and then, in between, we always had to stand outside, for all kinds of reasons. Sometimes, if somebody would escape, in Birkenau, we had to stand

outside, for hours. And we didn't sometimes know why we had to stand for hours. And they said if they get caught, they get hanged. And most of the time, they did catch these people that ran away. And then I heard that people go on the wire, and kill themselves rather. I could have run away, very easily, two times, but I knew that was all camps, so I didn't do it. But I ran away, when we had no more camps. I went to three more camps. So I ran away in Reiser, when there was a door open, and I closed it behind me and that is how I ran away. I really didn't have to run much, but until that point I was a skeleton, because once we left Auschwitz, there was starvation, you know.

Q: ??? WAS THERE ANY ONE INCIDENT WHERE YOU THOUGHT ????? THEY ARE A THREAT - A PERSONAL THREAT TO YOUR LIFE? WERE YOU EVER INJURED?

A: Oh, you mean, that somebody attacked me?

Q: INJURED YOU ???

A: Oh yes, yes. Well, one time I got hit by Margiet, and I still have pain in my left side - in my ear - because, the first week, we didn't know, you know our head wasn't working. And there were dirty bowls, standing on the table, in the middle of the room. And she came upstairs, after the soup was eaten. Some people had it in their head to put the dirty bowls on those empty tables - either everybody took the bowl to the bed; we had a spoon and we ate the soup sitting in our bed. And there weren't enough chairs, anyway, not enough tables. She came up, Margiet, and said: "Whose dirty bowls are that?" We were supposed to go down in the washroom and wash them out and rinse them, and keep them clean. And some people didn't do that. So she said: "Come forward, or I will punish the entire block - you will stand..." and she threatened us with all she would do with us, until these people and never so many bowls, you know. And I came forward, and I said: "I didn't do it, but I want to wash them." So she can stop screaming at us. I am willing to wash them. But she didn't get to hear that, she was so fast. I was the only one that came forward, and it was none of my bowls. Just, I couldn't take the

idea that all we would stand there and suffer. And then, she hit me.

So it was the end of September, you know, when we arrived - '43. And we were all new, so she hit me here [indicates left ear area] right away, and I looked her straight in her eyes and I said: "But, I didn't do it. Just, I want to wash these bowls." And it was already for her to take it back, you know - she didn't say: "I'm sorry."

But later on in life, I experienced her again when all the stuff was taken out of block ten, because we acquired garments, we acquired different shoes, maybe. I was sick downstairs and I had to leave my leather shoes that I had from home, in the mattress. I couldn't take anything to that sick room. So, my shoes were stolen. And one day, I saw those shoes in block one, on the feet of one of her friends - the one that cut the bread. And I said: "She's wearing my shoes - please, could you do something Margiet, to get my shoes back." She said: "Come back after six." And I came back to her room, and there were my shoes. Well they were too big for that other woman, anyway - I guess, now that I talk about it.

And I was thinking I was lucky there, because most of the stuff that was taken out of the mattresses, and these prisoners, that were in charge of those rooms, they had to help get it out. But she, in the meantime, switched the two to her own feet, you know. But I got my shoes back. And that meant life. That meant I didn't have to walk on the wooden shoes again. And, but she did do me justice after all. She didn't forget that she punished me for nothing. She made up that way. Isn't that interesting?

And then, there was a woman, who knew my mother from Cologne. There were two sisters - I have a picture on that here, when she hands me those shoes. She said to me: "Renee, do you have shoes for repair?" I said: "I do. They are in need of repair, but I'm wearing them." She said: "For a week, wear your wooden shoes," which I had in the new bed, in the mattress again. And I wore the wooden shoes for a week, and she brought them back - fixed. And I

looked at them, and I couldn't believe it. And that was shortly before we went on the march. And there was one thing about those repairs - that was done with old tires. And the gluing on my shoes, and all around, they used wooden pins. The wooden pins, the old fashioned way - I don't know if you know that - but I had an uncle who was a shoemaker. He showed me how to repair shoes. Well they put into these leather, when it is long enough soaked, they put these wooden pins in there - two in a row - two rows around the sole. And these were done with wooden pins all around in the rubber tire, the material. Was it inner tires, or outer tires - I don't know. It was rubber - black rubber.

And then, hey, I went on that march, and I feel nothing anymore. My feet were frozen. And what happened was that when I took my shoes off, after a week, I had blue spots where those pins had hit my flesh. And my feet looked awful. All these black spots, they were deteriorating - they were frozen. And so the repair was done, and I didn't feel those wooden pins in the daytime, while I was still in Auschwitz. I never felt anything. But now that it came to the freezing feet, these pins had gone into my flesh. Ja, and I had black toes - here you can see it, it is still red now [indicates to feet] - what is red and swollen now. That was all - here, you see here on the sides - that was all frozen. And I had blue feet - they operated here and here, later, here in America. But I had all this blue here [still indicating to feet] and swollen you know, big, heavy. And there was a nurse from Belgium. She knocked my toe - she said: "I have to bring life into your feet." I know people that had their toes amputated, you know. There is one here in the Peninsula - you know him, Werner Schenk. You know when you see him walk, you think he walks funny, but that's because he has no toes. And that was done after the war. You didn't wait for the natural healing; you didn't want to take a chance because that black flesh could also blood poisoned you, you know. So I always come to other subjects - I'm sorry. About block ten, ja.

Q: AFTER DID THEY MOVE YOU FROM BLOCK TEN, TO BLOCK ONE - HOW DIFFERENT WERE THE CONDITIONS THERE?

A: They were actually better, except that they bombed there. And when they did bomb, I was trying to escape and I was seen that I had already cut the wires. We had a big shear in the block, I didn't know of. And I went through that hole, outside, and I walked on the lawn, and I thought the war is over.

Q: WHAT YEAR WAS THIS?

A: '44, when they bombed that SS block. And then I thought that I was also bombed, and I told you about that. So I walked outside, and I see lots of people bleeding, prisoners, and they all jumped into a pool - that pool was for water, for drinking water. That was not a pool, it was ?? walls there - they had built that for reserve or something. So, and my girlfriend Margot, who was my nurse, and she doesn't remember that. She had bandages right away - she went to these guys that were hurt in the bombing, prisoners, and she wrapped around - I saw that. I said: "You did a good job," I said: "Where did you get these bandages from right away?" She said: "I don't remember a thing." So I walk on the lawn, and I thought the war is over, you know, fine. And in front of me is an SS man - only a head I see sticking out of the lawn. He was in a foxhole. And it was covered, like so, with grass, and he pointed his rifle at me and he said: "Go back, or I shoot." So I walked back, what can I do. The war wasn't over yet. I saw that man there - so. That was one life-threatening thing, besides the sterilization - I mean, some people died in the process. The Greek girls - they had so much parts on their body that didn't want to heal, with the malnutrition, you know. It was malnutrition. But I tell you one thing, I didn't have any arthritis there. I had arthritis - and in Auschwitz, arthritis left me. But later on I had it again. But the climate there is very good. You don't hear that from other people. No?

And, at Zola - then there was another thing. When we went out to pick the leaves we were

told by the SS men: "Don't try to escape. We'll shoot, and there is a river here." And there were two French girls in our block ten, who tried that. And they were both killed, swimming. So one day, when the mother came of that younger SS man who was seventeen, and a Polish doctor came with us too. He was also a prisoner - came along and while he talked with her, I walked to the zola, to the river, and I pretended that I had to go maybe, behind the bushes. Or, I didn't even say I was going anywhere. I just disappeared and I thought I could swim away now. But what if they miss me and they come after me and shoot me? So there was a little puddle, a pool like area, where I could lay in the water and get wet all over, like in a bath tub. I took all my clothes off, because I couldn't come up with wet clothes, later on, you know. And I was all alone for about fifteen minutes. I was all alone, and the prisoners were over there in the bushes, talking with the woman from Germany. And when I came back, this SS man said: "Where were you?" "Oh," I said, "I had to go, you know. Make wee-wee, or something." And he said: "We knew that somebody was missing, but we didn't know it was you." And he was so glad to see me. He said if somebody escapes then the whole camp stands up at night and is punished on the knees and so on, you know.

So there was a moment that I could have escaped, swimming, but I didn't know if it was too risky. There was another moment, when I worked in the rice-co and the book is written a lot about the ruskco, or rice-co. That was a place where the doctors would develop medicine - that they would shoot into my skin. They were from plant extracts. I don't know how and what they did, but that doctor - that very doctor is also talking in this book. And he was the only one who got set free, he was innocent. He was there to spy on the other doctors, so to say. But he injected my back, forty-two times, in one afternoon. And he said: "Don't worry, we have to do that," and I didn't know what they were doing. But I think that he was - I had a hunch, he was transmitting that he doesn't want to go to the Russian front. He was a very elegant man. And there's also a picture about it here, that his

nurse had to sit next to him and make notes, where he shoots. And the needle was so fine that I barely had any pain. But we didn't know what they were doing with us, so some people thought they were killing us by giving us the injections. And I was holding still, you know, it wasn't that bad compared to what they did to me before with the ovaries. It wasn't - nothing could be worse than that, you know, so I was holding still. And always was thinking: 'Stay alive and talk about it.' Just that - stay alive, because nobody can believe what's going on. I heard there that they sterilized men.

And there was a doctor there - he had the same name as I had at the time, Kremer, a German doctor, he did that. And I believed everything they told me. But I met, only a few years ago, a man who wrote a book - he was in San Francisco, he wrote a book about that sterilization that they did to him. And he was helped in Paris later on by doctors for no charge, where I paid all the time, you know. In Israel I paid - everywhere I paid. Now the Germans have me on their list, for sending me to a cure so I get better. So if I am down, the doctors have to state that I will get better, if I go for a cure and then I have to be seen by doctors and they have to say - when I come what condition I'm in, and when I leave. And so my years go by, going from one cure to another cure. And it has to be where I live, in America, so I found this place, hot spring Arkansas. I found it myself, that there was such a place as a hot spring and a bathhouse. I found it in the dictionary, because I bought a …

END OF TAPE 1 OF 2.

BEGIN TAPE 2 OF 2.

Q: OKAY YOU CAN PICK IT UP. OKAY. HOW FREQUENTLY DID THEY SUBJECT YOU TO THOSE EXAMINATIONS?

A: Oh, maybe once a month.

Q: ONCE A MONTH?

A: Ummm.. You never knew. And if they didn't call the number, then they called me for the ?? commando or I was sewing. Or I was cleaning somebody's house and repairing streets - as long as we could leave the camp, that was already better because that way we were on our feet and we saw things when we had fresh air. And Lucy who was my friend that I found through the Red Cross, she didn't go out. She told me that her husband was a long time alive, and he left for another camp, Stutthof, near the North Sea, or Baltic, North Sea, ja. She knew all that, she told me that he was assigned to leave Auschwitz, in block one she and me we looked out of the window, and there was a group walking and he pulled his cap off his head and raised it and made a fist. Then meant - be strong. And I said to her - that was on the 26th of October.

And she said that she read that, because I did send her the papers that I already had written about her, in connection with my experience, and her. But there were many things that we had to talk about that I didn't know. But when she read the papers, her friend said: "You know, since you wrote that down, I understand her so much better." But she said: "How do you know it was the 26th of October when he left Auschwitz?" And she never saw him again. He was killed also. But I said: "Oh," I said, "That was the birthday of my brother." That's why I remember it. You see it's so simple. And other days I can't remember that well. But I have an answer sometimes.

Q: HOW DID YOU MEET HER?

A: Yes, Lucy thought that while we were having a bath - every once a week we were led to that first place when we arrived, between block one and two. And we had a shower there. And there were some men peeking in. And these men, they would stretch their hands out sometimes, through these makeshift windows, there was no glass in there, it was just a square hole between the wooden walls and... They would give us something or they would like to talk to us, they couldn't - we not allowed to, and they would peek how we would shower. And so somebody must have liked me, and gave me a jack

knife, which is the most important thing you can have - to cut your bread and do things with. And then, one day, somebody gave me a cigarette. And Lucy saw that. But I didn't know that she saw that. And we were back in the block ten and it was evening, and I stood near the window as usual, talking with my hands. A-B-C-D-E-F-G, and so on. [shows hand signals] And when I was finished talking to my friend, she came up to me, and I had that cigarette in my hand, looking at it, thinking what am I going to do with that.

And that moment she was looking on the other side of the room, if she could see her husband. I didn't know what she was standing on the window, because he was alive, you know, and he tried in the evening to walk by block ten. And she told me later on that she managed to give him some bread through a Dutch doctor, who wrote the first book in Holland, after the war - The Wind. And he was coming our block with soup. And she went downstairs and gave that doctor - the Wind - a tiny sliver of bread that he would give it to her husband, everyday, when he came, if he came. And Lucy told me now - she said if her husband would have left Auschwitz, earlier, she would have had more to eat. She gave away from her little bit of bread. And she was… you couldn't go without, you know. But she did that - she told me that.

But now - how did I meet Lucy? She was first of all in the same room. She came at the same day and I had miss-spelt her name, years and years, when I was looking for her, and that's when the Red Cross came with the ?? The Red Cross ?? with the spelling of the name, because they did find her for me, in spite that I spelt her name wrong. My memory faded away. And, it was that cigarette that brought us together. She saw me holding the cigarette and she said right away, "Renee, I give you a piece of bread if you give me that cigarette." And I said: "I don't smoke, you can have the cigarette." And she was so happy, I could tell that she was thrilled - she was shaking. For the first time, in the camp, she had a cigarette. And I gave it to her. And I didn't even want bread.

That was the thing, you were always getting something for something. But she couldn't forget that. And she was the one, who later on, marched with me and it turned out, when we talk, she had forgotten who she hang onto. When I mentioned at one point, that I had her on my arm, all the time, during that Death March, and then she said: "It was you! I was always wondering who I was hanging onto for my life." She had come up to me and said: "Renee, can I hold onto you because I have slippery shoes," those wooden shoes would slip in the snow. And if you would fall down, the SS would kill you right away. And therefore, she knew that she had to thank somebody and I knew that she was alive. And I knew that - that, that was for her, a very critical time; that she could hang onto me.

And then, I shared my bread with her, that one bread I got. She got nothing. And she never got anything. In Ravensbruck we went to work in - and one day I came home with a bread, because I worked voluntarily, stuffing mattress. And we hadn't had any bread since Auschwitz. And that was now about two weeks later - that I stuffed the mattresses and a very old woman gave me a very sliver of bread, and she said: "I'm going to die here, but you are young - you must live." And she was from Hungaria - I never forget it. And I hadn't had any bread for two weeks.

And that day, I stole a bread and shared it with a prisoner, and we had to cut it up quickly - I talked about that maybe, before. So I don't' want to repeat it. It was a very sad scene. There was a dead body laying there in the washroom on that bag, and then, I had to step over the dead body, and then I had to cut quickly that whole bread in pieces because we were carrying all these loaves into that very barrack where this very old woman were. And so, I needed some bread. I mean, two weeks - no bread, you know. I said to this nice lady: "Come let's do it together. One of us falls over the stairs and the other one grabs the bread." I had it under the ?? and so, that went very quickly, the whole thing. That cutting up was so wonderful, nobody would come into that washroom because that woman would lay

in front of that door. When they opened the door, they couldn't open it. And we stepped over it, that is terrible, hey - I stepped over a dead body, just to share the bread. It was a matter of life and death. That's the only time I stole.

And then, the SS woman noticed that there was a bread missing. She tried - and I heard her hollering: "Here's a bread missing, a bread missing." And we walked away and we came back to the Ravensbruck. That was now another camp, you know. And we came there, and we saw everybody standing outside. They must have stood there all day long. And they were going to give everyone a bread - or a piece of bread, or whatever. And, but - we had come back from work. And we wanted to get back to our place, inside. And we just went nearest the door and I heard a SS woman scream: "Who got into that line now?" And we were already going through that door, and we got another bread. And so I had two breads, one from the work and one - at work we got some, and half of what I stole, and that bread.

And Lucy comes, with no bread. She says: "There was no more" by the time - she was always at the end of the line. So she got no bread. I said to her: "Don't worry about it. I do have bread for both of us." You see, they counted every bread for each person. I mean these Germans - these Germans, until this day they know how to keep books with numbers. So she got nothing, because we got our bread as well. Maybe we weren't supposed to get another bread there. I don't know.

Q: CAN WE JUST GO BACK A LITTLE BIT TO THE DEATH MARCH, WHAT HAPPENED IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THEY LINED YOU UP, WHEN YOU WERE…?

A: I think I told you that. That I was waiting… Otto told me: "Come to the gate, to the mesh wire." And he said: "We are going to march away now," and he told me: "Don't hide inside of the blocks, because they going to blow them up." See, I didn't tell you that. And there were rags up there and sometimes he walked with me, up there, on that loft, and he walked with me up and down. And the woman downstairs who

was in charge knew that, and she accused me of being dirty, or something. And I walked back and forth with him, and he wanted to push me on those rags that we had in the corner for sewing, you know. And then, I said: "No, we are in the camp. If the war is over, that's a different thing. I am a prisoner, you are a prisoner and I don't do that in the camp." I wasn't geared for that. I was malnutritioned and I had experiments done on my body - I had lost my husband, and I knew that already, because Stefan told me that in his letters. Stefan [Givelik?] from Krakow, who was my korhanie, who I did the language with, in the evening - he let me know that my husband was dead.

He died in December '43, so I knew already I was a widow. And so I knew already that I have to look, if I survive, with a new life, and I figured it will be Israel. It was then Palestine, because I thought I can't have a child, so I must live for the Jewish people. So, I all had that ahead of me, you know. I knew - I had a plan, and I carried it out.

Q: CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE ACTUAL MARCH?

A: The march - oh, ja. I had a picture here of how we left the camp then. I had my bread, and I was in the group of the block one people still, but as we marched there were other people that we never saw before, because, we were confined within the camp. We never knew anybody else. So when we marched, I saw first of all, on the way out that they were bringing the papers from the building where the SS had their - what you call - archives, or whatever. And they bringing them out quickly downstairs and on the street there was a heap of fire going on and things - and I always saw everything. And when I talked to other people - no, they didn't see it. I don't know what they saw. And they were in a dreaming stage, maybe. I was never in that stage. I was always thinking - how do I get out of here? So, when we marched, we marched for three days and three nights.

And I walked from one side of the street to the other side, in slept. I knew that I was

walking, but I also knew I was sleeping. And when I came to the border of the left side, the ditch, I stopped and then stepped to the right side. And I stopped there, and stepped to the left side. And I caught myself sleeping in my walk - like you drive and sleep. And in the last moments, you know that you have to move the steering wheel. And that is how we were. But we also turned into - what you call that - in a place ?? we could rest, on hay. And they told us that they would shoot us if we would try to leave the - that loft, what is that called - haystack? A building - a wooden building.

Q: A BARN?

A: A barn, thank you. So we were in a barn, and we were in a barn, and we just rested up sometimes there a little bit, until we were told to continue. And, until we saw all those trains. That was Gleiwitz, in Poland. And I've never seen so many railroad trucks in one place. And trains… they were all waiting for us to be loaded ??? And I was the first one in an open train, and there was snow in one corner. And I think that I wanted to stand higher - and that's probably one of the reasons I froze my feet, because I was standing for three days on that snow. That was my corner and I could stand there and see something. And the others - there were twenty Russians, they told us when we came in, that they take half of the train on the one side. And they were laying down next to each other in kept each other warm, like herring, one head here, one head here - organized. And we were fourteen Jewish people on the other side. And we had to stand up in that other half.

So we drove in the train, and sometimes the train stops - day and night, and we drove for three days and nights also. And we always wanted to know why does the train stop. They stop here at camp, but there was no room for us. So we had to go to another camp. We were throughout Germany. I passed Berlin, I saw it all bombed, with the help of the moon. And the ruins reminded me of my father's words - he said to me, when I said to him: "You go off into Berlin on business, why don't you take me

along?" And he said: "You are too young, you won't enjoy it." I mean - enjoy, I didn't expect much, but I just come on a trip with him to Berlin, you know. And he said: "No, no, you'll see Berlin later." Later in life, "You'll see Berlin," and I saw Berlin - bombed. And I thought of my father. So, I said to myself: "What a shame," you know, "that I didn't see it when it was standing there."

So we passed Berlin and then we got off the train in Ravensbruck. So in Ravensbruck, I was standing with Lucy all night, at an opening of a wooden wall of that place where they put us - they called a tent. And we didn't get a bed. I was one of the first ones to go in there, but I didn't know what to do. I didn't take a bed. I want to stand at the window, to get air, because there was a heating system going on and it had a foul air, and I thought it's a gas chamber. That's what I thought. And there were two SS women and they talk to each other, and they said we put these people in the tent. And I thought the tent was the word for the gas chamber. So I thought this is the gas chamber.

And I stood with Lucy at the window, and I fantasized - I saw myself stepping out of this open, there was no glass - I stepped out and I go to the gate, and I'm going to tell them: "My father was soldier in the First World War. Let me go." But then I thought I can't leave Lucy standing here, alone. And then, I saw in my fantasy, SS with guns, with rifles, across from that wall, and there was a snow heap, all along, the whole length of the block. And I saw SS men, with rifles, all night long, pointing at me. And when the day came, there was no such thing out there, there was no elevation where the snow was there. There was nothing that way. So I was on the end - I mean, that was after a week of the death march, no water whatsoever to drink, for one week. No water - the hunger wasn't bad, but the thirst.

The snowflakes came and I took the flakes off from somebody's shoulder, you ever heard that before. Ja, I have a picture in there also about a Laundromat that I saw - standing up there in Ravensbruck, looking down on this - and I begged for water, and she said: "No, this

water is contaminated. You can't drink that. We can't give that to you." And I would have drank the water.

And I was there for three weeks, in Ravensbruck, and I met Margot again, the one that treated me in Auschwitz for diphtheria. And that was wonderful, because she was in another barrack. She ended up somewhere, on top of the third bed, you know, and she was sleeping alone in that bed and I thought of course of visiting her. And then, I said to her: "I have no pants underneath. They stole my pants in Ravensbruck, when I tried to wash it, when I had an opportunity." And I turned around from the oven where it was hanging there against the tiles, and then the moment I turned around, the pants were gone - underwear. They were thick, filthy outside, inside - flannel. Black up to here, and they kept me warm during the march, but now, I had no more pants. And Margot did this, and she took off a pair of panties and she gave them to me. I said: "Can you afford that? Can you miss?" "Oh yeah," she said, "This is yours now. Don't you worry." So I met her later on, in life, in Minneapolis, and I said to her: "You know that was so nice, that you gave me one of your two panties." "Oh," she said, "I had three." [has good laugh] This is what life is all about.

Q: ANY ESTIMATE OF HOW MANY PEOPLE WERE ON THAT MARCH - CAN YOU ESTIMATE HOW MANY PEOPLE CAME…?

A: Everybody was from Birkenau and Auschwitz, and that's all in the books - 45 000, I think were alive there. But I don't know, because we were separated from Birkenau, but it was all in the same area and there were other camps. Maybe there were a hundred thousand, maybe two hundred thousand. There were a lot of camps there. And you name them. You know that there were a thousand camps in Germany and Poland. A thousand - and you know who said it? That Red Cross movie where I am in, in the German language. And in the French language, it's the same movie. They didn't say it there. Maybe I didn't understand it. They don't say it in the English version. But in the German version of the Red Cross film, called "???? Sporen" - there it's got it. And each of these three

films are a little bit different. And when they made the film here, I didn't know why they make you say the same thing so often. They did it their way, and their way was not to reproduce all three films, but they took pictures of me three times. After that, the Frenchman that talked, I visited him this year. The Frenchman that talked in that film, he said they took only one of him. And then they translated it in the various films. And then I saw, in one film, the French one, a factory, [Klopler?] or something like that, and I had met in Switzerland, a girlfriend I went to school with - I must tell you that.

After sixty-one years I met her, and we were just like buddies like we were before. I called her up from my home here, in Daly City, and I said: "Wilma, would you want to see me again. I'm coming to Europe, but I don't know where to come down. Can I come down to you?" And she said: "Certainly." We played together on the street and we were in the same class. And her mother and my mother were together in one class, but she didn't know ever, that her mother was Jewish, until Hitler came. And so she was very interested to be understood and to share something, what she went through. And she saw this factory, and she said - she went with me to the Red Cross to see that film, and she said that's the one she worked in! She was working for the Germans, under force, you know. And she has never been repaid for her suffering. And so I said: "I'm going to Dusseldorf for myself, so I'm going to look into this for you." And I hope that she gets something out of them, because they took her away, because she declared herself after her mother, being Jewish.

But until 1927, her mother was still not yet, Catholic. But she became Catholic to make a peaceful, harmonic family. And one day, on the…. I have to tell you this, her brother was a little older than her and me, he called me names - ugly… "You, you, you - hep, hep, hep… ??????" And that is Cologne language and it means 'Jew, put your nose into a waterdish.' And I said to my mother: "Can you believe it?" Hitler had just come. And this Theo tells me that. And she said: "He shouldn't do that to…

he should keep his mouth shut, because his mother is Jewish." So the kids didn't know it. They grew up strictly Catholic, and this son of a Jewish woman tells me to go… you know. Get lost. And then, that way I got to know that the mother of Wilma is Jewish born, because she and my mother went to the same school. And now I and Wilma are at the same school, which was a Catholic school, in our neighborhood, elementary school.

After three years, they took me out, my parents and sent me to Cologne to the big city, and then I was in a High School there. So I didn't see her very much anymore. Now she came to the airport, picked me up, and it was just instantly - back to then. And then she - and I told her that I was fortunate enough to be in this Red Cross film, when we were in Geneva I said: "Won't you see that film?" And she saw it in the French language. There I saw that it was different from the English version. And there she saw the factory, and she said: "Oh," and I saw her face sitting in front of this video like [hangs mouth open] - she couldn't believe her eyes. And then she felt better, you know, after we met, and we had ten days together, and it was wonderful. And then, we are writing to each other once a month now. I thought that after forty-two years or so, seeing Lucy was tops, but this was after sixty-one years. How old are you? Your next question?

Q: DID YOU PERSONALLY HEAR ANY SHOTS IN THE DEATH MARCH, OR… ??

A: Well, I heard the shots all the time - it was that death march, when I heard the shots all the time, boom-boom and I saw the dead bodies there, in the snow. And the snow was red, in the snow. And if somebody was sitting down and breathing, he wouldn't sit there very long - the next SS man would shoot him. And so Lucy knew that, you know, that's why she was hanging on. And she said: "Renee, may I hang on?" And I said: "Certainly." We all knew what was going on. Sure, we heard the shots every day, like I told you. They put wood on the other side of building block ten, so that we couldn't see the shooting, but it was right at our -

between two blocks. Can you imagine what that sounds like? Every Wednesday - er, it was Thursday morning, at eleven o'clock. That I can tell about - what I heard. And shooting - well, I mean, I saw the girls hanging. Isn't that enough?

Q: CAN WE ASK YOU MORE ABOUT YOUR HUSBAND, BECAUSE YOU SAID YOU LEANRED THAT HE DIED IN DECEMBER 1943, AND I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW, WHAT DID PEOPLE DO IN INSTACES LIKE THAT - WHEN YOU LEARNED ABOUT THE DEATH OF SOMEONE IN THE FAMILY. HOW DID YOU MOURN…???

A: Well, when I got this note and I got it, because there was a dentist and Stefan knew that I was going to be at the dentist certain hour, which was not far from our block. And there was a makeshift waiting room, part of the hallway. And there was a wooden wall and a door. And all of a sudden, the door goes open, and in came a hand of the man that was in charge of that block. And then I never saw Stefan, but this was a package, and it was a big piece of rope and it was with a letter inside. And that letter said: "Renee, sit down. I have to tell you sad news. Your husband is dead. He died on that day in December '43, and so, also I have to tell you the sad news, that I will leave the camp for Buchenwald, and you will not see me. But remember my home address, so if the war is over, you come there."

And every night he make me a sign language - his address where his wife was at home, and she sent him packages, and therefore, she - he had things that he could share then. But I didn't know who that was, but he signaled me all these things, but he signaled me one time - I should give him permission to look into the files, that he had a few friends - access. And then he came up with the news. And that was how I knew. And after the war, I had to say everything in the papers. Then the Germans asked me when he died, you know, and they paid up to that date - each day, five mark, you know. But the day when he was dead, then I didn't get anything. Other people said: "I don't know when he died." But I knew it, so that's how they tried to con us. But, on the

other hand, because I knew, and I told my friends in Auschwitz, that he died at that time. I cried - sure. But I knew I had to start a new life, if I survive. So I always look ahead - always.

So then, these people witnessed, in Amsterdam, that my husband wasn't live anymore, and therefore, I don't have permission to marry my second husband, who took me to Palestine, which later on became Israel. And without knowing the date, if you didn't know if he was for sure, dead, you couldn't remarry. So therefore, I married this man and these witnesses said that yes - they know he's dead. So that's the - and sure, it was terrible when I thought that he was on the truck. I didn't wave you know. And he didn't move. But I think it was him - to be sorted out. He has a living sister, who was with my girlfriend before I met him in Amsterdam. She's around; she has four children. She's my age - in Holland.

Q: WHAT HAPPENED TO THE REST OF YOUR FAMILY?

A: My father and mother, I told you were at ?? My husband... I had an aunt I lived with for three years. And I talked maybe about, on one of the other tapes. She was sent to Sobibor I think, and instantly killed there. And she told me, the last time I saw her in Westerbork, I heard she was also there - she was also picked up around that time that my parents were picked up and I found her in a barrack there, laying there in the lower bed. And she had again a concussion. That was the first concussion. When the door opened in the train, she said, they pushed her out and she fell on the floor from the train. And so she said to me: "Renee, the time that you lived in my house," and that was about three years long, and I was between fourteen and seventeen. She said: "That time that you lived in my house, was the finest time in my life."

She had no children and she was divorced, I think. And I have to find that steel box that she buried. My father buried it in her backyard. And if I had someone in Amsterdam who would go to that address, with a detector,

I would then find the true document of her that were in that box. There was no talk about her being divorced, but I know her husband went off with another woman. And she always worked so much in her life. And she explained it when I was a child, in a different manner, you know. She said that she refused to go with him to a restaurant or what, ???, you know, it's a bar or something. He wanted to drink a beer or so, and she would be: "No, I have to finish this dress." She was a dressmaker. "And I have obligations and I have to work." So he went alone and she told me that he found company there and then therefore, he finally left her, for another woman. And, in other words she was trying to tell me - if your husband is alone, watch out! It is a mistake. Don't leave a man alone, and I know that the American women don't leave their men alone. But others do - if you see too, a German man never brings his wife, or sometimes now yes. You meet single men on trips, and they are married - but the American men bring their wives, or vice versa. They want to be there. Yeah, I learned the hard way, from stories.

Q: WHAT ABOUT YOUR SIBLINGS?

A: I have a brother who is born in '17. And he just turned seventy-five, and my sister was born in '27, and I am in the middle. So, you know how it is with a middle child. I saw a picture… I can repeat myself, so please forgive me where I did wear the socks of my brother. And I realized now that my mother cut corners, not giving me girls socks that fitted. They were hanging on me and I felt that was not a nice thing to look at. And she photographed already - so at least, I have a picture when I was ten years old.

Q: IF YOU DON'T MIND, CAN WE GO BACK TO RAVENSBRUCK. YOU SAID WHEN YOU WERE IN THE TENT - YOU THOUGHT IT WAS THE GAS, AND YOU REALIZED ???? DID YOU… WHILE YOU WERE THERE?

A: Yes. In that camp there were lots of Russian prisoners - not Jewish, ??? But when the first time the soup was there, I didn't have a bowl or nothing, but I somehow had a little cup and the soup was to be dealt among us. And then

this Russian woman put the ladle in her soup there, to give me something, and then she looked at my face, and she landed that ladle with the hot soup, on top of my head. And I remember another instance - the toilet was very far away, and somehow I had to go to the bathroom, with a small one and didn't want to go and stand in line, and get cold. I had already bladder infection - I had bladder infection in Auschwitz also, you know. And before the camp I had bladder infection, twice. So I thought this floor was made out of natural ground; there was no floor, it was mud, it was dried, dried earth, brown earth. And I had to share my bed with four people. And I come down to make wee-wee, right down on the floor, and there was a woman in there, in the first bed down below. She saw me bending down and she hit down on me, in Dutch, and she said: "Oh, no you don't. Oh, no you don't." And so she sent me out to go to the bathroom, and it was very painful - I have never told that to anybody. She hit me there, right there in the same spot where the Russian woman hit me. And the same spot where I stood at the window with Lucy - the first night. But then, when they said go and work somewhere, I was the first one to want to get out of there - to get out of the camp, away from there, when I met the situation I talked about.

And otherwise, there was no work in Ravensbruck, and after three weeks, when I had the panties from Margot - after three weeks, I went in a train to [Maushaff?]. And [Mauschaff?] was a camp where we were starved. We got water soup - the water wasn't even cooked properly. We got diarrhea there. And they said if you want to night watch, you have to be awake all night and you get an extra soup. So I wanted to night watch to get an extra soup. And I had to stay awake to watch all these others sleep. And Lucy - she had a mattress with me, on the floor there, there were no more wooden beds. There were barracks, and it was in the countryside. And she had lice, but she didn't care anymore to catch the lice. And I was watched by one woman and she said to me: "Renee, Lucy has lice, that means she has typhus." The lice comes to typhus. "And you can share with me the mattress." And

so she said: "Come over to my mattress, you don't have any lice, but you will get them, if you sleep with Lucy." And I go over to her mattress, and Lucy had her own mattress, and then we had to be counted, morning and evening, also in every camp.

And then, Lucy was so weak, we had to hold her up between us. And every time we had to be counted, we had to drag her out of the barrack. We were afraid that they also had a gas chamber there, but they didn't have a gas chamber in that third camp, come to think of it now. And so we were afraid if she lays on the mattress that she will be counted as a dead person, or something, you know. And so we dragged her out every time, and her face was all red, and the woman, I told you, her name was - her maiden name was [Konkel?] - this woman was also standing and we were holding her.

And she was so high with fever, you know, and one day, we marched away. And they said only the people that can march can come in the next train. So I was still marching and she stayed behind. I never saw her again; I didn't know that she was in the meantime, taken to the hospital. After I left the camp there, she was taken to the hospital, in the camp, I guess. There must have been one barrack with sick people. And that is where the war ended for her. She was delirious; she didn't know what was going on anymore. And the woman that was holding her, Edith, she says… gray-haired, she says to me: "Renee, if we survive this war, I'm going to make a ten-course dinner for you," because I was the girlfriend of her brother, Max. I said: "I take you up on that. I come back…" And she was one of the witnesses, later on, in Amsterdam, and I said: "Edith, you owe me a dinner, with ten-course dinner." She said: "What are you talking about?" I said: "You said that to me in Mauschoff." "I never said that," she said, "Can't be." How do you like that?

And I met another woman, who survived, Lyda was her first name. She was very tiny, and she got a dress that was too long for her when we came to Auschwitz. She also didn't want the striped

clothing. She got herself a dress and she said: "What am I going to do? This dress is on the floor, and I'm…" I said: "I can sew, find me a needle, I find some threads, and I make that dress shorter for you." "Oh," she said, "Renee, if you can do that - I never did anything in my life. I am so rich, I have diamonds hidden. If you come back from the war…" I come back, and she comes back and she visited me in Amsterdam, in my little apartment when she heard I'm alive. I heard she's there - and my name was in the newspaper, because I got married the second time. And a lot of people that knew me came to that wedding in the city hall. And that's why she knew me - then we met. She saw my name, and she came and maybe, or maybe she heard it from another source, I don't know.

Lyda, she says to me: "Renee, what you just did for me…" I fixed her dress, made it shorter and she said: "I'll give you a diamond ring when I come out of the war." And she visited me, and I said: "Where's your diamond ring?" She said: "What are you talking about?" I said: "You said that to me when I shortened your dress." "I don't know about it - you shortened my dress? I don't know about it. I said I have it - yes, I found them all back," she said. I said: "That's what you promised me. You were so happy." People forget. I must be an exception. And maybe the extra-terrestrials did that to me. [laughs] Don't laugh, who knows, who knows? I have a memory.

Q: I WANTED TO KNOW - IN RAVENSBRUCK, YOU SAID THERE WAS NO WORK, SO…

A: Well, except that one day when I filled up the mattresses, and in that moment I didn't have the panties because they stole them. And I have a picture here when I washed myself with snow, while the SS woman went to have us counted. When you leave the camp you are counted, and when you come back you are counted. So, while she was in that building to check us out, I bent down and took some of that snow, made a ball, and I bent down, kneeled down and I washed myself down there. And I got nice and warm. Ja, snow is healthy. So that's funny, isn't it?

Q: ??????

A: No nothing. We were in that tent and we were waiting to be shipped on. And they waited - they didn't tell us what they are going to do with us… we just waited. And there was no more work. That's just the one day in Ravensbruck. And then I visited with Margot. And I remember that - and I don't - three weeks, you know.

Q: AND THEN - WHAT HAPPENED IN THE CAMP?

A: They, you know - come outside, and we guide you out of the camp, and we put you in the train to Mauscher. And that train was not a cattle train, I think. One of the trains was not a cattle train. Either out of Mauscher to Leipzig - no, that was a cattle train. This train, from Ravensbruck to Mauscher, was a regular train. We sat like tourists, on benches, with a little table near the window. Of course, we had nothing to eat, naturally - but you, for a moment… that's the train that they assigned to us. And then from Maulschoff, we stayed into February - it was iced cold.

And then, on one day we were shipped all to Germany along the rive Oder. I remember we passed Magdaborg, where they bombed us and we passed Frankfort, on the Oder, which was bombed. And there was this girl, Annie, who took me on her mattress so I wouldn't catch diphtheria and she was hugging me and I was hugging her, and I have a picture of that. And we said to each other, if they bomb us, let we die together. That was better to hug each other in a moment like that. Because, when you asked me - was I threatened - my life was threatened a lot, so. That comes out of the story.

And then we were not hit, but the train went on, and then, at one point they gave us old bread - it was all green. And some prisoners ate it, and some didn't. And somebody whispered that it's healthy - they make penicillin from that green stuff. That was already new then, you know, somebody knew something. So that green stuff, we tried to avoid it, we tried to eat the inside of the

bread, where it was still good. But that was short-lived bread - I mean... that was the only time when they threw that into the... there wasn't enough to go around, you know.

Then we arrived in Leipzig, and Leipzig they bombed it. And in Leipzig I worked in the cellar, that night, and that was also in my drawings. But you can't draw a fraction of a ???? you can't draw it, what happened. They bombed it, they hit the water main, in the cellar, where we were peeling the beets - volunteering job, so I can give something to somebody, but Lucy wasn't there any more. She - I thought she was, I come to think of it now, that I always thought of Lucy - to share. But maybe I thought I can find her - I will see her. But she stayed behind in Mauschoff. She told me that now, in her home, that she did not go on, on that march. And that was also like a death march, you know. We marched for weeks on end - from Leipzig out - after the bombing.

The bombing flooded the cellar, and a German SS woman didn't want to open the door. But she already, was up to her boots in the water. And she already got scared. But she had order not to open the door. So we were within the cellar - flooding us. And then the lights all went out, because the bombardment went on and finally, somebody opened the door. And in front of me, when we pushed to get out of there, in front of me screams terribly and the same woman, behind that girl to the Russian woman, who tried to steal my bag with the jack knife and with the beets I had in there - a slice. And in front of me - at the same moment that she pulled on my bag, this scream and this disappearing of a person in front of me, into nothing, made me make a big step. And you know what - the light came on then, and you know what it was? They had opened up a manhole, so that the water would disappear into that manhole in the cellar. And that manhole happened to be outside of that door that opened up. And everybody who stepped into that disappeared into the manhole, with the water, with the flooding water. And what I felt was - that woman screaming "Huuuuh!" and I felt her sliding away from me in the pitch dark, and I made a very big step, while this Russian woman

was trying to grab that - that little bag, this little sack I had. All that in one moment. And you asking me if I faced death? I faced death - often. That wasn't over yet.

I went to a shelter that was built, because this used to be a factory now that we were in - a big, square, red brick building in the middle of nothing. And then outside were heaps of air shelters. And we are supposed to go in air shelters. And I was going in there, and all of a sudden these Russian prisoners started to look at me and say: "Huh, she's not from ours… you know. She's not of ours." So they start to squeeze me against the wall, that my ribcage started almost cracking - they squeezed me, and more people wanted to get in, and with the mass of these people in the entrance, nobody wanted to go deep inside, because everybody was afraid for - that the shelter would be bombed. Everybody wanted to be at the entrance. And I couldn't even go in there anymore. There were people to the right of me and in front of me. And I was in that corner. And they pressed me so much, that I thought I'm going to be breaking my ribs now. They were thin enough, you know. And they squeezed me - I couldn't breathe. And then all of a sudden, the sirens called off the alarm and they left. And I got out of that shelter alive.

And the next morning, after this bombardment, they took us away again from Leipzig, [untreated?], and we were marched out of Leipzig into nowhere. We were marched in all… up to… not to Dresden, but that was where I came to… through left and right of the Elba. You know the Elba was always there - this side, and then this side [turns head from side to side] and then on this side [indicates in front] and on the East side of the Elba. And there we had to march at night, because the airplanes were bombing us. And we had to sit still in the daytime - don't move, just sit down there. And if there was not a wood where we could hide in from the bombs, we would be on a field where the cows used to be, there were no more cows; there was only the fences. And the women on that side, and the men on that side, and I have a picture of it where a man asked me to sleep between two boxes that had

been carried by the men… they were as big as a [sackotage?] - what is that? What you put in a grave, that…

Q: A COFFIN?

A: Ja, it was that long - like a coffin, but it wasn't a coffin. A box, with a cover, you know. And he said to me he's in charge of all the men and he can't come, but he put four blankets there on the floor and on top of me. And I saw the stars, and I thought, this is beautiful, you know. The stars are beautiful. And I thought - what a world I live in - it is unbelievable, that it still can be beautiful up there. And we were on that lawn for quite a while, not just one day. And one day, somehow, it was getting warm. It was April already and I must have slipped my arms. And I felt on my arms dust, and it came from the sky. And I said to myself: "That dust is red. What is that? Red dust?" It was like sand falling on my skin. And later on I knew what it was. It was from the Dresden bombardment. The clouds that came, carrying on, and came down. That's what I think it was.

And that was - that lasted [a horse?] there, and the man on the other side did that. And I pictured the memory - all of a sudden, I remembered there were two men, not one. And there was a woman on this side and said: "Give me some of that blood," because by the time I came there, the horse was already divided and nobody had - our women didn't get anything. But the Russian women, they asked for the blood that was in the hide - leftover, inside. They had used the horse's hide, the inner of the hide, to cut the meat up, or whatever. You know, and they had divided it among the prisoners or whatever, I don't know who they were. There were two men there. Oh, they were in prison uniform, yeah. So this guy says to me: "You have a cup, I give you some blood." I said: "No, I don't have a cup." I didn't have a cup. I don't know - these Russians, they are tough people, you know - survivors.

And I said: "Have you got nothing else I can't come back to my girlfriends, they are making a little fire." The picked up from that lawn - I

say lawn, it was field, little pieces of old straw, whatever, you know, and they put it together. And one of them had a match, and the other one had a pot and somebody called: "Get some water from somewhere," and so they were already heating up the water. And I came with - what? - nothing. So they gave me something that was left over. I had to pick, pick. And that is the esophagus, the air pipe. And it was white, transparent, and that was what I got. And it was just like little vacuum cleaner hose. And I had it between my hands, and I gave it to the girls, and the water was not yet boiling. And I said, I said: "Put it in the water, it'll taste something." They laughed at me when I came there with that in my hand. And I said: "I'm sorry I came too late."

And then, there was the command to break up and go again. It didn't even come to boiling that water. So I don't know if between the four of us - I said: "Let's share this thing. Cut it up." So I had a knife, so everybody got a quart of that pipe, and we nibbled on it, you know. It was raw, but it didn't - it tasted a little sweet. And there on that same field, I found a bone - that was an old soup bone - and I recognized it, not as a stone, but as a bone. I recognized it. ?? and I picked it up and I sucked on it. And it tasted like a soup bone, that was thrown out, ja.

And, at one point, I go back now, to Mauschoff - the people in the village there, had heard about us and one day I saw this thing, that, a horse and a buggy with four wheels came, with a barrow of cooked potatoes, steaming hot. They came to bring us that to eat. I never got a potato, you know. But I saw - I've seen it, they brought it to us. I also heard in Mauschoff that there was these Red Cross packages, but I never got anything out of it. And can you imagine what I said - I was nasty when they called me from Switzerland. I said: "Where have you been all these years?" And I said: "You should have intervened before it happened." And he said to me: "We are here for after the disaster." I said: "Well, I never received a package, and if you did send them to the camps, I didn't receive them." You see, and from that they learn.

Now, look at the situation in Africa. You must intervene - not afterwards. You must intervene and do it yourself. We didn't get the packages - and from those stories, the politicians can learn. Send it to Mr. Clinton, and tell him I have been eating in his restaurant, where he eats, in the Chinese restaurant, in Little Rock, in March, this year - 1992. And somebody asked for him. A customer came and said: "Where's Bill?" And the owner said: "Oh, you know he's traveling a lot lately." And that is Bill Clinton, and I am in the newspaper on the same page, in Arkansas, with him, on the same front page, and again, I'm in the front page in Los Angeles. So he also know about me. And he ought to learn - he needs feedback, which at least… then he will think…. Er okay.

Q: IF I MAY TAKE YOU BACK TO AUSCHWITZ, I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW IF YOU DID ANYTHING OR COULD YOU DO ANYTHING ABOUT HOLIDAYS? OR IF THERE SOMEBODY'S BIRTHDAY - HOW DID YOU REMEMBER THESE DAYS?

A: That's a nice one. We noticed that the people from Greece always knew the Jewish holidays. And I was thinking - how come they know the Jewish holiday, you know? To begin with, they on other dates than the calendar says. But they always knew. And we knew when it was Hanukkah, and they had managed to get some candles, and they did put them up and so, we were reminded, through them, that it was a holiday. And Christmas, sure - we knew that, and New Year, and so on. And in block one, Laura Shelley told me, the writer of this book, that she was in block one - New Year's Eve - and they had built that stage there to entertain the prisoners. And she was invited to come - she was also living in one of those five new blocks. And she was in block one. And so - what was that question again?

Q: HOW DID YOU CELEBRATE… IF YOU…. HOLIDAYS OR ANNIVERSARIES?

A: Celebrate, they celebrated with us, the last of the year, because 1944, there was - in the end - there was no more gassing, so the Nazi's

started to feel a bit better about being nicer to us in case the war is over, all of a sudden. I think that was behind it. And they wanted to entertain us, because among the prisoners were a lot of gifted people. And one of them was the lady from Holland - Emma. Emmma von Eyssel was her name then. She wasn't married yet, but she was in that block. She - I don't know - her story is in the book. Emma von Eyssel… and she tells her side of the story. And I read a book about her, that her fiancé died. That book I saw in ??? - I took it home. I never sent it back - I still have it.

And this man also made photos of me and my daughter, in Philadelphia. He was a photographer and he found us in the last minute, and he photographed Auschwitz when I was standing there showing my daughter where block ten was. And he said: "Hold it, hold it - I haven't seen you yet." And then I was the only one whose address he took because he spent the last of that day… the convention, with us - my daughter and me. And then we exchanged addresses and when that book wasn't printed, I ask him: "What's the matter?" He made all these photos there in Philadelphia, in '85… that was the third convention, you know, of survivors and their children. Second generation - that was the name - that's why I brought my daughter. And so, he became a friend and I bought the book - I have that. There's lots of photos in there from people with numbers - and instead of him writing down all the addresses of the people, he didn't have time for that, he was a volunteer, and he was interested in it.

And, so he told me later on, when I visited him, two years ago, in Philadelphia, he said: "You know, you were the only one who bought that book from me." And you know what else happened? He didn't have money to have it printed. So I sent him an address from Mr. Meade, in New York, and I said: "You must get in touch - because what you did was a big job." And so the book came out and I have maybe a picture of him, with these others, Stehele is his name - S-T-E-H-E-L-E. And I had to go back to that course, because there was a convention on UFO's and I landed in Philadelphia, to go to

Trenton, New Jersey. So I used his address, to come down and stay with him, and a friend of mine stayed there too. So I spent a little time with him, and so that's his life, but he made lots of pictures and they came out beautifully, he sent them to me, and I paid him for the book. And couldn't believe it, when he said: "You were the only one out of this book, that bought it from me." But I think they advertised that book now, and it is available, still. It's available.

Q: IN ALL THE TIME YOU WERE IN AUSCHWITZ, DID YOU HAVE ANY ACCESS TO... HOW DID YOU GET NEWS? THE RADIO OR...? HOW DID YOU GET ANY NEWS?

A: No news. No news, but the men that came with the soup, they told one, and then it went around inside of the block. But I didn't have that first connection. If I got to hear something, it was not second-hand and not third-, it was maybe, fiftieth-hand. And by that time, the thing is distorted.

But we knew one day, we had to stand outside, and couldn't leave the camp, when this Stefan gave me that bottle of water and with his first letter - he introduced himself, and told me he's watching me since four months, and I'm different, he says, from just watching me. And he wants to know more who I am, and what he can do for me, and in that first letter he said - I can also find out about your husband, you know. And then he did find out, you know. That was when Hitler was assassinated. Now you know that date, and we were punished by being outside, near our block, we were not supposed to be marched anywhere, go outside in the fields, pick leaves, nothing. We were inside of the block between nine and ten. And there was a rope put so that the men couldn't come to us. But I had the strategic corner on the wall where I stood, when that man sticked that in my hand. He watched me - okay.

I just heard he died about two years ago. I did write with him after the war - never forgot the address. And then he sent me a postcard from Krakow, and then I heard that he was vice-president, like a mayor, he was something like that, of the city. He was a very educated man,

and I said: "Why are you here? You are not Jewish." He said he is an [esperantez?] - I knew what [esperantez?] stands for, you know. And so he was studying, in Marseilles, he knew French and he told me all these things about himself. He was very educated.

Q: IN AUSCHWITZ DID YOU EVER FEEL, OR SEE, OR KNOW OF EXPERIMENTS DONE ON TWINS?

A: That was done in Birkenau, as far as I know. I met the twins in Philadelphia - we talked. And they wanted justice. It was never done, because they were from Poland. And then, I heard about it while I was there, because some people in our block had been in Birkenau before they came, like the Greek girls. And they knew, and you know the personnel - and like that Sonja Fritz - she left there because she didn't like it, and she found another job. And everybody knew, but everybody knew a little bit, and combined... er, yes, we knew. We were one day walking by the gas chambers. I saw all the gas chambers from the outside.

Q: ??????

A: When we were marching with the little baskets on our arms, to pick leaves, we had an SS man and I think his name was Fritz, and he liked me so much. And he put an apple, one time, in my basket and he wanted to make love to me, and I said to him: "You can't do that. You are an SS man, I am a Jew, and you will be in trouble. And I'll be killed. You'll be in trouble. Don't do it." "Oh," he said, "Don't you know I put an apple in your basket, while you were picking leaves." I said: "No." He said: "Look," and he touched the leaves, and it was hard there, and he took an apple. That was from his lunch. He gave me his apple, you know, as payment. And I said: "No," I said, "I don't do this." And he already took the rifle off and I said: "Where are all the others?" And he said: "I send them the other direction, we are all alone here." And I said: "Not with me!" And he walked away, he said: "No, I can't make you. I can't make you." He said: "Then I pick somebody else."

So he picked a French girl from then on, and he went off, every time we were in the woods, picking leaves. And lunchtime came - we sat down. There was no lunch, I mean, we had to sit and rest. And then he walked away with that woman - oh, Jenny was her name. Jenny… that was the one who gave me the coat to do - where she gave me a whole bread. So, she was a big shot if she had a whole bread to give away. So, anyway, he walked off with her. And we all knew it, and we tried one time another girl - I don't want to say who it is - but the whole shed was shaking. It was the loft, on top, and then the hay happened, and I thought - thank goodness, it isn't me. That's what I was thinking, you know. He tried me first. I was his first choice. I refused, and he didn't make a big fuss, and he had a big variety - thirty women - thirty. So he did that with us.

And that is the same guy who showed us the gas chambers and who said he was of Polish origin. He was a German - but Polish. And he probably volunteered or he was drafted into the German army. So he wasn't quite a German Nazi. He was a Polish Nazi, you see. So he said: "Today I'm going to show you something." And we walked, after we had picked the leaves I think, and we saw the gas chambers… no, it was in the morning, I think. And we saw the gas chambers that were usually burning. We walked on top of a big street - later on, that was to be for the trains to arrive at the gas chamber. But when we walked on this thing, Birkenau was below us, a little bit below us. And I was thinking - why do they need such a big, fat street? - I didn't know that my parents were going to be in the railroad that would bring them to the gas chambers there. But we walked there one day, and then he said: "This one is not in use today." There must have been a holiday, or something. One day it didn't work. Then he said: "Now we go to the first gas chamber." And that was outside of that fence that was loaded with electricity. And I made a picture of that, and there was no window on that house.

And many people who were there - I know a Frenchman - he was in San Francisco. He was interviewed in the French language here. He lives in Paris, and he remembered that house.

That was like a family house, with a door in the middle, with a pointed entrance, and a little wall was that thick [indicates with hands] and then I said to myself, that house is not a house, you know, without windows. A pointed roof and all that, red, red brick - so, it was the first gas chamber. And he said Hitler came to see it and said: "It's too small… only a hundred people go in there." He can't do it that way, do something else.

And then they built ovens for the people that had died. And I saw those ovens. They were also on the outside, behind the functioning gas chambers. They were ovens that he showed us, with the doors round, you know. And it was engraved with the film, and they were baking ovens, you know, for bread. They were bread ovens. Hansel and Gretl, you know. So we saw the ovens. And then I saw altogether five gas chambers from the outside.

But one thing struck me wrong - that was when I had to jump from one area to the next to keep my feet dry. There was water - there were like big, what you call that, dips in the ground. And I was sinking into some yellowish earth that was like dust. But it was raining and it had been raining all - and I sank with my dark red shoes way up to my ankles into that mud. And then there was a mushroom growing there, like we have - champion. So I thought - that I want - I want a champion, right now, you know. I picked the champion. And then I had to wash it later on, you know, and then it dawned on me, after years and years that, that's where the graves, of the mass graves of the people that had not been burned after they were dead. There were people in there - these were mass graves, outside of Birkenau fence in the… way in the back of it. Not where that big entrance is, on the other side. If you ever go there, the indentations must still be there. I walked on… When they did - the people that were killed, or no - the people that died, were burned to ashes, and those ashes were - they were on top, maybe underneath were people. I don't know. But I had to jump so that I wouldn't step in the water that was in between.

And that day, this SS man, on the way home, he said: "One of you will survive, and you must tell what I showed you today, because this is matter of fact." You see, I took everything personally. So we marched out of there, and we went back to our camp, and I'm sure that we didn't talk about it. That - what I saw, was something that you couldn't talk about. It was so impressive; it was so enormous. You didn't want to scare the other people, because they somehow knew also, but I have seen it.

And then, another time, we walked on the street, not right on that street, but close by when we came home with our baskets full of leaves. And the flames were there, from the chimneys. And the same man said to us: "Think, think, you have to think..." When he saw the flames he made us think. We usually did sing a little bit, Dutch songs, you know. I don't know them anymore. I wasn't born in Holland, so I didn't learn them to begin with. But I sung with them... and but, he said: "I know what you are thinking. I see what you see - the flames out of the chimney. And I'm alive," he said, "I saw my comrade fall next to me. I'm alive," he said. "And you are alive - so think! Now, you think." He made us think while the flames were going.

Q: DO YOU REMEMBER SMELL?

A: Ja, ja I do.

Q: DID IT SMELL BAD?

A: It's finished. The stench - it's terrible. Do you know what body odor is when it comes from the back of the skin, the fat? That some people smell fat, now if you would cook that - how would that smell? That's it - that's the best explanation. Since you ask me.

Q: HOW FAR WAS IT - THE GAS CHAMBERS FROM YOUR CAMP?

A: Oh, maybe four kilometers. Maybe three, I don't know. It took quite a while to get there, and we walked so slowly because we didn't have much energy. You know, we walked on that ??? We had more inside things. But the

porridge. She and others, and Esther took it away from her and others, to help me live. And I didn't know she had tuberculosis until much later in the camp.

But I found out after the war, that I had contracted tuberculosis in the camp, because I spit blood, in Israel, and at other occasions, a little bit, and I healed myself, without knowing I had it. And the doctors take x-ray in Dusseldorf, and they told me that I had contracted tuberculosis, but it had capsuled itself. And he said: "Don't you worry about it, as long as you don't - don't be under stress anymore, and it won't open. Very seldom does these capsules open up." There is such a thing in nature - that heals itself. And you can see him in the x-rays, in dots. If you see dots, these are capsules - TB. And he said, "Twenty five of all the people, twenty-five percent of all the people have that condition," and I knew I had nothing in my lungs when I left - my father had sent me, because I was coughing, one time, like a dog barks.

And my father said to me, in Amsterdam, "Go to the specialist, and I want to see a picture of your lungs." And I went there, and this doctor was still alive after the war. What he said to me was: "Tell your father your lungs are clear, and I don't make pictures of healthy lungs." So that is why I know I contracted it in the camps. And I lived in Israel for ten years, under stress. And there was also hunger, because the army had to built up and there was no milk for one year, for people who didn't have children. And those that had children - they got all the milk they needed. And I never saw a drop of milk. That was Israel, when those Arabs made war.

Q: YOU WERE IN LIEPZIG? AND THEY MARCHED YOU TO ??? IS THAT WHERE YOU WERE LIBERATED?

A: I was never liberated - I ran away. In Reiser.

Q: ??????

A: Well, I told you that we walked in the nighttime, because we were bombed from the spitfire, or whatever they - little American

skeletons came later. I mean, I was at one time, a skeleton and I was only two and a half months there. And I walked up the stairs very slowly. I was already thin when I arrived there, because we didn't have anything to eat in Holland, for the occupation began in '40 and that is when we were rationed and we didn't have much to eat.

But, when Esther - the nurse from Belgium walked behind me quickly, she said: "Renee, what's the matter?" - somehow my name sticks. "What is the matter with you Renee? You walk so slowly." And I said: "I'm just thinking that - as the way it goes, I won't have long anymore." And she said: "Would it help you if I would give you a little bit porridge for a while?" "Oh yes," I said, and that made me live again. And then she came in the morning, quickly, into the room, and handed me in a cup, that she - it was her cup - there was the bottom full of about half an inch full of porridge. She said: "Renee, you must know that I take that away from the sick people." And I said: "I am very grateful to you Esther." Because, my mother's name was Esther, so I could remember her name. She had dark hair and she was in a white uniform; she helped us there, you know. But after a week, she said: "That's it, Renee, I can't do it all the time. That's it - now you are on your own again."

And you know there was this Friedl de Windt, where I could have stayed now in Holland when Ina said to me on the telephone, when I called from Cologne, "Renee, you can stay with Friedl de Windt, I am going on vacation tomorrow." And I said: "I don't know who you are talking about." And she said: "Friedl knows you." And that must be her - Friedl de Windt survived. Her husband was the doctor, who took that slice of bread from Lucy out, for her husband. And Mr. De Windt, Dr. De Windt, was the one that was in charge of the bodies that were shot every Thursday, because he writes in his book that he had to take them like - two people took hands and feet and did throw them on the truck. That was because he was a doctor - he could do that. And he writes in his book a lot of things, and Friedl - his wife, had tuberculosis in Auschwitz. And therefore, she got the

fliers, and they were all was aiming to the SS. And we didn't know who they were hitting - us or them, or what. We were all mixed - walking in the street. And - what was the question again?

Q: WHAT HAPPENED AFTER LEIPZIG, AFTER YOU MARCHED? WERE YOU…?

A: Oh, when we marched - ja, we were bombed and I said to my friend, Annie, after we were not bombed in that trench. You know I - and I didn't get killed in Leipzig. So I said to her: "I'm going to run away." And she said: "You are just talking, but if you do, take me with you." And I said to myself - I can't do that, she's wearing striped clothing. I can't do it. So after I had the disillusion that we couldn't make our own soup there, and there was nothing to eat and it was windy and cold, and there was nowhere to sleep, and I slept that one night under the sky and thinking it's beautiful, and then I heard all the time trucks when people disappeared when we marched at night. They went into the woods and disappeared and then there were less and less people - definitely. And they didn't shoot so much anymore - the SS. I heard, here and there, a shot - maybe they shot, they did shoot.

But I thought - 'Gee, we come and I see this river, Elba; I see a city in front of me, and along the Elba, houses.' And then I thought - Gee, there is a city, we are walking through a city, not country. So I said: "Maybe, who knows, you know." And I walked closer to the sidewalk, and I talked to a man in German, who walks the other direction. I said: "????" in German. I said: "Can you take me home?" And he said: "Oh no." He said: "I'm glad I have a roof over my head, with my daughter-in-law here." I didn't know that all Germany, all Germans, were also displaced because of all the bombs that fell. So, I didn't think of that at that moment. So, he's glad he has a place to sleep - he can't take me. Then we walk around the corner, after we passed all along the river, on the other side of the bridge - that bridge was still intact. So there is a big wall, and then there is a door that is open and

I slip into that door, and close it behind me. That is it. That was when I was free.

Q: HOW DID YOU FEEL?

A: Great. I put that bucket that was there, upside down and I sat on it. I thought - now I'm having to wait until all these prisoners walk by. I wasn't already - I was none of these anymore. I was a person now - instantly. And there was a man - he was brushing his horse, in the yard, and I knocked the door, I go straight to the front door. And he said: "There is nobody home." I didn't understand - I could have taken the whole house, afterwards... I could have stayed there, whatever. But he said: "There is nobody home." I said: "Oh, that's too bad." "Are you a relative?" I said: "Yes, I'm a friend." And he was in SS uniform, and he said: "Nobody home." And then these people walked by - it took a long time you know. And then he walked away with the horse, and he closed the big gate, and I sat there, all alone in the backyard on the corner of the street, there. And I thought - what am I going to do now? I have to wait a long time until all these prisoners walk by. And it seemed forever, you know.

And I had picked up somewhere a piece of mirror - a little glass where I could look in there. And I looked at myself and I said: "Oh, what is that? That's me." And the scarf that used to have colors from Hungaria - you know they have those woolen scarves with red flowers and green leaves, and yellow and white... it wasn't white anymore, you know, it was kind of dirty - I noticed I had my lip all open here. [indicates middle of lower lip] It was all split in two, and it was kind of weird looking - that lip. I noticed that. And then, I thought - what am I going to do? I have to walk to Dresden. That is the address - and it isn't far from Dresden. And Otto had given me the address but let me tell you something - I put that out of the way, in Ravensbruck, because I thought if they find an address there in that glass container, they will go to that address and go to that woman - the mother of Otto. And I had to destroy it, I thought. So I didn't know the address in Ravensbruck anymore.

But when I came to Mauschoff, in another side of the barrack, there was Edith Gotstern, the sister of [Konkel?] - she was there in Mauschoff, and I visited her there in Mauschoff. And next to her were two girls from Czechoslovakia, and I knew that he had sponsored one woman from Czechoslovakia that he gave us supplies - pencils and papers, so she could draw. And that was the girl, who taught in that moment - I had no more address in Mauschoff, and this girl says to the other woman: "Where are you going when the war ends, when it's over? Are you going to Dresden? Do you go to [Schauferstrasse zwanzig?]?" And that was the address that I had lost. That was the address to go to, I mean, if I come near Dresden. So, I had the address again, in my head - [Schauferstrasse veerzig?] - forty, not twenty. Forgive me. So his mother had another name, also. And then she said to each other: "No, I think we go straight home, to Prague. We don't go there." So I knew already….

END OF TAPE 2 OF 2.

Statistics:
No Of Lines Typed: 3 885