**Interview with EVA BOROS**
**Bay Area Holocaust Oral History Project**
**Date: 5/16/91 Place: San Francisco**
**Interviewer:**
**Transcriber: Tessa Botha**

Q WHO ARE THESE PEOPLE, PLEASE?

A These people are my grandparents. They were born same place where I was, in [Kirihazel?]. That was Hungary, at the time. And my aunt had these pictures who lived here, in California.

Q OK, WE'LL HEAR MORE ABOUT THESE PEOPLE LATER ON IN THE INTERVIEW. BUT, THIS IS JUST TO GET SOME VIDEO PICTURES OF THEM. TELL US ABOUT THESE PEOPLE PLEASE? [INDICATES A NEW PHOTO]

A Well, these people are my parents, and that's their engagement picture. The picture you saw previously, were the parents of my father.

Q AND, WHAT YEAR WAS THIS PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN?

A That must have been 1919, out of the First World War.

Q AND IT WAS TAKEN IN WHAT TOWN?

A This was taken in, that was Romania at the time, in Sato Mare.

Q AND THE PREVIOUS PICTURE WAS TAKEN IN WHAT CITY AND WHAT YEAR?

A That was taken in - my grandparents. I would say Solosz or Kirihazel. That was where we lived. That was our hometown. We all came from there.

Q OK, AND WHAT YEAR DO YOU THINK THAT WAS TAKEN, THE GRANDPARNTS PICTURE?

A That I couldn't judge, I don't know. I know my grandfather died in 1922.

Q OK, SO BEFORE 1922. TELL WHO THESE PEOPLE ARE, PLEASE?

A This was our family picture. And it must have been taken approximately 1930. It's my parents.

Q LET'S SEE. SO THIS WOULD BE YOUR MOTHER AND YOUR FATHER. [indicates the two older persons in the back row]

A The older sister

Q IS WHICH ONE? [indicates to girl, extreme right, back row]

A Blanche, yeah.

Q THIS IS BLANCHE [still pointing] AND, WHO IS THIS? [indicates girl, extreme left, back row]

A That's Edith, second oldest.

Q AND WHO IS THIS? [indicates Row 1, far left]

A That's me.

Q HOW OLD ARE YOU IN THAT PICTURE?

A About, I would say about 4.

Q ALRIGHT. AND THE SMALL KID.

A The baby –the youngest one is Anne. [indicates to Row 1, second from left] She survived. The two of us are around. And then it's my brother – David.

Q THAT WOULD BE THIS PERSON HERE? [indicates far right in Row 1]

A And he was 2 and a half years old... he must be 61/2 over there, close to seven.

Q OK, VERY GOOD. TELL US ABOUT THIS PLEASE. [new picture]

A OK, this is me approximately the age of 16. And, it was taken in our back yard, in our garden. My favourite place. I used to play there, under a walnut tree. And, these are just very primitive snapshots, in those days..

Q WHAT YEAR WAS THIS PHOTO TAKEN?

A This was taken about, I would say, '42, 1942. Yes, it was just a little photo my sister enlarged. She had that enlarged. I didn't know what was waiting for me.

Q TELL US ABOUT THIS PLEASE? [new picture]

A OK, This picture was taken in Prague, in Czechoslovakia. I was there for registration, at the American Consulate in Prague. And I had this picture taken there in 1946, probably December, '46. I was about 21, before my 21st birthday. The ring came from my brother-in-law – it used to be my older sister's. She was

married and he gave me the ring. I don't wear it, it needs to be refurbished. I just put it on to have it matched up.

Q TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE? [new picture]

A OK, this is my engagement, and my husband, Steven. We were walking on the street and somebody just took this picture of us. And this was taken in Sato Mare or Sat Mar, or whatever it... Those names of those towns have changed, it depended on the regime, whatever.. Hungary or Romania, it was. This time it was Romania. And, it was taken in the spring of 1947. Also just a little snapshot and it was enlarged. So, this was how it came out. Little happier time.

Q TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE? [picture of twins]

A These are our twin daughters. They were born in '52, in San Francisco – Mount Zion Hospital. And, this was taken in San Francisco, at the age of, they were about 21. They were born in '52. So, this must have been taken – what, '73. Yes. We lost Julie – she is on the right side. Julie was, she had diabetes and at the age of 32 we lost her. Linda is with us and she is happily married, and has two children, a son Daniel, who is 13, and Rachel who is 8. They live in [Yucca?] City

Q TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE? [picture of young boy]

A This is Daniel, my grandson. And, this is a school picture. I don't know if it was last year, or two years ago. He has changed, of course, but this is what I had, handy in the frame. He is studying for his bar-mitzvah. This year, he's come of age. Next month – June 15th will be his bar-mitzvah. Big boy! Good luck to you. Better luck than we had.

Q AND WHO IS THIS? [picture of young girl]

A My granddaughter – Rachel. This is a kindergarten picture. We have fun together. She likes to come to our house a lot. She's the little brunette. Their daddy is dark, dark hair. So, she is the only one in the family with dark eyes. We're all blond, blue-eyed people. Both parents were blue-eyed. All of the children, all six of us children were blue-eyed. She wishes she would have blue eyes, because everybody else has blue eyes. She's a brunette, she's cute, she's very cute.

"Pause in Tape 1."

Q THIS IS THE INTERVIEW OF EVA BOROS FOR THE HOLOCAUST ORAL HISTORY PROJECT. IT IS TAKING PLACE IN SAN FRANCISCO, ON MAY 16TH, 1991. EVA, WHEN WERE YOU BORN?

A I was born December 24th, in 1925.

Q WHERE?

A In [Krawbernatisor]. This was Czechoslovakia, when I was born. This is the river, we had a river that flowed over [Kirihazel?]. And, after the first war, they gave it to Czechoslovakia, but that used to belong to Austro-Hungarian monarchy before the First World War. It's changed regimes. Right now, it belongs to Russia. It's surrounded with borders and the mountains. We have the Carpathian mountains up north. Up north is Poland. At th ' time, as a child, when I was very young, it seemed so distant, but as I see it now they were very small distances in mileage or even kilometres. Down south we had Romania - further Hungary. And, that's why it's changed around so much. Right now, it belongs to Russia. They took it after the war, and we were not even able to go back there.

Q TELL ME ABOUT YOUR PARENTS?

A My parents. My father comes from the same town which I was born, Kirihazel, but at the time, when he was born, 1888, it was Hungary. It belonged to Austro-Hungarian monarchy and our town is called "the Kings House." That's the name for it, because we had hills there and there were castles, they were only ruins at the time when we were growing up. That's all we saw. But they used to go "Oer Auslo." I don't know if it came from the eighteenth century, I cannot recall the history of that, but they were ruins and we used to climb. We used to go into

the hills and we used to climb those hills and those rocks there, because only the ruins were left of the castles. My father comes from this town and my grandfather.

My mother – you want to know my parents, you said. So, you want to know about my mother. My mother came from Sat Mar, Sato Mare. That was Romania. That was 60 kilometer and it was divided with the border.

Q WHAT ARE THE NAMES OF YOUR GRANDPARENTS, WHOSE PICTURES WE SAW?

A The names are – my grandfather was David. He had three names Heim Alexander David. And, my mother was Sarah – grandmother – Sarah.

Q YOUR GRANDFATHER WAS FROM THE SAME TOWN?

A I think my grandmother, my aunt, I had an aunt here. She died about two years ago. She lived to be 97, my grandmother – my aunt. My grandmother came from another town and came from a Rabbinical family. My aunt used to talk about her, and say that. But, I think that was [Berricktzars?] where she originated, where she, her family came from.

Q HUNGARY?

A It was Hungary in her times, when she was born and growing up. I imagine so. But, as I say, that whole area was changed in 1918, after the First World War.

Q DO YOU REMEMBER HER MAIDEN NAME?

A Sarah.

Q AND HER LAST NAME?

A Her last name was, I was thinking about it...do you know, Greenfold, Greenburger.... I'm not sure. I can't recall.

Q WHAT WAS YOUR FATHER'S NAME?

A My father's name is [Moshabear?], Morris. He was Morris.

Q HOW DO YOU SPELL THE LAST NAME?

A Zisovitc – ooh, I didn't write it down. Z-I-S-O-V-I-T-C, Zisovitc. (zee-so-vi-ch)

Q AND YOU MOTHER'S?

A My mother's maiden name is Schwartz.

Q AND HER FIRST NAME?

A Serena, Serena.

Q AND HOW DO YOU SPELL THAT?

A S-e-r-e-n-a.

Q AND WHEN DID THEY GET MARRIED?

A They got married in 1919. And, the wedding was in Sato Mare. That's Romania.

Q WHAT BUSINESS WAS YOUR FATHER IN?

A We had a grocery store. I have to go back to my grandfather. He was a master of all... he really was a

butcher and a baker and a candlestick maker. He had property he acquired. He was a very capable man. He built a house right in the centre of town and .. Because we had very important railroad. It wasn't a big town, it was a small town, with a big area and he built a house in the centre of town, close to the railroad, to the station area. But this was the main street. And, my father, were also six. They were four boys and two girls. And, the oldest daughter got married, my aunt, and she settled down in the same town. And the oldest brother, my uncle, also lived in the same town. They had their separate homes. I don't know how it came about, but my father stayed in the family home and property. He was the fourth - he was the fourth child. And, so after the war, they divided – it was a very, very big, big store he had with everything. It was like a country store, I imagined, because it wasn't there anymore when I was growing up. It was divided into three stores, the store that he used to have – before the First World War. And so, we had groceries. And we had the bakery in our back yard. There was another building and there was a smaller building in the back yard, and big garden, in the back.

After my parents were married, I imagine, they lived, my mother came to live to Kraub. That was already Czekeslovakia, at that time. So, they lived in this family home. And that's where we were born. There was six of us. In the picture I only have five, in the family picture. There was another little boy who went with my mother.

Q TELL US ABOUT YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS.

A OK, my older sister got married at the age of 20, that was 1940. She married a local young man. And, shortly after they were married, they had the young men go into service. This was like, instead of military service, the

Jewish men were taken to forced labour camps. And, so my sister lived, not too far away and I used to go home with her. She came home to stay during the day, in our house. And, in the evening I used to go home with her, to sleep with her, to be a companion.

Q WHAT WAS HER NAME?

A Her name was Blanche. We called her Bobby. Her nickname was Bobby. And, what was the question?

Q HER HUSBAND'S NAME?

A Her husband's name was also, More.. how did they call him. Morris. Morris? Well, I should remember and I should know because I have visited him, I know him real well. He was very good to us, after we came home. He survived, my sister didn't.

My second oldest sister was just about a year and half younger than my older sister. Her name was Edith. And, she was engaged. Just remembered that, suddenly. Yes, she was engaged from Sato Mare to a young man, to be married. Well, he was also in a forced labour camp and there was no wedding, because in meantime, they took us away, 1944. OK, I jumped over.

Then, I had a brother, older brother, who was named after our grandfather. He was born in 1923, and he was named after my grandfather died in '22, 1922. David, he was named after our grandfather.

Q AND ANOTHER SISTER?

A Then I have a younger sister. I have, she is alive. She lives now in Los Angeles. She was fifteen at the time we were deported and, a youngest brother who was born

in 1931, in December. There were a lot of December people. Mother was a December. The oldest sister, the second oldest sister, Edith, was a December girl.

The youngest brother was Alexander, and well, we don't have him. He was young - he was too young to survive. He was taken with my mother.

Q DO YOU REMEMBER BLANCHE'S WEDDING?

A Yes! In fact, I have a picture. I didn't bring all my pictures. Yes, yes, I remember her wedding. I was fourteen, fourteen and a half. Yes, her wedding was in the summer. That was happy times.

My father was still alive and that year, in 1940, my father died. He had a heart attack. He was only 52 years old. But later, when we were taken, when we were deported and all those horrible things were coming, we said he was spared from this horror - what we had to live through. But, the Hungarians shaved, they had to shave their beards and they were also taken in for... They took them in for labour, the older, the men, in their close like, fifties. They were old for us at that time, 'cause we were children. The Hungarians were very, very cruel, also. They took in the Jewish men, the religious Jewish men, and they took them on Saturday, for labour. Just, they gave them some work to do. I don't know, they were shovelling snow. And, later, the war broke out, in 1939, in Poland, when Germany attacked Poland.

After that, the beginning of 1940, they had these Jewish men, like they had to serve and take care, stay guard, that's the right expression for it, stay guard by the bridges. We had bridges. We had the river, as I said. And, we had a wooden bridge. They were able to cross by foot from one end of town to the other. And, then, there was a

railroad. Railroads were very important. There were no aeroplanes and no cars in those days. In our area, in our towns and in our surrounding area, there were horses and there were cows in the carts, and the wooden bridge was for the people to commute and there was one bridge, a railroad. So, they were watching. They were standing guards. They did have rifles, I remember, at that time, but they had to, they shaved off their beards. My father had a little, my grandfather had a longer beard. My father just had a little beard.

Q WHAT YEAR WAS THIS?

A 1940. My father died in 1940, in November. So, this was during this year, during the spring and summer, and very cruel. Already, I mean, that was enough suffering what he had to experience. What he had, and in November, after [Suckus?], he wasn't ill. He had a heart attack and we lost our father.

Q WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER ABOUT THE JEWISH LIFE IN THE TOWN?

A Oh, I remember that very well. We had a large Jewish community. All the holidays were very important. All the stores on Main Road, of course, well, they were Jewish stores, businesses – all kinds. And, they were closed on holidays. Every holiday, every season, even the Shabbat was a very, very big event and very important. I was brought up Orthodox, but not as strict. I mean, I didn't know what it means strict, or not. It was just a normal way of life - that Saturday we didn't do things that was regularly, during the week, allowed to do. Saturday we were resting, it was a real, real rest day. As children, we couldn't play certain things and they were beautiful. The holidays were very, very beautiful, significant.

Passover was a very, very important holiday. And, it's a very – I really have very difficult time when Passover comes, because it was our last holiday at home, in 1944, the family together.

Q CAN YOU REMEMBER THE EARLIER PASSOVERS?

A Oh, the earlier Passovers, they were joyous. Yes! Do I remember. I was always very interested. I was very, very - I am spiritual. I'm very, the Jewish books, the bookcase, meant so much to me. Always wanted to know what's in those books, and girls were not allowed to study. As I said, there was another, a smaller house, in our back yard and that was rented for a Mallamud. They were teaching the little boys. The Homash and all the Torah, the Talmud and I was always fascinated with all this studies, and with all the things that only boys were allowed to study, and girls were not. It really, really fascinated me and I wanted to learn. As a matter of fact, at the age of 8, I kept asking my father that I want to learn the aleph-bet. And I was thinking about this, it just came back. We had two schuls – one schul was, we come from Ashkenazi family and my uncle built.. He was the president of the congregation and he built the new schul. It was a very nice schul, with a front yard and I remember the fence so well. And, across the street was a Hasidic – what is that called – the temple, the more religious temple, the Safardic. That's what I didn't know. Yes, it's Safardic. And there was a Mallamud over there that was teaching aleph-bet and my father was reluctant to send me. "You are too young." And he said, "I'll tell you what I do, we'll try it. You go alone, not with several girls, but you alone." And, once they showed me – the Mallamud – he taught me, he showed me the aleph-bet, I went home and I learned it so fast. I remember, he came home to talk to

my father. He was so surprised. I mean, it was something they discussed behind my back, at first. The boys didn't learn as fast as I did. It was, I just remembered. That just came back to me as I was thinking, contemplating about my life.

So, all the preparations and all the – we had a bakery. There was a bakery also in our.. it was a very big property that my grandfather had. And, there was a bakery building, another building in the back. As a matter of fact, our family picture is done by that building, by the wall of the bakery, which is that last building in the yard. Behind that, was the garden. So, for Shabbaz there was baked beans and nobody, no Jew cooked. It was prepared on Friday, the foods, traditional foods for the Shabbat. And, they used to bring the baked beans, Friday afternoon, and it cooked in the ovens, in those bakery ovens. Twenty-four hours. They came next day and picked up, they had it marked. Everybody knew their own, tepel, their own pot. And, that was for the Shabat meal, the main meal, lunch time.

Q WHEN YOU SAY THEY, YOU MEAN THE OTHER PEOPLE?

A The people, it was for the whole, the whole community. It wasn't just a private bakery. I mean, this was a bakery that was... Somebody rented it from us, the baker. And then, he baked bread and rolls and we were selling all the 'goodies.'

Q WHO OWNED THE BAKERY?

A The bakery, the building, was owned by my father, by us. The whole property was ours, whatever we had there. And, it was rented. A baker came with his family. He had – they had a home there and I remember, two ovens, they

had. And, that was the business. They made bread and all those rolls and all the croissants, I remember. And, there were other stores that were buying from the baker and they were selling. There were some restaurants by the railroad station. And, so, that was for Shabat meals, the baked beans and kugel.

Q AND WHAT ELSE WOUD BE FOR SHABBAT?

A Kugel. Well, there was chopped eggs, which was prepared. The eggs, the hard boiled eggs were boiled. And, they made the chopped eggs. That was the appetizer. But, I jumped into Shabat, but there was a Friday night. There was a Friday night which was a very, very, very, interesting, very, very, meaningful evening, with a traditional meal. Chicken soup and chicken and fish in the winter. There was, summer, there was no refrigerations, no ice boxes. We had four seasons.

There was another building, I don't know how to describe this. Next the bakery building, was facing the entrance for the gate into the yard. Then, on the left side, there was another building which was built underground, and in the winter they used to pack it with ice from the river, in straw. It had a roof and it was surrounded with big, big acacia trees, for shade. And, that's where the ice blocks were stored – the natural ice from the river, that they cut in the winter. And it was probably till the middle of summer it lasted, and that's where... Well, we were selling the ice. That brings back some other thought. From Romania, they were shipping meat to Czechoslovakia. All these things came through our town and they used to buy the ice. They were icing the – the refrigeration was done that way. And, that's where they used to come and pick up the ice for that. Czechoslovakia was, and still is, and industrial nation, or land, or country. But food they used to

get from Romania. Romania had everything – very rich, very resourceful country, which is ruined now.

Q CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE PASSOVER, SAY YOUR..?

A Yes, yes, we were six children and the parents. We were eight of us around the table. My father was very tall. All of his whole family, they were very tall people and we had a big dining room table that was specially made, a big walnut table. I know, I remember I was telling my husband about this, how they had to have special size made because they were such tall people. And, you couldn't get furniture or whatever made. I mean, there was nothing readymade – clothes, or anything. Everything had to be ordered and made. There were seamstresses, there were cobblers and shoemakers and.. I don't know where the table was made, but it was a special table, a very tall. So, when we were little, we had to have high chairs made for the children. We were sitting around – I remember where my place was at the table. Nobody was allowed to sit in my father's place. It was like, father was, like king. It was, okay, two chairs were put together – pillows. Father had a white kittel on for the [saydah?] – all prepared, came home from temple with my big brother. And, I was very, very fascinated and very, very interested in this story – the exodus, which I understand now, in later years, so much better. But I had to listen. Our father was reading it and explaining it to us, this whole story. And, as a little child, sitting in the high chair, I had to sit by my father. I changed places. The children were ready, I remember, I was able to stay up till midnight just to listen to the last [hadgayah?]. Had to hear the story. That's how much, I was very interested in the story. It meant so much to me.

Q WHAT ABOUT THE MEAL, THE COOKING.

A The cooking was a big project. Very difficult things which I didn't know when we were very young. But, my mother had help and... any cooking, any preparation was a tremendous job. It meant, first of all, cleaning and preparing and changing dishes. There was a different set of dishes for Passover. It was kept all packed away in the attic, in big boxes, wooden boxes, crates, they were. And, so the last day, before Passover, the dishes came down and the cooking started. It had to be cooked and prepared in all the Passover dishes, pots and pans.

My mother was a very good cook because she came from a... her parents, her father was restaurateur. They had, in the two towns, where my father came from and my mother's town, that was Romania and my grandfather, Schwartz, had restaurants, on the station. They were called ['reschte'?] because it was at the station. And so, my mother learned from cooks they had, good cooks there. And, she was very, very good cook.

Well, we had matzo ball soups and there was geese and chicken and beef and lots, potato latkes and eggs. I remember she made a cake from 12 eggs. Every day she had to make cakes – there was no bread to eat. And the matzo, the matzo baking session, now that was another story. There was another bakery there that was really just making matzo and everything. Women were working there and preparing. They were the round matzos, not the square ones that we have, machine-made, it was all made by hand. And it was ordered – and wine, sometimes my father made wine and borscht. There was borscht made from beets – my mother had a real big earthen, like an urn, I would call it. Like a big, big.. well, it wasn't a pot. It was made out of earthenware, and the borscht had to be prepared weeks ahead. I don't know how many weeks ahead had to be put into make sour. They couldn't get it

in the jars, like we are getting it. The potatoes for potato latkes – everything had to be grated by hand. Peeled and grated, prepared – tremendous amount. Eggs, hundreds and hundreds of eggs. Everything had to be prepared for the eight days. Passover. So, it was happy time, but very difficult. Housekeeping was a chore and difficult. It was a twenty-four hour job.

Q YOUR MOTHER HAD HELP?

A Yes, yes. She couldn't have done it – no.

Q WHAT WAS THE SIZE OF THE HOUSE?

A The size of the house – comparing, I mean, if I could go home now, it would be tiny - if I could see it now. We had a big, big living room. There was a bedroom, sitting room and a kitchen, and there was another room, which the four girls, we lived in one room, with pink furniture. That was the girl's room. There were no separate bedrooms for every child, but it was nice. It was good. We were happy. We had everything. Everything we needed.

Q HOW ABOUT YOUR SCHOOLING?

A Schooling was local. We had, in our town, was Czech school and Russian. My two older sisters started Russian school. It was like, kind of Russian, because we had Rutanians they called them – Carpathian-Rutanians and it was, they went to Russian school. We had middle school, up to middle school, like it was compulsory to go till the age of fourteen. School.

And, then there was higher schools - had to go to Solosz. My second oldest sister was a student, and she really wanted to study higher, but she went for examination, to

enter into higher schooling and she was, this was during, already, what a mixture! It was Ukrainians were before the Hungarians came in 1939. In 1939, the Hungarians came back to our area. The Ukrainians took over for a while, and then they forced us, we had to get out of the Czech schools and get into Russian schools. Even for us, in the lower grades, and even for the younger ones. But, during that era, during the time between '39, the end, and '40, yes, she went to Solosz for the exam. Edith, they heard her speaking Hungarian, and they asked, a teacher came up and asked her name. She was talking to somebody in the halls. She gave the name, and even so, she was sure that she did her work right – they didn't pass her, because she spoke Hungarian.

Our mother tongue was Hungarian – we spoke Hungarian at home. And, when I was born, my father said: "That's enough, now we're gonna teach her Yiddish. She has to know Yiddish too. When she goes to school, she will learn the other languages. And, I started learning Yiddish and the rest of the children learned from me, Yiddish. And then when I started school, kindergarten, I started Czech school, and being that we were so surrounded with all these languages, in school, we learned German and Russian. So by the age when I was 12, I spoke at least four languages. I didn't stick with it. Even after the war, I could have gone into and... and I learned English very easily. It wasn't hard for me to study the language. On my own, I didn't go to school. With my husband, we studied. And, jumping ahead, we were in displaced persons camp and we studied English there. So, going back.

Q WHEN YOU STARTED SCHOOL, YOU SPOKE YIDDISH?

A Oh yeah. Hungarian.

Q AND?

A And I learned Czech. German, in school.

Q AND RUSSIAN.

A And Russian.

Q AND HOW LONG DID YOUR SCHOOLING CONTINUE?

A Well, the schooling wasn't too long, because it's changed around. Then the Hungarians came, and just about, just into the middle schools. They finished up with Hungarian. And then, the Hungarian didn't – they took away our privileges, all the Jewish privileges. No schools, no stores, close up. They took everything away, the privilege for business, after my father died, and then, everything collapsed.

Q BEFORE THAT HAPPENED, YOU MENTIONED GOING TO THE MALLAMUD TO LEARN THE..

A Oh, the Hebrew. Well, Hebrew language, my favourite is Hebrew and French and I never learned those. I don't speak Hebrew, but I learned the aleph-bet and I can read it. But I don't have the language, the knowledge of the language.

Q DID YOU HAVE ANY ASPIRATIONS OF WHAT YOU WANTED TO DO WHEN YOU GREW OLDER?

A When I was older? Oh, I couldn't go further to school and I learned sewing. That was a thing. My sister, Edith, who couldn't go to school - what she wanted to study for, she went and learned undergarments, like corsets,

making. And then, that was after 1940. That was after 1940. And, me, I went to learn to sew. But, it really wasn't for me. I'm not the sitting type. It wasn't good. It wasn't good. I just, I don't know.

At that period, I was sort of lost, myself. You must remember that, in our time, when we were young teens, what, my age 16, or I was 18 when I was deported. I was probably younger than you have here in America nowadays, in this age, a twelve-year-old, or maybe fourteen - they are more mature, more knowledgeable, more worldly. We were very naïve and very, very, very little girlish and very, very young and very protected. Girls didn't have professions. Girls...It just started when the difficulty came, that we had to think of, I don't know if we could think about it - what is actually your future, or your goal, or what would be good for you to do, with your life.

Q HOW LARGE WAS THE TOWN?

A The town wasn't very large. It was about 10 000 or 12 000 population. It was a big, big Jewish community, which I was thinking, trying to figure out if it was 100 / 120 families. And they were lots of peasants and they were working fields. It was a big territory, but.. and it was not ghetto-like. The Jews didn't live in ghetto. It wasn't like a [stedl?], like in Russia or Ukrania or Poland. But, the Jews did have a good life, sort of during Czechoslovakian era, from 1918 to 1938, twenty years, it was a blossoming community, and there was a fairly good life.

Q WHERE DID YOUR SISTER GET MARRIED?

A She got married right in town, where we lived and in our house was the wedding. And, the [hoopah?] was in our back yard.

Q WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER ABOUT THAT?

A Not too much. Just, I remember the [hoopah?]. But, the whole family was there. There was the uncle lived there, the oldest uncle, and he had a very large family. They were big families in those days. I mean, 6, 9, 12 children. People had large families. My uncle had a large family. And, his two married daughters lived in town. And, they had families – they each had two children. So, we got together for holidays. For the wedding they all came, and friends came. But, I don't remember the cooking and the preparation of the festivity of the wedding. I don't remember the detail. That wasn't, it's not marked. It's not in my memory.

Q DID YOUR FATHER HIRE THE MULLAMUD TO TEACH YOUR BROTHER?

A My brother went to [haydah?]. The little boys, they started when they were three or four. They had to get up early in the morning. Go to [haydah?] and then come home for breakfast, and then go to school, to regular school. He went to school. He went to Czech school. They had to study both. Or, if there was vacation, or after school, they went back to [haydah?].

Q DO YOU REMEMBER ANY BAR-MITZVAHS?

A Yes. I remember my brother's bar-mitzvah. I remember that, the whole town was there. I remember, he had a speech. There was a big lunch and the speech was such an important event that my father packed, for my uncle - the aunt who lived here, they were very close brother-in-laws, my father and my uncle Brevermann. I'm thinking about his first name. That's one thing, I'm very bad with names. Of course, I know his name. Ok – it'll come to me. I go to his grave very often – more than once

a year. I don't have my father's grave here. I'll tell you later about the cemetery at home. Anyway, he packed the speech, the papers, and the books and he sent the package to America, to my uncle. Here, to his brother-in-law. He was so proud of his sons. It was a girlish family. My uncle had six daughters and then, he had second wife. She had a daughter and he had a daughter with her, and then they had a boy, and he was also David. Rudy, they called him. In Hebrew, they were David, after the grandfather. But, in the Czech or Hungarian, they gave them little bit different names. It's not like here. They said David, you know, is David. So, he was very proud.

It was a nice bar-mitzvah. Of course, the men were separate. But that was for them. They were at the table, they were in the room. It was in our house. It was done different, not in temples, or.. It was done in the house, the whole celebration.

Q CAN YOU REMEMBER ANYTHING ELSE ABOUT IT?

A Just that, they were praising it. It was nice. The food was good. No, not such details at the happening. Well, he was born in '23, so 13 years later was '36. 1936. I remember the men. I was always peeking in. I was always curious, I wanted to see what's going on. I didn't understand it, but, I just wanted to see. But, they were separated. The women were in the other room. But, this is for the men and for the boys.

Q SO, YOU WERE NOT IN THE SAME ROOM WHEN YOUR BROTHER MADE THE SPEECH?

A No, no. He was born in the summer, so his bar-mitzvah was August. So, I know the doors were open and we could see in, in the room from outside. We had a

veranda and into the front room you could see the doors were open and that's the way it was done. It was the males – a man's world in Orthodox and in the Jewish tradition. The women are in the background, like in the Eastern countries, you know.

Q WHAT ABOUT THE CEMETARY?

A The cemetery, I hear, whoever, first of all, in the first least after the war, maybe forty years or thirty years, you know. Nobody was able to go through there because Communism, Russia, you know how it was closed up. And the border – you could've gone to the capital. They let somebody go to the capital. I lived in Los Angeles for a little while - and there was a family, a man, who had a brother who stayed in the Carpathian, in one of those towns. And, he wanted to see his brother, after so many years passed. He went to [Mukhatcho?] it was called, it's a big town which is close to Slovakia. And he met there. The brother was able to come out. It was done, I think he was one of the very, very first people who was able to do this. He wanted to give him a tallis and some Jewish books and they were able – I don't know if they checked him, if they allowed him to, I can't remember, if he was able to pass it to him and he was able to take it back home with him, from the bigger town into the smaller. It wasn't our town, but another one. There were lots of little towns around there, and it was in that area, but... I remember, Hirsch. Yes. Hirsch. But after years passed, and when it got a little bit easier, they permitted people to go. Some, very few, have dared to go. And they didn't have permission to stay. You were able to go into town in the morning, maybe spend a day. They told you how many hours you can spend there. Out! Before dark. I don't know what was the reason, why they arranged it, but they were happy to go. Very, very few – I just know about two, three people maybe, who did go. And they said:

"There is no cemetery." They built. The Jewish cemetery is not there. I wanted to go because my father was buried there and my grandparents, and my... we thought, if we go this is where we want to go visit, the cemetery. So they told me, there is no cemetery. They built a road over the cemetery area. They just, it's not what they do with the segregations of the cemeteries. So, what they are doing nowadays, in fact, I have a newspaper clipping that came out this Sunday. Anti-Semitism again in Eastern Europe and what they are doing to the cemeteries. They put crosses on the tombstones. So, we don't have any cemetery left. They just wiped it out.

Q DO YOU RECALL ANTI-SEMITISM WHEN YOU WERE GROWING UP?

A We knew we were Jewish, but, you see, with anti-Semitism, what we learn now, is when things go bad, then it's a bad economical situation. It's inflation, it's misery in the country, in an area. That's when they start hitting on the Jews. That's when anti-Semitism comes up. As I said, it was a good, good era, during Czechoslovakia. After the Second World War, everybody lived alright. They made a living, and the people, the majority of the people in [Kauwe?], in [Kirihazel?] – it was Hungary at the time, when we were taken, in '44, they were working at the railroad stations, with the railroads. They were employed, and lots of peasants with fields and have like little farms, but not this kind of calibre, not this kind of farms like here, in the West and in the United States. But, little farms, but then, they lived well.

Yes, we heard about the little boys who were with the side locks, and then the Safardic Jews, they were dressed more in the traditional black coats. They used to tease the boys. Some of the peasants were always worse with anti-Semitism. The primitive people are much more easy

to brainwash and of course, they used to tell them the Jews killed Jesus and they used to.. the were maybe knifing or rock throwing or teasing the boys. But, us girls, or in general, I really cannot say that it was that we felt because we were permitted to go where we wanted, do what we wanted, businesses. Even do, I was just interested in everything I was doing.

I was an outdoor child – I'm an outdoor person. I was, during Czechoslovakian era, we had, it was called [sukkol?]. [Sukkol?] is a bird, and this is a organisation for like exercising, physical exercising. I was interested in that, and I was allowed to go, and they took Jews. I remember that we went to Solosz, to [Savlusch?]. We were getting together from the smaller areas. We were exercising, we were training for a holiday, like, it was Mother's Day or it was October 28 was Independence Day, was a celebration. That was when the war ended and Czechoslovakia was created and then, we were like, putting a play on. This was with the exercisers or dancers. And, I remember, I went, this was 10 kilometre distance from our town to the next town. And, I was there and I remember the children, the girls were eating hotdogs, or so, and I said: "No," I had brought sardines with me.
"How come you don't eat hotdogs?"
I said: "I'm Jewish."
They were flabbergasted. I remember their – the said:
"You are allowed to be in this group?"
That was, I went home and I told on them. They told me that they were surprised that Jewish girl was allowed to be in it. That must have been – maybe I was about ten. Ten, eleven, ten. But I had to be doing it, because that's what I - I just had to be doing everything.

Q WAS THER ANY OTHER ACTIVITY LIKE THAT?

A Lots. Lots, I was a tomboy. I was into everything. I was a lot outdoors. I was hiking, I was bicycle riding, and this is for an orthodox girl, which, I think, I was the only Jewish girl who did all these things, and being interested. And, I'm still doing, I'm still doing exercises, and I'm still very much into it. We were swimming. We were allowed to go in the Summer to the river. We learned to swim on our own. What else? What did I do? I was outdoors all the time.

Q DID YOU HAVE A FRIEND GO WITH YOU, CYCLING OR SWIMMING?

A It, it – yes, the family. For swimming, we went together. All the girls, the four of us went and the cousins, and some friends, not very many Jews. But our family did this. For bicycling, it was just in town. We didn't go miles away. It was in the street, on the road. And that I did, when I was already teenager. I did the bicycling.

I did ice-skating. That took me the longest, to get ice skates. I remember I was pestering my father for ice skates. It was too dangerous. We didn't have artificial ice there. You had to go on the lake, or on water. But, yes! they did have. In the garden, at the end of our garden, there was a road. That property belonged to my grandfather and I don't know if they took it, or bought it. There was a road made and there were (inaudible – it seems as though the microphone malfunctioned) And, they built like an arena. They fenced in an area where you could - they did put up ice. And they made artificial ice, but it froze naturally. And that's where we were allowed to go skating. I had to play there. That was the area the.. – see! I am translating, looking for words of what that area, what that was called. That's where they had the celebrations. For Mother's Day, or get-togethers, they had beers, and beer and food for the adults. And we

used to dance there in the summertime. And in the winter, some, occasionally they made, not for very many years, that was just towards the end. Well, they left in '39, the Czechs. This was only during the Czech era. Later, they didn't do these things.

Q HOW LARGE WAS THIS PROPERTY?

A Well, it was a big area because – how large was it? Not like a stadium in here. But, my gosh, in our capacity. I couldn't tell you in yards or in kilometres or.. but it was a large area. They'd put up big ice in, and in the summer they were able to put, they were able to get groups of dancers and exercisers there. And they had an area put up with tables, for people to get together. They had the brass band. The Czechs had lots of, they are big in music and the brass. So that was going on for a few years, it didn't last very long. This was still when I was young, very young. But it was very happy. I was very close to my father, and it was a close family and it was a very important family.

Q WAS HE CONSIDERED ONE OF THE LEADERS OF THE COMMUNITY?

A Not my father – my father was, more quiet. The uncle was more the head of the Jewish community. He was. My father was the quiet, good-hearted. People needed help, needed some money – the poor people, they were always there. He liked very much, to bring, we had a rabbi, and there was a yeshiva, from the small towns. The young men were coming in. And I remember that my father was so advanced in health food and in, I remember, we had a bakery, but my mother used to bake homemade bread. And my father used to prepare bread and butter and put honey on top of it.

"You eat this," and I never liked white bread until nowadays I never, never prefer. I like the dark bread. And those young men who used to come to yeshiva. They came from little villages. They had stone ground flour, made out of flour – bread. And I remember that they came to our store and I asked my father to exchange. They wanted white bread. And I used to eat – this is such a tiny, little thing – but I just remember this so well. How important. I didn't care for that white, spongy bread. It had to be the dark bread, and that's what I like now, too.

My father was very, very important to me. When he died, I thought that the world collapsed. I was not quite fifteen - I thought it's the end of the world. And, it looks like that was just the beginning of the end.

Q CAN YOU REMEMBER WHEN THE CZECHS LEFT, WHAT THE FEELING WAS?

A Oh, yes. Yes, I remember, when the Czechs.. I had friends - Czech friends, we used to play together. I was twelve. They left, and the Hungarians came, and do you know, that I must say that our parents were waiting for the Hungarians. They thought it's going to be very good. They thought, if I just think of it, it looked like this was a temporary thing, those twenty years, for them, although it was good life. But the Hungarian police had hats with feather. I think that still exists. I think in Hungary that they have feathers. They are like a rooster's tail feathers, as I recall, it's not one, but it was like a bunch of feathers by the side of the heads. And the called, the Czech boys they always said that the ["faydah"?], with the feathers, that's how they remarked. But it was a celebration. It was a happy time for our parents.

We had a customer, a Hungarian, who came for very many years and he was in our house, then the Hungarians

came in. And, I don't know how, but we had a seamstress also living in our back yard. She was also renting from us. It was a little house there. And she was a seamstress, and her and my mother, with the help of this Hungarian man, put together Hungarian flag. They had it ready, when the Hungarians came in. They were such hot Hungarians. I mean, that was such a surprise to us, to the children, that they were ready. They were ready for them. And, it looked like it's – as I look back at it – they were happy. Happy occasion, the Hungarians came back. What a misfortune, what a tragedy happened.

Q DO YOU RECALL THEM, BEFORE YOUR FATHER DIED, BECOMING UNHAPPY ABOUT ANY..?

A Oh yes, because they very shortly, they took the permission away. We couldn't sell. We couldn't have the store. They took the license away. And, it was beginning to crumble. Our lives, like a, it was just, yes, yes and after, as I described they took him in, and the war broke out and they took him in for service for serving, taking care of the bridges. And they took him for work. They came on a Saturday, and we had a town crier, you know, and they announced things what they had to do. I don't know, they had to gather some place, city hall, and then they gave them shovels and then they had to work. I mean that was already a miserable time. It was beginning. So, it didn't last at all, the joy or the happiness didn't last. Long, not very long.

Q WHAT DID YOUR FATHER DO FOR A LIVELIHOOD AFTER THE PERMISSION TO SELL WAS TAKEN?

A What was happening in that era, in that time? In the beginning, what did we do? I can't, I don't know. Only, my father's desk stands out, in 1940. But later, after he

died, my sister worked. And then, I came in. I went to Sat Mar and I was more, not with the sewing. But more in doing some little business, doing.. I went to Sat Mar – I had, my mother's family was there. She had a brother there, she had two sisters there, and their children.

My uncle in Sat Mar, he was, he still had, like, a little eatery. People were coming in to eat. It was a small place. And he had his nephew or cousin, also was a cousin to me, his brother's son. They used to cook, prepare soap. During the war, you couldn't get anything there. That was a big item. The people washed by hand. No washing machines. He used to make, they used to, I don't know how.. They had the raw material, they were making soap. And I came and then packed in a suitcase and brought home and we were selling. This was '40. Yes, you see the borders opened, because that's Transylvania, you heard about Transylvania. So, this was just a distance of 60 kilometres during.. We were in Czechoslovakia and Sato Mar was Romania. But, we were liberated, they called it at that time. The Hungarians came in, to our area, in '39 and then, Transylvania, this area, where you hear so much troubles were what was happening there now. That part of Transylvania, Sat Mar belongs there. There are.. I was able to travel, I mean, you didn't need anymore passports, because we always for twenty years, you had to have passports. My mother was going home to her mother lived there and her sisters and the brothers. And, she used to go at least twice a year. And, always took two little children with her. I remember my last trip was 12. In '38 we went by passport, our last time, it was my turn with the little brother. So, we were doing whatever we could. I did learn to sew, but it didn't work out. It just wasn't for me. I had to be a bit with people. And I had to do something that is more, to move around and, I can't sit still that much. So, they were pretty hard times after the Hungarians came.

And it was just crumbling. Then, we were hearing about things, what was going on. Very little was coming out. But, when in 1941, '42, '43 they were taking the Jews.

They were beginning to take people, not whole families, like they took later. The Germans were coming. Of course, I skipped that. They took part of Czechoslovakia when the Hungarians came to our area. Bohemia, Moravia, Slovakia was taken. The Germans moved in – in that part of Czechoslovakia.

Q WHEN DID YOU FIRST BECOME AWARE OF NAZI GERMANY..?

A I wasn't aware. Thinking back, as a teenager, of really the weight of it, of what's happening. My uncle's daughter was married to a Polish, he was born in Poland, which I didn't know, I wasn't aware of that, at the time. But, when they started getting the Jews, the Germans, getting the Jews in Poland.. am I making any sense.. then, they came to Hungary. And, I don't know how they were aware of all these people. But this cousin of mine, who was married to the Polish man, he was in forced labour camp. He was not home. And they, the authorities came, the Hungarian authorities, they had gotten a order to gather these people. They were not very many, but this was one family they took away. And this was in 1942.

Q AND YOUR COUSIN?

A My cousin, her husband wasn't home and she had the two children, her son and her daughter. The daughter is just not quite a year younger. She survived, she was with me in Auschwitz for the six months. Her mother ... Anyway, this was the first time that they were taken. And they were taken to Poland. We had some family there, in

[Kolomay?]. That was a town that they were gathering. It was close up north, to the Czech border, to [Yasinah?].

That time, we were beginning to hear those horrible things that were going on in Poland, with the Jews. They were, they said they going to be killed. I mean they take them. That was already, I was beginning to wake up, that was already a threat, that they are taking this family. It still didn't come to us, but this was getting very close.

I don't know if it was exactly during this time that I mentioned to you about the trains were coming from Czechoslovakia. It was not whole Czechoslovakia, because Czechoslovakia consists of Bohemia, Moravia, Slovakia and then, we were the Carpathrosen. The Slovakian - the Jews were taken before us. That was also in '42, and that's when a friend of mine came. He was a young man. He says: "Come, let's.. – there are train's coming. They are bringing the Jews from Slovakia. They are going to take them to Poland. They are taking them away."
We were not sure. I can't recall if it was clear to me. But, the trains stopped out of the station, long tracks, it stretched all across and it was like a protected, a hidden place, that... And we had a fountain there, that you were able to, it was drinking water. And we used to bring our drinking water from there. It was close to us. So we got buckets and cups from home and the two of us. .. They did permit, at that time, they opened up those carts of.. They were not regular trains already at that time. They were cattle cars, is that how you call it? They did open - they did give permission to... We had permission to give them water, but they were pretty brief. They told us to get away. But I remember that we helped them out with the water. We couldn't get it. Later they didn't permit this, or maybe, they didn't permit it at every stop, or, I don't know, if they were refuelling or they're getting cold, because

those were steam engines. But, I remember, we helped them.

This must have been during the same time when Lily was taken – and with her family and [Artur?]. They were saved. They were saved. There was a family of another uncle's in-laws. They lived [Kolomay?], in this Polish town. They were notified. I don't know how they let them know that this family is there, the cousins. They saved them. They had money and they were able to come back, but they didn't come back to our town. They were hiding them until the father, I don't know how long it took. It was quite a while, I know. But, they were able to get papers. And first, they were hiding, then after, they came back. They brought them back, hidden in trucks. She never talked about that experience. How they existed there and how they came across the borders and how were hidden. They were hidden at another cousin in Sat Mar and after they legalized it, somehow, they made papers and their father came home and they were able to come back. And that was for, maybe, a year, a year and a half before we were taken.

Q HOW OLD WERE YOU, WHEN YOU BROUGHT WATER TO THE TRAIN?

A About 16, 16 and a half. It was the summertime. They were very hot and it was very difficult there for them.

Q THIS WAS 1941?

A There about '42, about '42. Yes, '42. See, I was born in '25, but December. My end of the year, so by the year, I am a year older.

Q WHAT DID THE PEOPLE INSIDE THE CARS LOOK LIKE?

A Haggard, tired, miserable. Miserable, they were travelling already, I don't know, by today's standards, it's not that much of a distance. But, in those days, by train, it probably, they were already two days in those trains and they still had to go all the way into Poland. I don't know if they took them to Auschwitz, if that existed already. It was fairly beginning of it. But, it did exist.

Q DID YOU SPEAK TO ANY OF THEM?

A We were not allowed to speak, where they came from. We were just glad we were able to give them the cups of water, getting some more, running to haul the water. It didn't last very long. They closed it and... [shakes head]

Q DID ANYONE SAY ANYTHING?

A No, they didn't say. They didn't say. No, I couldn't recall, I don't think any speaking, even can't remember if there was any certain language that we exchanged. I don't know. [shakes head, in thought]

Pause in "Tape 1"

Q TOUCHING ONCE AGAIN ON THE TRAINS. CAN YOU ESTIMATE HOW MANY PEOPLE THERE WERE IN THE CATTLE CAR?

A I would say there was a little room. They were able to move around a little bit. I wouldn't say they were so bunched up as later. Later, we were hundred and we were just able to sit when we were taken. They had a little more freedom, a little more room to move around. I remember that, I remember somehow, vividly, men in

white shirts, shirtsleeves, sitting there and taking the water. And people were sitting and somehow, there was a little space in the front. It wasn't completely packed.

Q HOW MANY TIMES DID YOU VISIT THE TRAINS AND GIVE THEM WATER?

A It wasn't too many times, because we were not aware of it. I don't know how, this young man, he was very interested, he was studying with the rabbi. He was also a religious man. But he came, a young man, he was maybe two or three years older than me, two years. He was about three years older. He, I don't know how he found out about the train coming. It happened to be daytime. Probably it was nighttime when they were passing through. But we were not aware. It happened, maybe once or twice. The one I really clearly remember. Maybe, a second time and maybe we went out. Next time - I think it's clearing, coming back to me, that we were not allowed, they didn't open. It was daytime that they passed. They didn't want to open the cars. They didn't let us give them water. We came, that we gonna give. I remember that. I remember that we were not able to get to them.

Q WAS THIS ABOUT THE TIME THAT THE PICTURE OF YOU IN THE GARDEN WAS TAKEN?

A It, probably about that time, because we had a .. This is, I'm telling slowly, it's coming back to me, that the property, the houses, how they, it was located in our yard. They were little buildings. They were not huge buildings. It was a small yard. But there were buildings there, and there was another building where the store front, say if this was the entrance, the gate. And our store was on this side, and then there were two rentals. And this one was on the left side, and this was a watchmaker family lived

there. They were, in fact, he's the one, yes, he's the one who made this ring that my brother-in-law got from him. And he had a camera, and he was taking those pictures. This is what I'm trying to get to. He was the one who was taking those little snapshots. It must have been at that time. Yes, it was already after my father died. So I was 16, I wasn't older than that. It must have been about that time. '42. Yah, this is when I was learning to sew. In fact, that blouse was made by me. This top that I'm wearing, with the navy blue pleated skirt. That little top – I was learning to sew and I made that myself. This just came home.

Q WHO TOOK THE PICTURE?

A The picture was taken by this man - the watchmaker. He had a camera. We didn't have any. And, in fact, he even made the pictures. I mean, he had his dark room. He took the snapshots and he made them. He used to take lots of pictures there.

Q I SAW A PICTURE EARLIER OF MOST OF YOUR FAMILY, YOUR SISTERS AND BROTHER AND YOUR PARENTS. TELL ME ABOUT THAT.

A Yes. Oh I remember getting ready for making that picture. I remember combing my hair and they hurried us children. We were running out, it was a big thing. Even remember the photographer – like - he was a professional photographer. He had one of those cameras with the stands. He put a black, kind of a cover, over his head and looked in the lens, until he was arranging. It's so funny how he took. He put that black sheeting behind the wall, but it didn't reach for all of us. He did that. So, it would have been better probably, I don't know, the dark with the white, it doesn't .. We had on little sailor outfits. My cousin looked at the picture.

She says: "It reminds me so much, it's like the Romanoffs, the Tzar with the children, with those outfits."

Q DID IT TAKE A LONG TIME?

A A very long time. Ah! That took forever. That took forever. Everybody got so tired. My mother couldn't take it. And, my older sister must have moved. I mean, she was, how old? She was 10, if it was.. She was born in 1920. She must have been 10 years old. And how, I mean, the face, doesn't look... I mean, it doesn't show the faces.

Q HOW LONG A PERIOD OF TIME DID IT TAKE TO GET THE PICTURE?

A Hours, hours, hours. He weared out us and he wore himself out. The man was a sort of a cripple. He had a bad arm and he was limping. Something was wrong with him. But this, he made a livelihood somehow. Nobody else was doing that. A Jewish man. I remember him. He did more.

We had more pictures. I have one more family picture, that it was taken later. I don't know. It's not interesting. Anyway, I was about 12. That's my father. And, I also have a picture of my father, which was a passport picture. It's beautiful. My sister didn't know. I don't know, I had it. My aunt gave it to me. It was a small, a tiny little picture, like just a little passport or for an identification. And I showed it to my sister and then I said: "You know, I'm going to enlarge this and you'll get one." And then, my photographer who did the copies, like my grandparents. I got that copy from my aunt. I took the picture out of the frame and I took it to a camera man, [Melbray?], and he photographed it and he made these for me. And I gave - and I had several order. I made for all the cousins. And

my aunt had it in a big frame. But I have a whole wall with these pictures, so I didn't put it in a big frame. Is this interesting? I don't know. It's just coming to me. So this picture deal. Well, we were taking lots and lots of pictures in those days, too. We take more now. It's nicer. Colour pictures are nicer.

Q TELL ME ABOUT YOUR FAVOURITE SPOT IN THE GARDEN, WHERE YOUR PICTURE WAS TAKEN.

A I had, we had a big old walnut tree there. And when I was a little girl, I used to sit there and take out my little sewing and scissors, and I used to make doll clothes'. As a child, I liked to sew. Make up my own little things there. I used to sit under that tree. And when the holidays – [shavours?] – came, we already had it for summer. Five weeks after Passover to Pasich, you have [Shavours?], and we used to take the branches, leaves and create the house behind pictures - behind the mirrors in the rooms, to get a nicer smell, it smelt so nice. We didn't have an abundance of flowers, but we were growing vegetables in the garden. This was all the greenery with this picture. You know, I was sixteen. There were bushes. But it was a very, very big way. We grew corn and then we had a small part, a vegetable garden, I used to help my mother a little bit. She used to like to go out there and work and plant radishes. We had green onions, carrots. We didn't grow, I don't remember tomatoes. Spinach, and in the bigger part, and further, potatoes and corn were growing. Who was working there? We had somebody who took care of that - that was working.

Later on, we had a back neighbour. They were Hungarians. And later, my mother let them work part of it and we shared. She even let them divide the corn, what was growing. For the land, they gave us half. I mean, or we gave them half. They worked, they planted it and so

we had corn there. And the reason I'm mentioning this, because this family, it was Hungarian. It was pretty large family. And, they were sort of, my mother used to talk with her and after we were taken in, in 1944, in the spring. After Passover, when they gathered in our town, the Jews, to take us to the ghetto, I ran over to this lady. We couldn't go out. We were already wearing a star. On the street, I had to have the yellow Star of David. We couldn't go out on the street. But I was able to go to her, in the back. I didn't get out in the street. I went through the garden - and over the fence, she lived. And I was able to go in through a gate. There was a gate. So they were able to come into like a small field. This garden was like a small field. And I went to them. This was after Passover. We finished all the food we had prepared. We had no bread yet, and I asked her that they are taking us away. "Would you.." - they already knew and they were happy about it. "To give us something to, some food to take with us." She didn't want to. She refused, she said she doesn't have anything. And when, I'm going to jump again, when I came home, she asked for my mother. I said: "She is no.." I went to see her, and she was crying to me that the Russians took the men folk away. Her daughters were married, and I should help her. I said: "No." I did, and I'm very good hearted and I always was. I always helped everybody I could, because I was in position, after they took us, and I was able to help people and I don't know how I said it. But boy, I never, to day I couldn't forget that, that we were neighbours and friends and how cruel she was in not giving us anything to eat, to take with us, when we had not anything. It was just after Passover. We were taken to the ghetto, with nothing. No food. I mean, what could we carry? Clothes or anything that... This is how cruel all the people and whoever lived there.

They were jumping with joy that the Jews were taken away. And things were left to them. Everything that was left there – they were able... I don't know what happened after the authorities came and gathered in the Jewish homes – I mean, all the belongings, all the things that were in the households. But I know, after I came back, I went to one of our tenants and they lived some place else at the time and I said: "Any clothes, anything left? Do you know who went in our house?"
She says: "Here," and took me up in the attic and showed me an attic full of rags, clothes that they gathered up for themselves.
And I said: "No, thank you. I don't see anything that was mine."

Q WHEN DID YOU BECOME AWARE OF HOW CRUEL THE HUNGARIANS WERE?

A Oh, already from the very beginning. I mean, there was licenses were taken away. We couldn't do, food was getting less and less. I mean, I think my mother had to sell to the watchmaker. I think, do you see this chain [looking at photo] she had a watch, a gold watch that was.. Her father gave to her, and my father had a gold watch with a chain. That was saved. But her little watch that she wore – she sold. I didn't know, we didn't know about that. I was already a teenager, but I wasn't aware of what was going on. I think it was gold, with the double deck. I mean it opened up. I think my mother sold that. She needed it, need for, to buy food, flour.. You couldn't get anymore white flour. I went away from our town. I went to another town, to my cousin, to my uncle. This is [Cighet?]. Did you hear about [Cighet?]?

Q TELL ME.

A That's the town where ?? comes from. [Cighet?], Romania. Hungary, it was Hungary at the time. I was, I had a cousin who lived there and I stayed there for a few months. Again, they tried, that's when they tried me to learn to sew. They gave me to, sign me up. We had to pay for .. And I stayed with my cousin. I didn't go too far. It just didn't work. That didn't work – I went home. And by the time when I came back there was less and less food. There was no more white flour for [halah?] for Friday. There was – you could get more dark flour, but those were awful times. I was aware – I was aware of the bad times. Yes, I was definitely aware that it was horrible.

Q WHEN DID YOU BEGIN TO WEAR THE YELLOW STAR?

A The yellow star – that's when, that was towards the end. It wasn't in '42, '43. It was towards the end – I don't know if it, the end, very end of '43 or the very beginning of 1944. The yellow - the stars. When the Germans were coming closer they were getting in.. they left Hungary last, they were not in Hungary. They were working all around us. Getting ... they didn't come in, into this area. This wasn't very important, although we were – but they surrounded it. Then, they came in, into – they were right there, physically, in our town. And they have, their officers occupied some of the Jewish homes, I think. Some - at my uncle's house, and one at my cousin's house. This, the stars – it was towards the end. And nobody wanted to go out. There was any errands to do, the rest of the family, the other children, didn't go and I had to do all – I was ready to go. And I remember crossing the railroad tracks, going over to my sister's house and I worried.. And of course, the workers, the railroad tracks, I remember they were making fun of me – they were laughing at me. They were..

Q WHY?

A Because of the star. The Jews were marked. They laughed and made fun. They enjoyed it. They really had joy. They did enjoy it, seeing us getting down – down from our pedestals. The Jews had it so good because we worked. We were honest. We didn't drink, but it was always a problem that the Jew has. The Jew had the money. But they were drinking – they spent their money on alcohol.

Q WHEN DID BLANCHE'S HUSBAND LEAVE?

A He was called in – well, this was from the beginning, because she was married in 1940 and in the summer... And when my father died he wasn't at home, because I was at my sister's house. My bother-in-law's father lived there too. My sister married and she went there. He was a widower and she took care of him. And when my father died, he got ill at night. The doctor came. There was no telephone. They had to go and get the doctor. The pharmacy was across the street from us. So they woke up the pharmacist. I wasn't home. But my sister ran. It was a Friday, very early in the morning, dawn. She ran and woke us up. "Come home, father's very ill. Father died." He was dead already. He got ill. He had a heart attack and the doctor came and gave him a shot. He got better. He left.

End of Tape 1..

# Interview with EVA BOROS [Part 2]
## Bay Area Holocaust Oral History Project

**Date: 5/15/1991 Place: San Francisco, CA**
**Interviewer: Sylvia Prozan**
**Transcriber: Tessa Botha**

"Begin Tape 2 of 2"

Q THE DOCTOR GAVE YOUR FATHER A SHOT, YOU SAID.

A Yes, but it didn't help. He had a massive heart attack. I remember that my sister, or my brother told us that the dog was barking – it was a very, very bad barking dog.
And my father asked the doctor: "I am that bad, I am that sick that I need a shot."
I don't know what the medication – what they did. But that was it. He didn't, he didn't make it – he died.

And, you see, my father - we are [Kohanim?] and it was Friday when he died and usually they bury right away, the religious and the Jews do that. And, they couldn't.

Shabbaz - Saturday came. And he was lying on the floor, they put him on the floor in the room, in the bedroom. And had to wait for the funeral till Sunday. It was, the funeral was like a [sadic?] – they said they took his body to the temple's, to the courtyard and the whole town was there. And an uncle, an ex-uncle came from Sat Mar. He

was a very, very educated in Jewish knowledge and he spoke. I mean, they said it's only done for a [sadic?] – for a big rabbi, then they do this kind of a funeral. So he died in a very, very and the funeral – it was very respectful.

My uncle couldn't come. You see, with the cemetery they were – with the grandfather and my father - they buried them, [kohanim?], around the fence, because they not allowed to go - to be present or close by a corpse. It's not kosher. They can't be present, so they couldn't even go to visit the cemetery - to go in. So they had to be buried alongside the fence so when they went for visiting the graves, before the young holidays – before Rosh Hashanah. They used to go to the cemeteries, and they had to pray from outside, from a certain distance. And my uncle couldn't make it to the funeral, because he says: "I cannot be there. Can't be in one room with a corpse."

They were very, very proud [kohanim?] – those Jews, in those days. But it was a beginning of the tragedies, with losing my father and later on I could see that it was good that he was buried at home. But now I can't go home. I can't to visit his grave. There is no graves left.

It was a shocker. It was a big shock to us. In fact, my sister really got very, very sick after the shock. In the evening we left. We left our house, our parents. My father was well. He was writing a letter. He was writing to a nephew. He had a nephew in New York. He was writing a letter. It wasn't even sealed. He was fine in the evening. That was his last letter. And he died in, during the dawn hours.

So when my sister, and Edith, came to tell us, it was a very big shock. My sister really couldn't take it. And that's

her husband. You asked me – again, your question about my brother-in-law. He was away at that time. I don't know what for or how long. But he did come back after '42, '43. I don't know, he must have come back in 1942. I know that my sister – the little boy, Barry, he was 18 month old when we were deported. We lost him too, with my sister. She carried him. This is when we got to Auschwitz.

Q YOUR BROTHER-IN-LAW LEFT IN 1940.

A For forced labour, for this duty that they had to do. They were working. I don't know, on railroad tracks, building, whatever, on roads. I don't know - they were a commando. They were a whole like, instead of serving, because they were Jews – they were not trustworthy, they had to be degraded. They had to do the works that were needed to be – the repairs and building and whatever needed to be done.

Q WHAT ABOUT YOUR OLDER BROTHER?

A Well, my older brother was 21 in '44, when we were in the ghetto. We took him. There was a way they took us to the ghetto and how we got there. But talking about my brother, he was.. they came in and they announced that the 21 year.. – the ones who were born in '23 – well, he wasn't 21 yet, because this was in the spring, in May, in April. He was only 21 in August, but he was born in '23. So they came and they announced that the young men who were born in '23 they are being taken out from the ghetto to serve, into forced labour camp. So they took them to Transylvania, to another, to a big town. They gathered them there, that was the last I saw of him.

Q IN 1942 AND 1943, HOW MANY PEOPLE WERE LIVING IN YOUR HOME?

A Oh, in the home where we were taken. Well, with my mother, we lived, the five of us, we were home. But the sister was married, had her own. She lived in the other home. But we were, we lived there, we were five children, were still home.

Q WHAT WAS LIFE LIKE IN 1943?

A In 1943 was already very, very degrading, very, very poor quality – very, very sad. Rumours, people were talking. I don't know - everything was a secret. They didn't, the adults, the women, mothers got together, and they were talking and whispering about the situation and what's happening in the world and somehow, it wasn't clear to me. It isn't clear now, of how those things were done. They didn't tell us. They didn't tell us that the – we were just waiting there.
"What's gonna happen to us?"
I mean, everybody – we knew already that people are taken and taken. What's going on and what's happening? We didn't know about details of how they are killing, or what's happening to the people.

Nobody knew that, in our town, of the cruelty, exactly of the way they were killing people. Although, see they were not talking, when my cousin, when Lily came back from Poland, they *never* talked about this things. What was happening there, that, they were shooting the people and they were digging the holes and they had – they shot the people right... and had those mass graves.

Later on, later on they were talking. People were talking. I don't know where it came from, where did I find out, how did I find out.

Because in Auschwitz, when men came and told us what's happening, they were asking.. I don't know where I was, my sister, my older sister was there and the girls gathered around. There were couple of men, they were working and they were sitting down there and talking. And they were trying to explain, enlighten those people, the inmates, the girls that ...
"What do you think? Where are the parents? Where are the older folks? Where are the children?"
"They are out – out through the chimney."
I didn't want to believe it. I said I didn't want to listen. I didn't want to listen to it. But, it was true. It was very true.

Q IN 1944, CAN YOU REMEMBER THAT LAST [SAYDAH?]?

A Yes, I remember the last [saydah?]. The Germans were already there. And they went to the bakery. They went into the back. And we were cleaning, preparing for Passover. I was cleaning windows. And well, one of them came up and looked through the house and he thought we had some bottles there, and he thought it was drinks. And we had oil for Passover and [pensive, as though the memory was painful] well.. it was a very, very hard holiday. It was already a very, very, very, very difficult Passover.

Q THEY WANTED DRINKS?

A Yah, they wanted drinks and then they was praising me. You know – "You are a beautiful girl." And no, they

didn't do anything. We were not, I wasn't, personally, I wasn't hurt through the whole time. But we were afraid already. We were very, very.. It was very, very close and we had double doors. We locked the doors. And in the evening, we were very quiet and our [saydah?] was very quiet, and my brother conducted the [saydah?]. And that was just a very sad, a sad thing.

Well, they were, we were.. we had a very bad scare, because they, soldiers, they came back at night. They were knocking on the door. Luckily, they went away. My mother said that the girls went to the officer, to our cousin's house, that we went out there, that we are not harmed. We ran out of the back door. So, they listened. And they left. They left. No harm was done.

Q WHEN DID THE GERMANS ENTER THE CITY?

A They entered in the very early spring of '44, not before.

Q THEY HAD JUST ARRIVED?

A Yes, yes. They let us stay home for Passover. They didn't budge us. They didn't do anything. But, right after Passover was over, at dawn, they announced that all the Jews leave everything there. Take just, I don't know, a little personal thing. I don't know if anything you took – little bag. And everybody gathered has to be gone to the courtyard, to the temple. And they went house-to-house – Hungarian soldiers and police, or the soldiers, with their rifles and they gathered the people. They still stayed overnight in the temple.

We were not taken that first night, but the next morning. My sister was taken and we didn't even wait for them to come into the house where my mother wanted to be with the daughter and we all left. That was our goal. They kept us there, in the temple. Then, all the peasants, with wagons, with carriages, had to come. They lined up and they put us on those carts, on those carriages. They were drawn by horses and by cows. And we had a procession out of town, into the ghetto, which was next town, 10 kilometres.

Q HOW MANY PEOPLE PER CARRIAGE?

A Well, we were sitting as many as they... by families. I think that we were by families, sitting there on the floor. There were boards puts across and that's how they transported us to the ghetto.

Q DID YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO EAT?

A I don't remember about food at all. I just... there just was no food. And nobody had it. Nobody. I don't know how later, in the ghetto, how food came in. I didn't see any food. I just remember that I was sitting there in a garden, down in the ghetto. And, there just was no food. My mother comes – has a little bowl with a little potato. And I don't know if she ate, but she gave it to me and I ate it, and I never asked her if she had anything to eat.

I don't know how they came, because they put us into homes. They squared off a part of town and they made a ghetto. And they were Jewish homes and this landlady emptied a room. And we were the whole family, everybody, with my sister's father-in-law – he was with us, in a room. That's where we lived. And this landlady, I

don't know if she had anything for herself, because she had little children. She didn't share with any, didn't talk to anybody. And I don't how we spent there – four or five weeks – how did we manage? I don't know.

But at the end, the baker, who used to be in our town, he baked bread, which was like the mud, flat bread. And when we were taken, when they were emptying the ghettos, they were gathering us and sending us .. "Where are we going?"
I don't know, so we knew we were going to Poland, that time we already knew that this is, this is the slaughter house. Going, and we had some breads given. They told us to come and get it. And we didn't eat it, even at that time. I don't know – I was sitting on my sack in the wagons where we were packed in. I don't know, hundred, or hundred and twenty, the whole family. And we were together, with my uncle.

Oh, I remember, when we were going up into the carts, a soldier kicked my uncle so bad, his hat flew off his head. And I was right behind him. I just remember this so well. My uncle was 64. I mean this was respectable old man. I guess now, I'm at the end of the rope. [looks tired]

Q WHAT WAS THE NAME OF THE TOWN WHERE THE GHETTO WAS..?

A The ghetto was in Solosz. The ghetto, that was Hungary.

Q AND HOW LONG DID IT TAKE YOU TO THE GHETTO, FROM THE TEMPLE?

A How long did that..? I remember seeing the people in the windows. I remember passing our town house, and the whatever - mayor, whatever you call him, at the time, he was a Hungarian, looked in the window as we were passing. How long did it take us? I don't know how many hours. Time was, didn't mean, the days and the hours, it didn't mean anything, anymore.

Q IN THIS ROOM IN THE TOWN, IN THE GHETTO, YOU WERE ALL THE SISTERS AND BROTHERS. . AND THE BABY?

A Yes, we were, yes, and the baby. We were on the floor. I don't know how, but we were lying there on the floor, sleeping on the floor at night, I think. I don't know - did we have blankets? I just, I can't remember, I can't remember this in such detail. How did we sleep there? How did we exist, already there?

Q AND YOU GOT THERE SHORTLY AFTER PASSOVER?

A That, the same day. We didn't ride overnight. We didn't, we must have gotten there the same day.

Q AND HOW LONG WERE YOU THERE?

A We stayed there about, at least four weeks, four to five - four weeks, because we got to Auschwitz exactly one week before [shavours?]. So, about four weeks.

Q AND WHAT HAPPENED WHEN YOU LEARNED YOU WERE GOING, LEAVING THE GHETTO? HOW DID YOU KNOW?

A Well, they announced it, that this section has to gather up and.. you know, I don't remember how they took us to the stations. How did we get there? Did we walk? We were lined up. They just announced it that we are taking, we are going by groups. Families stayed together, they announced. Everybody always, like through the whole time, even in Auschwitz, it was just a very important thing to stick together. The separation, the tearing apart families or sisters was a very big, big tragedy - very big, big mission. So we just sticking, families together.

Q HOW DID YOU TRAVEL TO AUSCHWITZ?

A There, we were packed in those cattle cars nothing given, and we sat again on the floors, on the floor. And we were travelling. We didn't – we really, we said: "We don't know where we are going"

There was no water. There was nothing. People were kicking around. Nobody died in our, on our trip, going. How did we survive? I don't know what a human, how much a human being can take, or endure, of no food, no water, for days. It was at least three days.

Q HOW LONG WAS THE TRIP?

A At least three days. It was raining and I remember I put a little cup out. There was a little window - to get a little rain water, and maybe I drank that. And the baby was crying. He was in my sister's lap. And my mother and my other sister, and that's where we were sitting.

Q AND THEN WHAT HAPPENED?

A Well, we arrived at Auschwitz. And we didn't know where we were.

Maybe I call it a day. I can't go on now.

"End of Tape 2 – Part 2 of 2."