

[INAUDIBLE] OK. Hi, I'm Sandra Berdayan. I'm here interviewing Richard Shand for the Holocaust Oral History Project. Today is the 18th of November, 1994, and John Grant is our producer. Could you start by introducing yourself and say if your name was different at birth than it is now?

Yes, indeed. My name at birth was Ludwig Willi Schohan. And subsequently down the line, it was changed to Richard William Shan Saabor. And believe it or not, it was changed a third time to Richard William Shand.

We may come by it later on, but briefly, how did you come by the first name change?

After I reached England and after my great uncle, whose name was Saabor, who was my grandmother's brother, took over my education, helped me to become a pharmacist, the intent was I was to take over his manufacturing business and pharmacy until his son was old enough. His son was somewhat my junior. And for business reasons, and also I had no reason to hang on to my name Schohan, I decided to shorten the name to Shan and make it a double barrel name-- call myself Shan Saabor, which was his name. When Uncle died, I felt that this long handle was unwieldy, and I changed it a second time to Richard Shand.

And where and when were you born?

I was born on the 26th of August, 1929, in Breslau, Germany. It's now Wroclaw in Poland.

And what were your parents' names?

My father's name was Erwin, and my mother's name was Gerta.

Did you have any brothers or sisters?

No, I'm an only child.

How about any other relatives?

Yes. I had a grandmother on my mother's side, and she had a brother, which was the gentleman I mentioned earlier, Hardi Saabor, who helped me later in life. I also had another paternal grandmother, whom I don't remember too well except she lived in a town called Gliwice. And I always called her Oma Gliwice to identify her. And she was pretty old. I don't really remember too much about her. I remember visiting her once or twice in Gliwice, but I have very unclear memories of her.

Did you have any aunts and uncles?

I had a gentleman whom I called Uncle, but I think he was a cousin of my Uncle Hardi. And he was a distant relative. He was a dentist who lived in Berlin. And sometimes, he did my teeth.

So does this mean that your parents were only children or that you had emigrated to Breslau from elsewhere?

I'm really a little vague about my background. It seems to me that my father had a brother, but it's very vague in my mind. I think my mother was an only child.

Were your parents religious people?

Well, not exactly religious. We did have Seder, and we were, I would say, Jewish, but not very devout. Does that explain it?

Yes. Yes. Did you in any way belong to the synagogue or the Jewish community?

I don't remember too much as a child going to synagogue. Later on in life, I did have a confirmation, which is a type of bar mitzvah. But that took place after I got to England. And I can go into that a little later.

What kind of work did your father do?

My father was a commercial traveler or salesman, if you will. And he was away most of the week. I saw him mainly during the weekends. My mother didn't work. She was a housewife.

And what was he selling?

I think he dealt mainly in shirts. I seem to remember seeing shirts and things. It may have been some other items, but I remember distinctly shirts.

So I presume you got to an agent-- going to a school.

Yes, indeed. Yes, indeed.

Did you go to a public school or a private school?

I think I went to private school. The only thing I really remember about the school was that the headmistress was Fraulein Bapp. And I knew it was in Breslau. But I do have some pictures. I didn't bring those with me, and surprisingly enough, I have a school friend here who's from England.

And he and I were talking the other day, and he told me that he met a gentleman who was a musician who also fled from Germany at the same time as I did. And the picture, which I showed you earlier of I in the train, has his picture also. And he seemed to remember me, but I don't have any clear recollection of him at all. But it's a strange coincidence.

Yeah, it is. Do you have any sense of suffering from any anti-Semitism when you were a child in Breslau?

Probably not that I can recall at this point.

Do you recall when things started to get scary or--

Yes. That I can recall. I recall very vividly coming home from school one day and seeing the synagogue, which was right at the end of our street, in flames. And I saw a lot of shop windows which were smashed and the merchandise lying around in the streets. I didn't know why the shop windows were smashed, but when I did go home, I told my mother, who was home, that the synagogue's burning. And I found out later that all the stores and things which were smashed were stores owned by Jewish people.

Mm-hmm. Was this Kristallnacht?

Kristallnacht, yes.

So that was your first awareness of--

That was my first awareness. And then the other thing which comes back to me is we always lived in the same house that I can remember on Victoria Strasse in Breslau. But for some unknown reason, I think this was sometime in '38, we had to move. And this was after Kristallnacht. And we had to sell a lot of things.

And I remember my father putting up a sign above the apartment-- we had a main entrance of the apartment building, and he had to put it very high. And I always said to him-- all the items were listed which we had for sale. And I always remember asking him, why is it so high? Why is it so difficult for people to be able to read it? And his reply was we had to put it up there because otherwise it would be torn down.

So getting back to your earlier questions, maybe that was the first glimmering which I had of anti-Semitism.

Do you know why your parents chose to move?

In retrospect, I believe that they knew that they had to get me out of the country. And I think they knew something about the Kindertransport at that time because the exit visa, which you're taking a picture of, was made out in Breslau. And it was made out either the end of '38 or beginning of '39. And that was about the same time frame.

So I think to begin with, the situation in Breslau was untenable. Also Uncle Hardi, who was a dentist-- correction, Uncle Hans, who was a dentist, was in Berlin. And my grandmother's brother, Uncle Hardi, also lived in Berlin. And I think it may have been the desire of my mother, particularly, to be close to them. And I assume that the Kindertransport did not leave from Breslau. It probably left from Berlin.

Now, this is assumption on my part. I'm not sure about this.

Of course, you were young.

Exactly.

But can you remember any discussions in front of your parents about the politics or?

Not about the politics. The only thing I remember very clearly is after we moved to Berlin, we moved into a very small place. I think it was just a bedroom. I think my mother may have cooked on a little stove or something in the corner. It was very small. It wasn't like our apartment at all.

And I remember seeing the telephone was covered with a cloth or blanket or something. And I asked why. And my mother said, well, we don't know who may be listening in. This was always a mystery to me. But later on, became clear, obviously. They had snooping devices.

When you were in Breslau, did you associate with other Jewish people or [INAUDIBLE]?

I have very vague memories of my early childhood. I don't remember being discriminated against. I think I had friends, both Jewish and non-Jewish people. And I think I lived a fairly sheltered existence. And one thing I do remember from Breslau, now it comes back to me, is that we had a boarder who rented a room in our house. A Mrs. Gerhardi.

And I remember that when we moved to Berlin, Mrs. Gerhardi was an American citizen. And I remember hearing talk afterwards when I came to England that my parents and Uncle Hardi tried very hard to get Mrs. Gerhardi to assist in some way. But they were not successful. Either she couldn't or she was not interested.

Clearly, your parents were paying real attention and believing that it was very dangerous.

Yes, I think so. And the irony of the thing is that I do know, Uncle Hardi told me this later, and after I left for England, my father got a job offer, I think, in Australia. And my mother got a job offer in another part of the world. And they elected not to be scattered, the three of us, all over the country. And they stayed. And I imagine that was the biggest mistake they made because they ended up in Auschwitz and perished.

So you moved to Berlin? Was that in 1938?

I can't recall. I think we may be able to get that from the actual visa. It was either at the end of '38 or the beginning of '39. And I left for Rotterdam on May the 5th, 1939, in the Kindertransport.

Had your parents been talking with you about this all along once you moved to--

I don't recall, but I imagine they must have done because I knew I was going. And I knew I was going to be cared for by

a group in England called the Hospitality Committee, who were my legal guardians, who would put me into an English family. That I knew beforehand.

When you got to Berlin, were you enrolled in school or anything like that at that point?

I don't believe that I ever was in school at all in Berlin. I don't recall it. It seems to me the time interval between leaving Berlin and arriving there was very short. So I suspect it was at the beginning of '38. And then, question of a few weeks, I left.

So do you feel you probably spent most of the time in this apartment?

Yes. Yes. And visiting Uncle Hans and Uncle Hardi occasionally.

And did they have family too?

Yes. Uncle Hans had a daughter called Daisy who was a little older than I. And did I say Uncle Hardi? Uncle Hans had a daughter called Daisy, the dentist. Uncle Hardi had a son called Peter. Uncle Hardi's wife was non-Jewish. And she and Peter remained in Germany.

And when the Nazis came to talk to her, she said, I don't know where my husband is. He's Jewish. I don't care. He left.

That's how she was able to survive.

And he had--

He left in '38. He must have left-- this is a contradiction because I thought I went to visit Uncle Hardi. I couldn't have done, because he had already left. It must have been to Tante Ilse I went to visit. He had left in 1938 and emigrated to England. And he didn't catch up with me in England until shortly after the war.

Were your parents or any members of your family at all Zionist?

No.

Did you consider that a place to go?

No, not at all. Not at all.

Not at all.

No. That I definitely know.

So you left from Berlin on the Kindertransport? Do you have a memory of that trip?

Yes, I remember being in the train. I remember being very excited. I remember landing at Rotterdam, and then we went on a boat. And the boat went over to Harwich. And from Harwich, we went on a train. And we were met by a group of people in London.

And then, I was introduced to this gentleman and lady. And he was called John Lyons, and the lady was called Leone Lyons. And there was a few preliminaries, and then I presume I went to the office of John Lyons with Leone. And the first thing they asked me was are you hungry? Would you like something to eat?

And I said, yes. What would you like? And I said, I don't know. And the thing I remember very clearly is John Lyons-- I think he was a stockbroker, I forget. Anyway, he had a ring on his finger and there was a glass panel there, and he tapped on this glass panel, which really impressed me enormously.

And the person came out, and he said something to her. And they brought me a bowl of cornflakes with milk. And I'd never eaten cornflakes before in my life and I loved it.

It sounds like you had some positive feeling about your trip.

I was excited. Obviously, a new life. I don't think the reality of what was happening had really come home to me. I think I understood that things weren't too good for us there, and it in my best interest. But the overall picture-- when you're nine years old, you can't really grasp all of it.

No, no.

And I think you shut a lot out too. So it was with anticipation I was looking forward to see what would happen.

I'm assuming that when your parents moved to Berlin, your father didn't keep his job anymore. Or is that not true?

I don't think so. In fact, we seem to spend an awful lot of time, all three of us, in the small apartment. We didn't go out much.

Do you feel like your parents were well enough off to be able to coast on savings.

No, definitely not. Definitely not.

No?

No. I think that's why they had to sell so much stuff.

So they were successful in selling a lot of stuff.

I believe so, yes.

And then they were trying to eke out a living with--

I think so. And from what I could see when I was in Breslau, practically every house in the block had these signs up. So obviously, all the Jewish people were selling this. And later on when I went to England, I was able to talk to Uncle Hardi about this-- selling is a kind word. They practically had to give the stuff away to get anything for it at all. And this, of course, was very sad.

The people, the Lyons, were they Jewish people?

The Lyons were Jewish people. And this is a very interesting tale. They had two sons. One was older than I, Neville, and one was younger, Derek. What I did not know at the time was that these two boys were sons of John by a previous marriage.

And later on, when I became older, I was given to understand that part of the reason why the Lyons took me in, part of the reason only, was that Leone not only wanted to help somebody in my position, but she wanted to have-- she couldn't have children evidently. She wanted to have a child to be able to make over in her own image.

As I will explain later on in our story, this did not work and led to potential disaster, which fortunately, turned into a positive sign for me eventually.

So you sound like you must have been about 10 years old when you got there.

I left in May. I turned 10 in August of '39.

OK. So what was your life like, your adjustment

I stayed very little. I went to school, I went to boarding school almost right away. The thing I remember, which worked very well as a bridge-- they had a German housemate called Hannah Laura. You must understand, I knew exactly six words or four words of English. Yes, no, please, and thank you. I knew no English whatsoever.

So I think I stayed with them. We lived in London at a place called Charnley Gardens. And we didn't stay there very long. And I was shipped off to school, to boarding school, which was a grammar school called Taplow Grammar School. And I have very, very vague memories. It was near a town called Maidenhead.

I stayed there very short time only-- one or two terms, if that. But the one thing I remember clearly was that after I'd been there maybe a week or two weeks, I had a complete puzzlement because I thought they were trying to teach me English. And sometimes, I understood, and other times I didn't.

And I was in the classroom and there was other children, various people were talking to me. And they came up with words, and then I went another classroom and it was different words altogether. And I found out years afterwards what they were trying to do was they were trying to integrate me. But I also had to attend French class.

And of course, I could not understand what they were trying to do, because I couldn't understand. Can you imagine why I was confused?

Tell me. What a burden.

What a scenario. It's humorous when you think back on it.

Well, the Lyons, though, did they speak German?

No. And this is why Hannah Laura was so helpful. We were able to communicate. But being nine years old, I learnt the language very quickly. Just to be able to understand and be able to communicate in a rudimentary fashion.

And they were paying your way, I presume?

I'm not really sure about that. It seems to me there were two things. I think the Hospitality Committee kicked in something, and then when I finally left Taplow Grammar School, we had moved to Guildford. And I was enrolled in a wonderful school called Ferndown. And I do know that I was there at reduced fees because there were some other refugees there.

And I stayed at that boarding school for almost three years, and I really liked it. And something happened there, which became made clearer to me when I finally became older and met Uncle Hardi. Evidently, I was not turning out the way Leone wanted me to. I was an only child. I was set in my ways.

And I was mischievous, and I was probably boisterous, and I wasn't fitting in. So when vacation time came, I think I spent maybe one vacation at home. And then I was no longer allowed to spend my vacation time with the Lyons. I had to spend it at school.

And at that time, we had a scout master, PE instructor, and general factotum, whom we call Sergeant. And I was given to understand later that Sergeant had been told by Lyons that I was out of control and he was to be extremely strict with me and discipline me, and so on and so forth. So the first few days when I went back there, Sergeant was very strict with me and shouted at me. He didn't beat me or anything like that, but he was really strict.

And then, evidently, after less than a week, everything changed. And he became extremely friendly, allowed me to help with tasks and things. And I found out afterwards that he drew his own conclusions. I was quite a normal, healthy boy. I was a little mischievous, a little disobedient, but I didn't need strict supervision.

I just needed somebody to tell me what to do, and I would do it. In other words, the picture he'd got from the Lyons, particularly Leone, was completely erroneous. And I spent all my vacation times there. And at that time, I was very friendly with a fellow by the name of Jimmy Callahan who was a little younger than I-- maybe a year-- who was a day boy. He was not a boarder. He used to go home every evening.

And he lived with his mom and dad in Haslemere. And he used to come up to Ferndown. I remember this very clearly. We had a rubbish dump, and we used to go to the rubbish dump with a air rifle to shoot rats. And of course, I enjoyed that too. And he got me an air rifle.

And one day he went home to mom and said, oh, poor Richard. He's all alone up at Ferndown. Can he come and stay? So Mrs. Callahan took pity on me, and I was allowed to stay with Jimmy. And the idea was that I was going to stay a week. Well, Jimmy had his own way, and I stayed the rest of the holidays there.

And we were mischievous. We broke the bed, and we talked all night. And Mr. Callahan came in-- will you boys shut up? And we remained good friends. And the funny thing is, to this day, I see Jimmy because Jimmy lives in Palo Alto. And we see each other at least once a month.

And it was he who told me that he met this friend who'd come out with a Kindertransport. And he's, I would say, he goes back as far as I can remember with anybody.

How marvelous.

It's just amazing.

Now, the Lyons own children, were they sent to private schools like that too?

The Lyons' both went to Ferndown. And somewhere down the line, Neville went to public school called Haileybury. I don't know where Derek went. I went to public school-- which, of course, in this country, is called a private school-- called Hurstpierpoint, also at reduced fees. And somewhere down the line, something went wrong with Derek.

When I say something went wrong with him, he, I guess, rebelled. And he ran away from home, and he became the black sheep of the family. I think he'd had it with Leone, myself. I never found out the true story. Neville kept in touch with him, but it was very vague. I know he was out of the picture.

Neville had a marvelous career. He went into the military, and he made the military his career. And he came out as Major Lyons and did very well. Incidentally, he did come and visit me a number of years ago in San Francisco. He was in business of some sort. So we did catch up with one another. But we had virtually nothing in common. We corresponded for a while, but more or less died a natural death.

But the person which I have really kept up with is Jimmy. As a matter of fact, when I married and I took my wife, who's an American, to England the year after we married, Jimmy's mother, who was still alive in those days, I took Barbara to meet her. We stayed in Jimmy's house. And that's the last time I saw Mrs. Callahan. And of course, soon afterwards, she died.

Were you in touch with your own family in Germany.

Yes, I'm glad you asked me this. I was going to cover that. I don't remember too much about the early correspondence which we had before the war actually started. There were some letters and things. I remember we had a housemaid called Clara, and I really liked Clara. She was like a grandmother to me.

And in all my letters, I asked, how is Clara doing? Write to me about Clara. And of course, Clara had to be let go. By this time, they were in Berlin. But I was still associating Clara with Breslau and everything, thinking my parents would keep in touch-- the naive thoughts of a boy. When the war started, I used to get Red Cross letters.

And they became fewer and fewer. And then, they ceased altogether. And I don't know who told me, but I think it was in 1942, I was told that my parents died. And I was never found out until much later that they'd perished in Auschwitz.

I did also find out that my grandmother, who's my great uncle's sister, Olmi, had committed suicide. And this will become clearer in my story later on how everything tied in with my great Uncle Hardi, and how my whole career changed thanks to him, how everything started to look positive after a while.

So it sounds like in those early years in England, you probably had plenty to worry about.

I was very uneasy. I missed my parents. I knew, of course, that I had-- oh, that was one of the great disappointment not being able to spend the vacations with the Lyons'. I had a feel of rejection, if you will. But it was made right by Jimmy and Jimmy's mother. And particularly, the mother.

That was a strange marriage too. The mother was English, and the father was American. And I don't know whether they separated or what the story was, but one day, Miller, who was the husband, left for the States and I never saw him again. He came from a very, very wealthy background from Louisville. And they owned a lot of property and waterworks or something.

And Jimmy's never had to work in his life. And he's turned out remarkably well under the circumstance. He's never married, either. His interests have been trekking in Africa, going through mountains, and generally, studying. He wanted to be a teacher.

He went to Stanford. He was at Sorbonne. He went to Oxford or Cambridge. He had a wonderful education, a very bright guy, but he never had to work. And he's not spoiled or anything, very natural. And I enjoyed him very, very much.

And he's the only one I really kept in touch with. The Lyons'-- after my uncle found me, and I'm a little vague on all this-- after the war finished, Uncle Hardi, of course, who knew that his sister had committed suicide because she knew what was coming, wanted to do something in her behalf. So he decided to trace me.

And I think he got hold of the Hospitality Committee, and they gave him the Lyons' name. And when he found out that I couldn't spend my vacations there, he more or less indicated to the Lyons' that he would be now fiscally responsible for me. He'd done very well since he'd come to England, established himself and got a good business. And since his wife was in Germany, he couldn't do anything during the war.

But he had a lady whom, I called Tante Thude. And I don't know what their relationship was, but I know that they lived in the same apartment. And I don't know what the story was. Anyway, I was allowed to stay with them. And this was in London. And they had an apartment there, and things started to look very much better.

And as I started to go through pharmacy school, I became more and more independent and gradually, I worked my way into his business. By this time, Tante Thude was out of the picture because the war was over. And Peter and his mother came over. And Uncle Hardi lived with Ilse, his wife, and Peter was sent to school. I had very little in common with Peter. He was a spoiled brat.

He was very selfish. He was sent to school. His idea of doing schoolwork was to listen for radio, play music, read a book, and do anything except work. We had very little in common. The tragedy of Peter was he died of a coronary at a very early age. I think he was less than-- he was in the 30s when he died.

And the sad thing for my aunt was that she lost her husband, Uncle Hardi had a stroke. I will go back to a chronological part of this in a moment. Uncle Hardi had a stroke. Within six months, her mother, who was also living with Hardi at the time who'd also being brought over, died. And within six months, Peter died.

Oh.



Anyway, I should say that before I got my pharmacy boards and was able to take over Uncle's business, he had a stroke. And he became totally incompetent. So there was some secret formulae, which-- he prepared an asthma inhalant. And there were some pituitary glands, which couldn't be analyzed. You had to have exact right quantities.

It was a patented formula, which was very effective for asthma. And he developed it. And he contracted to an independent company called Riddell. Well, the story was that I was to learn this process and to be able to do this, I had to have my license. And I didn't have a license.

So at that time, I was still doing an apprenticeship, and the manager of the pharmacy where I worked at was a Jewish fellow by the name of Johnny Steiner. And my aunt and I persuaded Johnny to be, as you will, the legal cover. See, if I had qualified pharmacists there, I could do anything. But Johnny was not allowed to look at the formulas.

So the arrangement we had with Johnny is he sat in one room and read a book whilst I mixed up the things and produced this [INAUDIBLE] thing. And we paid him for it, obviously. And Johnny was happy. He could care less one or the other, easy going. And just before I got my license, Uncle died.

And I thought I was going to be able to take over because it was just about the time I got my boards. But the parent company, Riddell product said, uh-uh. Our contract was with Uncle Hardi only. It was a personal contract, not his heirs. And they took it to court, and they won. So they had to pay a royalty to my aunt for 15 or 20 years.

And they offered me a job, but they said, look, we have our own chief chemist. You can be one of our pharmacists, something like that. But I decided, no. I didn't want to hang on to somebody else's shirt tails. I wanted to go out on my own.

And so I went out on my own, worked in retail pharmacy. And by this time, I was earning fairly good money in those days and had my own apartment. And Tante Ilse had met a very nice gentleman. She had gone to some function, and this gentleman was in business in India. He had also fled from Germany or was Austria, I forget which-- somewhat older than her.

And he'd established some sort of business in India. And he invited her as his guest to go to India. But when she got there, she got some sort of disease and she was deathly ill in his apartment between life and death. And he saw her at the worst possible circumstances. Well, anyway, she made it through, and she came back to England.

And soon afterwards, Fred came to England on a business trip, and he proposed to my aunt. And my aunt said to him-- and I was there-- and she said, Fred you're mad. And I said, here you are-- he was also married before and I think he was a widow. Said, Fred, you're mad. You can have any person you like.

Here, you have somebody who has a grown up son whom I'm having trouble with myself. I have a mother living with me. At that time, she was still alive. Hardi had he died already, but Peter and Olmi were still there. You can have any young chick you want. You've seen me at my worst. You know what it was like. And I can't live in India.

Now, Fred said, I've had it with India too. I'll move to England. And they're married, and they're still married in England. He's just had a birthday, 88. My aunt's 85. And we've corresponded once or twice a year. So that turned out to be wonderful--

After all that sorrow.

After all that sorrow, she did find her happiness.

Yes, wonderful.

But it sounds like once the so-called parent company took over, your uncle had no other business, then. Was that it?

That's correct.

No other business, one--

That's correct, but she had to pay-- Riddell had to pay the royalties for the rest of the contract. And I think the contract had something like 16 years to run. But they didn't have to hire me or give me the formulas. So they could take it over, but they still had to pay the royalties. So she was all right.

And obviously, when Uncle was working, he saved some money and so on and so forth. But I don't think she was ever assured that she could live out her life in peace and happiness. But she certainly had no plans to get married, I know that, until Fred appeared on the scene. And Fred was adamant.

And this was interesting too because Fred and Peter, as I knew would happen, had their differences. And Fred ordered Peter out the house. He couldn't live there for a while. And I was an adult at that time. I discussed this with Ilse, and Ilse said, look, this is Fred's home now, and he's the head of the family. And if that's what Fred wants-- I know Peter is my son, but that's what goes in this family.

But anyway, they had their apportionment, and Peter married subsequently also. And they remained good friends. Everything turned around the corner. He saw the error of his ways.

In those earlier years, especially while the war was going on, were you aware through the newspapers or the radio of what was happening to the Jews in Europe?

I think I was, but I don't think I really comprehended it or realized the magnitude of it at all. I knew about concentration camps. I didn't know anything about mass murder, gassings, cruelty, and things like that at all. If I did, I think it was kept from me.

Did you worry for the lives of your parents during that period?

I think I did, but the one thing I remember is that when I was told they were no longer alive, it was not that big a shock. I think the biggest shock was when I actually had to leave. I think that since a number of years had passed and I had not seen them, it cushioned it, if you will. And in retrospect, I would have thought I would have been much more emotionally distraught.

I'm sure I cried when I was told but, maybe I didn't fully understand it at that time because see, I was only, what was it? 12 maybe 13? And I had other things to worry about at that time. School wasn't that easy for me. I still hadn't made my peace with the Lyons' and Uncle Hardi hadn't yet found me. Things didn't really turn around until Uncle Hardi came into the picture.

It sounds like it was a very difficult period when you had no family at all and rejected by the Lyons'.

It was, I think. But fortunately, I was young enough that I managed to adapt, somehow. I think being an only child had something to do with it. I think as an only child, you've always had to rely upon yourself. I think you get a certain built-in resilience.

Did you have any connections with any Jewish community in Lyons'?

Yes, I'm glad you asked that. I was going to come back to that later. This actually took place not so much when I was with the Lyons', but when Uncle Hardi came into the picture because Uncle Hardi wanted me to have a bar mitzvah. And since he was sort of lukewarm Jewish, if you will, he wanted me to have a confirmation.

And at that time, I was going to pharmacy school in Birmingham in the Midlands. And I had private tuition by Rabbi Finkst. And I remember Rabbi Finkst. He was a wonderful man. And he had a son and a daughter. Sula was the daughter. I forget what the boy's name was. And I used to go there for Seder every Friday.

And his wife was a typical Jewish woman, on the heavy side, and they really made me feel at home. And I really learnt a lot. And I did have a confirmation by Rabbi Reinhardt in the synagogue. And I read from the Torah at the age of 13, I guess, or 14. So I did have my bar mitzvah. But then, I think what really disillusioned me was when the realization of everything which had gone on in Germany really hit me.

I lost all my faith. I became an atheist, if you will. I think everyone goes through that phase. And after I'd been an atheist for some time-- I think it really happened when I was in Bermuda already-- I met one of the chaplains there. And I was always amazed because he used to come to all the parties which we gave, and we told dirty jokes and things. And used to laugh and joy and everything else.

And one day, I drew him aside and I said, you're a man of God. How can you join in? He said, first of all, he said, I was an army chaplain. An army chaplain-- I've seen it all. Besides, I don't have to tell the dirty jokes do I? So then, he said, what about you? Are you following a religion? And I said, no.

I used to call him Bill. I said no, Bill. I kind of lost my faith. I'm an atheist. And he said, Richard, I want to tell you one thing. If you remember nothing else, what I tell you, I want you to add something to that remark. I want you to say I'm an atheist at the moment. I said, OK. And sure enough, it was quite a while afterwards when I began to think to myself, looking up at the stars, looking at nature, man could not have put that there. It's got to be something else. And that's when I became an agnostic.

And soon after that, I began to believe there's got to be something other than that. And whilst I'm not necessarily deist, a believer in God, I believe there is something greater than man. So that, if you will, is my religion.

I appreciate what you're saying. So this is not seemingly, some God or whatever that you might pray to.

Right.

You might, you might not.

Right.

And I don't know how you are now about following any particular religion's rituals or whether that has to be related to.

I don't follow rituals anymore. But I should say, I have become more Jewish, if I can use that phrase, certainly the last 10 years. And the profound influence which has prompted this has been my association with Marin JCC, my association with Rabbi Weiner of Sherith Israel, and my general communication with Jewish people as a whole.

I view Jewish people now as a more stable section of the community than I've ever done. Whilst, of course, you have bad people in all walks of life, I don't think you see the real bad people, the real people who are cruel, the real people who are unsociable-- When I say unsociable, doing bad things to others in the majority-- which you see on the outside, which has made me feel closer, if you will. And I've recognized this.

So you now feel like you have a sense of community.

Yes, yes. Absolutely.

When you were in England, did you ever experience anti-Semitism there?

Not overt anti-Semitism, surprisingly enough. But it's very interesting that you raise this point. I never felt comfortable in England at any time. I was always a poor, refugee boy. The only time I felt comfortable again was when I came to America. And interestingly enough, since I changed my name twice, I've also changed my nationality twice.

In 1945, or maybe '46, the British government passed a law. The law was repealed after about a year. And the law stated

that any person under the age of 21 whose parents were dead or believed to be dead could become a naturalized citizen without a sponsor, without paying a fee, without any formality whatsoever. And I became a British citizen.

And I'm very proud of my British citizenship. And I have a special certificate-- citizenship granted to a minor. But I will also tell you, when I came to the United States, I took out my American citizenship to the day after I'd been here five years. And I understand a lot of English people never do it. And I know a lot of Americans resent that because they feel the British people come here, they're too uppity to want to take out, but they take all the advantages.

And I didn't want to be cast in that role at all. I find a lot of faults with America, but I always remember what Tante Ilse used to say to me when I used to write her and say I find this obnoxious, I find this horrible. She said [SPEAKING GERMAN] which means, pick the nice things from your surroundings, leave everything else aside.

This reminds me of a story when we had a big uproar a number of years ago. It wasn't even in the city. It was somewhere else. I forget where it was.

But apparently, it was a movie house which was showing x-rated movies which were being put up someplace. And it was a song and dance over it nobody wanted that movie house there. And they were all aghast. And I was discussing this with a friend of mine and he said to me, I can't understand people. Nobody's forcing them to go in there. They're not dragging them in. You have to pay money to go in there.

And I said, I feel the same way. I'm not interested in baseball. I haven't been to a baseball game in my life. Why should I go there even if I got a free ticket? It doesn't interest me. The same thing. And I got back to thinking what Tante Ilse said, take the nice things and enjoy them, and leave everything else.

It's a good philosophy.

So you finally, like you say, you feel comfortable finally over here.

Yes, yes.

You-- sounds to me like you were going to pharmaceutical school at a rather young age, maybe 13 or 14.

No. It's interesting you should say. As a matter of fact, I did get past my final exams before I was 21. And I couldn't practice because the law in England says you have to be 21. So I took an additional year of postgraduate training. So I was younger than most, but I didn't go-- let's see. I went to Ferndown in '40. And I stayed at Ferndown until '43.

And then, I went to Herzberg Point between '43 and '46. Between '46 and '48, I did a two year apprenticeship. In '48, I went to pharmacy school, and I took my finals in '51. And I couldn't practice in '51 because I wasn't 21 yet. And I had to do one more year of post-grad, and I got my diploma in '52.

And so, as you said, when you started working, you were making good money and you got your own department.

Yes, that's correct. That's correct. As a matter of fact, as soon as I graduated from pharmacy school, I think I stayed with Uncle, oh, maybe another few months. And then I expressed my own desire. I wanted to have girlfriends around. I couldn't very easily do that an Uncle's flat.

So I got my own apartment. And at that time I got it very near the place of business. I didn't have a car in those days. I walked to work. And we had excellent transportation in London.

And I would say the happier days of my life really started. And I have to credit Uncle Hardi for all that because he, in the name of his sister, my grandmother, really steered me in the way when my life began to take a very positive turn. And everything in the past, which was so moving, which we just saw earlier, which I didn't have to go through. I feel very fortunate, very fortunate, indeed.

It sounds like you felt that you really had a family at that point.

Yes, I really did. And I think although I felt I had a family, I definitely did not want to stay in England. I felt I was not accepted there, and my family wasn't accepted there. There's nothing I could do about my family, but I didn't want to stay in England.

There were other reasons. I felt stultified. I finally bought a car. The car was always breaking down, and although I was a manager of the pharmacy, to be able to keep this car running, I had to take a night job three nights a week. And this meant driving across London with a thermos bottle on my seat and a sandwich in my hand. And I thought to myself, there's something wrong with the system.

I'm a graduate pharmacist. I'm managing a pharmacy. To be able to run a small car, I have to go through all this-- a night job three nights a week? There's got to be something else. So my real dream was to go to the States. But I knew no nobody. I knew nobody in the United States. I didn't have a sponsor.

And then, I saw this ad for a pharmacist in Bermuda. And I didn't even know where Bermuda was. So I went out to Woolworths and bought an atlas for six pence. And I thought, it is pretty close to the United States. But how am I going to get a job?

And sure enough, I found out afterwards I was one of a hundred applicants because it was a two-year contract, the manager of the largest pharmacy. And after the contract was up, payment back either to England, airfare, or any place in the world. Anyway, I wanted this job so badly, I could taste it.

And at that time, the pharmacy I was managing in Williston, when I wasn't there, which was one day a week, we had what is known as a locum, which is a relief pharmacist. And this locum was assistant secretary of the pharmaceutical society, which is a licensing board. And his name was Mr. Wilkinson. I called him Wilkie.

I said, Wilkie, I've applied for a job in Bermuda. I need a little help. Could you give me a recommendation? You don't have to say anything which isn't true, but coming from you, maybe on the stationery, it would help me. And it must have done, because they whittled it down to six, and I got the job.

So was it hard for you to leave your uncle at that point? Or you had already--

Let's see. Let me think of the chronology. Uncle had already died. Uncle had already died, Uncle Hardi had. Fred was already in the picture. And of course, Fred wasn't a blood relative. Peter was still alive, but we had nothing in common. So the only living relative I had was Tante Ilse. And she had her own life, plus the fact she was not a blood relative either.

And so I had nothing really to hold me there in England. And I felt that the whole world was opening out. By getting away, I felt I was on the threshold of something new. And it really was.

Did you have friends or lady friends at that point?

Yes, in fact, I had a very nice girl. We weren't exactly engaged, but she was the one. And I did have some ideas of marrying her. And she wanted to come to Bermuda with me. And I said, look, I'm going out a single man. I'm going out with a contract. I don't know what's going on there.

I don't even know whether you can get a job out there. Let me go out ahead, scout out what's going on, and if things work out well, maybe in six months you can come join me. Well, there was a lot of tears and everything else. And it wasn't more than three weeks after that I learned through a mutual friend of mine, I think it was Jimmy Callahan, that she had a new boyfriend, which was my best friend in England.

So that brought that to an end very quickly. Probably the best thing that could have ever happened to me.

So how did life go in Bermuda?

Bermuda was wonderful. There was only one problem-- I was too young because after I'd been there three years, I was practically an alcoholic and I weighed 225 pounds. And I knew I had to get out. It's a small island. All you can do is drink, eat, and enjoy yourself. The island's 21 miles long, a mile and a half across.

So pretty early on I decided I would try and get to the States. And I went to see the American consul, and he said, well, there is another way you can get into the States. If you can show fiscal responsibility, in other words, have a bank account in the States and, even better, have a job lined up, you might be able to get an entry permit. Well, we had a large Air Force base there, Kindley Air Force Base.

And there was a house-- I didn't live in there. I had my own apartment, which the Gibbons Company for whom I worked, supplied to me. And the house to which I refer [INAUDIBLE] they had six guys living there. And we used to party there once a week practically. And I used to play chess, and poker, and everything else. And two of the fellows there worked at Kindley Air Force Base. Two of the others were policemen, two of the others had other jobs.

Well, anyway, one of these fellows who worked the Air Force Base, I said to him, look, I need some dollars. And we have legal tender here in American dollars, and British pounds, the Bermuda pound freely interchangeable. Why don't you give me your dollar-- you get paid in dollars-- and I'll give you Bermuda pounds. We have no problem with that.

So I used to squirrel away this money, and every six months I used to ship it over to Chase Manhattan Bank. So I got a bank account here. So that's what started things.

So you didn't have to get a job then.

Well, technically, I didn't. But I sure as heck didn't want to come here without a job. So I used to come to the States about once a year on buying trips for the company. And I also used to combine this with a vacation. I first started on the East Coast. And I hated New York, didn't like anything about it at all.

And then, somebody said, well, why don't you go and talk to Parke-Davis, big, large pharmaceutical company in Detroit. I made it to Detroit, and I hated it in Detroit. So I thought, that's not going to work out. So next year, I thought, I'll have a real vacation. I like the mountains. I'm going to go to Denver.

So I went to Denver, and I met a very nice gentleman in Denver. And I guess we met in a restaurant someplace. We got in conversation, and he said, I've got only one piece-- I told him I wanted to emigrate. He said, I've only got one piece of advice to give you-- go west, young man. So the following year, which was 1959, in May, I came to San Francisco.

And I was in San Francisco 48 hours and I knew this is where I wanted to be. So I applied to an agency, and I interviewed with three pharmaceutical companies, all of which offered me a job. And I happened to like the guy who interviewed me.

And I had some bad experiences formerly, because when I was in Detroit, I interviewed with pharmaceutical companies other than Parke-Davis, we used to have marvelous interview. Everyone was very enthusiastic 'til it came about they found out I wasn't an American citizen. And they said, oh, we can't hire you.

So when Keith Roberts interviewed me for forest Laboratories, the first question I asked is, can you have a non-American citizen? He said, why not. I'm Canadian. So I accepted a job. I found myself an apartment in San Francisco. I bought myself a stereo, which I had delivered to the apartment. And I sent in my resignation to Bermuda.

And I remember I got a cable back, which says, any reasonable pay increase approved. Return soonest. And I said, it wasn't the job. I just felt I had to move on. And I was very grateful the opportunity to work for them. And that's how I left Bermuda and came to the States.

And how did you deal with your personal things of your drinking and eating to where you weren't happy with yourself?

Well, when I came here, a completely different life started. I started a job with which I was completely unfamiliar. I'd always been in retail pharmacy where you stand behind the counter, you mix potions, you sometimes go up the front, you sell cosmetics. Very sedentary life. Here, I found I had to hustle.

I was given a downtown San Francisco territory 450 Sutter. I'd never seen a medical building with 26 floors with doctors and dentists. I had a lot of running around to do. And I found I didn't have time to eat. I didn't have time to sleep much, either. I had to apply myself to the job.

And gradually, I got my act together and lost some weight. I stopped drinking, not entirely, but I certainly became more modest. I had to be able to retain my job.

During any of this period, did you go or did you think about returning to Germany at all?

I had no desire whatsoever to go back to Germany. I have no rancor or hate for German people. I have no particular reason to dislike driving or buying German automobiles, like some people have. That's childish. You cannot condemn an entire race for some misguided people. And let's face it, the atrocities were committed by a few. It is true that many chose to turn a blind eye or chose not to know about these things.

But I sincerely believe there were a lot of people who did not really know what was going on. I think there were some. But also, I think you have to understand, if you have a society such as was evolving in Germany at that time, you, as an individual, I think if you started to protest that much, I think he would be in the same ballpark as the Jews.

And also, everything which I've always been taught is that you should forgive. To bear a grudge or a malice to the grave for a people-- for Hitler, yes. Of somebody else's life or-- who was this guy who was just tried some time ago? Some Nazi. He went to--

[PERSONAL NAME]?

Him, maybe. It was another fellow. He was in South America, whoever. That I could understand because he was in on it. He was responsible for it. But again, I really have got nothing to go back to Germany for. I was a child when I was Breslau.

I doubt whether I could remember anything. I might remember where the synagogue was. I might be able to find Victoria Strasse where I was born. But I have no roots. My roots were destroyed by the Nazis. No reason to go back there.

Were ever able to find out any more details about the fate of your parents after you left? Their life? How they lived and how they eventually got deported?

Let me answer this question. I am sure that at one time, that I was made fully aware of this. But I chose to block it out. And to this day, I can't tell you anymore. And I've learned this. I've learned that when something unpleasant happens, I have it-- I like cats. We have lots of cats at home.

And when an animal dies, I cry. I'm very emotional. But then, I block it out of my mind. I think it's best for myself. And I think I did that as far as everything. This is why I think when you and I talked earlier, I was so vague about what went on in Germany. It's not that I didn't want to remember, I think I put a mental block there. And I don't think I could remember it if I tried.

I see. It's what saved you, too.

I think you're right. And I think maybe this is why I didn't dwell upon my relationship with the Lyons' too much. I may have been hurt more than I realized, but somewhere as I matured, I realized this was not a very happy phase of my life. Jimmy reminds me of that sometimes.

Jimmy says to me, when I first met you, he said, I remember you spoke with a foreign accent. And I can't imagine myself in that situation. I must have a difficult time. The only thing I remember was this French episode because it was amusing. But at the time, it must have been very stressful.

And I think that we human beings do have a defense mechanism. And if we can bring it to bear, one can blot out an awful lot. And I think one maintains one's sanity that way. And as I said earlier, I so identifying right now to the Marin Jewish Community Center and all the wonderful people I've met there that I tend to focus on all the wonderful things which have happened, particularly in the last 10 years.

It sounds like you're following your aunt's advice.

I try.

So by this time now, you have arrived in the United States. And you have a job and an apartment. Was it lonely for you at first?

Yes, it was. That I do recall. I had an apartment in San Francisco. I knew nobody, and I didn't particularly care for my fellow workers. The main reason wasn't that I didn't like them, but number one, it was a different lifestyle to which I was used to. Everything was very strange to me here.

A lot of it was foreign to me, and I wasn't comfortable with it. Also, the majority of them were married. And even at that time, I felt pretty much set in my ways being a bachelor for the rest of my life. I was 28 at that time. Now, I was 30 at that time. Anyway, I think the thing which turned the corner for me is I joined the Sierra Club. And that's how I met my wife, surprisingly enough.

And I started making a lot of friends through the Sierra Club. And I became very active with them. And I led hikes, and I socialized with very many Americans, began to learn their way of life, came into contact with some English people. And gradually, I began to build up relationships. I wasn't an American citizen at that time.

And gradually, as I got to know these people closer, I began to get more rapport and more affinity and more understanding of what the American culture is all about. I think the thing which really hit me-- and I know that this is an after sight, and I often marvel why it took me so long to come to bear on it-- when I think about all the unrest and uncertainty, which we have in this country, particularly now, the realization hit me, this is a very young civilization.

We've been here since the 1700s. You look at England, you look at Greece, you're going back millennia. And we're going through a development phase. And I'm sure-- the rise and fall of the Roman Empire, we're now going through the rise and fall of the American system. And I didn't allow for this when I first came here.

I used to think all Americans were shallow. And Jimmy asked me this just the other day. He said, do you still think Americans are shallow? I said, no, Jimmy. I don't. And it's surprising how much I've learned in the last 10 years and how much other people have learned.

So yes. So you said you met your wife. My wife and I met on a hike. And she was 10 years younger than I. I was 38 at the time. Very set in my ways, happy bachelor. And I thought she was much too young for me. And tried to fob her off on my friends who was on the hike.

She had a date with him, and she didn't particularly like him. Nice guy. Anyway, this is very, very clear in my mind because we had an interview by one of the local papers in the last six months, and they took us out of my [INAUDIBLE] and reenacted all this and wrote an article about us. And a lot of this comes back because Barbara came back on the next hike.

And I was a very strong hiker. I always at the front, set of fairly fast pace. And she was able to keep up with me. So I thought to myself, well, maybe I'm looking at this young chick with the wrong eyes. So one thing led to the other, and I



get to know her, started to date her.

And I think the thing which really opened my eyes is I went on a backcountry trip by myself. She had a job. And that's when my back gave out and I ended up in Fresno Community Hospital. And she came down to visit me.

And as I was lying in bed in severe pain, all my life was going in front of me. And I thought to myself, if I've got to make this again on my own, I'm never going to be able to make it. I'd better make up my mind right now.

And you did.

And I did. Yes.

So her name is Barbara.

Her name is Barbara, right.

Is she Jewish?

She's not Jewish. She comes what used to be a small town. It's pretty large now-- Midwestern town, Kalamazoo Michigan. We've been married 26 years. She comes from a very large family. She had, at that time, seven brothers and sisters. One has died in the meantime.

And has zillions of nephews and nieces. And when we were first married, of course, she wanted to drag me home to Kalamazoo. And I said, listen, I'm 38 years old. This is my first marriage. The first year, we're not going anyplace. I've got to get used to you.

And then, I said the next place we're going is England. Then, I'll consider Michigan. And the way we did it.

You did it that way.

Right.

Well, who were returning to in England? What did you do there?

Well, when I returned to England I went to see, of course, Tante Ilse and Uncle Fred and Peter was already dead at that time, and Jimmy Callahan's mother. And then, I wanted to show her some of the sites-- I took her to Kew Gardens, I took her to Oxford, Cambridge, showed her the Tower of London, Windsor Castle.

And she'd never been at the country before, let alone England. I think she'd been to Canada. And it was quite an eye-opener for her. But she said she wouldn't want to live in England.

How was it for you to go back after all those years?

I found it very crowded, particularly London. I found the countryside very appealing. I found the people relaxed. I was treated as an American, although I had an English accent. It's not a pure English accent anymore. But I also felt I couldn't live there again.

I was wondering, you said you had no interest and didn't go back to Germany at all. Did you ever think about or apply for any reparations for your parents?

Yes, yes. As a matter of fact, I did. This happened in England. I didn't in the United States, but I did something in England. In fact, it seems to me the funds finally came through when I was in Bermuda because some money did come through. But I thought you were going to ask me a different question because something else came up in the last year, which escaped my mind until just now.

There was an article in the paper about the Kindertransport. And there was a meeting in San Francisco on Brotherhood Way, which is the SF JCC, of not only the Kindertransport, but the kinder of the Kindertransport. And Barbara and I went to that. And the reason I'm thinking of this suddenly is your question because the question was asked from the floor, how many of you have been back to Germany? How many of you would go back to Germany?

And the answers to me were amazing. They were diametrically opposite. Some people said they went back to Germany, they felt they weren't being treated like kings. The people wanted to make reparations. Other people went back they said they were disgusted, they were sycophants. They hadn't changed, the Germans hadn't changed a bit. They were just as bad as ever.

They thought they could make amends. Some people cried when they talked about this. And it was just amazing. And I said to Barbara, the only thing I'm thankful for is I don't hold either of these views. To me it's like a cup of cold tea. I could take it or leave it.

Do you find you have any particular reaction when you meet Germans traveling?

I haven't met that many. I've met some Germans through the Sierra Club. Surprisingly, most of them were Jewish. I'm trying to think. I must have met some Germans. And I guess they were the younger generation. They weren't of the Nazi background or they weren't in that situation.

I can't remember being exposed to Germans that I felt antagonism towards. Does that answer your question?

Yes. Speaking about the fate of your parents, you mentioned that your grandmother committed suicide.

Yes.

Do you know whether she had any thoughts of leaving the country herself? Her brother, obviously, did.

I have no idea. What I have brought with me, which I have outside, I brought a picture of her grave. Let me digress a moment. All the pictures and things-- when Uncle Hardi moved to England, he wasn't able to take anything. But when Ilse, his wife, after the war, came to join him, she had all the stuff from my parents. That's how I got all this. It was through Tante Ilse that I have all this stuff.

In amongst them is a picture of a grave in Germany, which my uncle, Uncle Hardi, had put a tombstone on. And on the tombstone, it says in memory of my beloved sister and her children, Gerta Schohan, and her husband, Erwin Schohan, who were murdered as a result of fascism. It's in German, but it's very clear there.

Do you know how it was that she killed herself?

I was told by Uncle Hardi later that she could see what was coming down the line. And I don't know how she committed suicide. He never told me, and I never asked. But it was definite.

So the implication here is that Ilse able to get some belongings from the family--

Yes.

--before they were deported.

Oh, yes. She had a tremendous amount of stuff. All the letters, all the Red Cross letters which I wrote to them, all the letters before the Red Cross, in other words, before war started-- she had everything. Pictures, and I bought a lot of those with me. So I do feel that I have some remembrance of what went on. I have something which pertains back to happier days, if you will.

I realize, as you said that, it's more peaceful for you to not know all the details.

Right. But I'm going to assume that Ilse knows a whole lot of what happened.

I don't know. I don't know. And I've never asked.

I was thinking back to what you said about an article that you said that an article was done on and your wife.

Yes.

And what was the occasion for that?

There was something in the Independent Journal in Marin County, which said, how and when did you meet your sweetheart? And so I wrote in and said, I met on a hike. And about half a dozen people wrote in, one met on a ball game, one met someone else. One went skiing.

And they happened to pick mine. They liked it. That's how that came about. It's kind of interesting.

Did you ever have children?

We never had children. This is interesting too because the subject came up, and I said to Barbara, actually, I don't want to have children. I feel I'm too old and set in my ways, and also I'm not that particularly fond of children. I don't relate well to children. More on this later.

And Barbara said, well, I've told you before and I want to re-emphasize is I did have a child out of wedlock. And I said, yes, I remember you told me. So she said, if I had not been through this experience, I think I would have been more insistent. But seeing that I have been through the experience, I had a child adopted out since I couldn't raise it. If that's what you want, fine. And it was very soon afterwards at a very young age that she had to have a hysterectomy so the subject never came up.

So it sounds like you've been both happy.

Yes. Yes. But the irony of this whole thing is when I retired from pharmaceutical company 10 years ago, I wanted to start a new career. And I didn't know what I was going to do. So I saw this ad in the paper, school bus driver, will train. I went there and went to advanced driving school.

And they said, well, if you pass the test, the thing is we will guarantee you a job. Well, of course, I passed, and I got the job. And when Barbara's mother found out-- and she knew my feelings about children. I remember to this day, she telephoned Barbara, and she said, Richard a school bus driver. With his feeling for children, he went last in that job 10 minutes, maybe 10 days. And here I am, 10 years still going on.

And now, it doesn't faze me a bit. I have a bus full of kids. They don't bother me in the slightest.

Really?

Isn't that something?

Yes. So is it that you're able to just remain relaxed and peaceful, or you actually can relate better to people than you thought you would?

I can relate better than-- and I've learned so much through MJCC because I have to interact with them there. And it's just that one really does know, one assumes, and it's a very dangerous thing to assume. And I think in a sense, this is what's been very positive in my life-- I've tried to put bad things behind me and have a positive outlook on life.

And I think if one has a positive outlook, one can go a long way.

Yes.

And I think a lot of people have failings in that. They always see black clouds. And I try to look for the rainbow.

Yes.

It's made me a happier person. I can tell you that. I regard a very happy person.

Wonderful. Really, wonderful. Why did you decide to retire from the pharmaceutical business? You were relatively young, I gather.

I was 55. I was burnt out. The main reason was that when I started in the industry, it was in its-- not in its infancy, but it was a very informal thing. Even in a city such as San Francisco, you knocked on the physician's door, spoke to the secretary, he was happy to see you. Then, as the pressures increased and as the HMOs came to the picture, and as dissemination of information became more through other media, television, seminars, and things-- the need wasn't there.

Therefore, the need for us to see the physician was created by our New York offices, by the head offices of the companies. But it was an artificial thing. It was something dreamt up by the advertising people. It was purely out of the reality of what was going on in the field.

For example, I mentioned to you earlier I had the Kaiser account. The Kaiser doctors are the busiest doctor on this Earth. What I was supposed to do, as everyone was supposed to do, is you're supposed to go into a doctor and engage him in dialogue for 10 or 15 minutes, have a question and answer session. You can do this with a physician on 450 Sutter even.

You might in the country, if you're out, we'll say, in Garberville, if you will, where you have a country physician who sees maybe eight patients a day. With a Kaiser doctor who may see 60 a day, there is no way. And I was becoming a liar. I had two complete sets of records-- my own and the ones I gave the company. The two were completely different.

I used to tell the doctor look, I'm supposed to have a question and answer session with you. I'm going to spend exactly a minute and a half with you. Will you give me that? Here's my product. If you like it, prescribe it. If you don't like it, tell me now, this time. See you. And then, when my manager worked with me once every two months, I called these guys at home and I said, look, I've looked after your wife with Premarin hormone for menopause for years.

I give you vitamins for your kids. You've got to do me a favor tomorrow. I got this bozo from New York with me. I'm going to come to your office. You can keep me waiting for 15 or 20 minutes, make it an hour. And then, you've got to play games with me for 10 minutes. This is how I keep my job.

And did they do it?

Oh, yes, because I knew a lot of-- I made friends. I made friends with the doctors. I used to go in and say, doctor, look at, you like this product, you're using something else. What you don't understand is the nutritional value of this product. So he looks at me, my God, he said, this is for angina? What's the nutritional value. I said, doctor, you prescribe it. I eat.

[LAUGHTER]

And laughed. I had personalized license plates on my car. We made an antacid called Riopan. So one day, I was in this doctor's office, I tried to get him for years to prescribe Riopan. He said, look, leave me alone. I prescribe Maalox. It works.

So I said, doctor, this is the last time I'm calling on you. I want to show you something. I said, come to the window. I said, look at that car down there. He looks, and I said, look at the license plate. Says, my God, it says Riopan. I said,

doctor, you won't help me, I'm going public. He said, that does it. I'm changing.

So injecting a little bit of humor in it, I made a lot of friends. And I could call in favors. But even that, the pressures were too great. We had to have these special projects which the company made. You put out large volumes of drugs, which doctors can evaluate. What doctor has time to evaluate this stuff? I mean, they're busy seeing patients.

So I was writing all these fancy reports. They're all a bunch of lies. I was getting high blood pressure. I was eating my heart out. And Barbara said to me one day, Richard, you better quit because you're going to get fired. You've got a bad attitude. I can tell it when you come home you're all tied in knots and things. And by golly, when the first day of retirement came, I said, that's it.

And I wanted out. And really, since I've left the pharmaceutical industry, I've become a different person. Really. I liked the first five or 10 years, but then it went downhill from there on.

So you were very successful, obviously, in making a new life for yourself.

I think so. I think so.

Did your wife have a career too?

Oh, yes. She worked for a doctor. She worked for-- before that, before I met her, she worked in a hospital. When I met her, she worked for a doctor. That was in the East Bay. And then, since I lived in Marin, she became office manager for a doctor for 11 years.

And then, she changed careers. She became an installer for a subsidiary of Pacific Bell installing the telephone directories in the public telephone booth throughout the county. But unfortunately, she'd been in an automobile accident many years ago, and manipulating these tools and things, she got severe problems with her wrists. And she had to go on workman's comp.

So she couldn't do a job anymore, and she got a settlement. It wasn't very much, but she was happy with it. She doesn't have to work. And then, she has little odd jobs here and there, nothing very much. And then, the thing worked out at MJCC. And she loves it. She doesn't earn much money, but she just got the fever, like I have now.

Have you talked to people over the years about your Holocaust experiences? I would say, other than that they brief sojourn at the Kindertransport, you're the only person I've talked to about it in depth. There are one or two people at the center, Phyllis Jerome, director of ECE, my immediate boss, and maybe one or two others. But very briefly and very cursorily. Not in depth at all.

Because I was wondering what reception you had when you did talk about it?

Very interesting. The Jewish people, particularly at the Center, will say, oh, that's interesting. And they ask me questions. Other people say, gee, I had no idea. You have a British accent and your background. I didn't know you had a childhood like that-- express great surprise.

And that leads me to the other statement which I made to you in the car is that sometimes, I hear these stories about people who are wrapped up in their own problems and things. I think to myself, what the hell are they talking about? I've had problems which they can't even dream about in my early years. And I've managed to straighten myself out. Why can't they?

So I don't suffer fools gladly. And I don't suffer whiners gladly. I like to deal with people-- I have a perfect example. We have somebody working at the Center. He's a maintenance man. When I first met him, he was in bad straits.

He was in the booze, and he was in drugs. He was-- everything. Single man. He lost his license, dangerous driver, the lot. Somewhere down the line, I don't know the whole story, I talk to him quite a bit, he had a day, a minute, of

realization. And he turned himself completely round. He's completely off that stuff. He's responsible.

Everybody likes him. When I need a favor done from the maintenance people, I go to him. And I really admire this guy because he did it himself. He nobody had to help him. One day, he said-- he told me-- he said, one day, I woke up in bed and I thought to myself, my God, I'm going to be dead in a couple of years time. And I don't want this to happen. I've got to change.

And you do sometimes meet people like that. And they come from all walks of life. He's a maintenance man, and he did it all himself. And to me, he is more successful than somebody like the Kennedys who inherited their money. So I have to say, this is the way I feel.

So what do you think about your own sources of strength? How did you-- what were they, and how did you--

Oh, my marriage. I think so. I was ruthless before. Sure, we have our difficulties. We had a difficulties to begin with, but I've always believed, like everything else, a marriage is something you work at. And people say, oh, are you having problems? Easy to get divorced.

I tell them, hell, I wouldn't have got married if I wanted to be divorced. Wouldn't have gotten married in the first place. What's the point?

But I find that Barb is completely different to me. Absolutely different background, different ideas. She's handy where I'm not. I tend to be more intellectual than she is. But we have somehow click, and we have a feeling of belonging. And I think that has really done wonders for me. It's really stabilized me a lot.

What do you think helped you get through those hard times in your childhood when you were so young?

I often wonder. I think maybe it was the old sergeant at Ferndown when, after the first few days, he eased up and got to know me, and I got to know him. And I can't remember many of the things which he used to say to me, but it seems to me that being of the military school, sergeant type, he was a disciplinarian. And I think he taught me discipline and self-discipline.

And I think in life, if you can exercise self-discipline and not go to excess, whether it's in drinking, whether it's in eating, whether it's lovemaking, anything, I think you really become more sure of yourself. And I think as we get older, we mellow. And I also have to, as I mentioned earlier in our talk, I also-- this fruitlessness of being an atheist, whereas now, I believe that there's a bigger purpose in life. I think it's a combination of things, really.

Yes. Well, you sound like you're feeling well.

I feel a very, very fortunate person. I feel that when I look back, I have had some very difficult times. But basically, I have a very happy story to tell. And this is why I was reluctant to come, I think. And I expressed this to Phyllis.

And she said, that doesn't matter. Tell it the way you see it.

Yes. You wanted to talk about the encouragement you got.

Yes. When I was first contacted, I think somebody at the Jewish Center gave it to me. And they said to me, you ought to do this. And I talked it over with Barbara. And Barbara said, well, whatever you feel like.

And I really didn't. And Phyllis knew of my background. And maybe Phyllis gave it to me. Then we got in a conversation about this. And I said, no, I don't think so. I said, to begin with, they want to talk about the Holocaust.

And I was a kid. I got out of it. I saw my parents perish through paragraphs. And she said, that's not the point at all. The point is that they want the whole background of this. And even if you have one aspect of the story which may not be interesting to all people, there will be something of interest to somebody. And when you take the thing as a whole, it

will be-- it's like a book, she said.

You read a book, you're not going to like every bit of it. But there's sections which you will like. And I would encourage you to do it. And as I said, I saw her yesterday. And she said, please come and see me when it's done.

You guys could have that reaction.

Yes.

Have you ever thought about or visited Israel?

It's funny you should ask this because yesterday, I attended this-- these folks who've just come back from Israel. I think one of my great, not great-- one of my failings, which is a physical failing, is that I don't suffer extreme temperatures, particularly heat, very well.

I think that's one reason why I like San Francisco-- or Mill Valley, which has San Francisco weather-- so well because it's very similar to the English climate. Believe it or not, I liked the English climate. I cannot stand heat. When I worked for the pharmaceutical company, for a while, I was the representative at the state government level. And I had to go to the MediCal Medicare hearings in Sacramento.

And I hated it. I hated being in that heat. And everybody told me that when you go to Israel and all the areas, it's hot most of the time. And some of the time, it's unbearably hot. And in the cooler season, you will be really unhappy.

So I've always been a little bit reluctant. But when I had the invitation to come and hear about it and see the pictures and be able to talk to these people, I was extremely interested. But I've really had no-- and I've had no desire to travel. This is something Jimmy and I talk about a lot.

I'm very much of a stay at home person. When I worked for the pharmaceutical company, when I didn't have the Sacramento assignment, I was away maybe two or three nights a month. I hated it. I like to sleep in my own bed. And I haven't taken a vacation from home, I don't think, oh, I think 12 years easy.

Barbara goes away to Michigan. And we have pets, so I look after the cats. But I'm happy at home. I go for a walk. I'm a stay at home person. And I know that people tell me, and perhaps I'm insolent that way, it says travel is broadening. Wouldn't you like to go to Spain, you'd like to go to Europe, see South Africa, go and see Australia. My answer is no.

[LAUGHTER]

And the other thing which I dislike is I dislike everything which goes into it-- the packing, the sitting on planes, the missed connections, the upheaval, not being able to sleep in a strange bed. I like very much order. I get up at 6:00 in the morning. I go to bed 8:00 at night. I know what I'm going to do during the day.

You planned this ahead of time. I had plenty of warning. I psyched myself up to it. I wasn't that sold to begin with. Phyllis encouraged me. But as time went by, I began to-- and you see, I'm relaxed now. I was tense when you and I first talked.

I think you sensed I was reluctant when you first talked to me on the telephone. So but--

Maybe a little ambivalent.

Ambivalent, if you will. Right. But I'm glad.

How has it been for you now that you're actually sitting here for a couple of hours.

Very comfortable. Very comfortable.

Good, good. I'm very glad. I was thinking back do you remember being with any of the other children from the transport?

Not really. It was so brief. It was such a brief time period compared to the rest of my life. If I had remembered anything, I would have remembered maybe the first year or so. But certainly not now. It was, essentially, not a big thing. I was agog, obviously, excited.

But I'm interested to know, and Jimmy mentioned that his friend who also came out on the Kindertransport with me and whose picture appears, he's a musician of some sort, or music critic. He's sometimes in the area. And it would be interesting if we met up.

And the other thing he asked me to do is get a copy of that picture, which is already given to him. I had it copied. So it's definitely the same fellow, which is a strange coincidence.

It is. It is.

I mean, that should have happened also indirectly through Jimmy.

Mm-hmm.

So it sounds like there wasn't, in England, opportunities for all the children who had come on the transport to re-meet at times.

Not at all. Not at all. No, we were scattered throughout the globe. We had all different situations. Of course, some children went to the United States. A majority of them went to England.

But the other interesting thing is when I was at the Kindertransport reunion, there must have been between 60 and 80 people there. And whilst I didn't talk to all of them, I talked to a lot of them to try to get the time frame. None of them had got out on the particular date on which I'd come out and from the same location. So they must be scattered all over the world.

Is this going to be an ongoing kind of reunion?

I understand it is. But the main reunion is not here. They had a mammoth one in London I think about five years ago. And they had another huge one in New York. And this was more or less a local one. They want to do it again here.

But I understand the one in London was huge. People came from all over the world to that one.

Do you plan to continue?

No. No, not at all. Not even if they have it here again, either. I found it was interesting for me to go once. It was interesting for me to get some reaction. But that's in the past now.

I would prefer not to dwell on it. It's not a happy time for me.

Well, speaking also of not a happy time, do you remember during those war years, were you subject to bombing?

Yes, yes. That--

What about the food rations? Did you have enough to eat?

Yeah, this is very interesting because it brings to mind something very, very interesting, which is happening here in San Francisco now. When I was in boarding school, this was at Ferndown. Ferndown was located between the South



Downs, which was on the back of us, and a large Air Force base between us and the coast.

And this was a time when we had the doodlebugs and the V2s. The doodlebugs you could hear.

[VOCALIZES RUMBLING]

And what happened was that anything which was above our school was caught either by the South Down guns or the Air Force. So these things were shot down on our fields regularly every night. And of course, obviously, we couldn't sleep in the dormitories. So we evacuated. And they evacuated us in the library, which was on the ground floor. And we had to sleep on mattresses.

And the reason that I remember this so clearly is that Jimmy and I were talking about it, there's something I read in the paper that in Marin County, the jail, somebody is being fined so many a day because the prisoners have to sleep on mattresses.

I thought to myself, we had 60 kids for weeks on end in dormitories. Nobody gave us extra food. What? What's the matter with you? These are criminals. I thought to myself, life ain't fair. That's what brought that to mind.

Getting back to your second question about food rationing. Going to school, I never knew, but I think at school, and since I was at school most of the time, I think they got special allocations being a school because we never went hungry. The thing-- I'm a chocoholic. One of the things I missed most was chocolate. And of course, that was rationed.

But Uncle Hardi, God bless his soul, he knew Jewish fellow who could get it for him wholesale. And every month, we used to go to this huge shop. We used to give him all his ration coupons. Once each month, he did what he liked with them. Then, we would go to his wholesale shop and pick out what we wanted.

And of course, his name was Vogelstein. Mr. Vogelstein. I'll always remember Mr. Vogelstein and his candy. Oh, we're going to Vogelstein's this afternoon. Still Mr. Vogelstein. I says to Hardi once, we're taking all the stuff. That was five times [INAUDIBLE] points. So Hardi said, don't worry about it. Don't worry about.

Mr. Vogelstein, he gets maybe 500 of these coupons. And out of these people, three of them will take the coupons. The others, they don't bother with them.

[LAUGHTER]

So I was never very hard up. And Uncle Hardi always managed to feed me. The other thing I missed, canned goods. They were rationed too. We had to give points for canned peaches and canned pears. And there were shortages during the war, but we managed.

The bombing wasn't very pleasant. I remember being in London once, and one of these doodlebugs came over. And I looked up, I was quite young and still in school. And the policeman came up and shoved me against the wall. Get down! And it crashed someplace. But we were no worse for it. We got used to it.

Did you ever have any kind of effects like nightmares or any other sorts of things after those kinds of experiences?

No. No, no. Never. No.

Even through all those hardships of your childhood.

Not that I remember.

--longings and--

Not that I remember. And I think I would.

Mm-hmm, or any other type, like some people, headaches, or some sorts of things that reflect those terrible tensions.

I would say no because I must have been able to somehow control them. That's the only thing I can think of. And I've really been very healthy all my life. That helps.

Let me ask you what point of view do you have about the people who-- we might call them historical revisionists who say that the Holocaust didn't happen at all.

They're a bunch of idiots. I feel sympathy for them. They're ostriches. You can't take them seriously. I know some people do, but some people will swear if I hold up something which is blue it'll be red. What can you do?

As I said before, I don't suffer fools gladly. The revisionists are false.

So you don't feel that they even would have an impact necessarily?

Oh, no. No. I think this is the same for any group of persons who are out of the mainstream of society. I'm trying to think of an example. Again, excesses, devious cults, if you will. And what was this Koresh cult where they-- you've got your people who are just out of it. That's all. I feel sorry for them, put it that way.

Do you think something like the Holocaust could happen again?

That is a very good question. I would like to think not, and I would like to hope not. The only thing is from what I learnt three [INAUDIBLE] yesterday, the persecution of Jews has gone on far longer than the Holocaust.

And this is why I view with apprehension. May not be something like the Holocaust, but it could be something else, something more insidious. And from what I read in Germany, there is a certain amount of anti-Semitism, the skinheads. Part of it is spreading to the States too.

And it's an alarming sign. I hope that it's just a fringe element. And I think history, I hope, will have taught us that we never see something like the Holocaust again. I can't see it happening in the States, put it that way.

But on the other hand, when I look at the situation in the Mideast you sure have it with the radical Arabs. Fortunately, I don't think they are in the majority at this point. And I think things are heading in the right direction there.

I think when Syria joins the more moderate Arabs, I think that Israel will have a certain amount of security. But it hasn't happened yet.

So it sounds like you also are looking at Germany with a certain apprehension too [INAUDIBLE]. Or are you? Maybe not.

I don't think with a certain apprehension. I think it bothers me that this thing goes on. But from what I read is that the German government is taking very dim view of this. And they're trying very hard to bring it under control, which wasn't the case when Hitler was around. I think the Germans suffered greatly as a result of the war also.

I think we can't dismiss that either. And I think that if anything of this nature was to even start again, I think the majority of the Germans, I would like to believe, would not allowed it to happen again.

Yeah. I meant to ask you also did you-- or up to what point were you in any touch with the Lyons family.

Let's see. Uncle Hardi contacted me still during the war. I think I must have lost touch with the Lyons-- let me think now. I went to Hurstpierpoint. They got me into Hurstpierpoint, which was '43. And Uncle Hardi started taking over when I was at Hurstpierpoint.

So I would say that the complete breakup with the Lyons' took place either just before the end of the war or just after the end of the war, '45.

And do you know how it was that Peter made it through in Germany. After all, he was 50% Jewish.

OK. I don't think I was ever told the whole story. I put two and two together. I think that Ilse felt that the less said about her husband the better. She more or less disowned him. And I think Peter was too young at that time.

He was even younger than I was-- he was virtually a baby-- that it wasn't a big picture for the Nazis. That's how he was overlooked.

I see.

Do you know, was he circumcised?

I think so. I think Hardi would have had it done, yes. Definitely.

But apparently she managed to keep him kind of [CROSS TALK]

Yes. Of course, I don't know what went on in Germany. I don't know who was it who said that maybe that's the way Hardi wanted it. Maybe it wasn't. Maybe should have come with him. But Hardi he felt the same way as I did when I went to Bermuda.

He was going to a new country. He had nothing. He didn't want to bring a wife and baby with him. And I don't think at 38, he could foresee what was coming, the big picture. And I think things just got caught up there.

And it couldn't have been easy for Ilse. In fact, she said so on many occasions. Can you imagine bringing up a baby by myself wondering any day whether the Nazis were going to walk in and take us both. So she must have had real fears.

Do you know how she supported herself by herself?

No. I think Hardi must have been very comfortably off because he had his own pharmacy. And I imagine that she had plenty of funds. I think Hardi took anything with him. He hardly took anything out with him. He started all over. I think probably-- Hardi was in his 50s when he left, which meant that he'd had a pharmacy for a long time. So he must have amassed quite a lot of money.

I imagine she existed on that. And things must have been tight in those days. But it couldn't have been easy.

No. So you say she's still alive?

She's still alive, yes. Yes.

And you're all in touch?

Yes, we're in touch. Right. Interesting about the Lyons'-- and I went back, after I arrived the United States, I went back to visit them. They were both still alive, and as far as I was concerned, the visit was a disaster.

They were living in a small town near Guildford. And my visit, which was less than two hours, what I remember of it was remonstrations by the Lyons'. No interest of what was going on in the States. No interest. Either they were wanting to talk about themselves, she painted, or they remonstrated with me, recalled things when I was a child and what I did. Very unsatisfactory.

So I never went back. Subsequently, she died. He's still alive.

And you said you had some touch with the older son?

The older son was out here, and he showed me a picture of his father. I've got a couple of pictures. And he must be 90.

Well, is there anything else right now you can think of you would like to add?

No, I think it's been very comprehensive.

Do you have any message you might like to leave? You don't have to, but if you'd like to.

Who would I leave it to?

Whoever is going to watch this tape?

Be an optimist. And remember, it's everybody's power to change their own course of life. I don't think any of us are born with it. And I think self discipline is a great teacher.

Well, thank you. I thank you very, very much for coming and doing this interview. You have a very good memory.

Thank you.

And you're very articulate. Thank you very much.

I've enjoyed very much.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

--contribution. So wait one minute because we want to do the photos.

OK, who are these people, please?

This is my mother and father. Erwin and Gerta Schohan. It's a wedding picture. And the reason I'm sharing it is the little sign on the right-hand side says apotheker H. Saabor. Apotheker is a pharmacist, and H. Saabor is Uncle Hardi. It's taken outside his pharmacy.

And about when is this?

Oh, golly. Let's see. I was born in '29. I would say it was in '28, '27 or '28. The next picture is also taken at about the same time.

Those are your parents also?

Right. That is soon after their wedding. So I would say that was also '29 or maybe '30.

Who are these people? That's my mother and father. And I think that was taken in 1935. I can't be sure of the date.

Would that be Breslau also?

That would be in Breslau, right.

They seem to be in the country or something.

Well, we had quite a lot of countryside outside Breslau. I'm not quite sure where it was taken. It's not identified. It happened to be one of the few of them together so I put it in.

This is a photograph taken of my mother and I. And we were in a place called Riesengebirge, which is the Forest of the Giants, which is just outside Breslau. And I think I was about six at that time.

So that would be also around 1935?

Yes. OK.

This is my grandmother, Uncle Hardi's sister. And of course, it's me. And I'm eight at the time. And that was taken in 1938. That's the last picture that was taken of my grandmother and I. And is that in her apartment?

No, that was taken where we lived in Victoria Strasse out on the balcony.

OK. Well, clearly, now, Uncle Hardi is your great uncle?

Correct. Correct. Yes.

OK. OK. Who are these people?

These were taken in 1938. And this was a visit, which my mother, which is the lady on the right with the first stole, is visiting Uncle Hardi, who's my great uncle and my grandmother's brother. And his wife, Tante Ilse. Tante Ilse is the lady with the hat on the left-hand side. And she's still alive and she's 86 living in London.

And would this be Berlin?

This was taken in Berlin, right. I don't know where my father was at that time. Probably on a business trip.

Mm-hmm. OK.

That's a group photograph. And that was taken also in 1938. That was taken in Breslau.

In a studio, perhaps?

I think so. This is the grave of my grandmother, which the headstone was put there, or I should say ordered, by Uncle Hardi. And translating it says, here rests my beloved sister, Alma Hannes. And the date of birth, and then, about the children, Gerta Schohan, [SPEAKING GERMAN] Hannes, and Erwin Schohan, murdered by the fascists.

Yes.

That says it all.

It does.

Yes. OK.

That was a picture taken of me in a portrait studio in Berlin sometime early in May just before leaving for England. And the next one is the last picture which was taken of me in England on the train, May the 5th, 1939. And as I mentioned earlier, I'm the one in the center. As I mentioned earlier, the boy on the left with the curly hair is this friend which Jimmy Callahan has.

And he recognized himself. And he wanted a copy of this picture. I haven't met him yet, I'm quite interested to meet with him and talk with him.

Do you know what his name is?

I do, but I can't think of it right now.

That's OK. And you don't know the other people in this picture?

No. No.

OK.