

In about 5 seconds, you can say who all is here and what the date is and begin at your convenience. What is the date? The 12th, is it?

12th, hmm.

Yeah. Any time.

Today is September 12th, 1990. I'm Evelyn Fielden. And I'm here with Ursula Angress, interviewing her for the Oral History Project of The Holocaust Center, Northern California. We are today in San Francisco at The Holocaust Center. And with me our duty call and April Lee.

Good afternoon, Ursula. It's nice to have you here.

Thank you.

Would you tell me where you were born and when you were born?

In Berlin, Germany in 1923.

And how long did you live there?

Till 1939, beginning of '39.

So you went to school?

I went to school. I didn't finish school. But I did go for four years, which would be not quite the equivalent of a high school here. Yes, in that.

That was a lycee?

Yeah, right.

In Berlin?

In Berlin.

But it was not a Jewish?

Yes, it was. It's the only one we could go to at the last few years.

Oh, really?

Mhm.

And tell me a little bit about your parents. Where was your father born?

My parents were divorced when I was eight years old. And I lived with my mother. And then with her mother, my grandmother. And we lived together until we left in March of 1939.

My father lived in Dusseldorf. And I saw him usually during school vacation. That was three or four weeks at the time. And I was with him six or seven months just before we left to go to Shanghai.

I was supposed to learn some sort of something that I could possibly live from or learn with that. I could do it in a

strange country.

I was going to a beauty parlor to learn hairdressing. But I never finished it, either, because of the Crystal Night. That took care of the rest of the education.

Then I went back to Berlin. And my mother was ready then. She knew where we would go. We had no relatives anywhere in this country. And Shanghai, at the time, was the only place I believe that you could go without an affidavit or without a visa. So that's where we went.

What was the occupation your father had?

My father was a salesman, paper goods, and he also designed napkins, anything, letterheads, this sort of thing.

And did your mother work, too?

Yes, she did. She worked for the last, I guess, six years. And actually, ever since my parents divorced, she learned how to manicure and pedicure and did that until we left.

Were you an only child?

I'm an only child, yes.

Can you remember what it was like after 1933, what life in Berlin was like?

Yes. Basically, now what I'm saying now came a little later than '33. When I went to the lycee-- which we had to take a train to get to it, it was not right around the corner-- and whenever you saw a uniformed SS or SA man, you had to lift your hand and say Heil Hitler. Whether you were Jewish or not, you had to.

That school closed after I was there about nine months. And I had to transfer to also a Jewish school in Berlin, which was easier to get to, but not half as good and was very overcrowded.

Of course, I remember the benches in the park that said for Jews only or Jews are not allowed, either one. And I forgot which way it went now. I think they were green and they said for Jews only.

We didn't do much. I usually came home. I had a couple of girlfriends. And we didn't really go anywhere anymore. We were scared.

I looked very Jewish. And so did my girlfriend. And we just decided, well, our entertainment will be at home, whatever we do. We were afraid to go out at night, especially.

I was so very young. I was 16 when we left.

Did you have non-Jewish friends, too?

Not at this time. In Jewish schools, really, it's-- even if you form friendships, they were all Jewish. I mean, I didn't have opportunity at this age to meet any other girls that were non-Jewish.

How did you live in Berlin, in an apartment house?

Yes. In an apartment house, which was where I visited when I was there a few years ago. It still stands the same way, old, but same set up. And we lived in this, my mother, myself, and my grandmother.

And were your neighbors Jewish, too?

No, I don't think so. I mean, the houses were there a little different than they are here. And you really didn't have much contact. I don't remember anyone that lived above us or on the same floor. It's all blanks there.

So you did didn't really encounter antisemitism at home, right, in your surroundings there?

Only on the streets, when we walked. We went to temple, for instance. Of course, we would, especially young people would say, there's a dirty Jew. But you know, it doesn't sound correct, but you get used to this after a while. So as long as we could go somewhere, and be able to go to school, which was very important for me, we sort of disregarded that sort of thing as long as we could.

You could not disregard it anymore after Crystal Night. But then, at this point, I was with my father. And I didn't know what happened in Berlin.

But in Dusseldorf, which is a beautiful city on the Rhine, I believe that the man that was shot in Paris was born in Dusseldorf. And so the Crystal Night was even worse than, for instance, in Berlin, and not only synagogues, but private homes. They ripped people out of bed and took them to God knows where. People were thrown into the river, thrown them there the next day. It was really pretty staggering.

And after that, I went back to Berlin. I was able to call my mother and find out whether she was all right. And she was all right.

But then that's when I found out that she decided to go to China. And I was always terrible in geography. And I knew that China was somewhere very far away, but that's about all I knew about it. But I found out a lot later on. [LAUGHS]

Did any of your friends get picked up on Crystal Night?

Of my father's friends-- when I was in that city, I really had no friends, only one girl. Yeah, my father's friends did. And those that were picked up were never seen again.

We lived with my grandfather, who was then in his 80s. And when we found out that night what was happening, my father put me and his second wife in a car to get out of the house and try to go to his second wife's relatives, who were non-Jewish. She was non-Jewish also.

And they were not willing to take us in. So he drove around, I think, for about five, or six, or seven hours until he decided to go to a business friend of his who was also non-Jewish, but who was willing to keep us there for at least one or two nights.

And my grandfather, who as I said, was in his 80s already, refused to leave his apartment. He said those are my things here. And nobody's going to touch them while I'm still alive. So this is something I will never forget, that particular day, or two or three days.

What happened to your grandfather?

My father went to Belgium illegally. And his second wife, who was not Jewish, was not willing to go with him. But she had promised him she would take care of his father.

And what we found out after the war was that my father had given him a pill, a poison. And the day they came, the day the Nazis came to pick him up, he took the pill. And that was something I could very well understand.

He must have, by that time, been 86, which at this time, people didn't get all that old. But that was his way out, I think. Considering his age and the fact there was no family, it was a good thing to do for him.

So what happened to your father's wife, then?

I really don't know. She was non-Jewish. And she, I suppose, then with her family, she was a likeable person. But she was not willing to go illegally, and to leave the country illegally. That was a very dangerous thing to do. So I don't know what happened to her anymore.

And what about your father?

My father was in hiding in Belgium most of the war. And he met a woman there who he married after the war. And they went back to the city, to Dusseldorf, but found out that they just could not stay among Germans anymore.

And they went to Argentina, Argentine, Argentina? [LAUGHS] And that was difficult for him at his age at the time, also. So then they settled in Switzerland, in Lugano, which was very beautiful. I was there once.

But at the time, I did not know whether he was alive at all. I mean, he wrote a letter, I got a letter from him at the end of 1946, a year after the war. The letter traveled for at least two years.

I was married in the meantime. The letter was addressed to my maiden name. My father did not know we were in China in the first place.

I don't remember how. I don't remember me telling him that. He must have known. Somebody must have told him.

But the letter reached me. He was, at the time, all right. And I had seen him in 1973. And that's it. He died a few years after that, it was in his 80s.

And did you have other family, besides your grandfather, like uncles and aunts?

Yes. I have an uncle. I had an uncle who came here, who came to Shanghai before we did. He was an attorney, originally.

And his hobby was playing music, accordion, and piano, and so on. So he had gotten a job as a musician in a-- when we read the letter, it sounded wonderful. He was a musician in a nightclub.

When we arrived in Shanghai, after a four week, slow boat to China trip, he was sitting in something that looked like a bird's cage. It was a terrible nightclub. Everything was pretty awful.

But we had not much choice. And so we went. There we ended up.

And my grandmother died six weeks later because she was diabetic. And we didn't know it. I'm not sure she knew it.

She loved chocolate. She couldn't live without chocolate. And she hurt her leg. It was in a big-- it just wouldn't heal anymore. And that was that, then, very, very fast.

So it left my mother and me. And my mother remarried. My mother had to go to work, and so did I. I could not finish my education.

And my mother went to work for an Austrian gentleman who had a dental supply business. He had that in Austria and also in Shanghai. And when she married him, he was a wonderful, wonderful person.

And that helped all the way around. She was not alone. And she kept working with him, but then it was part of something, meant something to her.

And-- excuse me. May I drink some coffee for a second?

Sure.

Should I get you some water, too?

No, that's fine.

OK.

I keep jumping back and forth.

No, it goes fine. Don't worry about it.

Can you understand me?

Yes, I can. Can you all?

Absolutely.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

Don't worry about it. We can [INAUDIBLE].

And the thing is, I might remember something at a time that I've already covered, you know. I'm going back and forth.

No, it's OK.

That's OK. If you want to hop back and forth like that, that's all right. We'd like as much detail as you're able to remember.

Yeah.

Don't be concerned with it, with that. It really doesn't matter at all.

OK. All right. I'm ready.

Mhm.

All right. So I'd like to know a little bit how you left Berlin physically. Can you explain?

Yes, I think so it really all went very fast. Because I came back to Berlin since the end of November '38, which was after Crystal Night. And we left at the end of March '39. I had just turned 16.

And the last few months were very hectic. My mother decided she will have a lift to get a lot of furniture over to China and whatever else she could get out. You're not allowed more than 10 German marks per person. I don't have to tell you how much that is or was at the time.

We had a mover, a Jewish mover. And we told him that we are trying to get some jewelry out and some other things that we were not allowed to take out. And he said no problem.

We put it in a teapot, in a coffee pot, and whatever he had. Nobody would know about it. And furniture, paintings, whatever we thought we should take along, we took along, pretty much the whole apartment, really.

And then the lift arrived in Shanghai about a month or two months after we arrived. Everything was there except the jewelry and the money and whatever was valuable. So it was all gone, by a fellow Jew. That upset me at the time. It was more even the fact that a Jew did this than the fact that the things were gone.

But first of all, it all went very fast. There was not very much time to do anything between early December of '38 and March of '39. So we really got prepared.

I worked. I had to make you some money. My mother said, if you want some clothes-- and by the way, in Germany at that time, it was unusual that the Jewish woman worked. I mean, you also didn't get a divorce at the time, very, very rare thing to do.

So she had to work. And the only thing I could do is cook. I had gone to a cooking school where they also had regular lessons of history and math and whatever. But I did learn how to cook. I learned to cook there.

And the only job I could find in a hurry was to cook and clean for another Jewish couple who were not allowed to hire any non-Jews, either. So for this three or four months, I worked every day. And if nothing else, I improved my cooking at least.

I hated it. I like to cook now. But I didn't then.

And as far as my friends were concerned, I had one very, very close girlfriend. And I have never had another friend like this since. And her parents, unfortunately, were one of so many that said, it cannot get any worse, it can only get better. Well, we know it did not get better. And none of them made it.

But other than that, my memories from Germany are pretty well covered, I think. At this point, anyhow, I don't remember any particular things happening the last four months other than the idea that you go to a country where we obviously didn't know the language. We had no idea how we would communicate with anyone. We didn't know at the time that 20,000 German and Austrian Jews would be there.

So we went with a lot of misgivings. We did go via Italy. It was a Japanese ship, half freighter, half passenger, passenger-freighter combination.

We went via Naples, where we stayed for three days. It was our last treat before we started the journey to Shanghai. And it was a very long journey.

I mean, everybody on that ship was Jewish and went to Shanghai for the same reason we did. I think there were about 70 people on there, not more. This was freight. And it was a very, very long trip, a scary trip, really. Nobody knew who or what would await us once we get there.

I believe around 1939 you all had to take Jewish names, is that right?

Right. You're right. The woman's name is Sara. And it was in the passport. And our passports had a big J for "Jew" in it.

And we all had to be photographed by our profile, not straight, you know. I don't know if it was the right or left profile. I don't remember. It was my profile.

They all had the big J and all second name "Sara" for the women. And I've forgotten how it was--

Israel.

Right. I'm sorry. That's correct.

Did you still keep your passport or did they take it away from you?

No, we kept it. I haven't found it yet. My mother died 11 years ago. And she kept everything. And I have everything over at my apartment now. And I have not yet really gone through everything.

But I'm pretty sure it's there somewhere. We were stateless. I mean, this was of no value anymore. We were stateless as

of that point. But it was something. Yeah, I'm sure we have it, pretty sure we have it.

So how long did the journey take?

Four long weeks, exactly, I think, to the day. It was a long, long, long trip.

And I was just 16. And I didn't think it would be that terrible. There were a couple of people on the trip that were my age group. And I had a record player. And I had just gone through dental school and the whole thing. And so for me, partly, it was fun, partly.

But my mother and my grandmother were very, very nervous about what would await them. And when we got there, Shanghai is a huge city. It's not a beautiful city. Everything's gray on gray. I mean, there's no greenery. At least, there wasn't at the time.

When we got there, my uncle, my mother's brother, only brother, picked us up from the ship. And he had rented what he called an apartment for us very close to where he played at night. Now Shanghai consisted of several districts. One was a French district, which is where all the street names were French, which is where we landed up at the time.

Then it was International district. It was one other, which I don't remember now. But we landed up in the French district.

And the apartment was, well, it was one large room with a little side room, I would say smaller than your ladies' bathroom here, and some sort of a kitchen. And that was it. And you didn't have a door to close.

You came up the stairs, one flight of stairs. And there it was. You didn't open any main door close or close any main door. We had two or three doors there to this room or that room. And that's the way our apartment was.

My mother was very unhappy. She couldn't cook at all. And I think I was the one that finally taught her how to cook.

And I don't know whether this is right. But I have some memories which at the time were not funny, but now they are. And if it's all right if I put something in about those things.

I mean, I've been trying to write something myself, what I remember, for my children. And one of those things was, as I said, my mother had never learned how to cook. We had all grown up with maids, with live-in maids. I mean, that was the thing at the time.

And I had gone, as I had said, to cooking school. And we lived about three or four days in that apartment. And I heard my mother scream. I was called Uli in Germany. Will you come quick? Come quick.

She was lying on the floor with the cook spoon in her hand. And it was the first time I ever saw-- this was a wooden cook spoon-- holding down a mouse. And I said, sorry, you're on your own. I'm not going to even come close to that thing.

But I will never forget that she was lying flat on the floor. The mouse was underneath some table. She had the long wooden spoon holding down that thing. I will never forget that, never.

I'm quite sure I wouldn't forget it, either.

And we lived there until the war broke out in September. And within a few months-- Shanghai was occupied by the Japanese at the time-- and there was one part which was called Hongkew. In order to get there, you had to go over the main bridge. It was a very long bridge which went over the river.

And Hongkew was shot to pieces during the Japanese-Chinese war in '36, '37. And not much of it was restored. I mean, everything was just left the way it was then. Now we're talking about two years later.

And when the Japanese gives the order that all German Jews have to move out of wherever they were at the time, move into this particular district, which it was like a ghetto. The district was larger than the area we could occupy. We had certain streets that we were allowed to live in. And on certain areas, if you crossed the street, you were out of the district.

We were not allowed to do that. You were punished by the Japanese. They were not much different from the Germans.

So we had-- I have to go back a little. Shortly after we arrived, we found a relative, a fairly distant relative, but I called him uncle at the time. My mother, I think, he was half a generation older than my mother was. And he had some money. And my mother was able to take some money out.

So when we lived in the French concession, we did not-- I made a mistake before. We did not stay in that apartment for the rest of the time. But we had bought a house.

Actually, it was a duplex with two houses. Each had three apartments. One was really very small, then one was a floor up, the next was another floor up.

And that's where we stayed until we had to move out. And in order for us to get a house, rather than just a room, we sold the two apartment buildings, for which we got one shutdown building and had to pay in addition. I mean, that was the way it was. We could not just even trade two nice buildings against one impossible building.

But we were glad to at least have a house so that we could all live together. And that house had one large room. My mother had remarried by that time. And my mother and stepfather slept on there.

And then it another small room on the first floor where that uncle that we found lived. And on the top floor was another room where I lived. And I was one of a very, very few people that had a room of her own.

And the kitchen had a bathtub in it. But that was fine. We were not spoiled at this point anymore. And there was a regular toilet, where you could flush, which was also something not everybody had.

A luxury?

Absolutely, luxury. So that's where we moved when we had to get out of-- when we were in the ghetto.

Whom did you deal with in Shanghai, like, when you traded the houses and bought a new house?

Well, I don't remember too much about that part of it. And when we had to leave, I know that my mother had to deal with the Japanese that were pretty much in charge of the districts we moved in and that shut down this Hongkew. It's H-O-N-G-K-E-W, I think it was.

I don't really remember how and why, how we got that house. Obviously, my mother tried to get something as decent as possible. And it was very difficult.

Most families lived in a room. And I'm talking about four or five people. And they did not have a WC. They had something behind a curtain which had to be used. It was very, very hard.

I felt very lucky, which is one reason that I kept saying I feel I didn't really have much to contribute. I came out alive, unhealthy, but alive. And I did not live as badly as I would say the other 80% lived. Maybe 20% of the 20,000 people that had emigrated to China lived as well or better than we did.

I'm talking about living arrangements. There's a room of my own and having a real stove, a gas stove to cook on. Which didn't do much good a few months later, because there was no gas anymore.

But we did have the stove. [LAUGHS] And we then cooked on a little flower pot, Japanese flower pot. We stood there

with a fan and made sure the thing worked.

And we cooked-- rice was cooked in bed. You had the water and the rice. And I think we had to bring it to a boil. Then we put it in a certain box, a wooden box which was lined with newspaper.

And all that went into one of our beds and was kept warm. And for some reason or other, that evening the rice was done. And it was all right. And it was still hot. I mean, it was not a bad way of doing it. But of course, food-wise, we didn't have much of a choice.

Where did you go shopping?

I've seen the Chinese market there. I mean, what impressed me a great deal is that the Chinese who, for instance, rickshaw couriers who had no education whatsoever, who were very, very poor, they picked up English, pidgin English, even pidgin German, in no time whatsoever. I could have never done that the other way around. None of us could have done that in Chinese.

But they are very, very bright people. They picked up the language so easily. Whenever you took a rickshaw, you preferably had to tell the man before you get in where you want to go, how much it will be. And then you are bound. You have to not argue-- I can't find the word now, about the price.

Bargaining.

Right. We had to bargain about the price. Otherwise, you lost face. If you just said OK, no good. You had to have a bargain. You have to get down. And their English, I mean, in such a short time, was unbelievable the way they understood us.

But there were lots of things that we had to learn. For instance, the poor Chinese, when a baby was born, they would keep the boy. If it was a girl, it would be put out at night, in winter or whenever, on the street, wrapped in a blanket, and left to die.

We were not allowed to help anyone, any Chinese. Because it meant that you have to now take responsibility for the rest of its life. Whether it was a little law or unwritten law, I don't remember. I remember this very clearly.

You would see somebody in obvious pain. And you have the feeling you have to do something. You couldn't afford to do it. And these babies out there, it broke your heart, you know?

But it's odd how you can get used to things like that. After the first year or two, I guess, you just walked by and didn't look anymore. And it was difficult.

I mean, one thing, a thing I did do, at that particular district is 20,000 Jews of all ages from Germany and Austria. Businesses, all of them started to open up. You had tailors. You had cafes by the dozens. You had nightclubs.

I mean, your teenage years are supposed to be the best years of your life. I wouldn't say that this is for my best years. But we were able to go someplace at night, and hear music, and dance, and go to a movie, this in the district.

But we were all in the same boat. All of us were only allowed to be within that specific area. And so we sort of had a social life. And so this was life. [LAUGHS] It was bearable.

The difficult part was if you had to get out of the district. I didn't need to get out, but my parents-- and I referred to my mother's second husband as my father later on. He was wonderful-- had a business which was originally out of the city-- out of the district. He had to go over the bridge and into the international part of the city.

And for that he needed a passport. And it had to be a pass given to you by the Japanese authorities. And one man, in particular, a Mr. Goya, G-O-Y-A, was a second little Hitler.

I mean, if you were lucky, he would not ask you much. He would ask you questions, why you wanted the pass and for how long. But he would give it to you.

If you're out of luck, and that happened quite often. He would beat you. He would [NON-ENGLISH] or he would do whatever he saw fit to do. And he was not very careful about what he did. I mean, there were people dying because of his treatment. And others were dying because of the fact that they couldn't eat the food or didn't have any money to buy the food.

But as a whole, most of us made it through without too terribly much problems. The fact that we needed a passport only affected the people that they had the business out there. And then my father had to close up. He couldn't do it anymore.

It was just too much of a risk to go and ask for that pass, which everybody knew every-- I don't know whether it was a monthly basis or a weekly basis. But he just tried to do it from home and until the end of the war.

May I have some more coffee, please?

Yeah, sure.

I'm sorry. I'm dehydrated.

That must be PG&E, right?

I'm afraid so.

Yeah.

Doing some roadwork.

Will they do it in the morning too?

Yes.

He just said I couldn't park there. I was there--

Sounds a bit like he was--

Yeah, that's why I think I have to remember too well. I live in park [PLACE NAME] there. It was very--

You're doing very well. I can understand you without any problems. So don't worry. Really, it's really very good.

May I take-- before you start, I want to take one more pill, OK?

Sure.

For instance, which would be nice-- I have my marriage license.

OK?

Make sure it is down.

Is it down?

Yes. It's down.

You ready?

Yes.

OK, [INAUDIBLE].

The language.

Mhm. Yeah, we were talking about the language--

Right, but of course all 20,000 of us spoke German. And there were also a lot of Russian, white Russians, also Jewish. But we had no connections with them because they could live wherever they wanted to live.

But it was very odd, because I didn't know much English before. In school, I had French. At the time, you had no choice. And I think I learned a little bit of English the last few months before we left for Shanghai.

But then we spoke, among all of us, well, we spoke German. And if you had to deal with the Chinese, they spoke some sort of pidgin English, which they understood better than any decent language, which I couldn't speak anyhow at the time.

But they picked it up. I mean, they picked up the pidgin English. And they spoke it better than we did at times.

And among us, and all the businesses that have sprung up, we spoke German. I'm pretty sure that we spoke at least 80% of the time German. Once in a while, we might have tried to speak English as to a decent English, but we forget the little we had learned.

Rather, I only learned to speak English when I came here. Because I had no choice. You had to speak it.

And I found out the best and the only way to learn any language is if you have to speak it and to read, which I loved to do. I did a great deal. And even movies help. Because you need to understand in order to enjoy it. But other than that, everybody spoke German.

The market, food were also handled a lot by the German-Austrian Jews. I mean, the markets are actually mainly Chinese. We had to boil everything, you know. Water, I mean, you could not just drink water.

But we were also some of the few people who could afford an icebox. And I mean an icebox that the ice was delivered and melted much too soon, because the climate is miserable there. It's very, very hot in the summer and very humid.

And the winter is ice cold. And of course, we had no heating. We had nothing. I froze all my 10 toes during the winters there.

And I still have problems with them. The minute the air hits my toes, they turn blue. I didn't lose any of them, so I was very lucky there.

But you got dressed at night in order to go to bed. I wasn't undressed. Because the nights were absolutely-- I mean, it was unbearable. During the day, you could at least do something.

But I went to bed dressed as if I was going to go to Siberia. We all did. And I couldn't get into shoes, because my feet were so swollen from being frozen. And you could buy straw shoes, and they're about that long, in order to get in there with your shoes on. Only I couldn't put my shoes on, so I just wore these things.

But all in all, I don't know, maybe I have a weird sense of humor. But I feel that if you can look at the things and find something that, at least later on, you can make fun of, or a memory that is worthwhile remembering, whether it was

funny or not, it helps you to get through the time.

I remember one thing that bothered me. When we arrived in Shanghai you were met by a committee. Was it Joint? I forgot. Anyhow, it consisted of all--

A Jewish committee?

A Jewish committee, right. And they had made plans for you to-- they had, not constructed, but they had homes available, which would be like a big hall with beds. I don't know how many 100, 200-- I don't remember any of the details. But you didn't have to pay. And it would include some food.

So a lot of people went there with a feeling, at least for the first few months, gives me a start. The sad thing, I thought, was that they all stayed there. It was too easy for them to just stay and not do anything, not trying to do anything else with their lives. And that was bad.

My mother said right away, no way. We managed our own somehow. And we did. I mean, as I said, it was easier once she got married. But before that, we managed, too. And it was work.

But a lot of these people didn't really work at all. They didn't do anything. Because they were taken care of, not wonderful, but taken care of nevertheless.

So that was one thing I think was a mistake made by the people who organized that whole thing. They were ready to take you from the ship right over there. And these homes were in Hongkew, in the part where we all had to move in later on. But the people that were in these homes, as I said, unfortunately decided to just stay in and let one day go by after another without doing anything.

And some of those people died. I mean, they died out of isolation. They died because they didn't have enough food. They died because it was so cold, or it was so terribly hot. And they had no-- they had nothing to-- they had no willpower anymore.

No will to live.

Right. And actually, it was unnecessary for quite a few of them. There were young people my age that lived there and didn't even try to get out. I think I would probably have, from the first day, I would try to find a job and get out of there. Because you get used to this type of living. Somebody else is caring for you, for better or for worse. But you're taken care of.

Did you notice if those were mainly older people?

No, there were a lot of young people. Of course, there were older people too. But basically, if I remember correctly, I would say that the young people made up at least 50% of all of the people that-- there were maybe between 4 and 7 homes altogether within that district. And I don't remember exactly how many.

But no, I must say some of the older people did quite well. They were used to working. And they tried. But the younger people, and I'm talking about-- I was 16, let's say between 16 and whatever, that had no families, just sort of lived in the day and didn't do anything.

And you could work, if you really want to, you could always find work. You could clean. Even if you were not trained for anything, you were able to do something. I mean, my first job was in a doctor's office as a receptionist on the phone.

All my life I spoke too fast, even before I had the stroke. And my English was not very good. But I sure learned that way. I really learned that way. So then, by the time I came here, I knew, at least, some English, not a great deal, but some.

The doctor's office, who was the doctor?

Oh, we had lots of doctors there.

What nationality?

German-Austrian, oh, yeah. I mean, we had a Jewish hospital there, and one hospital, I think, only. But all the doctors were-- everyone was Jewish. And as I said, either from Germany or from Austria, and some of the excellent doctors.

I mean, there was a friend of my parents, I think, who took care of us, who took care of us whatever the need was. And I was in the hospital only twice. Once to get my first child and the second time because I had a bad-- I needed my-- what do you call it, my--

Appendix?

--I needed my appendix removed. But that part was all run very correctly, very clean, and no problem there.

How could the doctors practice there? They just set up?

I would think they obviously had their licenses from Germany brought along to prove something to someone. But yes, I don't think it was very difficult, really. If you need an abortion, you went to your regular obstetrician.

Because I was pregnant. I was married in '44. And I was pregnant right away. And the bombs had started. The American bombs, they started flying around us. And it was a lovely sound on one hand.

On the other hand, we were scared. But it was not the time to bring children into the world. And that was an advantage. I could go to a regular, very good obstetrician. And I actually did that twice.

And the third time, he said, if you ever want children, this is it. Do what you want. And my daughter was born there.

But it was then-- she was born in '46. And the war was over. And that was all right. But I mean, as far as that's concerned, there are no problems, not that I know of anyhow.

Let's go back a little bit. When did you hear about the atrocities in Germany, if you heard it at all?

Yeah.

You remember when it was?

Yes, I do. I think I do now. When the war in Europe was over, the war in the Pacific was not over yet. And we heard, to start with, the first time that the war in the Pacific was over. Because somebody had a radio, a long distance. I'm trying to find the right word, a-- how do you call? I'm sorry.

Never mind. Try to explain it because I'm [CROSS TALK].

They had to have radios where you could get other countries in. There's a word for this.

You mean an international telephone company?

No, no, a radio, the regular radio.

Shortwave?

Oh, thank you. Shortwave.

And he got it too.

And they heard. And there was a rumor. That's the first time we heard about the bombs, about Hiroshima. We didn't know anything. Then we heard that the war was over.

And at first, one person came out of the house, and then the second. And see, in this district at night, we lived in what's called lanes. There was a main gate, which is an iron gate, which was open during the day, but was locked at a certain time at night.

For instance, our address was 919 House 5 East River Road. 919 was a street number. Then we went through the gate, and then the houses had numbers. And at a certain time at night, these gates are locked.

Who locked them?

The Japanese. And when we came out, did you hear, did you hear, did you hear? We were not really quite sure that we would believe it. It was too good to be true, we thought.

But then some other confirmation came through over the same shortwave radio. And we all went crazy. We all went crazy.

I think anybody that had any liquor in the house brought it out. And everybody drank everything. And everybody was very, very sick. I remember that very well. [LAUGHS]

But I mean, we just couldn't believe it was over. And then, within I would say the next month, we slowly got information of what happened in the camps. And my father, my stepfather, you know, my mother's husband, had lost relatives in Vienna, except for his mother. And his mother was still alive.

His father died. His sister died. And he lost most of his family. And we couldn't believe it at first.

And I remember that, I would say, what was it, three or four months after we were liberated by the Americans, a movie was shown about the camps. And that is when we actually-- when we hear about it. People talk about it.

I heard this and this happened. You say, that can't be right. You must have misunderstood something someplace.

Well, obviously, when we saw it on film, we did believe it. It was-- well, it was awful. Because most people had somebody still that was there, even if it's not a relative, good friends, whatever.

And all the people there that said at the time it cannot get any worse, it can only get better. Well, every one of them was gone. And none of the ones that I know came back.

When I say people that we know, my father's mother, who was then, I guess, in her 70s, was able to live through Theresienstadt. She came home. She came out.

And she came over here later on, over here, over to Shanghai. No, I'm sorry-- to San Francisco. I'm sorry. And she died in this country.

But everybody else was gone. And it was very, very difficult. And we felt we want to get out of Shanghai also. There was no future for us there.

And my father and my mother were on an Austrian quota. Their quota was very, very small, just x number of people, a small amount let out, or let in and out into this country per month, I would imagine. I don't know. And my husband and I were on a German quota, which was faster. Of course, we had to go through the medical examinations and make sure we all right.

And we were checked out very carefully by what did we do profession-wise. We had friends where the man was a policeman for the Japanese. And they wanted to come to the States.

They were not allowed to come in. They were not allowed to come into America. They ended up in Israel later on.

We were checked very, very carefully about our backgrounds. What did we do? With this man, I suppose it might be true. I don't know. See, we were fairly sure that he worked with the Japanese against us and whoever.

But they were not allowed to come here. They tried three or four times. No way.

I'd like you to explain a little bit when you mention that this German was a policeman, right?

Yes. A German Jew.

Yeah. But I'd like to know the everyday life in Shanghai. You said it was run entirely by Austrians and Germans?

99%. Except for markets. For instance, meat and vegetables, they mostly were run by Chinese. You had German-Jewish dressmakers, whatever.

But the Chinese were beautiful, much cheaper, much faster. And you could get along, wonderful going to Chinese. I mean, they had the material. And you wouldn't just go and buy a dress. That only was possible after the war.

So for instance, I remember I had a very pretty nightgown. I never will forget that this nightgown was made into a dress. I mean, we had to use what we had to use.

I mean, you didn't buy yardage. You could buy yardage if you got out of the city during the war. But I wasn't able to do that, neither was my husband at the time.

So I had a coat made out of an old suit, I guess, of my father's. And after the war, when it was over, when the Americans came, we got army blankets, these khaki-colored army blankets which we had coats made out of.

But the worst problem really was that we had schools for young children. We had kindergarten. We had regular grade school. And we had enough teachers in Shanghai, German or Austrian Jewish teachers, to run the schools. I mean, that part of it was-- considering where we all came from-- was run pretty professionally.

Cooking and eating was a problem. I became quite ill. my digestive system-- went to the doctor. And it was-- you got hungry. Of course, rice fills you up, but only for that long. And most of us, really, it wasn't even necessarily a matter of money. It was a matter of availability of certain foods.

May I interject one other story. It was my father, his business, all his clients were Chinese, Chinese dentists. And this was, I think, right after the war. And he invited these dentists, very, very lovely people, three or four of them, with their wives, for coffee and cake.

And my mother was supposed to bake a cake. And it was a gugelhupf, if you know what that is? And she attempted to do this. And it looked fine from the outside. And she also used the one set of good dishes that we had left and she had a nice table.

And when the people came, she poured coffee. And the first one, she heard something as if she dropped something into the cup. And she thought she must be wrong.

She went around the table with a coffee--

Pot.

--coffee pot, with a Chinese coffee pot, China, made from China. And then she looked over and she saw that Chinese gentleman take his spoon, go into his cup, bring out a dead cockroach, and put it right next on his plate.

My mother wanted to die. But he thought it was not such a big deal. We all lived with the roaches. And this particular one obviously went to this coffee pot and couldn't get out and died there.

And when my mother filled it with hot water, it was very [INAUDIBLE] and he came out. And the gugelhupf, you couldn't even cut. My mother was not a proper baker. I mean, that was not the best afternoon we ever had there.

But the things-- it's odd. People remember-- after a while, you remember the good things. You try to forget the bad ones. You try. It doesn't always work, but you try. And I think that's what helped all of us to sort of get through this the way we did.

You asked me about the daily life. A lot of people had absolutely no money. I mean, they really lived from whatever the Joint Committee gave them, whether it was food, whatever cash they needed, I don't really remember anymore where it came from. But they barely made it, barely made it through today, from day to day to day.

Some people lived very well. And we had some people that opened bicycle shops and tailors that opened their own places, nightclubs, movies. It was always full.

But the worst thing, I think, is very much older people with their health. The food that they could get didn't agree with them. And you had constantly-- at least I did, and many-- we had ringworm. We had all these nice little things that you had never heard of before.

And I was, I think, one of the people that had most of these problems. And when I came here eventually, my whole stomach, every bit it, was removed. Because I still cannot eat. I never will be able to eat normally again.

But I eat enough to live. I mean, you know, I manage. I'm not very fit. But I manage.

But that was one part. And people, after a while, gave up looking clean. You had to wash in cold water. There was no warm water unless you had a stove. Like, we had a gas stove which, most of the time, we had no gas.

So you washed everything in cold water. When I had my baby, by that time, I was able to get the gas again to heat the washing water. Everything, that was with cold water. You washed your clothes in cold water, I mean, ice cold. You hung it on somewhere, if you can, outside, where the things were as stiff as a rock during winter.

The summers were even worse, to be honest. The heat was unbelievable. And the humidity was even more unbelievable.

Then you had not hurricanes, they had typhoons. Which I mean, if you had to be out, if you had to be out, you were lucky to make it back home again. Extremely strong, very, very strong winds, I don't know to what degree.

But everything was flooded. I mean, our so-called house was. You didn't go up any steps. It was right on the level of the floor.

And so all the water came in. It was not easy. It really was not easy.

But I'm remarried. I got divorced and I remarried later on. But my first husband's parents, who were not young either anymore, managed to make it through without any illness whatsoever. Whereas young people, and I was young at the time, we had problems. The young people had more problems healthwise than the older ones. And I cannot explain why.

But you walked a lot. You didn't always take rickshaws because they were expensive. We didn't have the money, obviously. We didn't travel on bicycles. There was a very small complication.

I married in 1944. And you know, all the-- at the school to train you for whatever, to give you a profession. And this particular-- I forgot what the initials stand for, but they stand for something. That particular school had knitting machines. And you learn how to knit with a machine.

I was interested in that. And I went there. That's where I met my husband, my first husband, who I saw for the first time in my life when we came to China and we were on the same boat. But we had no contact whatsoever.

And he was working there. And that chapter of ORT was run by a very nice Russian Jew who wanted to help as much as he could. And I learned how to machine knit. And I enjoyed that.

And then I worked a job doing it. Excuse me. The bad thing was that when you do this, with those machines, they are professional machines, you had to stand up. And when you stand up and worked these very heavy handles, you have all your weight on one leg.

What happened to me personally, I got bad varicose veins. And then I got a blood clot, which put me into bed about six months without moving. So I had to give that up at the time.

But it was a good school. And you learned a lot. And as a matter of fact, I just started doing it again at home. But now I can sit down doing it. And these machines are much more sophisticated the others were.

I'm jumping back and forth. If you ask me, I think I'm better able to--

OK. I have a few questions, yeah. You mentioned the Russian Jews, that they could go everywhere.

Yes.

They were not restricted?

They came there long before us. They came there--

Oh, they were--

--yeah, long before we did. I mean 20,000 all came in '39. Some maybe at the end of '38, but '39 was a year where I would say 99% came over there. This was the only place left where you could go without an affidavit.

What was your relationship with the Russians?

We didn't have much to do with them. Because we really didn't know that many. The one gentleman that ran the chapter of ORT, I got to know him quite well. Most of the others didn't live in that area. They lived in the city, where we used to live in the beginning.

There was not much of a relationship, really. Because when 20,000 Jews live together and they all speak the same language, you sort of become a big clique, several cliques. Which really was not too good, because we didn't really speak much other than German.

Did you encounter any French people or Yugoslav?

No, no.

Italians.

Nope, not a single one that I can remember.

Why don't you know?

No, I'm sure they were there. But no, not at all. I mean, all my friends there were either German or from Austria. And my father knew some very nice Chinese people who spoke a good English, much better than we did. And that's pretty much, you know.

How was your relationship with the Chinese?

I liked them. I was very impressed by them because they're very, very smart. They learned very fast.

I was upset, of course, at first, the way they treat these newborn baby girls and the way they treated the animals and dogs, I mean. But I have learned-- I can only say that from my point of view, if you have a Chinese friend, you have a friend for life.

If you have a Japanese friend, I have never learned to trust the Japanese. They can be very polite and very charming. And you never know what they think.

And you were better off not knowing what they think. I mean, when we dealt with them, for passes to get out of the ghetto or whatever, some of them were decent. Some of them felt very powerful. And they were in power there.

I understand that after the war-- we were told, I haven't seen it, but this was told to us-- that the Japanese had already or were in the process of setting up the same type of death camps as Germans did. As I said, I cannot say whether it's true or not, but it sounds to me like it could be very true. If it had not been for Hiroshima, we most probably wouldn't be here today, I think. May I have another sip of coffee, please?

Sure. Yes. Go ahead.

--interferes with you.

Yeah, we would. Yeah.

OK, any time you can begin.

I have a couple more questions.

Sure.

How did you deal with religion? Were there synagogues?

Yes, there was one synagogue, one of two? I only remember one run by a man named Kandorski, Rabbi Kandorski, who later on started the synagogue here B'nai Emunah.

In San Francisco?

In San Francisco. He was very, very conservative. I think he was also more Orthodox than conservative. And I didn't much enjoy the service.

But we did go for holidays. I mean, strictly holidays, and you know, if you had a funeral or whatever. But the services were very, very long. And he was, in my opinion, a terrible speaker. Maybe I shouldn't say that on camera.

His daughter also married somebody with the same name that I have now. We are the only two Angresses in the phone book. But he started a synagogue here.

He's been dead now for quite a long time. And there's now another rabbi. But this was the only synagogue I remembered.

And when I got married in '44, that was the only time I asked for a pass to go over to a school. That was done not in the synagogue. And I don't remember really what the synagogue looked like. It was just a large hall within the district.

But we were married in a school which was, as I said, out of the district. And I went there in a rickshaw with my mother, my mother and my father in a separate rickshaw. And I had a bouquet with a long-- I've forgotten what they call these things.

Ribbons?

No, actually, the whole thing was very long. And before we ever made it to that school where we were to be married, most of this very pretty bouquet was gone by the rickshaw wheels. I mean, it was just sort of--

Oh, it could got caught.

It got caught in the rickshaw wheels. And the man that married us was a young rabbi who had not, at that point, had any congregation of his own. But he was a friend of my husband's. I forgot his name.

And we stood there. And I have my white dress, which was-- I got it from my mother-in-law, originally, which had to be just a little bit altered and the veil.

And all of a sudden, I couldn't see. Everything was dark. And my mother was on the right side with my father and my husband's family on the left.

And I looked at my mother. And as I turned my head, it got a little lighter. What happened was that about 1,000 flies were settled on that veil of mine.

Absolutely, it was full with flies. And as I moved my head, they, some of them, most of them, for the moment, started up flying away. And I mean some things were funny now, anyhow.

Almost unbelievable, yes.

It's just a silly little thing that I don't forget. My mother had been aware of it before. I think I was much too nervous to pay attention to who is where.

But when I couldn't see at all, I thought, well, something's not quite right here. And when I turned my head, the flies moved. Full, it was full with flies.

And September was still very, very hot there. And that dress was a very, very heavy silk. And in Shanghai in the summer, you didn't dress into anything. You wore as little as you could.

Stockings, forget it. They stuck to your skin. I mean, they would rip off. Jewelry, a necklace, was definitely too much. It was just-- and what happened was that behind me, the invited guests started giggling.

And as I found out later on, I just wore the most necessary things underneath this dress. And I was sweating. And the dress was completely soaked.

And whether or not I wore it, didn't really make much difference at this point anymore. I was standing there soaking wet. And you could see whatever you wanted to see. I mean, it was embarrassing. But I did not know that until after it was over.

And we had to be married also. The Jewish ceremony was not legal. That was something we wanted to do. We had to be married by an official.

Justice of the peace?

Yeah, something like that. And that's what our marriage certificate-- yeah. That was on our marriage certificate. They were beautiful.

I wanted to bring it, because they're very, very colorful. They were written in Chinese. The whole script is Chinese. They just tell you where to sign. And we signed, obviously. But I hope I can find it. It was just gorgeous, flowers and about that big, beautiful pieces.

At your wedding, were there any Chinese people present?

No. Not a single one that I can remember. We were married in September 1944. And as I said, the war still went on.

And my husband moved into the house where I lived with my parents. And my room upstairs was large enough. I mean, at the time, it was large enough to house two of us.

And then when my daughter was born, it housed three of us and still wasn't too bad. I mean, as I said before, living condition-wise, I was quite lucky. But during the war, we had no heat, none.

The Chinese teach you something. When it's really very hot in summer, what you want to do is you want to drink something cold, don't. Drink something hot, hot tea. It works. It works better.

And when they came up with these little advices, they were usually right. Don't ever wear silk. Wear cotton. I mean-- or any absorbent fabric. When you want to take an ice cold shower, don't. Take a hot shower. And this was all true.

The one thing that I remember, I went under the shower one day. And I don't know how it could have happened. But the bathtub was in the kitchen. And the shower was over the bathtub.

And the water was full of electricity. I went under. I put the water on it. I started screaming and jumped out.

Now I don't know how it happened. And it was later on fixed. But I refused to go into the bathtub for the next month at least.

I could have died there. I mean, it was as if you put your finger into an outlet, I think. It was terrible.

How would you explain that?

I have no idea. We have no idea what actually happened. It was later on fixed. And the work people, they were mainly Chinese. And you have to have a lot of time.

I mean, they will not do something right away. They will come. They will look at it. And then they will come back, maybe look at it again. And then the third time, maybe they will start something and leave again.

So it takes time. Time is something you have to have when you go over there. But basically, as far as a question how did you get along with the Chinese, I'm talking about the Chinese that are not rickshaw coolies, but the few that we met that had some education, very well. Really, I did like them.

And I hated, as I said before, the Japanese. I didn't trust them. There's good reason.

OK. What did you do for news? You said you had shortwave?

No, there was one person that happened to live in the same lane that we do. We were not allowed to have it. But he had it.

There was a paper coming out, run also by German Jews. I forgot the name. But she had-- but the news-- I mean, news, there was none.

I mean, there was plenty. We didn't hear about it. We had no idea what was going on, none.

And as I said, when she found out, she wouldn't believe it. Ever since then, I still feel I am not really a Holocaust survivor. Holocaust survivors to me are the people that went to camps.

OK, let's say you were a witness. I mean, that's-- that's something. I it does-- only a matter of words.

Well, the fellow, the person who had the shortwave, did they try to turn it on?

I think they tried occasionally. But they didn't-- I mean, this, we never never knew. We never heard about it. I mean, what I suppose we did hear was all the successes of the Japanese side. And we did not know about Hiroshima until later, which then was the time that the rumor came out that the war was over.

When did the last people come to Shanghai?

At the end of '39, and they could not come by ship anymore. They came by-- you've got me there.

[CROSS TALK].

Yes. And also a long way by train.

Train?

Yeah, yeah. And that was--

Through Siberia, right?

Pardon me?

Through Siberia.

Right. And those were really the last ones. When we came, we left in March, last day or two of March '39. And it took four weeks to get there. And I think the last immigrants arrived, well, once the war started, that was it. I would say we did in September of '39, I think, was when we saw the last ones come in.

And the figure of 20,000 is, I'm pretty sure, fairly correct. They were babies born in between and some people died. But at the time, I think there were maybe 20,000 German Austrian Jews.

Maybe some Hungarian, I don't know. I didn't meet any. I'm sure this was pretty correct.

You had cemeteries?

We had a cemetery. When my grandmother died, and that was before we had to go into the ghetto there, she had to be buried Orthodox. And since, for whatever reason, the casket, which was supposed to be made out of seven boards. Was not available, or not available to us. I don't remember that.

We were only there a very short time when that happened. I'll never forget that, either. She was wrapped into a sheet. And she was lying on a table, or on a bed, whatever. It was terrible to see that.

They let a woman I was very fond of, she was a lovely lady. And she was never sick before, never. And she was buried in that sheet.

There was no casket. And that's pretty much the only time I remember a funeral. But later on, I think, they had the caskets that were out of seven boards.

You mentioned your grandmother was Orthodox, right?

No, no, my grandmother, I would say, never entered a temple in her whole life. She never did. But the funeral, the only way we could have it was the Orthodox way. And why we couldn't get the casket made out of the seven boards, I don't know anymore.

But I will never forget her lying there because you see the whole outline of the thing. It was pretty awful. And it was raining. And we stood in mud up to our knees. I mean, one of these typhoon, right after typhoon, I think.

And she never really saw much of this country. She was much more like I was. She was sort of excited about, at her age, still having a new experience.

How old was she?

My mother was born in 1900. That was in '39. She couldn't have been much more than early 60s, maybe middle 60s. At this time, it was not such a terribly young age. It was too early for her.

But at the time, people did die between 60 and 70. Very few lived until 80 or more, right? If I remember correctly, I don't know.

And when the lift came that I had mentioned before, that was packed, which came without our jewelry and good things, it was one of the biggest mistakes we ever made. The Chinese homes are not built to have that heavy furniture. This was a really heavy piece of furniture.

And I don't know what we did with it. We used a couple of things and sold the rest for frankly nothing. Because the house could have-- I mean, the floor could have easily sunken in. It was that heavy.

When you wanted to take a bath before we had that house and before we moved down to Hongkew, in order to take a bath, you had to buy hot water, which was brought on by a coolie who had two big buckets on one of his bamboo sticks. And he brought that up to wherever there was-- if you were lucky enough to have a bathtub.

And that hot water came from. We had cold water, but not hot water, this time, anyhow. I mean, there's so many things that I as I talk, I keep remembering. But it's not like they're really-- they're unimportant. They just sort of--

Well, it's important.

--come back.

How-- if you had had wood, could you have burned it in the apartment to keep warm in winter? Or was there no fireplace or anything?

No, no way. There was no fireplace. The only thing we used for burning was for cooking. But it had to be done outside of the house. Because we had that fan. And anything would have easily started up a fire. I mean, no, no way.

After the war, was it? This house was not equipped to be heated in the first place, I suppose. And after the war, somebody had made some sort of a device where you have, on the outside of your house, out the window, you have something that drips petrol into it, drop by drop by drop, which then went wherever and heated.

It was a fantastic heater. I'm sorry I forgot. Somehow, I forgot how it exactly worked. But that was the first time in all those years we had a warm room.

But we had enough clothes, more or less, to keep warm. And lots of people didn't. That was a sad thing.

Another thing you mentioned before is your mother brought some money out. How did she manage to do that?

I only found out later she would put it in the lining of her coat. It wasn't very much. But this uncle that I had mentioned, he had some money. And the combination managed for us to get these two houses, which would, under normal circumstances, probably have been enough, maybe, to support us.

But she did go to work. And it was a blessing. Because she met the right man. She was very happily married.

And I was crazy about that man. He was wonderful. to me. I was 17 years old. And it's not easy for a man who is a typical bachelor all his life to marry a woman with a 17-year-- you know, it's a difficult age to be. But he was wonderful. He was wonderful.

You also mentioned movie houses.

Yes.

Where did they get the films from?

I wish I could answer that. I was thinking about that at home. Because I know we went to movies.

I mean, were they European movies, or American movies?

They were not American movies. They were European movies. They were made in German, I think.

I think they were made in-- except for the one movie that we finally got about the camp. That was a documentary thing. I don't really remember now.

I really don't. It's been so long ago. I'm sorry. Those things that are important and I really just don't remember.

When the Americans came, could you tell us a little bit about that?

Yes.

Towards the end of the war, how--

Well, we had expected a huge, big liberation, you know. Ships coming in by whatever, and planes, and everything would be wonderful. But it took a few weeks.

And the one good thing was, now we know that, they wanted the Japanese out. But mostly, they stayed until the Americans came. Because they kept things in order.

It could have been very, very difficult if they would have left. They stayed until the first Americans came. And the first thing I was the 7th Fleet.

I'll never forget that all these ships and all these sailors coming off the ships, that was fantastic. I mean, it was breathtaking. And the young girls, you know, the teenage girls, the girls between 14 and whatever, all dated Americans.

That was the first big transport that we saw of Americans. I don't remember any other nationality coming in for liberation. But we did stay and live where we were, because there was no sense in looking for something else at that point. Because we knew we wanted to leave the country.

And my husband had a cousin in Washington, DC, who furnished us with an affidavit. My parents, eventually, as I said before, got out. But it was nearly a year and a half later that they got out because of the Austrian quota being very small.

But for the first at least two weeks or so, we didn't see any American. We had hoped they would come in. I would imagine that the first thing we saw were a couple of planes, but just really a couple.

We would see one or two or three Americans in uniform. It was a nice view, a nice thing to look at, but we had expected more. Which we did have, once the fleet got there.

Lots of girls got pregnant. They thought they were going to get married to the Americans. Of course not, you know? But it was an important sight, once the fleet was there. And there was another way we could speak some English.

Now my husband got a job at the airport. And it was at this point, of course, there were no more restrictions as to which streets you could use. And he got paid, I think, for the first two months in American dollars. And I think it was like \$50 a month, which was an unbelievable amount.

I mean, the deflation in Shanghai was unbelievable. In China, in Chinese money, you paid, like, \$10,000 for a loaf of bread. It may have been more. It was just completely out of-- completely.

So when we were paid in America money, it was very nice. But after two or three months, I don't know why anymore, but they paid us equivalent of the Chinese money. We didn't get dollars anymore.

I mean, we managed. And we managed to hold on. But it was nothing like \$50 real dollars.

They paid you in Chinese money?

After the first three months. I mean, what we lived on before in American dollars during the war would probably be the equivalent of about \$5 a month. I'm talking about my husband, myself, our daughter when she was born. And now we had \$50. I mean, it was a fortune, as long as it was American money.

And we left Shanghai with an American transporter, American troop transport. The men and women were divided. And you had the bunks.

And I remember our baby carriage had to be tied on, because the ship moved quite a bit. My baby was nine months old when we left. Was she, yeah, nine months old.

So it was interesting. But that really took two weeks, not four weeks. It wasn't too bad.

How did you mention-- in winter, was it in winter when your baby was born?

She was born in September. And it was really very, very hot, very hot.

What about the winter? Could you keep her warm?

At this point, yes. Because the war over and you could buy some stuff. And I knitted by hand. And yes, that was all right. After the war, it was not that traumatic anymore.

And you could go into the city. And you could buy, if you had the money to buy it, you could buy things that you needed. I will never forget the first time I tasted mayonnaise. We had a deli, also run by German Jews, which was, like, across the street, actually, on our side, just across-- one house in front of us.

And I think we bought-- it was at the most, 1/8 of a pound. It was an unbelievable amount of mayonnaise to us. We were so careful with it, just a taste. And how far does it go?

But that was the first time we had, in what, in 8 and 1/2 years, tasted-- and butter, real butter, I mean. I'm trying to think what we ate. [LAUGHS] We had lots of rice, and we ate some vegetables. And meat, we ate when it was available. It was not very much. Yeah.

You speak German, right?

Yes.

Do you remember [NON-ENGLISH]?

Yes.

I don't know how to translate it.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

It's a meatloaf made out of the lung meat.

Something like, yeah. I mean, things, you know, brains. Because it wasn't easy.

Now where did the Chinese get these supplies from?

Well, the Chinese-- you mean the markets?

Yeah.

Well, I would imagine quite a bit the stuff was, for us [INAUDIBLE]. They sell, like, [INAUDIBLE] and so on, and so on. It was from-- the best, only answer I can think of is really they take the whole, whatever was available, was [INAUDIBLE] house.

I remember I had some peanut butter. Now that was after the war. We ate it by the pounds after the war. But rice fills you up. And the Chinese eat rice every meal.

And the meat they use, they use pork, for instance, a lot of pork. Chicken, I don't remember whether that was available. I think chickens were available also. It was very expensive.

But I think it was mainly-- now I love Chinese food. And I love the Cantonese-type Chinese food, because that's the ones we got in Shanghai. And-- excuse me. I'm sure whatever there was available we had. I'm not very good in remembering those things. I was a young girl. I was much more interested in--

[CROSS TALK]. [LAUGHS]

--in trying to have a good time, which was not easy, either, and in working. I needed to be busy. I couldn't just sit. I never could.

And you know, I was married and with a baby. It was a big job for me. But that's it. My daughter was raised on powdered milk. It was called Klim, milk spelled backwards.

That came from the United States. We got packages there, care packages, at first. And everything tasted wonderful, even if it was terrible. I remember some kind of hash, corned beef hash or something.

Spam? [LAUGHS]

Yeah, right. Yeah. When we came here and I went to a pediatrician, he said, well, you can now put her on your milk.

But up until that time, I didn't know. And I couldn't nurse. I had no milk. She was on powdered milk, whatever. It agreed with her.

So how long did it take you to come to the States by boat?

We left here in July 3, 1947. And the war was over in December in '45. So it took quite a long time. It did.

I mean, to get all the papers ready, and all the examinations. And people left by droves. I mean, every day there was at least one transport leaving. And I think each ship held a good 5,000 people. It was, you know, army transporters.

And it started emptying out at this point. Most people left in late '46 through '47. My parents only came at the end of '48. My husband's parents came-- no, no, my parents came in '49. My husband's parents came sometime in the middle of '48. They were on the German quota.

So you came to New York?

No, we came to San Francisco. Our friends were here. And we knew that if you can-- we were supposed to go to Washington, DC, to my husband's cousin who gave us the affidavit.

But this is such a beautiful city. And all our friends were here. And as long as we were able to make a living, my husband was very bright man, and he would take anything. He worked two jobs at the time.

So we decided we don't sit on anybody's private pocketbook. We're going to stay here. All our friends were here.

So I still haven't been to New York or to Washington. I would like to see those states. But San Francisco is too nice to leave, really. It's a gorgeous city. I love it still, in spite of the earthquakes.

Now you said that the journey took so long from Shanghai. So I thought you went through the canal, to the East Coast.

No, no, yeah, it took two weeks. We stopped in Hong Kong. And we stopped in Hawaii. And in Hawaii, we just had a few hours. And in Hong Kong, I don't even think we got off the ship.

And in Hawaii, we got off. But we had just maybe 6, 7, or 8 hours at the most before we went on. Those were the only two stops that I remember at this point, then San Francisco.

And it's a beautiful sight to see the city. For 8 and 1/2 years, it's been nothing but gray buildings and gray floors and gray everything. And then you come and have a view like this, it was like a dream.

Our friends had been here already, like, two months. They were already completely American. And they took us up to Mount Tamalpais. And when we saw all this, we couldn't believe it. We didn't know those things existed anymore, trees and flowers and nicely kept homes.

In color, no?

Yeah, absolutely.

What about your daughter?

My daughter had to make-- had to do the same thing we had to do. My son was born here. He was born American.

My daughter had to take the-- no, she didn't have to take the examination. But when my husband and I, after five years, became citizens, then automatically she was made a citizen also, but not before. She doesn't remember much, obviously, at that age. And my son was born here in '48.

Interesting story. Have you been back at all to Germany?

Well, yes, to Germany, yes. We didn't want to go. My husband has been-- I've been married 38 years now to my husband-- has family in Berlin. And his aunt was married to a non-Jew. So they made it through the war, and his cousin, the daughter of these two people.

And the cousin came here to visit us. And she said, my mother wants to invite you over to Berlin. And we said, no way. We don't. We don't do this. We're not going to go.

And then Fred talked to her on the phone once. And she said, I would like to see you once more. She's in her 90s now. And she was in the 80s then, 70s. Is that right?

So it was in '83. That time is right. And she paid for the trip for us, which we couldn't have afforded. And it was a very odd feeling.

Somehow, the young people, the few that we met, I had no problem. With my generation and older, I felt so ill at ease. And I still speak German fluently. And I still have to write some letters in German.

And I couldn't speak one word. I just couldn't. We spoke English all the time. It just didn't come out. I just-- it bothered me.

We stayed two weeks? It was two weeks. Two weeks too long, it's just-- we went to the houses where we lived. And two of them, apartment buildings, are still standing the same way they were when we left them, with other people in now.

There's the same door, the balcony. When we lived there, it had a glass. The kitchen window out, that was gone. But you know, your mind goes back.

Last time we were there, my grandmother was sitting in that chair in a very beautiful, flowered Japanese kimono. I still have a picture of that. And now here we stand, all these years later, and everybody I knew then was gone.

And you look at these people, at the Germans, especially older Germans, and then you think, you were alive then. Why didn't you do something? You were alive. You were there. And you let all this happen to us.

We didn't say it to anyone. My husband's aunt said-- we talked about the bombings. And she said, weren't you afraid for us?

And Fred said, for us, this was the best news we ever heard. And of course, we were worried about you, personally. But knowing that the Americans or whoever bombed Berlin, it was a dream we thought we would never live to see, or to hear about at the time.

It's very understandable, I think. I felt the same way when we were bombed, because it was by the Americans because of the Japanese regimentation. And at first, we were bombed only at night. And then later on, in the day, too.

But for some reason or other, I don't know of a single person that I know that got hurt. Although the one time, the bombing, I think, during the day was, like, a distance from here to the next-- half a block. And everybody in that half a block was dead. There was not one that I remember, one person I knew that-- that they were killed. It was many, many Chinese.

Did you have shelters?

Pardon me?

Did you have air raid shelter?

No. There was a hospital which had a full basement, I believe. And some people ran over there.

No, no, I'm sorry. That building was out of the zones. And we saw all the Chinese which had belongings on these bamboo sticks hanging there, walking out to go away from the air, or to this particular building. The building never got hit.

But we wouldn't go there. We found out later on that it was loaded with ammunition. That building was used for ammunition, the whole downstairs.

I think it was a hospital, if I remember correctly, as well, I think. It was full of ammunition and never hit. If it had, we would have heard it. Believe me. It was not that far away from where we were.

But we sat there. And we didn't know. It was a beautiful sound to hear these planes. You knew they were American planes.

You couldn't even tell if they're very low. Even during the day, they were very low. We were scared.

But it was worth it. It seemed to us that it's going to be over soon, maybe, hopefully. And it was, really, after that.

The bombings, maybe for a week we had bombings during the day. And then it was very close to Hiroshima. When this happened, no more.

Did you apply for restitution from the German government?

Yes. Both my husband and I did. I get a monthly pension. Unfortunately, they-- normally we got paid. I mean, I had to have a lot of surgery because of the way I came here. But the diagnosis made at the time was not my stomach but-- and I was try all the was down here to remember the word-- [NON-ENGLISH].

Oh, intestine.

Yeah, intestinal-- right. Oh, my intestines were-- which was true. But my real problems were all with my stomach, with ulcers and a few other things. So I had surgery about five times.

Every time a little bit more of my intestine or my stomach went. Then, In 1975, whatever there was left of my stomach was taken out. When they lift it out front, it's very difficult.

And it costs us a fortune. However, we had pretty good coverage, thank God. They refused to pay for it because my diagnosis had said that only my intestines were affected, not my stomach.

The Germans refused to pay?

They refused for this, for surgery. Yeah. But I do get a-- not a huge amount, but it helps. It helps the monthly pension.

Because we all got some money because we had to leave school at a certain time of year. But that was a one time payment. But the fact that I had these intestinal problems, and I mean, they were confirmed here, for that I got a pension.

And my husband had some very bad psychological problems, still does. You know his story. But the money doesn't bring anybody back. On the other hand, I must say, it helps out now.

We are both more or less retired. I work from home. And he also works, but it's just like a part-time job. And without it, we wouldn't know what to do.

But my husband's father refused to take any money from the Germans. And I could see his point at the time. But I couldn't afford not to do it. And the way he saw it, too, because he's 96 years old. And he doesn't do as well as he thought he would. Now it's too late for him.

But that does not endear the Germans to me at all. Believe me. They have to pay until we're dead. I think that was the arrangement made. For as long as we live, we get that, whatever increase of cost of living is also--

Included.

--included. Yeah. But it helps. But sitting, going to Germany, going through these streets, and looking at things that you used to. When I went to the Jewish school, which was-- you're not from Berlin, are you?

It was Jewish school? No.

No, are you from Berlin?

With what?

Are you from Berlin?

Yeah.

Oh, the Boulevard, do you know where that is? That was a lycee there? And we had to go by train.

In a suburb?

Yeah, right. And we took one of two--

Train station?

Train station. And then I saw all that. And I stood there. And I got sick. I really got sick.

I thought, what in heaven's name are we doing here? I don't belong here anymore. They don't want me. I don't want them.

But you know, Fred felt very strong about it. And she paid for the trip. She wanted to see him once more. So be it.

It's hard to know, you know, what to do.

Yes. But we have antisemitism here, too, you know. But still, when you see people your own age and older, where you know they were alive then. I'm not saying that there were not some who were very decent.

But most of them, I had a very odd feeling, very uncomfortable feeling. We knew them. I mean, as I said, we spoke English. And most of the Germans speak English now. Maybe not perfect, but they speak it.

May I have some more? Do you mind for a second? I don't believe the two hours are up?

No, no,

I can't believe it.

[CROSS TALK] to tell us. I don't know if you ladies had questions.

No more questions.

I've got one or two. But perhaps the seconds should go first.

I do have one question.

Which is?

Listening about your mother and grandmother, so I just find it fascinating that at that time, these women alone, they knew enough to leave Europe, where so many people. Did anything--

Exactly.

special-- did something happened to them that scared them personally?

I tell you-- I tell you about one of the things that happened. My mother's brother had left Germany before Kristallnacht, Crystal Night and had gone to South America. And my mother had paid for all this.

And one day, also before Crystal Night, she got a letter he's coming back. He can't stand South America. And he said when he came back and stood at the station, and she picked him up, he stood there like a beaten dog.

He knew, but it was terrible. Especially my mother, who had to work very hard. I mean, in Germany at the time, women didn't work. And they didn't get divorced.

So my mother had to do it all. And then she sent her brother away out of the country. Go and do something, anything. He was an attorney. He hadn't practiced yet, but he had passed the bar. And he was a musician.

But he came back. And that scared her. And then she sent me to live with my father to learn any profession. As I had said, I settled on hairdressing.

And she must already then have thought, my daughter needs to learn something. We cannot stay here. My mother was a very, very bright lady.

And the more people said to her, it cannot get any worse, the more she was convinced it's going to get worse. We didn't know how bad. But she did know that she couldn't live this way.

And we had found out that my father, my real father had, in the meantime, left illegally. And nobody told us illegally. But we knew he wasn't around anymore.

And we didn't know about the camps yet. We did know about one of the camps, where people were taken during Kristallnacht. But most of them were released later on. And I forgot where that was. I think it was in Poland.

So she really didn't know. But she knew it wouldn't get any better. Because everyday, when we were on the street, and you saw these people. And you saw these uniforms. And you saw them marching.

And my mother had a very nice youth. She had the kind of youth that she would have liked me to have. And I obviously didn't, but that's nobody's fault.

And she really could see ahead. And her mother would have been lost without my mother. They were very close. And my grandfather had died quite a few years before that.

So my mother wouldn't leave my grandmother alone. And my grandmother was willing to do anything. She was a very easygoing lady. Oh, well, you know, learn something new. Why not? China, China, who cares?

But my mother was, thank God, not one of these people that said it couldn't get any worse. She knew it would get worse. That was very smart.

And she also knew that you cannot wait to be let into the States or anywhere else. Because it was closed. China was the only place you could go without having to show any papers.

And so she said, let's get out. China? Who cares? We'll get to China, we'll take it from there, day by day, one day at a time. That's what we did.

When my grandmother died so soon, she didn't know, either. I don't think she knew that she was diabetic. She lived for chocolate. And she couldn't live without it. And that went very fast.

Where was your mother born?

My mother was born in Berlin, also. So was my father, as a matter of fact, my real father.

I wanted to ask you how you feel your experiences in Germany and then being a refugee in China and the general experience of the Holocaust has affected your children and what their attitudes are today.

That question I like. It's very odd. Both my children are grown up and have children of their own. My daughter who was born in China is now 44. My son is a year and a half younger.

My daughter does not really want to know. She says she doesn't want to know because it hurts too much to watch. My son wants to know everything. And his own children who are now 11 and 7, he takes them, he lets them watch movies and television, Wiesenthal, all the documentaries. He wants them to learn and I'm very happy about that.

My daughter knows that she was born in China. And she has never asked a question why China. She's never asked how did you live there? Never.

When my husband wrote that manuscript, she didn't read it. I'm sure she didn't. She got a copy of it, just like my son did. I'm sure she never looked at it. I thought maybe it would get her to ask some questions.

If I tell her stories like I mentioned here, with the [INAUDIBLE], with the [INAUDIBLE] with the mouse, that she likes to hear. Because she can laugh. But anything that is tragic, [INAUDIBLE] our lives also, she doesn't really want to know.

Whereas my son-- now she is married for the second time also. Both times to a non-Jew. And she has one son from the first marriage and one son from the present marriage and a little girl adopted.

And none of these kids [INAUDIBLE]. The oldest boy is now 10. And I don't think he's ever been to a temple unless I took him for Pesach or any holiday that he might be able to sit through. And she has no intention of giving them any Jewish education, or other education, religious. That bothers me very much.

Whereas my son and his boys visit. Now Levi, the oldest, who's now 11, whether or not he will be bar mitzvah, I don't know.

But he does have a Jewish education. And they do go to temple. And my son keeps every holiday. I never knew he would.

I mean, I was very surprised, every Jewish holiday, we always have it at Gary's house. And he feels his boy should know.

That was a reason why it may not have been-- you were talking at the time. And I said, I would like to sit down, going way back from the time I was a little girl, and write it all down as well as I can because the kids, someday, maybe want

to read that, my grandchildren.

And when these movies are shown, the kids are very upset, our grandchildren. And my son doesn't say you have to stay. But they want to know. And they ask questions, which I'm very happy about, really.

Because I think once we are all dead, who knows? Other than, of course, the library here and the interviews. And who's going to read it?

There's your tape. Those who want to will have access to that.

Yes. I would like to. I would like to.

And show the tape to your daughter. Would she like to look at it, you think?

I think she might at mine. I'm not sure she would look at Fred's. She didn't read the manuscript. I'm sure she didn't. And she obviously has some reason. I don't ask anymore. Because you can't force her, you know?

She's a sweetheart. I love her dearly. But she looks at as if it's easier. You know, for this Strauss [GERMAN] you put your head in the sand. You see nothing.

I talk to other people that have children my age. And a lot of them say the same thing, that the kids are really not that affected, except for some. I read the book, Children of The Holocaust.

Helen Epstein's book?

Was that the-- yeah. And I don't know whether this holds true for everyone. Because these kids are much more involved, when they were mentioned, than mine are, or quite a few of the others that I know are. Of course, they were affected.

Both my kids speak a little German, which doesn't hurt them. But I try not to speak it too much around them. Renee looks the other way. There's no question about it.

I would like to see my grandson bar mitzvahed very badly. And maybe he will be. I'm not going to push it. My daughter-in-law's family is very religious.

Is she Jewish?

Yeah. My son married a Jewish girl. My daughter is married for the second time to a non-Jew. It happens very often these days.

I have nothing against him as far as religion is concerned. I'm not crazy about him for other reasons. But I never expected our son to get involved in it.

When he finished that manuscript-- and I wanted to say something about that. I did the writing. Fred took notes, what he wants in there. I mean, I started-- I have a computer. And so I use a word processor. But I started working on it, and I told my husband, I feel he left out the most important things. He left out your real feelings.

You didn't have the guts to face them. Because basically, sure, he worked. He helped some people out, no question about it. He helped others get off the train.

But all in all, he still worked with the Germans. He had to. But face up to it. Say what you couldn't say. All of them, he says the same thing. His brothers, who had-- say the same thing.

He was not honest enough. He doesn't want to admit it. And true, he didn't hurt anybody. He was not a kapo in Germany.

But this idea that he worked for the Germans, I mean, if he had not, he would have been in Auschwitz. And it was the only way for him to survive, and his mother, and his brothers survive. His oldest brother was in the 82nd Airborne Division. They were already here.

But I feel that he was not open enough in this. And I think that's one thing that is missing out of his-- probably missing also in the interview. And I'm the only one that can say that to him. He wouldn't let anyone else. But it's too bad.

You mentioned that to me, that you were his best judge, that you would know.

Yeah. But I'm pretty tough on him. Maybe I'm too tough. But I think this is important.

Nobody would blame him. People wanted to survive. I mean, you want to live. I don't know how. I don't know what I could or would have done had I been in that position.

If I would have been in Holland, and I would have had a chance to live rather than be on the transport, I probably would have had the chance. I think. I'm not the type that was easily let to the slaughterhouse without fighting.

But that's the sort of fighter I am. But I really feel that manuscript should have shown more inner feeling, not just fact, not just the things that happened in that order, but more of how he really felt about working for these people and doing this and doing that.

But then you cannot-- some people cannot face it. I know one man who actually died knowing that he was in Auschwitz and he was a capo. And I think he was the only people that knew that. And he couldn't live with it anymore.

He got ill. And that illness, he could easily have been killed from. He didn't from the disease. He died because he just said, I can't live with this anymore.

It's not true for my husband. He was not in this situation. Thank God. But still in all, he was able to save his life, and his mother's and his brother's life. And to do this, you have to do what they tell you to do, whatever that is. You go to transport and put x amount, 1,000 people on these trains.

What did he feel when he did that? As I said, I can ask him. But nobody else can. Even then, I don't get-- I know exactly how he felt. I know him too well. He knows that, too.

At this point, he is, at least-- he's glad he did the writing of it. He's glad some of it is, I'm not saying out of his mind. But at least he's done something with his thoughts.

He still wakes up at night and screams because he feels he's being-- Nazis follow him. And he runs over roofs and everywhere. He still does, after all these years. And he probably always will.

After all those years.

Yeah. For some people it comes very late. My brother-in-law was a psychologist. And the man said it happens very often that, all of a sudden, at this age, and he's 60 now. His is younger than we are. All of a sudden, the truth emerges.

And all of a sudden, it hits him. He's become, this brother of my husband's, has become a man who has no confidence in himself at all. He was full of confidence. He made wonderful money. And now he's losing. He's going down, down, down, down.

But I think I've used up your two hours. I can't believe I did. Did I?

You did very well. Is there anything else you would like to-- that you think you should take a rest, or you want to think a little bit more? Have you forgotten anything?

I keep forgetting. You know, I was going to make myself some notes. Then I thought, if I start making notes, it's not going to work for me. It doesn't,

I would like to take another sip of coffee.

Sure.

You have still in there? Is it enough?

We have to take another pill. So [INAUDIBLE] this.

Yeah. Well, you had mentioned earlier on that the two or three day period surrounding Kristallnacht made a very deep impression on you that stayed with you your entire life. I was wondering if you could tell us the details of two or three episodes that you witnessed. That's the sort of stuff that we aren't going to find in a history book, you know, in your personal experiences.

You're right. You're right. Yes, I can.

As I had mentioned, I was in Dusseldorf, which is a beautiful city on the Rhine, which is where my father lived. And there was a Jewish restaurant, a coffeehouse that, Saturday nights, had dancing. It was a downstairs and upstairs.

And I was 15 when I was over there. And I remember we used to go there nearly every week. My father and his second wife and I went along. And I had made some friends there. And I had a wonderful time.

And that particular night, we did not go. And the first thing we heard was that a whole gang of Nazis walked into this place, destroyed everything. And this was not a synagogue.

It was a two-floor cafe, no band. You know, regular-- evidently they got the music from records and so on. And destroyed everything and grabbed the man. The man went to-- wherever he went. God, I forgot that name of the place.

And that was when my father put us in the car. Now I remember we were in bed already. And his wife said, go get dressed. Put anything on. I want you out of here.

And when we got in the car-- now if I remember correctly, the windows were cracked, something. I sometimes think I have these blinds, like Venetian blinds. I think his car had that. Because the idea was that nobody can look in. My father looked very Jewish and so did I. His second wife did not, because she wasn't.

And as we started driving around, not really knowing where we should go, we saw corpses floating in the Rhine, people who just were thrown in there. The killed persons were in there or just decided life isn't worth it anymore.

I think there were two synagogues in Dusseldorf which were burned to the ground. But systematically, and we were told that by the owners of the apartment building about the caretakers of the apartment where my father lived, that the SA goes-- must go to each house where there are Jews, each house, and destroy and/or take people along.

So we had to be out of the house. And I think I mentioned before that my grandfather, who was then in his 80s already, said, no way. I stay with my things here. What can happen to an old man like this? They're not going to do anything.

And we drove to the parents of my father's wife, who were afraid to keep us-- they were also non-Jewish-- and to another brother of hers, also non-Jew. And so we ended up, I think for two or three nights, I remember at a business friend of my father who was not afraid to take us. And he risked his life by taking us in.

And we had no idea of what had happened in the apartment. We had no idea what happened in the other city. And I was afraid to use the telephone from the apartment of this-- really, stranger to me, because I didn't want to risk anymore for

him to get into trouble, too.

And I think after the second night, we stayed there two nights and days, we went back. By this time, we had heard that things have quietened down. We went back.

And it was unbelievable. The razzias that were started on that day, on that night in November, stopped, I think, three or four houses on the street where we lived, my father and his wife with my grandfather. Before they would have come to the apartment of where my family lived. Had they, they would have taken my grandfather along. They just stopped there.

And the caretakers of the apartment there, they were the ones that somehow got word to us. As I said, I don't remember how they even knew where we were. I would remember my father made some contact. I don't remember that.

And then we came back home to his house. And I called Berlin. I did not even know whether my mother was alive, even. And she said, she's fine. And in Berlin, mainly, it was mainly synagogues and some windows from stores. But nobody that she knows of at that time had been taken.

So all I wanted was to come home and go to my mother. And when we left, when I left Dusseldorf, it was a train ride of, I think, about eight hours. I mentioned several times that my father also looked very Jewish. And he drove me to the train station. He had the ticket for me.

And he said goodbye to me. He didn't want to get out of his car. He was afraid something would happen to him, rightly so.

So I was alone at that train station until the train came. And then I went to that [NON-ENGLISH]. [NON-ENGLISH]?

Compartment.

Compartment, right, and I remember I smoked. I think it was the first time in my life. I was-- I was shaking. I was so nervous, so afraid.

But as I said, Dusseldorf was hit harder. Because Ernst vom Rath, the man that was shot by Grynszpan, was born in Dusseldorf, or Grynszpan himself. I don't remember now. But one of the two was born in the city. And that's why the city was hit that much harder at the time when Kristallnacht came.

And my father, as far as I know, very soon afterwards went illegally across the border. And my grandfather stayed.

And that restaurant, where we really had gone every Saturday night, and was full. I think there were at least four people that were killed right then and there. And then somebody saw the people that we knew in the-- the river. That is also something I'll never forget.

And when you sit in a car, and you know-- I really-- I cannot imagine that they were Venetian blinds. But something was on. We put something on the windows. We're talking now a long time ago, right?

I remember moving really low in the seat of the car. And my father was the driver. And my father never showed that he was scared, but he was scared.

And every place we went, the family of his wife, everybody said no. Get out of here as fast as you can. I don't want any Jew up here. This was family.

And it got scarier and scarier by the minute. And therefore, you know, it was three days at least until-- no, we got shelter that night, late, at his colleague's house, friend's house. But this man, he stuck his neck out. The family wouldn't have done that.