

Interview with URSULA LANDSBERG

Holocaust Oral History Program

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Q TODAY IS JULY 18, 1990. I'M EVELYN FIELDEN INTERVIEWING URSULA LANDSBERG FOR THE ORAL HISTORY PROJECT OF THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA HOLOCAUST CENTER. WE ARE IN SAN FRANCISCO AT THE TEMPLE BETH ISRAEL JUDEA.

GOOD MORNING, URSULA.

A Good morning, Evelyn.

Q GOOD TO HAVE YOU HERE.

A Nice to be here.

Q WOULD YOU TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOUR EARLY CHILDHOOD; WHEN YOU WERE BORN AND WHERE.

A Okay, okay. When?

Q IF YOU WANT TO.

A Yes. I was born in June, 1923, in a very
SP? little, small village called (Guchsagen) which is near
Kassel in Germany. I was born there because my mother
wanted to give birth to me at her parents home, and they
SP? lived in (Guchsagen). We lived at the time in a town
called Brilon which is in Westphalia. I do not have much
recollection of that time at all.

My grandfather, my mother's father, was a teacher

and hazan and rabbi in this little village of
EP? (Guchsagen), lived in the house, in the schoolhouse, in
#206 the (schulhouse), you know, in the synagogue house as
well; and I recall going back there every summer during
our summer vacations and spending time with them.

We lived in Brilon, I think, until I was four years
old. My father also was a teacher and hazan and rabbi,
but I have to enlarge on that a little bit because in the
small, little towns, one person took care of all these
so-called duties in a Jewish community, different than
here. Anyway, he was transferred for duty to a small
town called Wesel which is on the Rhine near Dusseldorf,
Cologne, not too far from there.

I think in 1928, early '28, we moved to Wesel and
my father again took the position of leading the Jewish
community. It was a larger community than the one of
Brilon, and we lived there until early '33. So actually,
there again, there were no hardships as far as Nazis or
whatever, at least I didn't feel anything in that time
at all.

Q LET ME JUST ASK YOU, DID YOU HAVE BROTHERS AND
SISTERS?

A No, I was an only child.

Q YOU WERE AN ONLY CHILD?

A Yes.

Q AND WERE YOU BROUGHT UP IN AN ORTHODOX WAY?

A Yes. Very orthodox, very orthodox.

I went to school there, my father's class. He taught all classes from first through eighth grade, in one school room. We each had our own lessons to do, I suppose, and it was fun. It was really a lot of fun. He did not favor me above the other children. I remember that, too.

I do have some pictures from there; maybe I could show one.

Q OH, YES, THAT WOULD BE NICE. THAT IS THE HOUSE WHERE YOU WERE BORN?

A No, not born. This is the house where the school was in. We lived in that house, on the second floor actually.

Q-2 OKAY, AND WE'LL GET ADDITIONAL SHOTS OF THIS AT THE END OF THE VIDEO TODAY.

A Okay. Do you want me to show any more of them?

Q-2 YES, IT'S FINE TO SHOW THEM. I WAS JUST SAYING THAT SO ANYBODY WATCHING THIS WOULD KNOW THERE WOULD BE OTHER SHOTS AT THE END OF THE TAPE.

A Okay. This is my father with some of the children in school in front of the synagogue.

(NEXT PHOTOGRAPH)

This is a whole group of us in front of the synagogue, and I'm this one.

(NEXT PHOTOGRAPH)

These are some of my friends; it was my ninth birthday party; this is me.

(NEXT PICTURE)

This was the synagogue in Wesel. One of the former residents who now lives here in San Mateo that's an artist, a painter; he painted it, from memory and also pictures, I suppose. And here it is burning at Kristallnacht.

Q YOU HAVE A PICTURE OF YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER THERE?

A No. These are my grandparents.

Q GRANDPARENTS. YOU HAD ONE OF YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER, TOO?

A Yes. These are my grandparents, the ones in
sp? (Guchsagen) where I was born.

(NEXT PHOTOGRAPH)

And this is my father, was my father I should say.

Q THIS IS YOU, ISN'T IT?

A Well, this is a little later. This is an interesting picture from the point of view, I don't know if you recall this, everybody had to have their picture taken with the left ear exposed. Do you remember that?

Q WHAT YEAR WAS THAT?

A I think I was 14. That must have been '37, '36-'37, somewhere around that time.

Q SO, DURING THE NAZI PERIOD?

A Yes.

Q IN ORDER TO GET YOUR CERTIFICATE, YOUR HOUSE RIGHTS OR SOMETHING?

A I don't recall why this was. I know there was a law, whatever you want to call it, that every Jew had to have their picture with the left ear exposed.

Q WE ARE NOW IN THE '30s?

A Yes, yes.

Q AND WHEN HITLER FIRST CAME TO POWER, TELL ME HOW YOU NOTICED LIFE WAS CHANGED FOR YOU.

A I don't remember it, to be quite honest. I don't remember that until later when we then moved again in 1933 to Krefeld which is also near Cologne. Again my father was transferred. Teachers in Europe, or in Germany at least, were employed by the State, by the government. So he had to go where they sent him, so to speak. Now that was again a much larger community than the ones we had been in prior to that.

There he was only, at the beginning, teacher at the Jewish school. I went to high school right away. I was ten years old and had a lot of Jewish and non-Jewish friends, but I must say, most of my friends were really Jewish because we were in a very Jewish environment. We lived it. My father was very orthodox, my parents were orthodox, we lived in the synagogue premises; and so most

of my contacts were Jewish, I would say.

Now when Hitler came, I mean Hitler came in '33 already, but we didn't notice it too much at that time. At least I was not aware of it. I was very protected, I think.

Q YOU KEPT KOSHER ALSO?

A Very kosher, strictly kosher.

Q WAS IT HARD TO GET THE KOSHER MEAT?

A No. I remember getting kosher meat, later on this was.

There was, of course, Jewish butchers in Krefeld and I don't know at what stage, probably '37 or '38, they were no longer allowed to be there. Now I honestly don't know what happened. I know we didn't stop eating meat, I don't think. I presume one had to do what one could in those days; or maybe there was still kosher butchers, I don't remember that.

But I do remember hearing the talk of the boycotts and once in a while my parents would mention so-and-so has been taken away; but it never really sank in. I was too young, too, I think, to be in on that.

SP? We had in Krefeld a Jewish (kieminder) house, which I suppose is like a community center, whatever it is, where we had a lot of Jewish activities going on because, as you know, later on we were not allowed to go to an opera, or a cinema, or to a play, or whatever,

(SP. nothing, nothing cultural at all. So whatever culture was going on, was going on in this (kieminder) house, in this community center. And we had a Jewish tennis club to which I belonged, and I lived on the tennis club. At that point I was a teenager, I was 15, and that really was the only outlet that we had; tennis, table tennis, and the community center.

(I remember in '38, maybe I'm getting ahead of myself, but in '38 when they first picked up some of the men and took them to concentration camps, to Dachau, I think it was at that time most all of the men in the Jewish community of Krefeld were picked up, except my father, including the rabbi; he was also picked up. And then my father took on the role of rabbi, took over the rabbi's part and led the community. Eventually most of the men did come back. Why my father was spared, I do not know. Today when I think about it I am sorry in a way, because if they had picked him up, he would have seen the writing on the wall which later on, very much later on, of course, he did.

(But at the time when I left, which was in '39 or '38 already, they sort of half-heartedly wanted to leave, but they always said, "Nothing is going to happen to us. Look, I was never picked up, you know; I'm employed by the government; I fought in the First World War and I was decorated." And all this, like all the men--a lot of men

did. As a matter of fact, I remember him going to, with a friend, driving to Stuttgart where the American Consulate was that was applicable to us, and this other man picked up his waiting number for visas for the United States. My father did not. He was there and did not pick up a number. It is unreal to even think of; this was an intelligent person and he did not see the light. Therefore they never made it out.

Anyway, in '37, I think late '37, we were thrown out of school, high school. I remember that preparing, going to prepare for the emigration, we had to do something besides sitting around the home. We decided, my parents helped me decide I guess, to do something. And at that time I became an assistant to a dentist, a Jewish dentist, to learn dental assistance which, unfortunately, only lasted six months because at that time all the doctors and dentists had to stop practicing. So that was then end of that.

Then shortly after that my parents received a letter from a family in England asking if they would be willing to send me, alone, to spend my time, live with them, until such time that we could go to the United States. The waiting numbers at that time were very high, the quotas were very little, so that it was going to take time for us to be able to go. At that time my parents then saw the light and tried to get a number and come

out. I had an uncle living here in Redwood City, in San Francisco, and he sent an affidavit.

So these people, they're name was (Rosen), had heard of me through a friend, a girlfriend, who had come to England also to stay with a family somewhere nearby. They knew each other, whatever, and she mentioned that she had a friend who perhaps these (Rosens), this family had no children, Jewish people of course, and felt that they would like to take a child in.

So I don't know the discussions that my parents obviously must have had, and with my grandparents who at that time were living with us, to send me along, alone, to a strange country; but they decided to send me. So in 1939, June '39, I left with the (Kinder) transport to England.

Q DESCRIBE THE (KINDER) TRANSPORT A LITTLE BIT.

A Yes. We left from a town called Duisburg, that was a gathering point, by train to Holland; and took the ferry from there to Dover, to England. There must have been, I would guess maybe a hundred boys and girls.

I remember very distinctly the scene at the station in Duisburg, where friends, kids my age had come to say goodbye. And I spent the time with them rather than with my parents and my grandparents. I will never forget it. When one grows up and becomes a parent oneself, one realizes how cruel kids can be. Anyway, I left; had

never been away from home.

Sorry I'm being a little emotional.

We arrived in England and were all taken to some kind of a waiting hall, whatever you want to call it, where certain formalities had to be taken care of. And then eventually all the names were called, including mine. And here comes this man, what I thought was an old man; he was not, but he looked old to me; with a younger man and they were the ones. It was Mr. (Rosen) with his chauffeur who were picking me up, and they lived in Wales, in Cardiff.

So having learned a little English in school, and I must say, very little English because once the English started speaking, forget it! And a very funny incident happened when we were driving down Oxford Street in London to go to Wales. Amongst--I'm sure all of you have been there, in England, in London, the crowds that are on Oxford Street--I see a cousin walking along there, a cousin of my mother's. But by the time I was able to say, "Stop the car," forget it; we were gone. I couldn't, I was so excited, I couldn't say it in English. I just couldn't.

Anyway, so then I also remember distinctly stopping on the way to Wales at some kind of a coffee shop, I presume, whatever, and having my first cup of English tea, which was absolutely a disaster--tea with milk.

(Funny the things that you remember.

Anyway, then we got to Wales finally, to Cardiff, and the people lived in a small, little house. Her father lived with them, too, everybody called him the Governor. And the people were absolutely fantastic to me. There are very many cases--I have friends that went under the same conditions that I did, and they really became servants in their homes; but I was just part of the family, loved, well-taken care of.

(The only problem I had was that he was a jobber I guess, whatever you call it, went to the little markets in Wales and sold merchandise. And they stored that merchandise in a shop, an open shop, and this is where she was all day. And I sat with her in this shop all day long. Here I was, 16 years old, and that was not my idea of spending my life.

But, as far as being loved and all that, at the very beginning I must say this, too. I went to the synagogue every Friday night, every Saturday morning, this was my life, all my life. And I cried bitterly, cried bitterly I was so homesick, until one day Auntie Ethel, what I called her, spoke to me and said to me, "Why do you cry so hard? People tell me..." she didn't always go with me, "People tell me that you cry and they think that I am beating you." It was really quite an eye opener.

(Anyway, I was very homesick, as I said. And then

they thought it would be a good idea to invite this girlfriend through whom I had come to them and spend a week with me, which they did. And she came and I guess then I got better.

As you know, contact with my parents was--because I arrived in England, let's see, it was June 26th, I left Germany June 26th, and September 1st the war broke out between England and Germany. So the contacts, you know, the letters absolutely wouldn't go through. Eventually I remember writing to America to my uncle who then sent the letters to my parents and vice-versa. I got letters from them. That, too, stopped after awhile and then it was just communication through Red Cross letters: "We are okay, how are you?" That was it, and which also stopped after awhile.

I tried very hard to get my parents to come to England the same way as I did, somehow, as a stepping point to America. I remember going to see the rabbi there, of our congregation, and saying, "Anything, my father will do anything to bring him here." Didn't work. I guess they were all afraid for their own hides. Really and truly. I hate to say it, but that was the way it was. Because as a teacher, or rabbi, or whatever, he was--what was he going to do? What kind of profession? He would have to learn all over. He did study English. I remember him writing me letters in English, trying to

perfect himself a little bit. Anyway, they wouldn't accept him at all.

Then I recall that my uncle, here in America, tried to send them tickets to come to the United States via Cuba, via South America, whatever, all these various means that people tried to do. And I remember him sending money, and he lost all of the money. I mean, nothing, it was-- a lot of hoax, I think, were going on; people were taking advantage.

So to cut this very long story short, eventually in 1942 my parents were taken to a concentration camp and perished there.

Q WHEN DID YOU FIRST FIND THAT OUT?

A I did not hear that until after the war. Then I got an official notice from the Red Cross, I believe it was, and that was the end; there was nothing. And I remember looking after the war, when the press was able to send pictures and things of concentration camps, and people that had fled and whatever. I remember also on the newsreels looking furiously to see if I can see a face. Of course, I never did. And I've never been able to talk to anyone that saw them at concentration camps, because I think everybody perished there.

I found out meanwhile that all the people that went with them on the same transport, because as you know, a lot of it has been documented since then, they have books

(#1684)
 of the (Euden in Krefeld, Euden in Wesel) and all that, you know, it's history.

It will say in there the date that they were transported to (#1693) (Itsbeka), which is in Poland.

What else?

Q MAY I JUST ASK YOU ONE MORE QUESTION; REGARDING 1937, YOU MENTIONED THAT THE MEN WERE TAKEN TO DACHAU, DID YOU KNOW AT THAT TIME THAT THEY WERE GOING TO DACHAU?

A Yes, I think people--well, no, I think once they were there, I think they knew. I remember them coming back with their heads shaven, those that did come back.

Q ALL RIGHT.

A I do remember that.

Q IT'S INTERESTING THAT YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT WAS DACHAU.

A Well, there was talk of it. I remember it very distinctly.

Q DID YOU KNOW ABOUT THE OTHER CAMPS?

?
 A No, no. I, of course, #1640 to come back to the Kristallnacht. Naturally I remember that very distinctly too. Because in the morning, early in morning, someone had come to my father and said that the synagogue is burning. And we walked there and saw it up in flames, and also the community center was also burning. All the Jewish stores, all the windows were

smashed in. I guess that's when reality really set it.

Q AFTER THAT YOUR FATHER DID NOT CHANGE HIS MIND ABOUT LEAVING?

A Yes, but it was too late, you know. The waiting numbers to America were too high to be able to get out soon, and then it was just too late.

Q COULD YOU TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOUR MOTHER?

A Yes, of course. My mother was a typical Jewish mother. Very concerned, in fact so much so that she never wanted me to learn to ride a bicycle, which I did though, or go swimming. And she was just a wonderful lady. She never worked, most women didn't in those days. And she had a brother, that's the one that was here in Redwood City that sent us the affidavits to come to the United States.

My father had one brother. My father's family also came from near Kassel, a little tiny village, even tinier than (Guchsagen) by the name of (Falconberg). And when we went in the summertime to visit the grandparents, we also visited those grandparents, of course, but we didn't stay with them that long. So that's why the other ones I have more memories of. But I remember it was a tiny place. And I remember the geese running in the street, you know, very small village.

But my mother's brother emigrated to the United

States, to New York, and had a family. I saw them here. He has died in the meantime.

The friends--I don't know, do you want me to talk about--

Q YOU CAN TALK ABOUT ANYTHING YOU WANT.

A Well, so much happened in England. Are you interested to hear about life in England?

Q ABSOLUTELY. YES, YES.

BUT BEFORE WE GET TO ENGLAND, I WANT TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR IMMEDIATE FAMILY. HOW MANY PEOPLE IN YOUR FAMILY PERISHED, AND CAN YOU TELL US THE NAMES?

A Yes.

Q IF YOU REMEMBER.

A Yes, right. Our family was very small. My mother had one brother, my father had one brother only. This cousin whom I mentioned before who I ran into in London on Oxford Street, I was in touch with. I lived in London and I found out through my parents where he was. He has passed away in the meantime. He was my mother's cousin actually, he was older.

88? I remember my mother had a cousin in Essen by the name of (Leufenstein). He was a teacher as well. I don't know what happened to them. We had family in Holland, in Amsterdam. We visited with them, I think in 1935 or '36 maybe. This uncle who lived here had left Germany to go to Austria first and he then wanted to go

to the United States, and went to Amsterdam on the transit to America. And we went and visited them there with his family in Amsterdam. But I don't remember the names.

And really, that's all the family. There were other cousins of my mother's, I believe, some are still alive in South America and in New York by the name of ^{SP?} (Viatime). I know the ones, two cousins in New York, they are in the insurance business; not anymore, today, they were. So we were a very small family.

Q SO, HOW MANY IMMEDIATE MEMBERS OF YOUR FAMILY DID YOU LOSE IN THE CAMPS?

A That I am aware of, first of all my grandmother. She was sent to Theresienstadt.

Q AND WHAT WAS HER NAME?

^{SP?} A (Kantar, Lena Kantar). My grandfather died a natural death in 1939, shortly after I left. And also the other grandparents died natural deaths. But this grandmother was sent to Theresienstadt and died there.

So there's really--she died, my parents, maybe some cousins. Not too many people. There were just not that many, you know.

Q WILL YOU TELL US THE NAMES OF YOUR PARENTS?

A Of course. Joseph and Elsa Dannenberg.

Q D-A-N-N-E-N-B-E-R-G?

A Right, right.

Q IT'S VERY UNUSUAL IN A WAY TO HAVE SUCH A SMALL FAMILY.

A Yes, I realize that. Well, I continued it, I only have one son.

Q SO, NOW YOU WENT TO ENGLAND, RATHER WALES AS YOU SAY.

A Yes, Wales, yes.

Q DESCRIBE A LITTLE BIT YOUR LIFE IN ENGLAND.

A Well, in Wales, I was there for one year with this family. At that time a, I don't know what you would call that, ruling or whatever came out from the English government that so-called "enemy aliens", as we were, were not allowed to live within a certain radius of the sea, and Cardiff was right at the sea. And so I was to leave.

SP? Now, the (Rosens), the family I was with, wanted me to stay; and I probably would have been able to somehow fix it that I could, but I was very anxious to leave. As good as they were to me, I wanted to get away to a big town. You know what I mean; I wanted to get to London. At that time I was 17, so I left, went to London and stayed with a friend of my parents in a suburb of London: Hitchin, Surrey.

The first land mine that hit London area was our house. Fortunately we were in an air-raid shelter. We got out in the morning; there was nothing left. They had

two children, and she had a sister living nearby with a husband and two children. Well, we went to live there, with her sister because our--everything was gone.

Pretty soon after that they, England, interred all the men, all the "enemy alien" men, on the Isle of Wight. So these two men were picked up and sent away to camp. So now we were three women, if I can call myself a woman at 17, with their children. The ladies were super-nervous, obviously, and there was just no way for me to stay there any longer.

SP?
(#2072) So I went at that time to (Bloomsbury house) in London. (Bloomsbury house), where the authorities, they took care of refugees, and told them I had to leave and to find me somewhere to go. So they sent me to a girls' hostel, a Jewish girls' hostel, in London in Oxford Gardens. There must have been about 30 girls, I would say, at this place. It was run by a Jewish family, three children.

I remember getting there. When I was shown to my bed, which was one of maybe eight in a room, no closet space, no nothing, I thought, "What has happened to you?" Oh my god, it was just a horrible experience and I sat down on my bed and bawled, you know, no money, no nothing, nothing.

But as time went by, pretty soon after that we were allowed to go to work, the refugees. We got permission

to go to work. So I immediately looked into that and did something that I never wanted to do, and that was to sew. I got a job with a Jewish family who ran a small tailoring business, manufacturing handmade men's pants; everything was done by hand. Well, you know, one was young and one got used to everything.

In this hostel, I remember, we had to take turns fixing breakfast, you know, cooking oatmeal in the morning for 40 people, and I remember this great big pot, standing over the stove, stirring. Not like today, 1-2-3 in the microwave oven.

We, of course, were rationed during the war years and I became very friendly with their younger daughter, who was my age, real close friends. So eventually I had a little bit of, what is the word, an "in" with the owners, whatever. So much so that they gave me the keys to the larder. And so whenever they went out, we would sneak in, literally, and steal food.

Q YOU WERE HUNGRY?

A We were hungry; we were hungry for the good things this family did not let us have. You know we were rationed with butter and things. We never saw any butter, jam. I remember us going in there and making sandwiches with butter and jam this thick. One does funny things; hunger does funny things to you.

Anyway, as I said I became quite friendly with this

(daughter and therefore spent a lot of time in their living room--not with all the rest of the gang--where they had a fire going, which was fun. And also, eventually I was then able to move out of this room with so many cots into a double-bedded room with a friend, who I am still friends with today, who lives in New York.

(And then the bombing became very, very serious in England. I mean it was serious already because I was bombed out with the land mine, but, you know, these constant air raids kept happening. So in England most homes had cellars, the cellar was converted into an air-raid shelter. And at the beginning, I remember, we only had mattresses on the floor; but not enough mattresses for everybody. So what happened was that half the people were half the night on a mattress, the other half sat on chairs like this; and then half of the night was over and we changed places. Eventually then, since, you know, everybody thought the war was going to be over any minute so to speak, then it was going to be a long time; so they put beds, two layers of beds, one on top of the other, so we were able to stay in a bed all night long.

What can I tell you? It was really pretty rough. The hostel life was very hard, but yet you made the most of every situation.

(I remember around the corner was a hostel for boys. So, of course, we had--I remember putting on plays

together with the boys. As a matter of fact, at one of the plays at one time, that's where my husband first saw me. I didn't realize that he was there to look the girls over. And eventually I met him and we married. We met out of the hostel in 1943. Gosh, there's so much in England. I can't recall.

Q REGARDING THESE PICTURES, HOW DID YOU MANAGE TO BRING THEM OUT?

A I didn't. Oh, some of them I did. Some of them I did, but most of these are pictures that I only got within the last few years. I got those through the help of--shall I talk about my reunion?

Q YES. I'M SURE YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT, BUT HOW, YOU KNOW, DID YOU--

A Well, some of these friends I met, again three years ago, two and three years ago, had pictures because they had come out with their families to America directly, and we made copies. That's how I have most of these pictures. A couple of them from my parents I brought with me. This one, for instance, of my father, my uncle had here, so you know, this is how I got some of the pictures.

Q WHAT DID YOU MANAGE TO BRING OVER TO ENGLAND WITH YOU?

A Okay, I'll tell you. My parents had packed a big crate, I remember. Some linens, a typewriter,

personal belongings, of course, a little bit of silver, with the idea, of course, that eventually they would come out and we would have that.

I remember exactly it arriving in Wales. When they notified us that I can come and pick up the box. When we got to the port, they opened it and of all the things that were in there, amongst others, was a bottle of 47-11 cologne. That they would not allow me, or rather I think they would have allowed me, but I had to pay a certain amount of duty; and the duty was more than the whole thing was worth. I said, "You keep it." I remember that very distinctly.

I also remember very distinctly that these (Rosens) who I stayed with were sort of surprised. And I remember them saying to their friends, "Here's this poor refugee girl and look at all the things that she brought." So they didn't expect that I would bring a lot, that I was able to bring anything with me.

Q THE ENGLISH PEOPLE THAT YOU MET, NOT YOUR FRIENDS I'M TALKING ABOUT, WHAT WERE THEIR MOODS TOWARDS JEWISH REFUGEES FROM GERMANY?

A Friendly. Oh, yes, friendly. You know that also was 1939 don't forget, the end of '39, people began to realize that it really was so. I think just like in America, people didn't believe what was going on.

Q SO IN '40 YOU STAYED IN ENGLAND, HOW LONG?

A Ten years, until 1949 when we came to the United States. I was married in England, my son was born in England. He was four years old when we came over here.

Q WHERE DID YOU LIVE WHEN YOU WERE MARRIED IN ENGLAND?

A In London. And then later on, a suburb of London.

Q AND YOUR HUSBAND, WHAT DID HE DO?

A My husband was, what do you call that here, well let's call it a manager, whatever you want to, of a ladies' dresses manufacturing place at first, when I first met him. And then later on he went into his own business, partnership, in making fancy covered buttons.

And I was working, I had left this place where I'd learned to make men's pants and did war work. First of all, we all had to do war work. And I remember it was somewhere (on Finch Lane) in London, on how to do soldering, radio parts. And then fortunately I became pregnant and I didn't have to do war work anymore. I got excused from doing that. And after my son was born-- I'm sorry, and prior to that I had worked in other sewing, in manufacture of maternity clothes; and then I did war work.

Q YOUR HUSBAND WAS NOT PICKED UP AND SENT TO THE CAMPS?

(
A No. My husband volunteered for the army in England. That was before I met him. And he served in Yoevil in England, I think that is (Devonport), Sommerset I believe, yes, Sommerset, in what they call the Pioneer Corps where most of the refugee people served that had volunteered. And he had to change his name. His name officially was (Gunther Gustaf) Landsberg, and he changed it to Guy Landsbury.

Q THE BRITISH MADE HIM CHANGE HIS NAME?

(
A The British made him change it, in case they were going to go abroad and would be found by, or captured by the Germans; that they wouldn't have a German name.

He retained the "Guy" all his life, but went back to Landsberg later on. He was invalided out of the army, and when I met him he was working in this manufacturing place. He had a brother who also perished in a concentration camp, also his mother.

Q WHAT WAS THE NAME OF HIS BROTHER?

A Peter, Peter Landsberg. His family owned the music school in Berlin, which, incidentally, today is still in existence and is called the School of Music, formerly (Stashitla Vetorium), which is what it was named then. His father died a natural death when he was four years old. Let me see...

(
Q WAS YOUR HUSBAND ORTHODOX?

A No, my husband was not orthodox. We kept an orthodox home all through the war years in England, I want you to know. I remember taking the train to Croydon from where we lived to a Jewish butcher to get meat. My little child, two years old or whatever he was at the time, with me on the train. It was really easy to travel in those days in England.

We kept a Jewish home, a kosher home I mean, until we came to the United States, where it should be easy, right? But when we came here, we had to go to work, find jobs, and my husband didn't have such an easy time of it, not immediately. But I found a job right away. My husband was sent to (Koret) of California because he had sort of been in the business. I don't remember who sent him there. And when he was talking to the personnel manager there, it was a woman, she said they really didn't have anything, but what did his wife do? And he said, "Well, she sews," and she said, "Well, send her."

SP? So I went there and got a job right away at (Koret). I was a sample maker there for four years.

His first job was Fuller Brush man, and he just hated it with a passion. He just, you know, the first person that threw the door in his face, that was the end of that! He said, "No more Fuller Brush man for me." He just wasn't the type to go from door-to-door. After that he took a job, got a job, wasn't able to find

anything else, in--what do you call it, I can't think of
the word--loan shark (south of Market).^{# 2723}

Q PAWNBROKER?

A Pawnbroker, thank you, pawnbroker. Eventually they asked him to have a gun handy and he said, "I'm not going to shoot anybody." And they said, very sorry, if you can't do that, we can't use you. So he lost that job.

He then worked for Blue Cross-Blue Shield in one of the offices. Unfortunately, he became very ill very soon; he contracted TB. Was in a sanatorium here in Belmont for fourteen months, came home for a few months and then had to go again for another ten months. He had to have surgery; they removed a lung eventually. During that time he contracted diabetes. He was very ill for very, very many years.

But then after he came out of the sanatorium the second time, he became director of the Jewish National Fund here, Western Region, and was there for a long time. I don't remember exactly how many years. During the time when he was hospitalized in Belmont, right by (Rosenoff Temple Beth...)^{# 2781} visited and met him and were looking for an executive director, and then he asked for Guy and that's how he got there, and was there ten years until he was too ill to work.

Q DO YOU THINK HE COULD HAVE CONTRACTED T.B. IN ENGLAND?

A Yes, be quite sure. As a matter of fact, I remember when we applied to go to the United States, when our turn, finally our waiting number was, mine--I don't remember how my husband came, really. Whether he came through me or vice-versa, I don't recall that.

We had to wait six months because a shadow showed on the X ray. At that time you had to have a clean bill of health. But then after six months they did it again, and they said he's okay to come. But obviously it broke open again, whatever had capsulized before that, I suppose.

Q YOU APPLIED FOR YOUR NUMBER, VISA NUMBER, QUOTA NUMBER THEY CALLED IT AT THAT TIME, IN '39

A '38-'39, yes.

Q IT TOOK YOU HOW LONG?

A '49. As a matter of fact, we had no thoughts of coming to the United States at the beginning. We were English. My husband became naturalized through having been in the army, so that was not a major thing at the time, and I through him became British. Big difference between British and English; the English people make a difference there.

Q YOU GOT A PASSPORT?

A Yes, British passport, absolutely.

But life was very rough during the war. As a matter of fact, during the blitzes I remember one time we ran from London, literally, because a bomb hit very close to where my husband was working. We went for a week to Wales, to these people that I had lived with. We spent a week there and then said, "What are we going to do? We have got to make a living; we can't live here, stay here." So we went back to London.

We, for awhile, slept in an underground. That was before my son was born. We lived in (Gorress Green) and there the underground station, you know, people went to sleep there at night; some experience that was.

And the funny story was: about 5:00 in the morning the "all-clear" would sound from the air raids; we'd walk home, and on the way home a new alert would go; but we'd still go home and just have an hour back in our beds. You know people did silly things.

War time in England was not easy, bombs flying all around us. I did a lot of "home work"; after my son was born I never went back to work. I did what they call "home work" there, sewing. I remember doing (hand-baste linings). I had to schlepp a big suitcase with leather linings into town, to pick-up and deliver. And I remember when I told this man we were going to go to the United States and he said, I don't have to worry about you ever, you'll always make a living. It's kind of cute.

And we were talking about when we came to the United States, right? We came by ship, from England to New York, where we spent a few days with an uncle and aunt of my husband's; and with my uncle--my father's brother lived in New York--a few days. Then came cross-country by Greyhound with a four-year-old child on my lap.

I remember when we hit Nevada and stopped. We didn't know what was going on, everybody ran out of the bus. Meanwhile we found out why; they were gambling, of course, but we didn't know about that. I remember a lot of soldiers, American soldiers, on the bus.

We came, arrived here in San Francisco November 11th, which is a holiday, as you know, in 1949. My uncle and his brother-in-law picked us up at the Greyhound station; and my uncle said, "It's a holiday." And I said, "Yes, we are coming."

So he had taken an apartment--well, I know what I was talking about, let me cut back a little bit. He wrote to us; I was in touch with him in England by letter. He wrote to us, "Why don't you decide to come to the United States. You're young; anything that you want to do you could do here, what do you have to lose?" And when that letter came, we looked at each other and said, "Why not? Why don't we go to the United States finally?" And we decided to come here.

He wrote us that he had rented a furnished apartment

for us near the Golden Gate Park. Well, when we heard the Golden Gate Park--I don't know whether Americans realize what San Francisco means, or used to in those days, to Europe. It was really like Eden, the Garden of Eden you were going to come to. When I heard an apartment near the Golden Gate Park, it absolutely sounded ideal. Well, it wasn't so ideal. It was a little two room flat; the living room had one of those, what do you call those beds in the wall?

Q I DON'T QUITE UNDERSTAND.

A You know, you put the bed up into the wall.

Q OH, MURPHY BED.

A Murphy, Murphy bed, and one bedroom. Well, believe it or not, his lordship the four-year-old son got the bedroom, and we slept on the Murphy bed. My son was very asthmatic, so we had a lot of problems with him healthwise. Fortunately he outgrew that.

Q HE LIKED AMERICA?

A Oh, yes, we all did. We were really very happy with the decision. I don't know what would have happened had we stayed in England; my husband got so sick. It was best to be here. I made wonderful friends here, we joined an organization, (Haku) Athletic Club. I don't know if you have ever heard of it. It was a Jewish soccer club mainly, but there was a lot a social goings-on and we were both very active in that. I have been

involved in the Jewish community ever since I'm here, really, in one way or another.

Q WHAT SCHOOL DID YOU SEND YOUR SON TO?

A He went to elementary school in, gosh--There's somebody at the door (interruption). I don't remember the name of the school. Somewhere near 14th Avenue.

Q YOU TOLD YOUR SON ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND, ABOUT YOUR LIFE RIGHT AWAY?

A No. As a matter of fact, we had decided we would never speak German at home. At that time, you know, German was a no-no. Today I'm sorry. I remember when he went to high school and he had a choice of languages; we suggested he choose German because we thought we could help him with that. He did and we could not help him with that because we did not remember why a certain grammar was that way. We knew the way it was supposed to sound, but we didn't know why, if you know what I am trying to say. So he learned German in high school, but we never spoke it at home, never.

Q DID HE ASK YOU QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR PAST?

A Not too much, not too much. He's aware of it certainly. As a matter of fact, he--should have brought that. He went to Selma, marched in Selma when he was a young man. My son, he was just 18, 17-18; he was going to San Francisco State, the university here, and we were at that time at a convention in Palm Springs for the

temple administrators. We phoned him and he told us over the telephone that he had decided to go and march at Selma. We said, "You can't do that. How are you going to get there?" Etc., etc. Well, he's going to go with some friends in the car. We were absolutely devastated and we said, "Well, if you're going to go"--we couldn't talk him out of it--"at least take our car; it's a safe car to drive. But before you go, do us a favor and talk to the rabbi." And the rabbi advised him to go if that was the way he felt. So he did go and, of course, that was a very interesting experience. He came back; he wrote a letter--oh, no, sorry. When we came back from the convention, he had left a letter for us, "Why I feel I must go to Selma," and he refers to freedom of people in that. The letter was published in ever so many newspapers. I remember the (Corps Bulletin), do you remember that years ago? And the Chronicle, and the Jewish publications, and his picture. We had letters, we had mail from all kinds of people who had read it and congratulated him and us. So he's very much, my son is very aware of what has been going on. We don't talk about it too much, though.

My grandchildren know of it, but I'm sort of pleased about this (interview) because I think that I certainly will let them, if you give me the tape, I will let them have it. They know of it, obviously they read, but I

think here too, the children don't learn too much about the Holocaust itself in school. It's part of history and that's it.

We've been back, we've been invited back to Germany. I had never set foot in Germany until the invitation came. And it was very doubtful that I would want to go; but I did go hoping to find some friends, which I certainly did. I met twelve of the closest friends that I had and played with, so to speak, in Krefeld.

This friend who had saved my life, who had asked these people to sponsor me to come to England, we had totally lost contact. I didn't know what happened to her, nor did she know what happened to me. The first morning in Krefeld, after the night before we had a reception; but the first morning in Krefeld we were to visit the Jewish cemeteries. There were two Jewish cemeteries, and as we walked from one to the other around the corner, there was another couple walking. Naturally you say something, and we looked at each other and it was her. Unreal, really and truly.

When I got checked into the hotel in Krefeld; well, a group of people in the foyer, in the lobby there, and a man walked up to me real close and he said to me, "I used to know an Ursula Dannenberg once." And I said, "Well, that's me." And he said "I know, I recognize you." This was a man, a friend who now lives in South

America. I mean it was just unreal, really. So I don't know if you want to hear anything about a reunion.

Q I DO. I UNDERSTAND THE CITY OF KREFELD INVITED FORMER JEWISH RESIDENTS OF KREFELD TO COME BACK.

A Yes, right.

Q AND YOUR TRIP WAS PAID FOR?

A Right.

Q AND WAS IT TWO WEEKS, OR ONE WEEK?

A One week.

Q ONE WEEK. SO YOU HAD ALL EXPENSES PAID; RIGHT?

A Yes.

Q WELL, TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT THE REUNION.

A Okay. We were put up in two different places. Well, before all this happened, we had letters, of course, with the invitation. Then we had a letter from whoever was in charge there saying that if we would want to, they would like to put us up with a private family and if not, a choice of two hotels or whatever it is. I remember writing back, under no circumstances will I stay with a German family, in no way.

When we got there it was kind of a cute story. In the meantime we had a letter from a family from--can you cut that a minute? (Interruption)

What were we talking about; the reunion I believe. It was the most important thing that I did because of the fact that we were able to speak to children in the

schools. They had asked us whether we would be willing to do that. Not all of us did, but some of us did.

I remember speaking to 14-year-old girls and telling them our story in Germany. They then deluged us with questions. I think, from that point of view, it was very important, because these kids had never seen Jews before.

We went back to the synagogue, a synagogue in Krefeld. They had a little, small room which was set up as a synagogue. Most members are Eastern Jews and Israeli Jews.

But the best part of it was meeting old friends, but I think that's really not so important now.

I'm trying to think back in Germany.

Q YOU SAID AS A CHILD YOU BELONGED TO A TENNIS CLUB.

A Yes.

Q WERE YOU ACTIVE IN ANY OTHER JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS?

? A Yes. In the (beddeyock...) where we had outings and got together, do what kids do, I don't know, have fun. I don't remember too many details at all.

Q HAVE YOU EVER HAD AN INCIDENT WHERE SOME GERMAN WOULD MAKE A REMARK TO YOU, REFERRING TO YOUR JEWISH--

(A No, really not. In that respect I guess I was very lucky.

Q AT SCHOOL?

A No. When we were back in Krefeld, the last evening they had a gathering and I was seated next to a lady. I said to her--long tables--I said, "I haven't seen you before here." So she introduced herself and said she came here to meet an old classmate that she went to the (Lyceum) and gave the name of the classmate. I said, well, I went to the same class, we must have been classmates as well. So she introduced herself as I did, but we didn't remember each other. Then I said to her, "I must ask you something. We have been here one week now; how come that none of you came forward. You all knew we were here." I mean, the newspapers, the press was full of our visit there. And she looked at me and she said, "I think we were all afraid. We didn't know how you would treat us." And I said, "You have a good point."

Q WHAT WAS YOUR PERSONAL FEELING TOWARDS THE GERMANS?

A The Germans. I tell you. Most of the people that we were in contact with were younger people, in their forties, and their children. So you really, to be fair, you really cannot, must not blame them for what has happened.

This one family, who were our (betoya), who took care of us, sort of, were a lovely couple. They one evening had us over and had a bunch of their friends,

all the same age, people that are the age of my son. And they just couldn't ask us enough questions and were very guilty for their parents, and said that they cannot believe that their parents would allow something like this to happen, and how come it happened.

In other words, they had never had a direct contact with people. I think, for the Germans it was very important too that we came; that they realize.

I remember saying in the school, "We are really no different than you are. You see, we have no horns as Hitler used to depict in his pictures and caricatures and all that. We are no different than you are." And they just couldn't understand how their people, how the Germans could have been this cruel.

Q-2 WHAT DID THEY HAVE TO SAY ABOUT THAT SPECIFIC ISSUE? I MEAN, WE CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT EITHER, BUT THEY MUST HAVE AS GOOD A POTENTIAL TO UNDERSTAND IT AS ANYONE, SO I WOULD BE CURIOUS TO KNOW WHAT THEIR THOUGHTS ARE ON HOW THAT HAPPENED.

A They don't know. They don't know how it happened. They just--it was really a story that just evolved, eventually just things got so bad.

They all claim, of course, that they didn't know. I mean, I saw older people on the street and would always wonder: Where were you, what were you doing during that time? You can't help but doing that, you know, and you

can't help it. I mean, I wouldn't go back there of my own free will for nothing; I mean it.

I remember prior to that we were invited to Berlin and my friend has a friend, German friend, who lives in Hildesheim whom we visited. When we were there she, his wife, asked me, "Where are you from?" I told her (Guchsagen). She said, "Oh, that's not too far from here."--see, she knew where it was--"and would you like to go?" I said, I absolutely would love it, even if for no other reason to see that it was on the map, to prove that it was on the map.

So one Saturday afternoon we drove there. It was maybe an hour and a half, two hours to get there. We arrived and there was a big sign, ("Guchsagen"), and I said, "Stop the car! I'm going to take a picture."

Anyway, I did remember the house where my grandparents lived, and we didn't know where it was, of course, so we stopped at a corner store. He was rather busy and wanted to help us, and I said, I'll just wait until everybody's gone. Then when they were gone, I introduced myself, I said my name, and I said I was born here and told him who we were, you know, here from the United States. I said, I'm curious to see the synagogue, whether it was, the building was--He said, "Well, yes, it's just around the corner from here."

So we went there. In the meantime this building had

been turned over into an old-age home, so to speak. People have rooms and live there. It has changed, of course, since those days; and there was a big plaque affixed outside dedicated to the Jews who were killed, etc., etc. I have pictures of that; I have all that at home.

We were taking pictures of this plaque and somebody came from across the street, an older man. He said to us, "Are you here from the press?" We said, no. He said, well, because this was just dedicated six weeks prior to our being there, he thought that we were from the press. I then introduced myself and he said, "Oh my goodness, I remember your grandparents so well. I remember going into the synagogue to the weddings and how much I enjoyed that," and blah, blah, blah. Then he said to me, we were talking, and he said, "See that house over there, ^{sl?} that was (Euden) house, and that one over there was a ^{sl?} (Euden) house, and over there..." I am standing there ^{sl?} furious and finally said to him, "Why do you say (Euden) house?" I said, "Why can you not say, 'Jewish people lived there?'" He said, "I don't know." Just that's the way they talked. You see, they didn't even think ^{sl?} that it would offend me, think nothing of it. (Euden) house, why?? Strange, strange. You can't figure it out.

Then he said that the cemetery was still in existence, that it was being taken care of by the city.

So we went there and it was in pretty good condition. I picked some flowers and I have them at home, dried.

So that was a nice instance, to be able to go back. As a matter of fact, I remember getting back into the car and saying, "I can go home and die, now. I found my roots again."

Q DID THEY HAVE A SEPARATE PART FOR THE JEWISH PEOPLE IN THE CEMETERY?

A It was just Jewish, period. It was a Jewish cemetery.

Q THE TOWN BEING SO SMALL, I COULDN'T THINK...

A Yes. I think for the size of the little village there were comparatively, percentage, a lot of Jews living there, and a lot of them were butchers. Interesting, really.

So the reactions of the Germans, I think it varies. The older people don't want to know. Well, I also asked this man who had come across, I said, "What did you think when all of the sudden everybody was gone; all the Jewish people were gone?" He said, "Well, they told us that they took them to do labor." And they never thought anymore of it. I mean it's just unreal; it really is.

Whether this is the truth or not, who knows? I am convinced that they knew. I really am. But really and truly, not that I am defending them, there is not a thing they could have done about it. Do you feel that the

Germans could have done something at that point? No.

Q-2 DO YOU EVER REACH A SITUATION TALKING WITH A GERMAN WHERE SOMEONE WILL ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THEY DID KNOW WHAT WAS GOING ON, AND THEN YOU CAN PUSH YOUR DISCUSSION ONE STEP FURTHER AND ASK THEM THEIR MOTIVATIONS?

A No, no.

Q THEY ALL DENY KNOWLEDGE OF THE SITUATION?

A They all knew that the Jews were doing hard labor, but they deny--they themselves never did anything. Do you know what I'm trying to say? They're not guilty of anything.

Q-2 BUT DO YOU FEEL THAT THESE PEOPLE WERE GENUINELY INTERESTED IN HAVING THE OLD JEWISH POPULATION RETURN TO THE TOWN FOR THE REUNION OR WAS THIS A POLITICAL MOVE BY A SMALLER GROUP FOR OTHER POLITICAL REASONS OF FACILITATING OTHER KINDS OF INTERACTIONS BETWEEN THE CULTURES AND SO ON.

A Yes, I hear you. Interesting question. I think both. For instance, in Krefeld I remember we were being told--and I'm sure it was so--the year before we were invited they opened a fund, established a fund, where people, private people, could donate monies to bring us over. Apparently a lot of money--it cost them an arm and a leg to bring these people over. I'm quite sure that there were some people that objected to that. There's got to be. Any monies, public monies that were

spent for that; there was bound to be. Frankly, sometimes I felt a little uneasy. I did not feel that I am not there; I don't belong there, not really. It's a strange feeling when you go back, very strange.

I also remember coming back and saying, "You know what? We should all move back to Germany because Hitler did do, did achieve what he wanted to achieve, (Euden Plan), the Jews are gone. We should all go back and live there." But, who would do that?

Q YOU MENTIONED THAT YOU KEPT A DIARY WHEN YOU WERE LIVING IN GERMANY AS A CHILD.

A Right.

Q DID YOU MANAGE TO GET THAT OUT?

A No, no, unfortunately.

Q THERE MUST HAVE BEEN A LOT OF FEELING, YOU MUST HAVE SHOWN A LOT OF FEELINGS IN THERE--

A I'm sure.

Q --FOR THE POLITICAL SITUATION.

A No, I don't think so to be honest. I was too young; I really was. Well, I was 15, you know, and my friends were important. You know how teenagers are.

Q I THINK AT THAT TIME THE 15-YEAR-OLDS WEREN'T AS POLITICALLY INFORMED AS THEY ARE NOW.

A No, absolutely not. That's very true. I think that all that happened later sort of came upon you; the realization came too late, really.

Q AND YOUR PARENTS DID NOT TALK TO YOU ABOUT POLITICS.

A Not at all, not at all, no.

Q SO YOU ACTUALLY GREW UP POLITICALLY COMPLETELY UNAWARE OF WHAT WAS GOING ON?

A Right, right.

Q WHICH NOWADAYS SEEMS INCREDIBLE.

A Yes, yes. Well, don't forget, there was no television and things like that to communicate. The world was large then, now it is small. Everybody knows what's going on in the world.

Q YOU MENTIONED YOU FATHER WAS IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR.

A Yes.

Q DID HE GET ANY KINDS OF DECORATIONS?

A Yes. He had the, whatever you call it, cross, the iron cross. I remember him showing that to me. A lot of good that did him to have that.

He was a very public man. I have a picture here where he's speaking at, I think it was a function through the army, whatever it is. You can't see that really but he's standing up here on a pedestal here and talking.

Q THAT WAS WHERE?

A In Wesel, this is in Wesel.

Q I'M LOOKING AT THE PALM TREE AND I CANNOT THINK ABOUT PALM TREES IN GERMANY.

A Yes, absolutely.

Q DID YOU EVER GET A CLOSE-UP OF THE--

Q-2 I'D LIKE TO ASK A FEW QUESTIONS FIRST.

A Of course, sure.

Q-2 FORGIVE ME IT I OVERLAP ON SOME OF THE THINGS YOU'VE ALREADY SPOKEN ABOUT. I MAY BE A LITTLE REDUNDANT HERE.

A It's okay.

Q-2 DID YOU EXPERIENCE ANTI-SEMITISM AS A CHILD?

A No.

Q-2 NONE AT ALL?

A No. The only anti-Semitism I remember, naturally, is having to leave school, if you can call that anti-Semitism, you know. Because I was a Jew, I had to leave school. And the fact that I was not--we were not able to go anywhere, do anything, not to go to any public place. But personally, you know, if you call being called a dirty Jew or whatever, no.

Q-2 WHAT ABOUT IN ENGLAND? DID YOU EXPERIENCE ANTI-SEMITISM THERE?

A No, absolutely not, no. The only "anti" in England was anti-German, but once they realized that you were a refugee, you know--

Q-2 YOU HAD MADE AN ILLUSION EARLIER ON ABOUT HOW CRUEL KIDS ARE. YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT, AT THE TIME, WHEN YOU WERE PREPARING FOR YOUR TRANSPORT TO ENGLAND IF

I AM NOT MISTAKEN. WHAT WERE YOU REFERRING TO WHEN YOU MADE THAT REMARK?

A I was referring to the fact that I spent time saying goodbye and being with my friends rather than standing with my parents and saying goodbye to them.

Q-2 OH, I SEE.

A You know, your friends are more important than your own family. I remember also leaving that my grandfather gave me a blessing, putting his hand on my head.

Q ALSO, AT THAT TIME YOU DIDN'T THINK YOU WOULD BE LEAVING FOR ANY LENGTH OF TIME.

A Oh, absolutely not. I expected to be reunited.

Q EITHER THEY COMING TO YOU OR YOUR COMING WITH THEM.

A To America together, right.

Q-2 LET ME ASK YOU, YOU HAD SAID THAT THAT HOUSE THAT YOU WERE STAYING IN WAS ONE OF THE FIRST HOUSES TO BE BOMBED.

A Yes.

Q-2 COULD YOU, FOR THOSE OF US WHO HAVE NEVER HAD THE MISFORTUNE TO PARTICIPATE IN A BOMBING ATTACK, COULD YOU EXPLAIN TO US--

A Misfortune?

Q-2 GOOD FORTUNE NEVER TO BE BOMBED.

A I think so, I think so.

Q-2 COULD YOU EXPLAIN WHAT THAT 12-HOUR PERIOD OR 24-HOUR PERIOD OR 6-HOUR PERIOD IS, LEADING UP TO THAT MOMENT? AND THEN WHAT HAPPENS DURING AND WHAT HAPPENED JUST AFTER FROM YOUR PERSPECTIVE AS A TEENAGER AT THAT TIME.

A Sure, absolutely. The family lived--it was war time and we were apprehensive, of course, always. Then it got so bad one decided to go sleep in an air-raid shelter at night, public air-raid shelter, rather than stay at home and sleep.

Q-2 THAT WAS EVERY NIGHT?

A Every night. I don't remember how many people were in this particular shelter. Obviously they were not very comfortable, but you did the best you could. You slept on chairs or on the floor, whatever was available. But there were not any serious bombings until that point when the land mines came. This was very early; don't forget this was '40, 1940. We were told then--I think if I remember exactly, you heard the sound of the bombs coming over. I may mix it up with later on, with the bombings--

Q THEN THE V-1s--

A The V-1s and the V-2s.

Q AND THEN CAME THE V-2s.

A Right, right. But this was earlier than that. I remember that someone came into the shelter saying that

a bomb had hit the area. Then in the morning when the all-clear sounded, and we went out of the shelter and wanted to go home, here was no more house. There and around there, everything was absolutely devastated and destroyed.

I remember going into the house, trying to salvage something, but there was nothing, absolutely nothing left. So obviously, you can imagine the feelings we had. Then, as I said, I went to this lady's sister and lived with them for awhile.

The bombing got a lot worse; not that one ever got used to it, because later on, as we just said, the V-1s and V-2s came. Then, you know, they used to come over and the air-raid sirens would go; and you'd try to protect yourself as much as you could. Sometimes--later on you got used to the sound of the siren--you had no time, you couldn't protect yourself, but you did. You ran downstairs and stood in a doorway; just like they tell you here for earthquakes, the same thing.

You could hear the bombs coming. Then we used to say--it was like a whirring sound--when that stopped, when you heard that noise, you know, then you knew you were safe. Otherwise you would have been hit, so it hit somewhere else.

Q-2 IN THE CASE OF THE BOMB THAT DESTROYED THE HOUSE YOU WERE STAYING IN, HOW MANY MILES AWAY FROM THE

SHELTER WAS THE HOUSE?

A Oh, maybe a half a mile.

Q-2 HALF A MILE?

A If that much.

Q-2 AND WHEN THE BOMBS ACTUALLY LANDED IN THE IMMEDIATE AREA OF THE SHELTER, DID YOU HEAR THEM LAND?

A You heard an explosion. You heard a bang, yes.

Q-2 SO YOU HEAR AN EXPLOSION AND YOU DON'T KNOW IF THAT'S A HOUSE THAT IS FOUR DOORS AWAY OR SOMETHING THREE MILES AWAY?

A Absolutely.

Q-2 SO YOU HAVE TO GO OUT AND TAKE A LOOK.

A Yes, yes.

Q-2 AND HOW MANY, THAT NIGHT THAT YOU WERE IN THERE AND THEN DISCOVERED THAT THE HOUSE HAD BEEN HIT, HOW MANY EXPLOSIONS DID YOU HEAR IN THE ENVIRONMENT, IN A NIGHT LIKE THAT, HOW MANY CHANCES?

A I think that night it was just that one.

Q-2 JUST THE ONE?

A The one land mine that hit the London area.

Q-2 I SEE.

A That was very frightening, extremely so, because you never knew where it was going to hit, when it was going to hit.

Q THE ONES YOU DIDN'T HEAR I THINK WERE--

A Were the dangerous ones, right.

Q THEY CAME AS AN AFTER THOUGHT.

A Yes, later, yes.

Q YOU LIVED THROUGH THOSE, DIDN'T YOU.

A I remember once another couple and us went to the movies and walking home the air-raid sirens went off. So we heard--also in the evening, in the nighttime, they had, what do you call them, searchlights going. The skies were lit up with searchlights. So we went into a doorway and the bomb hit and shrapnel flew all over. It's an unreal situation. It was pitch dark.

When I lived in the hostel at the beginning of the war, we all had to take turns doing air-raid duty. We had helmets, we had gas masks, and we had a certain amount of time, I don't know how many hours, an hour, whatever. It was at night, anytime, we had to go and go on air-raid duty, meaning walk around the neighborhood in the dark.

I remember going out at nighttime sometimes--wherever I went, I don't know, probably to the underground station, whatever--walking very heavily and whistling loud so if there was somebody lurking in the dark they would think it was a man walking. Scary times, really scary.

The undergrounds, especially in town in London, were full of people sleeping; and they were way down. I don't know if you have ever been to Oxford Circus, for

instance, it goes way down. It's just unreal when you see people living there, really. It's like the homeless here, now. Very much like that.

Q-2 NOW, YOU WERE A 17-YEAR-OLD GIRL AT THIS TIME. CAN YOU TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOUR LIFE, THE LIFE OF A 17-YEAR-OLD GIRL? I'M SURE 17-YEAR-OLD GIRLS AROUND THE WORLD HAVE CERTAIN THINGS IN COMMON, THINGS THAT THEY ARE INTERESTED IN AND THINGS THAT THEY WANT TO DO; AND I IMAGINE YOU PURSUED THE INTERESTS OF A 17-YEAR-OLD GIRL.

A No, no. I tell you why. See, probably you cannot realize that all we were interested in was survival. We lived from day-to-day. I remember in the hostel it was so cold in the winter. I remember getting dressed in bed in the morning because it was too cold to get out of bed. We had a bathroom, washroom, whatever you call it, no baths ever. We had to sponge bath among maybe ten or twenty girls. We shared one bathroom, ice cold water.

You just existed from day to day. You tried to make a little money so that you were a little independent. Most of the money we made went back to (Bloomsbury House), who in turn paid for our keep at the hostel. So we just had a little pocket money, I don't remember how much, that we could keep for ourselves.

No, there was absolutely no fantasizing. if you want

to call it that. We could go to the movies, but nightlife sort of stopped in England, period. It was pitch dark; you couldn't go out anywhere except in the immediate neighborhood sometimes. Bombs were falling. It's a very unreal existence, not anything at all to--

Q THE (BLOOMSBURY) HOUSE WAS FOR GIRLS ONLY, WASN'T IT?

A I don't remember. It could be, but I doubt it.

Q I JUST WONDERED IF YOU HAD A CHANCE TO GET A BOYFRIEND SOMEWHERE, OR--

A No. As I said, the boys' hostel was around the corner. We did have contact with them inasmuch as we, as I said, made some dances together. Yes, of course, we had a little bit of life, if you want to call it that.

As I said, I met my husband there. These people who ran that boys' hostel, he had a brother who lived very nearby with his wife. My husband knew them from Berlin; and my husband was ready to settle down, I suppose, whatever, and he said to them, "Don't you know of a nice Jewish girl for me?" They said, "Yes, we do. Come, they're putting on a play." So, unbeknownst to me, he was there looking me over.

Q-2 HOW OLD WERE YOU THEN?

A I was 20. I got married before I was 21, and I had to have permission from the courts to get married because I had no parents. We had to go to court, and

this Mr. (Rosen) in Cardiff vouched for me, so to speak. And he stood for me at the wedding. When I got married he was sort of to be my father.

Q DID YOU EVER HAVE TO REPORT TO THE POLICE IN ENGLAND YOUR WHEREABOUTS WHEN YOU MOVED?

A I don't think so, I don't remember that. If we did my husband would have taken care of that. I don't remember.

Q I MEAN WHEN YOU WERE A YOUNG GIRL. YOU HAD STAYED WITH THIS FAMILY, BUT WHEN YOU MOVED THEY TOLD YOU YOU COULD NOT BE IN THAT PLACE BECAUSE IT WAS TOO CLOSE TO THE COAST.

A Right, right.

Q SO, WHO TOLD YOU THAT? WHO CAME? ANYBODY NOTIFY YOU?

A I suppose so. Some kind of authorities. I don't know if they notified me or if they notified the (Rosens), probably.

Even there, before being in London, in Wales I remember once going to a dance. It was a dance of some refugees, somewhere, not in Cardiff. It don't know where it was. I enjoyed it very much, but I never had any more contact with anyone after that.

You know there is a reunion happening next year in New York about the people that went with the (Kinder) Transport to England. At first I was kind of anxious,

and I did write to inquire about it. But I don't think I'll bother. It's getting too much almost.

Q THERE WAS ONE LAST YEAR, TWO YEARS AGO.

A In England, right.

Q WAS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU CARE TO TELL US. ANYTHING YOU CAN THINK ABOUT THAT YOU HAVE MISSED TELLING US?

A I'm sure I missed a lot of things, but it's difficult to remember.

Q EVENTUALLY IT ALL COMES TOGETHER. WHEN YOU GO HOME NOW, I BET YOU SAY, "I WISH I HAD THOUGHT OF TELLING YOU THIS."

A I'm sure.

Q BUT YOU CAN ALWAYS COME BACK YOU KNOW. YOU CAN ALWAYS ADD TO YOUR STORY. THAT'S NO PROBLEM AT ALL.

A Yes.

Q SO WE JUST DON'T WANT TO LOSE ANY DETAILS.

A As I said, my life, as hard as it was, and I had a very hard time here, too, due to the fact that my husband was so ill, I didn't suffer as much as so many of our people did. I am certainly grateful for that.

Q WELL, URSULA, THANK YOU VERY MUCH. YOU HAVE REALLY GIVEN US A WONDERFUL INTERVIEW. WE ARE REALLY GRATEFUL TO YOU.

A You're certainly welcome. I'm grateful to you.

Q GOOD LUCK AND GOOD HEALTH.

A Thank you, thank you.

Q-2 WHY DON'T WE LOOK AT SOME OF THOSE PHOTOS NOW.
WE CAN SET THOSE UP.

(SHOWING PHOTOGRAPH)

THIS IS URSULA'S GRANDPARENTS. WHAT YEAR WOULD YOU
GUESS THAT WAS TAKEN?

A I would say maybe '38.

Q AND YOUR GRANDFATHER DIED A NATURAL DEATH?

A Yes.

Q AND YOUR GRANDMOTHER?

A Went to Theresienstadt.

(NEXT PHOTOGRAPH)

Q-2 ALL RIGHT. AND THIS WAS YOUR--

A My father.

Q-2 OKAY, YOUR FATHER IN HIS OFFICIAL ROBE AS A
CANTOR.

Q IT'S VERY TYPICAL FOR GERMAN CANTORS TO BE
DRESSED THAT WAY, WITH THE TYPE OF HAT THEY WEAR.

A Right.

Q-2 WHAT YEAR WOULD YOU GUESS THAT WAS TAKEN?

A It must be '38-'39 because I remember he had
that taken to send to America, you know, for positions
or whatever.

(NEXT PHOTOGRAPH)

A Maybe 40, around 40 years old.

Q-2 YOUR MOTHER AT THE AGE OF 40. SO WHAT YEAR WOULD THAT BE, ROUGHLY?

A '39. Oh, no, '37, 1937,

Q-2 AND THAT'S TAKEN IN THE--

A Living room. She's sewing.

Q YES, A GERMAN HOUSEWIFE IS NEVER IDLE.

(NEXT PHOTOGRAPH)

Q-2 SO THIS IS YOUR GRANDPARENTS AND--

A My mother.

Q-2 YOUR MOTHER ON THE RIGHT?

A Yes.

Q-2 AND YOU ON THE LEFT?

A Yes.

Q-2 AND AGAIN, THE YEAR, ROUGHLY, HERE?

A '39.

Q-2 1939. AND THIS IS YOUR HOUSE?

A Yes.

Q-2 YOUR FAMILY'S HOUSE?

A Which has changed a great deal. I went back there and it's totally different.

Q-2 LET'S GET A LARGER SHOT OF THAT SO WE CAN SEE THE ARCHITECTURE.

A There are no more balconies; it's just flush to the wall.

(NEXT PHOTOGRAPH)

Q-2 NOW, THIS IS THE SYNAGOGUE IN KREFELD.

Q WHICH WAS BURNT IN KRISTALLNACHT?

A Yes.

Q-2 IS THAT ANYBODY YOU KNOW STANDING IN THE BOTTOM OF THAT?

A No.

Q-2 LETS GET A LITTLE TIGHTER SHOT ON THAT.

A Today it is just a monument.

Q SO NOTHING HAS BEEN BUILT IN ITS PLACE?

A Oh, yes, absolutely. A big business center, big department store right in this spot. And there is some sort of, like stone slabs, I would say maybe six feet tall, six of them commemorating the synagogue.

(NEXT PHOTOGRAPH)

Q-2 OKAY, YOU CAN TELL US, PLEASE.

A This is a picture in Wesel in front of the synagogue. That is my father, the teacher, with some of the students. Some of them I met again two years ago when I was there at the reunion.

Q-2 ANY OF YOUR RELATIVES IN THAT PICTURE, OTHER THAN YOUR FATHER?

A No, no.

The little girl in the middle there--

Q-2 SITTING DOWN?

A No, right there in the right corner, was killed in a concentration camp.

Q-2 WHAT'S HER NAME?

SP7
A (Sally Lyon.) And the one behind here, there standing, is her sister. She lives in San Jose.

(NEXT PHOTOGRAPH)

Q-2 OKAY. AND OVER HERE

A That one is again in front of the synagogue. Some (contura), you see we all have little flags in our hands. I'm in that one, second row from the front.

Q-2 WHY DON'T YOU JUST REACH IN AND POINT?

A Can I point?

Q-2 HERE, LET ME GIVE YOU THIS.

Q TAKE THE PENCIL. COME AROUND HERE URSULA. I THINK THAT IT'S EASIER. AND THEN FROM THE SIDE YOU CAN-

A This is me (pointing). There too are some of the girls I re-met at the reunion. This girl (pointing) lives in the state of New York. She (pointing) lives here in Los Altos Hills. He (pointing) lives in England, he was there. She (pointing) is in Chicago. These are brothers and sisters (pointing).

Q-2 OKAY. AND WHAT YEAR WOULD YOU GUESS THAT PHOTO WAS TAKEN, ROUGHLY?

A I would think in '32. This was in Wesel. '32 I would say. This one (different photo) is in '33; it says so.

Q-2 WHAT, THE FIRST ONE?

A The first one, yes. So probably about the same time, '32-'33.

Q SO JUST AROUND THAT TIME.

A If not earlier. I think this is earlier because I don't look--I would have been 9 years old in '32. This must have been '30, maybe.

(NEXT PHOTOGRAPH)

Q-2 CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THIS ONE?

A Yes. This happens to be my 9th birthday; here I am (pointing).

Q-2 THIS IS YOUR BIRTHDAY PARTY?

A Birthday party, right. This (pointing) is the girl in New York. This (pointing) is Los Altos Hills. She's (pointing) the one in San Jose.

Q-2 CAN YOU TELL US THEIR NAMES?

A Yes, of course. Her name (pointing) is now Ruth (Cockter), formerly (Lundow). (Nettie Ness) (pointing) formerly (Darvord, Nettie Darvord). Margaret (pointing), what is her name now, I can't think, Margaret Coleman formerly. This (pointing) is her brother. This (pointing) is, (Myberg) her name is now, formerly (Lyon). These two girls (pointing) perished.

Q DO YOU REMEMBER THEIR NAMES?

A This (pointing) is (Lisa Darvord). This one (pointing) I don't recall. This (pointing) was (Sally Lyon). She (pointing) perished too, Margaret (Popart).

Q CUTE LITTLE FACES.

A The funny thing is that most of these friends

that I re-met, both in Krefeld and Wesel, they have all been to San Francisco and just never knew of my existence before.

Two years ago we had a reunion, I'm sure I've mentioned that, of those people in Krefeld, and we said, in two years we we're going to meet again. So nine of us went; we went on a cruise to Alaska. It was really wonderful. So now we're talking about next year's reunion again.

Q AFTER SO MANY YEARS.

A After so many years. And we also write to each other. We have a list; each one of us has a month that we have to send a letter, and we send copies to everybody. So we are staying in contact in other words.

Q THAT'S LOVELY.

(NEXT PICTURE)

Q-2 WHAT IS THE STORY OF THIS DRAWING?

A This is the synagogue in Wesel which was destroyed, and as you see there, next to it is depicted as it is in flames on Kristallnacht. One of the survivors who also lives in the Bay Area, in San Mateo, is sort of an artist, and he drew that.

Q-2 WHAT IS HIS NAME?

A Jack Sanders.

(NEXT PHOTOGRAPH)

Q-2 AND THIS PICTURE, THIS IS YOU?

A This is me. I think I must have been 14. All Jews had to have a picture taken with their left ear exposed, for whatever reasons I do not recall. I suppose that everybody's ear has like a fingerprint, it's different. That's the picture that got into our passports.

Q-2 AND SO WHAT YEAR WAS THAT TAKEN, ROUGHLY?

A That must have been, I was 14, '37.

(NEXT PHOTOGRAPH)

Q-2 THIS MUST BE YOUR TENNIS CLUB.

A Right.

I think that's it. This one if you want. This is my father speaking.

Q-2 IT LOOKS SO EDWARDIAN.

A Doesn't it, though.

(NEXT PICTURE)

Q-2 OH, MY GOSH. I THINK I WAS NOT RECORDING THEN. OKAY, WELL, I JUST WANT TO MAKE SURE WE HAVE THIS PHOTO.

THIS WAS YOUR FATHER SPEAKING AT A WAR RALLY--WELL, WHY DON'T YOU TELL IT.

A No, go ahead.

Q-2 A RALLY OF GERMAN WORLD WAR I VETERANS. YOUR FATHER IS THE MAN IN THE UPPER RIGHT, SPEAKING THERE.

A Right.

Q-2 AND THIS PERHAPS THE EARLY '30s.

A Yes.

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Q-2 AND THE LOCATION AGAIN?

A In Wesel.

Q-2 IN WESEL. AND THE BUILDING BEHIND THEM IS?

A I don't think anything particular. It's a big-
-called (Willebordeplutz). There was a cathedral there;
there still is. It's just a big park-like setting.