Interview With Ursula Sabel
Holocaust Oral History Project
Date: 06/18/91 Place: San Francisco, CA
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Videotape 1 of 2:

Q OKAY. CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THIS PICTURE, PLEASE?

A All right, that's my picture when I was 16 years old. It was taken in New York City. My older sister took the picture --

Q SO WHAT YEAR WAS THAT?

A Took the picture. I didn't have too many photographs of myself, so she took the picture. And it's been sort of a picture that's been used throughout the family. All my children have the picture. My nieces and nephews in a lot of different houses. I'm very surprised to find it in different parts of the country.

Q OKAY, WHAT YEAR WAS THE PICTURE TAKEN?

A Let's see, I was 16.

Q TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE?

A Okay. This picture was taken in Germany in 1934, 1935. And this is myself, and I'm the person in the middle. And to the right is my older sister Gertrude. And to the left is my middle sister Maryanna and this was taken -- it was our last picture -- group picture taken in Germany that we had for the family. And where it says "Rock" it actually means that it's German for, "The regular photo." So that's why it's written on there and that's the only picture that we have of when we

were -- a young picture like that, during that period. That was 1934, close to 1934, 1935.

Q AND YOU WERE WHICH PERSON?

A Yeah.

Q YOU WERE WHICH PERSON?

A Hum?

Q WHO WERE YOU?

A I am the middle.

Q IN THE MIDDLE?

A In the middle -- I am the youngest, yeah. I was 4 years old, 4 and a half years old.

Q TELL US ABOUT THIS PLEASE?

A This was our house in Germany Rutzheim (Fouse) and it -- we had a store as you can see. We had a clothing store, and in the back of the house, we had cigar factory. But that was closed in early 1930s. And now, at the present time, the city of Rutzheim has made it into a post office; which I have yet to see. It was not our last home when we were in Rutzheim because we were forced -- we had sold the house and we had -- the people wanted to move in and we had to leave, so we lived somewhere else in our last few weeks -- last few weeks in Rutzheim. But most of my parents' lives and my sisters' lives we -- and my life, we lived in that house.

Q OKAY. ARE YOU IN THE PHOTOGRAPH?

A No. I don't know what that photograph -- I am not in the photograph and I don't know who that is really.

Q TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE?

A This is Rutzheim, 1935, and that's my handwriting. And the one -- the woman on right is my mother.

Q OKAY.

A And the child on the left is me. It was my fifth birthday party, and in the courtyard of the house. And there is the neighbors -- there is a neighbor next to my mother and next to them is my sister Maryanna and another maybe. And the man who's sticking out, that's my father.

Q IN THE BACK ON THE LEFT?

A That's right. That's right.

Q AND WERE YOU ON THE LEFT -- THIRD ON THE LEFT?

A That's right. That's right, and that's me.

Q THIRD FROM THE LEFT?

A That's right. That's right. It's my fifth birthday party and in the courtyard, and it was outside. And it was very nice and I remember I got a scooter for a present and it was a very joyous occasion. And that's the only picture in the family we have of that particular occasion. And that's all I can say about it. It was just a nice remembrance.

Q WHO ARE ALL THE CHILDREN IN THERE? ARE THEY FRIENDS?

A Okay. There was someone else in there. I'm trying to see. She is a woman who worked for us and she was just like one of family, and I thought I saw somehow they might be in there -- maybe in the back here. She might be the one that's in the back there, and I have

another picture over there that you might --

Q OKAY. WHAT'S HER NAME?

A Her name was Ketchum, Kathy, Ketchum. That's what we called her. Ketchum was her name. She was very close to the family, and she was very disturbed when all these problems that we had with the Nazis and all that. That I had related to you before. So she came to visit us in Germany later when we came back to Germany. I'll show you I have pictures of that.

Q OKAY. TELL US ABOUT THIS PLEASE?

A Okay. This is 1988 after we returned after all these years. When we returned to Rutzheim and the Mayor took me throughout the house to see the house and to tell me that they are going to make it into a post office. And I looked at all these specific places that I had all these memories and this is one of the memories that you saw, the picture in 1935. This is what it looked like after all these years. I also looked at the stairs -- went upstairs to look at the rest of courtyard to see that it was very difficult to see it, except to see that it really hadn't changed that much. I mean the courtyard was still there and all these different things happened to all of us and all these people.

Q TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE?

A As I mentioned earlier in my talk is that my mother was trying to get my father out of prison, and my sisters and myself were waiting at train station for my parents to come back. And it was the most difficult part of my young life. After all, I was only 8 years old, and I didn't know whether I was going to see my parents again. It was a very

trying experience. The first thing I did in 1988 when I came to Rutzheim is go to that particular spot and take pictures, and I just sat there and cried. I just cried and cried, and I couldn't stop crying. And my sister was with me and she felt the same way. My middle sister was with me at the time and we sort of relived our experiences by having that particular thing. And so that picture is very valuable to me because it has a lot of emotional ties.

Q OKAY.

A That was part of it. This is what we saw while we were sitting there waiting, looking around, and trying to make the minutes go faster. And that's part of those pictures that I took when we first got there.

Q TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE?

A This was my great grandfather's grave in Rutzheim. And they took us on a trip to the cemetery and showed us what the people in the town have done to keep the Jewish cemetery in good condition and they said because the Nazis really wanted to destroy it, and there were attempts to destroy it but the older people in the town were against it and they made sure it was still intact. In fact, they even tried -- and before we got there, I'm sure they did some work on it to make it look even better. So we went through the cemetery and saw my great grandfather and my grandfather.

Q HERE IS SOME MORE OF WHAT -- WE'LL SLIP THIS IN. THIS IS YOUR GREAT GRANDMOTHER?

A My great grandmother, that's right.

Q OKAY. HOW DID THE OLDER -- ?

A This was my grandmother. This one was my grandmother. The other one was my great grandmother. I have never met any of those people, but my parents told me -- my father always told me about them and everything.

Q AND THIS IS?

A And this is my grandfather.

Q HOW DID THE OLDER GERMANS IN TOWN PREVENT THE NAZIS FROM DESTROYING THE GRAVES? HOW DID THEY DO THAT?

A Well it seems that in the town there were not many Nazis themselves. And that the town was forced -- things were forced upon by the town by Nazis that have come from other areas because even at the time when they arrested my father, the police never wanted to keep him in prison. It was always the Nazis that came in and said, "Look we are over you and you have got to do what we tell you, and this is the way it is." People who resisted got very bad experiences.

There was one woman who came to sit with us while we were waiting at the train station, and when they found that out she was in a concentration camp for a while, and her husband was put on the Russian Front. So the people who didn't cooperate weren't treated very well. But as a rule, that particular town did not have many Nazis, and in 1930 they didn't feel the real -- the bad parts or anything until very late 1938 because the town was just a normal town and they just lived their lives, and Jews were assimilated in the town and were very well thought of, and they were -- everything was fine. And it was not until the Nazis came in

-- well there are factories nearby and the factories brought other people also. The fact that we were building up their (warmacht), you know, and so that's what happened.

That's what happened in the town because many of older people -- at least this is what they told us when we were there in 1988. I don't have the copy yet, but I'll get you a copy of experiences in 1988 where the Mayor made these speeches. And they took us into these schools and many people invited us into their homes, and we were just wined and dined and made to feel at home. And they continued to correspond with us, and I get a newspaper every few months and they tell us what they are doing in the town and they tell us to please come and visit and they even ask us to come live there, but none of us wanted to come back and live there. There isn't anyone there that's living there any more.

And what they have done with the Synagogue is change the Synagogue into -- they have resurrected it and they even put plaques on it of all the people in town -- the Jewish people in town, and put names on it. They have taken some streets in the town and named them after Jewish people that they thought had contributed a lot in past years and generations that lived in the town. So they really wanted us to feel that we are not forgotten.

Q HAVE THEY NAMED ANY STREETS AFTER PEOPLE WHO WERE KILLED?

A Yes. Some of people who are killed, that's right. That's what they've been doing.

Q WE'RE ROLLING.

A This was one of trips that they took us into the

cemetery. They took us on a lot of other trips in the surrounding area to show us what's happened.

Q TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE?

A The one on right is me. The first one. The second one, her name is also Ursula. She is a counsel woman in the town the Rutzheim, and I became really good friends with her. She told me -- she was very friendly and told me all about what she's doing and that they're doing for the town. And there is the Mayor at another table and this was actually the farewell dinner. I think it is the farewell dinner and what they have done in the farewell dinner is -- many people in the town brought food for us. Special food they wanted to share with us at this particular thing, and there was entertainment, and there were speeches, and it was a very moving thing because they had -- for a whole week they had really treated us excellent because I never thought I would ever go back to Germany or that I ever wanted to see anyone, and yet here I was and my feelings were completely turned around because they were so nice and so wonderful to us.

And it was at that particular dinner -- see that may enter me into my next speech with my husband. My husband got up and said he feels like he's part of them because when he went back -- we went back to Poland twice -- we never got any feeling of anyone in Poland that gave us the feeling we were welcome as Jews to come back, and you know, we were fearful of even admitting that we were Jews in Poland, but here we were able to get up and make him feel at home and so he felt that he accepted my heritage as well as he felt very strong. And that was my husband's

last trip because he died six months after that. So he was very emotional when he spoke during that particular thing. And I think that might be in my tape.

Q HOW MANY PEOPLE WERE IN YOUR GROUP? IN THIS GROUP THAT WERE INVITED BACK ON RUTZHEIM?

A How many what?

Q HOW MANY PEOPLE WERE THERE? HOW MANY PEOPLE WERE INVITED BACK TO --

A Okay. Okay. There were -- I think it was 60 people altogether, but you have to divide that in half because, after all, half of them were the spouses who were not people who had lived there. So there were about 30 other people who were invited who could not attend because they were too old and had too many medical problems. And of course, my own parents were dead. I don't know whether my own parents would have wanted to go back. I don't know how they felt about the whole situation.

Q WHAT IS THE POPULATION OF RUTZHEIM?

A The population?

Q YEAH, THE JEWISH POPULATION. HOW MANY JEWS WERE THERE IN THAT TOWN?

A Originally you mean? Originally there were at least a thousand or more. Yes, in a town of two or three thousand people. See, now in 1988 Rutzheim that seven thousand people. There was an influx of course. A lot of people who came during Hitler time stayed in the factories and all that stuff, and its a very productive little town, and

the Mayor -- which is unbelievable. They have something called Moby Dick. Its a recreation complex which is so tremendous for a little town like that which is unbelievable for the towns people. For sports, for anything to go to. And that's where they wined and dined us, in that place. They had 40 service organizations. Entertainers from the town itself they had different things the children, the mothers, the grandparents. You name it, just about everybody. So it was a really nice experience. I plan to go back this summer. I plan to visit the town. With a friend.

Q TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE?

A This picture was taken in -- my parents lived in Concord in the apartment. And it was taken shortly -- my mother died about two years later, oh maybe a year-and-a-half later after that. And my father died five years after that, but this is where they lived, in Concord, and the whole family always visited him. Everybody the in the family came to visit him. And at that point my parents never thought that they would ever go back to Germany or there would be anything like they would ask us to come back or pay our way to come back or anything like that. They would have laughed at something like that. They would not have realized something like that could exist and --

Q WHAT YEAR WAS THIS PHOTO TAKEN?

A Let's see, my mother died in 1977; my father died in 1982. Oh, '81 -- excuse me. He died in 1981. So this was before 1977. It was in 1976 or something like that, you know, something like that.

Q TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE?

A This is my -- that's me. I used to have real long

hair and that's me with my father, and we're standing close to the apartments where -- he stayed in the same apartment after my mother died, and we visited him very often and he was -- he liked to do a lot of different things. He wanted to be a part of everything. Whenever we did anything he came long with us, and he had lots of stories to tell us also from his experiences during World War I when he was in the German army in Word War I, and he would tell us experiences about that. And one thing, as he got older he always talked about how he couldn't understand the way everything progressed so fast like when he was first a young man, people were just barely driving cars and the whole thing just blew his mind.

As he got older, he kept talking about all those things like that a lot, and we didn't talk much about Holocaust and all those things. We tried not to think about all his experiences, and he never talked about his experiences except one time he did say something that was the time that he was in that jail for a short period of time in his life. He'll never forget that particular incident, and the fact my mother rescued him and all that kind of stuff. But otherwise he never wanted to talk about that. He really didn't want to think about it. And he was very active and the next picture will show you --

Q OKAY, I'LL PAUSE THIS PICTURE; WHAT YEAR WAS THIS PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN?

A Let's see, 1977 -- it could be 1979 something like that. I couldn't tell you the exact -- something during the period. Also he had -- he liked birthday's. Both my parents very much for birthday's, and we always celebrated our birthday's, and we would always have big

celebrations. So from the time he was 80 until the time he died, 83 or 84, we celebrated every year. His birthday was a big thing. We went out to a place and we invited all the people in the apartments who were friends of his and they all came along, and he wanted to have that. And in all this time the German government has supported him because after -- because he was a veteran of World War I. He lost an eye, and they supported him financially so he never -- to give him the chance to live in the apartment, to have a housekeeper, and to live well and to do the things he wanted to do; and that made him very, very happy and he didn't have to depend on any of his children. And he could be an independent person, and he liked that very much.

Q URSULA, HOW DID YOUR MOTHER --

A Hum?

Q HOW DID YOU MOTHER GET YOUR FATHER OUT OF JAIL? DID THAT -- DID YOU EVER FIND OUT HOW YOUR MOTHER ACTUALLY -- WHAT SHE SAID TO THEM, WHAT SHE DID?

A Yes, it's in the tape of what I told you, and its also -- and I gave you one of tapes that I gave you. Its in my mother's own words. She tells you exactly what she did when she went to the man who was in charge. Not the Nazis but these policemen. And she talked to him and he just made it his business that he said, "Okay. You got your point." And he called two people and they were SS men, and they -- she walked between the two of them. She talks about walking between those two SS men, and they went to get my father out of jail where they had taken him. And then they went -- we met them then at the railroad station. So

you have my version as a child. I was only 8 -- 9 -- 8 and a half years old. And you have my mother's version on the tapes in her own words.

Q WAS THERE ANY EXCHANGE OF MONEY, DO YOU KNOW? DID SHE GIVE THEM MONEY?

A No. No she did not give them money. She just said, "Here's a man who gave his eye for your country and still has scrap metal wounds in his arm, and he did everything for your country and look at the way you are treating him now. And you can give him that much support to at least let him go now." And he said, "Okay." That particular person, it was the man from the town and he had the feeling that she was right, and he let him go. She just happened to get somebody who had a little human feeling. It was luck. It was just luck because I think -- we always think they could have just put her in prison too and forgotten the whole thing. We didn't -- if it was the Nazis themselves to how some of them felt, so it was just a question of what individual you talked to.

Q TELL US ABOUT THIS PICTURE, PLEASE?

A Hum?

Q TELL US ABOUT THIS PICTURE?

A Okay, this is -- I believe this is 1979 of my daughter, Judy, graduating in a nursing school in University of California in San Francisco. Up on the hill -- I'm sorry. Way up on the hill they had this capping -- what they call capping and she chose to have her grandfather to be the one to cap her, and he was delighted, and he was very happy to do that. And so he was the one to cap her and that made her officially an RN, a nurse, and then we had a big party up there and it was

a great joy for my father also. It was a great joy for all of us, and so this was just one of the things that he did.

This is what I'm saying; my father was a quiet man but he liked to do things. He did like to be involved and was involved in all of things in my family, and this was one of things that -- her being capped -- and he also went to her graduation and to my other children's graduations, and he was always into all of that. And he met -- and he also saw many of his own grandchildren too. He never met Eric, but he met my grandson who is in England now, Shawn, and that was probably the only great grandchild he met before he died. He was a good family man and I was very close to my father and he did a lot of things for me in my life and also during when we first came to this country he had to take care of me because my mother had to go to work. He couldn't get work at first and so I was still a young child and he really was a mother and father to me both at different times, so I was very close to him.

This is the part, I believe, was just before he capped her -- before he capped -- and showed my daughter Judy's real happiness to have her grandfather to do that and see how happy she was at that particular situation there.

Q OKAY.

A This is in Lundow. Lundow, Germany. She was a student with my sister Gertrude and they've been friends for many years. And she came over to United States to visit us a few times so when we came over -- before we went Rutzheim we went to visit her and she wined and dined us and took us around and she drove us into Rutzheim.

Q SHE'S A GERMAN WOMAN?

A Yes, she is a German woman. She has never been married -- she's a spinster. She's a very, very friendly person -- a very friendly person. And so you see how friendly -- that was a very nice picture of her. And so --

Q WHAT'S HER NAME?

A Her name is Gertrude Brinkhouse, and I called her two weeks ago and she's delighted I'm going to be in Europe and I told her I might come to visit her. I'll call her from England and she said she'd be very happy to have me come and visit her and that she would be very happy to take me back to Rutzheim to visit some people because Lundow and Rutzheim are not very far apart.

Q OKAY.

A Okay. This couple used to work in our -- with us in our house. I don't know exactly what they were doing but they were very close -- she used to take care of me when I was a little girl, and she was very emotional when she saw me. She was the first person who saw me when we got to Rutzheim and she invited me to her house several times. We were there for dinner and they gave us gifts, and I took these pictures and made copies and sent it to them -- copies of us. And the first Christmas I sent them all Christmas cards and everything, but I haven't really kept up a lot of correspondence because I really don't write German very well. And I think my sisters are able to do that better than myself because my middle sister taught German in high school, and my older sister graduated in Germany so they knew the language much, much more than I did. But they

were very, very nice to us and we enjoyed -- they went with us on excursions, and they took us out, and we offered them if they ever wanted to come to United States we would be glad to take them around, and things like that.

Q WHAT ARE THE NAMES OF THESE PEOPLE?

A I can't remember. I don't remember their names right now. I mean I have them written down somewhere, but there is so many people that I've got a whole book full of people who I know I can remember, but I can't tell you their names.

Q TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE.

A Okay. Now, the woman on right is a cousin of my father's. She is in her 80s and she came to the German experience in '88 with her grandchildren because her husband is dead and her son is dead, so she came with her grandchildren. She was the one who was responsible actually for us to be able to come to the United States because we were not able to enter because our visas were not strong enough. And she went and looked in the phone book and found some name -- our name was Bodenheimer -- and found somebody with that name. A very famous doctor who she convinced to write a letter to say that he would support our visa. And that's how we got into the United States. Otherwise we never would have gotten in, so we really owe the fact that we're here to her. And she still -- we still correspond quite a bit. I write to her and she writes to me. And she is living in New Jersey, and she is one of the few left in our family, and we still correspond with her.

Q WHAT IS HER NAME, AGAIN?

A Her name is Voos -- her last name is Voos. V-O-O-S.

Q AND HER FIRST NAME AGAIN?

A Do you know, I can't -- I know her really well and I can't think of her first name. Well, it will come to me maybe later.

Q ANY TIME.

A Okay. This is my cousin who was -- they came from Lundow. Her name was Imgrat. Imgrat was her first name and she came to the United States -- his father sent him to United States earlier before the rest of family but the mother and father perished in the Holocaust. And he was a soldier in United States and the Germans captured him. And they new that he was not -- because he was up in airplane and had very bad eye sight and was probably some kind of intelligence. But he never told him that. He said, "No, I'm an American. I was born an American." And somehow his sister and mother and father -- they died in the Holocaust and probably Theresienstadt. I think they died in the concentration camp. This picture is in the Jewish community in Lundow stating she is a Holocaust -- that she died -- that she died and they have her picture there and they have a whole story about the family there.

Q AND HER BROTHER IS THE ONE YOU WERE JUST DESCRIBING?

A And the brother is alive and living in Florida. And he saw this -- maybe he might have put that picture there. I don't know, you know, how we saw that, but I happened to walk through that thing and saw that picture and I was taken aback that it was somebody in our family -- Gunsburger it was.

Q DID YOU KNOW HER VERY WELL?

A Imgrat Gunsburger, that was her name.

Q DID YOU KNOW HER VERY WELL?

A I don't remember -- no. I was 8 years old when I came to this country. As a child I didn't know her very well but I new her brother because he lived with us in the United States, so I knew him. And I remember the parents, but, you know, what -- as a child you might have known them but not as an adult I didn't know them. I know its difficult to --

Q OKAY.

A Okay. This was their house in Lundow where they lived -- this is where they lived and my -- and her brother and all of them lived together and finally, of course, the Nazis took it over because they took -- put the people in concentration camps and in '88 they had made five apartments in that house. There were five apartments in one house. It used to be their house. It's a beautiful house and it's situated right across a park, and it's a beautiful park -- just a beautiful scene. And its a sad situation of what's happened to all these people.

Q OKAY.

A Okay. She was very close to the family. She used to live with our family she took care of us as children and almost like -- and you know, and she was a housekeeper and she was just like part of family. Anyhow, what happened in 1988, when she found out we were in Rutzheim, she was not living in Rutzheim any more at the time and she

traveled wherever she was and came to visit us in our hotel. And it was a very moving experience, and she was very emotional. We were all very emotional, my sisters and myself. And she brought us each -- she had made many beautiful embroidery for each of us and gave us each a piece of embroidery, and she just told us how much she missed us, and she was so sorry about what's happened in the world and its a terrible world -- what's happened. She asked us all sorts of questions about our parents on how did they live and, you know, because she hadn't -- that was all gone a world that was all gone and she was a very sad person, and it was very moving. We all cried -- everybody cried. You know how that goes.

Q WHAT WAS HER NAME AGAIN?

A Her name was -- well, I called her Ketchem. Her full name is -- well, I've got it written down here somewhere. She has a full name and -- but I haven't got it right -- I can't tell you.

Q OKAY, TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE.

A It's my mother's name. Martha Bodenheimer, see, yeah.

Q OKAY.

A She died in 1977 and that picture has her brother on it from Brazil, and his wife.

Q AND YOUR MOTHER IS SITTING?

A And my mother is one in middle. I don't have a picture of my father. And they tell you all of different times to light the candle the night before, and when is right time for that -- for my mother.

Q OKAY.

A That's Eric Bodenheimer, and he died in 1981, in February.

NEW SPEAKER

Q TODAY IS JUNE 18, 1991, AND I'M ELLEN SZAKAL, AN INTERVIEWER WITH THE HOLOCAUST ORAL HISTORY PROJECT OF SAN FRANCISCO. TODAY WE ARE TALKING WITH URSULA SABEL FOR HER SECOND INTERVIEW, AND ASSISTING IN THE INTERVIEW TODAY IS ALAN PETERS. URSULA, IN THE FIRST INTERVIEW YOU COVERED YOUR LIFE, YOUR EXPERIENCES IN GERMANY, AND NOW WE WOULD LIKE YOU TO SHARE WITH US YOUR HUSBAND'S EXPERIENCES AND IN THE BEGINNING WOULD YOU LIKE TO TELL US FIRSTLY HOW -- WIND UP BY SAYING HOW THE HOLOCAUST EXPERIENCE AFFECTED YOUR LIFE.

A Well, the Holocaust affected my life in many ways. Number one, it left me with a disability, hearing disability, which already affected my life somewhat before anything else. And so that particular disability helped me never to forget. I mean, maybe other people might forget things, but I can't forget because its something that's with me daily for the rest of my life. So one of things that besides my hearing disability that has affected me -- it's made me a much more sensitive person about the needs of people and nations, and just people living in general. And, you know, has made me much more -- in some ways almost too sensitive at times because I was always afraid that it could happen again, you know, like if things happen in this country that were bad, people lost certain rights, and it always brought me back to what could happen to people if they let that happen. So it has made me

somewhat of a fighter for peoples rights -- for my rights, and I've tried to install that in my children's lives too.

My husband and I -- having to bring my husband into this -- my husband was Herman Sabel, and we were married in 1950. And he felt the same way because of all of his losses -- because all the losses -- because he lost his whole family. He lost everyone accept his sister and mother and so he -- it was always inside of him also and so between the two of us, we were very, very sensitive and we didn't want our children to forget these things either, and we related our stories and told them about all these things many, many times from the time they were growing up and all of our children have that feeling that I think that they want the people to have the right to live right and I think like that. So that's one of things that I think the Holocaust has done for us. But also, I think that I would like to say that well, my children have even shown a lot of these things too in their lives that they have felt people were wrong and they have wanted to fight for people's rights too. So that has made us very proud as parents -- to know we have sort of helped them carry on what we have carried on -- sort of a third generation kind of thing. At least we tried to do that. We tried to do that.

And besides not being able to forget the Holocaust because of my own feeling and because of what had happened to me, I had a husband who wouldn't, you know, let me forget it because of what had happened to him. And he went so far that sometimes I didn't even want to see the program, or didn't want to see myself because I thought that it would upset me too much, and it was too much for me to bare sometimes, and wanted to forget

the whole thing really because -- but he felt so bad about it that my husband came to this country when he was 12 years old and he -- in the 1920s, so he really didn't experience any of these things himself, but it got to the point where he felt he had experienced it. He read everything, he listened to everything, and he sometimes even felt so bad -- he thought he was alive and they were all dead. He said that many, many times, and during Word War II, I didn't know him but he said that during World War II he tried very hard to get into the army -- he was in army and he wanted to get to a place where he could fight because he really wanted to fight the Nazis. He needed to feel that feeling and somehow it never happened to him. He tried to get into the Marine Corps, and he never made it. They said he was better as a radio operator on an airplane, and he just never really had a chance to get into actual fighting experiences and they thought he would be better off -- and what he wanted to do is fighting. And they used to call him -- I saw some papers that he had from his -- when he was in the army they called him fighting Joe or fighting something because he would fight all the people even in his place that were with him in the army he fought discrimination in the army. There was a lot of discrimination in the army and he was very much -- at that point he got into a lot of difficulties with these southern fellows that were very highly discriminatory to Jews and to blacks, so he got into real -- he got to be known as the fighter on the post. The things like that and he did the things like that.

So this just gives you an idea what kind of person he was, and he wanted to do all those things. And it wasn't until we went on a trip

in 1981. Up to that time we would discuss things all the time and he would always feel very bad about the situation. And his mother also was very, very disturbed by the situation because they lost their whole family. They were here and at the last minute their whole family was gone, and there was no family left. Their whole world was gone. So in 1981 we took a trip to Warsaw and Czechoslovakia and other countries -- to Poland. And my husband decided he was going to see what he could find over in Poland -- what he could find himself. We got to Warsaw and we left the group and took a taxi. When we got to Bialystock and he said to the driver, the rest of the drive -- this was 50 years later. It was 50 years ago that he left Poland and after 50 years he directed the taxi driver exactly where to go and what streets to stop, and he did that. And it was real unbelievable and even the taxi driver couldn't believe it -- that he gave directions to the streets.

And so we were there. But those houses weren't there any more -- they weren't there any more. He had this memory about this big tall clock. It was a clock and this and that. So we were in the area, but it wasn't there any more. Who did we talk to? Everybody looked at us very funny. We tried to talk to them in Polish. People just shied away, they didn't want to talk to you. It was a terrible experience. It was like cloak and dagger. He said, "Pose for me and I'll make believe your posing, and I'll take a picture of you and at the same time I can find out and stuff like that. So finally we went into a museum and the museum was exactly where -- about two blocks from where their house used to be. And in the museum he talked to one of women there and she said, "I'll get

somebody to talk with you," and he spoke Polish so he was able to -- and she called somebody and a man came to speak to us and that man spoke polish and German I talked to him in German, he talked to him in Polish. He was not Jewish. And this man said, "Come, I'm going to take you somewhere. I'm going to show you what happened during the war," and things like that. And he took us to this place and he said -- later on, we can show that in the pictures later on. And he took us to this place and he said, "This was the biggest synagogue in Bialystock and here is a plaque right there, and showed us this plaque in Yiddish and my husband was able to read Yiddish, and it said here there were is 15 -- between 15 hundred to 2 thousand burned in this synagogue and that was -- when I talk about it I get very upset myself and he said they went into synagogue to pray and they fired it and just burned these people burned those people in the end. And the thing that was worse than ever is that there was a great possibility it was his family because they were so close. They lived right by here. Many of them could have been his own family. His eight sisters and eight uncles and their wives and their children, his grandparents, cousins, I don't know how many there were. There may have been 50 or 70 in their family was living in that particular -- and that was just, I mean, we were kind of in shock, you know.

And we thought the man -- then my husband said he wanted to go look around and see if there were any buildings left -- any buildings left anywhere. And at that time, in 1981 -- the only buildings left in 1981 that was left was all pieces. Just little rubble of buildings. Buildings that were -- we had seen what happened that the Germans came in

immediately. As soon as they came in they just knocked on the door, you know, rounded out the people. Some of them they killed out right right while they were there. And just pulled them out and took them to this -- who knows -- to that situation, and they just came in brutally just to kill everybody -- to kill everybody at that particular time. That was later in 1940's it must have been in about 1941 or something during that period -- 1940. So we went -- we did have from New York, we had this one person we knew. There were 11 -- first of all, there were 170 -- 185 people, Jews -- Jews in Bialystock during the war, before the war, and here there were only 11 Jews left living in this town.

And so we had we had the address of one of this one Jew that my husband got from New York when Bialystock our home group there had sent him -- and this man was living there and they were sending him supplies, this man, this Holocaust survivor. And he was living on the money from New York and the Polish government was also giving him. So we went to see this young man. He was about 55, 60 years old, and he lived in this little tiny apartment. He lived by himself and I guess he lost his family and things like that and he said, "Oh I'm so glad you come to visit me," and he was very friendly and very sweet and he said, "I'll take you out and I'll show you around the area. And he took us we want in car with a driver -- he told the driver where to go. Well what he did show us is just how all these different people got killed in different places, I don't know how many places. So many people killed here, so many people were here standing, so many people were killed with machine guns and it was just terrible. It was just really bad. It was so bad at one point

the polish driver who had driven us from Warsaw, he cried just like the rest of us it was really a continuous thing he was showing us and he also showed us where the Germans went into the cemetery, like I was telling you when they took the plaques from the cemetery and paved the streets with it. The cemeteries were completely disarranged like this. What they did with that -- and it was a really terrible experience. And so we didn't really see anything.

My husband wanted to see many happy occasions but he didn't see any happy occasions. He didn't see anything from that -- frankly, I thought he was going to have a heart attack because he just felt -- and I just felt really bad to see all this and be there because it's one thing to talk about these things when you read about them, when I see them, but when your standing in exact same spot where that happened, things happen to you. There is nothing you can do, its over, but still it's just a terrible experience. And then he wanted to go to Treblinka or something and I couldn't go with him. I said, "I think we've seen enough. I don't think we have to do that. We know it's there and we don't have to go; and there is nothing there." And, "Why do you want to -- let's get out of here," because there wasn't any feeling. The people certainly didn't make you feel warm or nice or anything. Most the people -- we went into a store, we had lunch in one of places, and they acted very, you know, like aloof. You just didn't have a very good feeling, you know. So finally we convinced them to go back to Warsaw. We went back and but that taxi driver -- you know those people the way they drive in Poland is absolutely -- you never in your life -- I had to close my eyes. We were happy we got

back there alive. They drive so fast -- they drive real fast and stop short behind the other car. But I mean its such a way it's almost shocking and its 150 miles, but he made it real quick and my husband wanted to go to Treblinka, and I said, "No, I didn't want to," so we didn't go and we went on with the rest of the tour which was from Warsaw. We went to -- what's it called? Well, we went to Czechoslovakia and some other countries.

That was in 1981. Okay. And my husband was very dissatisfied with the trip because he wanted to see something positive and he didn't see anything. All he had saw was death and still there must have been something not so terrible that he could remember of his life. So consequently in 1985 we made another trip. Now this was a completely different trip. This trip we went to England and from Brussels we took a bus, and the bus took us 14 hundred miles throughout Europe. It covered Poland it covered Czechoslovakia it covered the Soviet Union, it covered -- it was a bit long trip, you know. 85 percent of people at the end of trip were sick, but we weren't. Again we went to Warsaw. We were in Warsaw again. Again we took a taxi and this time we were not going to get in touch with any survivors. He wanted to see something of his life. He just wanted to see. So had asked again -- directed the driver, told him where to go, we left the driver, and we just took a walk. And he and I walked through Bialystock. He took me -- he showed me where he was born, where the house was, and one of those houses is still standing and where there was a river, and the river is now covered over -- they covered the river with cobble stone's. But there was a big change from 1981 to 1985.

There wasn't any more rubble or things like that and there were big high tall buildings by this time. He couldn't recognize the city any more. It was not the same city certainly not the Jewish city it was before it was completely -- the city was completely different and it lost all its whatever it had a all during those years which I showed you some pictures -- you could see what it looked like before.

But the thing that was always there even in 1981 -- it was there in 1985 -- was the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church was still the same Catholic Church. It was still standing the same way. In fact, we were there on a Sunday and he remembered when he was a boy what it looked like when people came out. It almost looked like the same. And there was the other church that he remembered was up on the hill, and we went up the hill and we walked -- he told me how he used to walk home from school, where he used to go to school, and completely walked around the whole area. It was really a beautiful thing, and we came upon the bus stop -- the bus station. The bus station hadn't changed 50, 55 years. The bus station was still the same old bus station. The buses were more modern now, but the bus station was still there. And he was really delighted to see that something was just still -- and we had what they call a hot dog and it wasn't a hot dog at all. I had I hot dog and there was nothing in it. It was just fruit and vegetables stuffed inside, and they called that a hot dog. And so he really -- in a sense, he found something of what was left, but there was nothing left of Jewish city. But at least he found a little bit of what he remembered, something of his life when he was a young boy.

And then we went into a store and we bought the pictures that we found. There was some photographs he was selling of Bialystock before the war and we bought the pictures from them. And somebody mentioned the word "Jew" when we were in the store, and it was so quiet you could here a pin drop. It was a very uncomfortable feeling like, "Oh, no -- no, oh, no -- I think your mistaken. We didn't say Jews." You know, something like that. So you could see it was a very uncomfortable thing like that -- and it reminded us of the show a. You've all seen show a. I have copy of it at home of what happened during that period. And many of people were living in Jewish houses and they didn't want to remember that. It was their house now and it was gone. So, okay. You know, there was no remorse -- there is no remorse. There was no feeling of remorse. At least not in Bialystock.

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We found some things in Warsaw where people talked to us and stuff like that, but not in a city like that. There wasn't any feeling that it happened or maybe if it happened I didn't see it or this kind of attitude, you know. Or this was a new world and let's forget it -- let's forget it. Even though they do have the plaques, they do have the things that they feel they do there duty. They have there things that say so many were killed here, so many were killed here, so many killed there, but there is no -- the feeling isn't there. They don't feel bad about it or anything like that. And they say a lot of Poles were killed too, but when you see how many Jews were killed in Poland -- its quite a few. And it was just -- and so we left on that situation.

But then we were in Russia and those countries it seemed a

little bit better. They had a little bit better -- at that point in 1985 when they had met some people in Russia who had some feelings about that there. You could talk to some people there, but not all the people. But here in Poland, there was such a thing over it that you couldn't even open your mouth. It was a very bad feeling we always had that feeling, you know, in Poland.

And so when I was just telling you before that my husband made that speech in Germany, he felt -- that's why he felt so good in Germany just before he died because at least here they were willing -- it was a generation that they were not responsible and they are telling us they were not responsible for what there forefathers did, and we're terribly sorry. We can't amend it, but at least we can tell you how we feel about it. But over there they weren't able to do that. Not in a country where he was born. And so he was -- he felt a little bit better when we went back home.

But from that trip we went to many other places in Europe and we went and visited other places. We visited cemeteries in Czechoslovakia and Hungary and we had some very good feelings in Hungary. We spoke to a lot of wonderful people in Hungary; that there was a lot of assimilation also in Hungary and there were a lot of -- we spoke to a lot of people there and -- in fact, there were people in Hungary who had come to the United States and didn't want to stay in the United States. They wanted to go back. They went back to Hungary to their own places because they felt very comfortable in there own area and stuff like that. So we enjoyed Hungary very much.

Czechoslovakia was a little -- you had places here and there but you had some places in Czechoslovakia you had a little Jewish section with Jewish shops. It was a very nice section and everything. But what they tried to do in Czechoslovakia to us -- and we really did defy that -- was they tried to take us in a tour. They tried to take us out of the city and to see the castles. Now you don't mind seeing castles when you go on a tour, but if you constantly -- if you want to see the people and lives of the people, you don't want to constantly be taken out to see castles; which is a three- hour drive into the beautiful countryside. It's a lovely day, but we wanted to see -- so we got out of the bus and said we're sorry we don't want to see another castle, and we stayed in the city. And it was very good to do that because then we could see something that was going on in the city, going on in the lives of the people and stuff like that. That's what a lot of these countries do. They shove people someplace where they want to shove them -- to take them.

So when we came home my husband was much more settled, more satisfied after the second experience. But I think if he had lived he would made a third experience. I think he would have gone back again and again because he just felt that -- he couldn't believe that -- he never accepted the fact that it really happened. He knows that it happened, but he never -- he just wanted to accept it and go back and see it was all a dream and see that everybody was going to be alive. It really bothered him and had a lot to do with his whole life and whole make-up; and by that, it affected me by doing the same thing. And the children know that he over did it because he talked about it too much. But he had to let it

out, and as I've told you before, I'm sorry that he would have been very good in your organization. I think he would been able to contribute and that would been one way to get it out of his -- yes -- and it's just too bad that he didn't have that avenue. I think it would been very, very helpful for him because people didn't understand. But he was among people like you who would you understand him and he didn't want people to forget it. So I think he would have been very proud of what I'm doing -- very happy that I did this. That's what I feel -- I feel -- that was my feeling. Even my own sisters tried to dissuade me, and I was not dissuade that easily, and they said I am a very stubborn person. So anyway, that's all I can think of right now. You may want to ask me some questions.

Q WHY DID YOUR HUSBAND'S FAMILY LEAVE BIALYSTOCK AND WHO EXACTLY DID THEY LEAVE BEHIND?

A Well, okay. My mother-in-law had to -- left Bialystock because -- it goes back to the time when during the World War I -- before World War I, or during World War I, her husband was restricted into the army in Bialystock.

Okay. And he was -- and what happened you see what Poland has always been known for discrimination. In fact, I think Hitler probably learned from Poland is that they inducted these Jewish men into the army, examined them, and they were naked down to their pants, and let them out for five hours in the freezing below zero weather until they were ready for the next phase. They examined them and then they want to come back and by that time, most of them had colds and they got sick and that's where my husband's father died; from having a cold and getting, you know

-- and this was almost like a concentration camp to a certain extent -- what they did to these people. So having lost a husband -- my mother-in-law lost a husband and she had just given birth to my husband and she was pregnant with another child. And here she was and without a husband, with two small children, and had a her -- but she had many, many people in the family. She had her mother and father who owned this great big vegetable store and so they helped her with the business and she had a little business of her own and she tried to make a go of it. But it was just one thing after another.

She had a robbery and it was very difficult because the Jews did not always assimilate -- at least not in Bialystock -- maybe in other cities but in Bialystock the Jews lived in Jewish section and non-Jews lived in non- Jewish section so it was very difficult for her to make a living and her mother tried to get her to marry some other man or something like that -- frankly it didn't work out too well. She did marry a man but didn't like him and she threw him out right after. She told us this later -- she is 92 now -- that she threw him out. And she might be telling you all these things anyhow what happened was during that period. So finally she told her parents, "Look, you've got the money let me go -- let me go to the United States. Let me leave here." So she went to United States and she left her two children which is my husband and his sister in Bialystock with their grandparents, and she went and came to the United States and she became a seamstress and started working and she met her -- a man who actually had been her neighbor in Bialystock and married him. And when they were married -- and this was during the depression

when it was very difficult to come by -- they finally got enough money together to bring the children to the United States. And they brought my husband and sister to the United States. This was a period of five years that my husband and his sister were with their grandparents and it was a very difficult time. And I would say my husband and his sister never forgave their mother for doing that even though they wouldn't be alive if she hadn't done this. But still it created a terrible rife in the family -- in the relationship -- and I don't think it was ever brought back together again. To this day it's still there between my husband's sister and their mother. There is just no closeness, no feeling. There is really this feeling that they will never be able to -- I don't understand it, but it's just really terrible -- I find it very bad.

Anyhow, what happened was, after five years the children came to the United States. During those five years they were in Bialystock with eight aunts and uncles who some of them were just getting married and some of them were -- and the grandparents had a store and they had all these children and they had to work and there wasn't really enough time -- there wasn't somebody there who was just taking care of them. They were sort of running amok and they didn't have all the help and all the kindness that children should be getting. It was really a very bad time for them; that growing-up period. But by the time my husband was 12 and my sister-in-law was 10, they came to the United States. And I think they were pretty disturbed kids by that time because they had been through all this, you know.

And my -- then they came to United States and my father-in-law

and my mother-in-law have -- their step-father was a wonderful man. He tried everything to make them feel at home. He tried to help them to learn the language. He tried to do everything. He was a very good, good man. They never had a any other children. It was just that he adopted them as his children and he really took care of them and he really was a really good father to them, but it was very difficult under situation because they always had this rife between the mother and the children and there always was this kind of thing, you know. And they grew up but there was never very much closeness that I would have liked to see -- that closeness that I felt for my parents. They will never have that now, and I was very sorry to see that they would never have that, you know.

And so, after a while the grandparents were writing to the children and during the war and that happened and they all just disappeared. So that's what the children remember. That's what my husband and his sister remember, all these different situations and all these sisters were all their family and they had just perished like that, you know. It was just awful, you know. And many of them were just beginning in life and just starting -- young people were just starting to have children. And there were small children too that, you know, perished. There was eight aunts and uncles, and the grandparents, and there were cousins and there were even cousins that came from some other little town that my husband remembered that he went during the summers they used to go to this little town outside of Bialystock where they used to go on vacation and stuff like that. In fact, when we were on our last trip my husband made the bus stop on the freeway and he pointed and he

said,"That's the town," and it was a tiny -- and he said "That's the town," but they wouldn't go there. I wish they would been able on drive there but he could see that was the little town that he remembered where they had their summer things like that. So you know so then the kids grew up -- my husband and my sister-in-law grew up.

My husband was in army; but when he was in army during the war, that's when he wanted so desperately -- as I say -- wanted to go to fight at that time and they just wouldn't let him fight. He also tried to fight before he was 21. He wanted to join in Spain. He tried to fight the Nazis in Spain, and his mother wouldn't sign the thing. He was under 21 and in order to leave the country and to go fight in Spain his mother -- but you see again his mother didn't -- I can't blame her because if she had signed it, he wouldn't been living, he wouldn't have been my husband because his friend he was going to go with died in Spain -- in the Spanish Civil War and so his feeling of what started very early already during the Spanish Civil War that he wanted to fight the Nazis. So he never forgot the Holocaust. When all of this was going on -- and he new the Holocaust was going on -- people didn't believe it. You see it took a long time for people to believe that something like that was really going on especially in this country.

So he was very active during his young years during all of this time and stuff. He was very, very active. That's how I met him, in fact. Because he was at the -- he was active in the labor in New York, in the labor department, and I was in the young Judais -- the young children. We were 12 years apart so I was still 12 years younger than him. So that's

how we met. He took care of the office to make sure we behaved ourselves. That's how we met. So it was a political thing that we actually met. So we have been fighting a lot of different things. He's always fighting about that. But he never forgot about the Holocaust and he always wanted to -- he tried very hard.

So I think if he would have lived I know he probably would have made another trip even now to go to see if he could find something. He wanted to find his own, you know. Now I did not -- I myself didn't want to go back to Germany. I didn't want to find -- I wanted to forget Germany as far as -- in fact, I forgot the language. That was my trouble, that for a while I refused to speak the language and even say that I even came from there. So it was years later when they finally wrote to me and asked me to come to Germany. At first I said, "Forget it, I'm not going to go. I am not going to go."

Then it was my sisters that bothered me about that because my sisters have been going back and forth. All these years they had friends that went back and forth. Some of them came to the United States and they went back and forth. They went in Rutzheim several times, but I was never there. I was never one to go there. Now I want -- I have a feeling that I want to go. Its crazy -- its a crazy world to want to go and see it again and see how I feel this time. I took it all in and I felt it was all -- it was wonderful the way they reacted and everything, but I still feel I would like to go back another time myself, not with a group, and see is it only a group thing or is it -- a lot of these people are they -- do they really mean all that because they were overwhelming us. So I have

a whole book full of names and addresses. "Write to me. Write to me and I'll write to you," really over and over, and I just wasn't sure how deep that went, you know. But I know some of those people I have there, but not all of them -- not all of the people. But they were not Nazis and they were not to the point where they wanted to, you know, live in your houses and glad that your gone or any -- and none of those feelings.

In fact, the person -- when we lived in Germany and we had a clothing store. Well there was only two clothing stores in the town and when we went there that last time when my husband and I went there, the people -- the owners of clothing store they were the ones that treated us the nicest. They said they missed us. They have no more competition and, you know, the whole generation from the older ones to the -- and they were very, very openly -- very friendly. And no more competition means it is very good for them. I mean, you can't say it's very bad for them, but still the fact that they were very nice -- they did treat us very nice. Well I don't know what else to say right now.

Q WHAT ARE SOME OF THE MEMORIES THAT YOUR HUSBAND SHARED WITH YOU OF HIS CHILDHOOD?

A What?

Q SOME OF MEMORIES THAT YOUR HUSBAND SHARED WITH HIS CHILDHOOD IN BIALYSTOCK?

A My husband had some bad feelings of some things from his childhood because they were sort of battered around with the relatives. And at that time a lot of the aunts, there were three or four aunts that were just getting married and they were all interested in their

own interests and there were two little brats running around, you know. And they thought they were taking away there things for themselves, the different things. They were getting married and they wanted to do this and they wanted to do that, so -- there are some pictures there. He had quite a few aunts.

One aunt was very aloof. She wanted all of the attention in the family and she didn't like any of the attention being given to anybody else so it was kind of a hard situation for the children. "Who are these little kids running around," and stuff like that. And the grandparents were very angry with her. "These are my grandchildren, how can you say that," but she said, "I'm your daughter. I'm your daughter. Why don't you treat me better;" this kind of thing, you know.

And then it was difficult for the schooling, to get him in right schooling. But they did. He was in the Kaida over there. He was in a very progressive school in Europe and that did help him and it helped him throughout his life because he was always interested in reading and they really created a really good wonderful feeling about reading and stuff like that. So when he came to the United States he read and read and read as much is he could read. If fact he didn't even like the schooling in the United States. He just wanted to read. He would go out -- he used to play hooky and read. Like reading school, and all these things and my husband was a completely self-educated person. He didn't graduate high school, but he passed the college equivalency test very easily. You see, he passed it and was able to do it.

He was very well read and he could also write very well. And

what he really needed and I tried my best to encourage him, was that he was too hard on himself he didn't think he was good enough and when you look at other people he was damn good, and he should have written some of that stuff and not thrown it away. He would write and say it's awful and throw it away and stuff like that. I would read it and say don't do that. So he did write some things and I meant to bring that to show you. He started to write a story about his experiences in Europe because he felt he had so many of them. And also, here in this country there was a lot of discrimination against Jews and he got into a lot of fights as a young boy here in the United States because anybody ever mentioned anything about Jews or something he would fight. And he did in the army too. He fought the big tall guys, you know. My husband's small, but he was not afraid of them. He liked to do all those kinds of things.

Q CAN YOU SHARE ANY MORE ABOUT THE JEWISH LIFE THAT HE EXPERIENCED AS A YOUNG BOY? YOU MENTIONED KAIDA, BUT WHAT ELSE?

A Yes, he went to Kaida, but he was not -- his Jewish life. He really did not as far as religion, he was not religious. In fact, he got into a lot of trouble because he was not going -- he made fun of things that were going on and that's one of the experiences he had when they would sit in on Synagogue and they would have these discussions and he would sit there and he would make fun of it and they got mad at him and pulled him by the ear and gave him a little -- you know, because you can't do things like that. Its not right. And he didn't take it seriously; the religion. He really did not. He just took more of politicals and more politically inclined.

He was not at all -- in fact that's one of the things that we evaluated later in our life was that we didn't have enough of that and we were sorry that we weren't more -- had a more religious training toward our children because only one of my daughters married a Jew; and my daughter Judy is the only one who says she feels that she didn't have much of a religious background that I've given her. And the other two are not at all involved in my -- they have gone into other things. In fact, my children went into Mahargie (Pheon.↓) and all those other clubs and all these other things that I was involved with. I had to fight them to get them out of it so even my daughter Rose has her own religion. They don't consider them not Jewish, but they don't go to Synagogue but we always had all the holidays but not in a Jewish way, as a culture of the background and that's what we felt. Sometimes we felt we had to give them more than that because they spread out so fast. I say my husband didn't feel that -- I felt that because he never wanted them to have the Jewish -- really go into it deeply because he didn't feel that himself. But so that was, you know.

Q I WANTED TO ASK YOU ABOUT YOUR HUSBAND'S PATERNAL SIDE. WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM?

A Who the --

Q HIS PATTERNAL SIDE. HIS FATHER DIED?

A Yes.

Q WAS HE IN CONTACT WITH HIS PATTERNAL SIDE OF THE FAMILY?

A Well, the only -- let's see. Okay. The only ones

that were -- most of them died. Yes.

Q BEFORE -- WHEN HIS FATHER DIED, DID HE HAVE GRANDPARENTS? WERE THOSE GRANDPARENTS ALIVE? BROTHERS AND SISTERS? I'M SPEAKING BEFORE THE HOLOCAUST?

A Okay. I think he had grandparents in the United States. He had one grandparent in the United States; that's right. And I think she lived with his cousins. She lived with cousins and she died shortly afterwards. When he first came to this country there was a grandmother, but she lived only maybe a few months after he came to this country. I don't know how she came here -- I don't remember that. I don't remember that time. Maybe my mother-in-law can enlighten you on that. She can tell you much more about that because I hear so many stories you know my mother-in-law, she tells me millions of stories and I get very confused some times.

There was a Uncle Sam, his father's brother was called Uncle Sam. And he was in this country a very excentric man. He was a jeweler and he made up his own jewelry he was able to make to fix the jewelry. He was able to do the jewelry and he made the jewelry tools. He was the founder of the all jewelry tools, actually. And he came to the United States and he married and he had a daughter and his daughter is -- I've met her she's living in Baltimore and his daughter had two children -- two girls and -- but he was very excentric. He divorced from his wife and he we went off by himself and lived most of his life by himself as a jeweler. And people -- once and a while he would come by.

He liked my husband very much and he would come to visit us --

when he was 94 years old. We would get a call from the bus station. This man came from -- we don't know where he came from. He was somewhere in California and he wanted to come to visit us. So he came to visit us. He didn't have a suitcase he had a paper bag with him and he was wearing slippers and he was a very difficult man. He was very -- and we called him Uncle Sam and he came to the house and he bought everybody -- he had little gifts that he had bought. He always brought things. He would buy things and he wouldn't sell them. He had a little mental. He was mentally, I don't know what you want to call it. He loved to buy things but he couldn't part with them -- he couldn't sell them. He came to us and he wanted to live with us. He was 94. He came, I don't know, clear out of blue he came and wanted to live with us and he was very interested in starting a business. And he wanted -- he would live upstairs and the business would be downstairs and he completely didn't realize what kind of world he was living in. He was living in maybe the world of Bialystoc before World War I or something, you know. And so we told him that you can't do that any more. This thing is done and we tried to educate him and my husband showed him how the world was changed and we showed him what happened to the radio and all of things and showed him how things have developed to this point. You don't buy things, put them in a store, and sell them the way he had invisioned it.

We couln't convince him but he said he would come and visit us again and we wanted to give him the money to fly home but he wouldn't. No, no. He wanted to take a bus he didn't believe in flying so we took him to the bus station and we visited him periodically. And he lived in

one room and he would just go around and on Saturdays he would go to Synagogue and the people gave him watches to fix and he would fix their watches and that's how he made his living he fixes watches. He would go to the bank and have coffee in the bank and some have coffee and he was really a very excentric man. But he was very cute. My kids liked him. And he was very -- one thing he really bestowed upon my children and us was that when he ate something in our house he wanted to make sure we washed our hands before -- did you wash your hands? Did you wash your hands? Stuff like that. He's real old, old. And that's -- he just came out of blue and its really -- he would not go to his daughter in Baltimore. She begged him to go to live there but he didn't want to and he said, "No." He wouldn't like that. And he would have 16 or 17 trunks that he would take around with him in his room. And one time he was robbed. And they robbed him of almost -- it was awful. Who knew what he had in there whether it was valuable or not valuable, but he just bought things and he had put pad locks on it so the thief thought it meant something and it was somewhere in California and eventually he died and his daughter came and picked up whatever was left and there was enough money in his trunks left for a funeral, and he had a funeral.

Q SO AS FAR AS YOU KNOW, OR YOUR HUSBAND KNEW --

A That was the patternal side.

Q NO ONE LEFT IN BIALYSTOCK?

A No, there was nobody left. No I don't know so I don't know what happened to them. So, see, after my husband's father died that was the year they had all those deaths because of colds. They had it

all over the world. It was diptheria, all those different things. And there were all those different things and in paternal family a lot of people died aside from fact these people were put outside in cold, there weren't enough doctors around to help at the time and people died like flies. So I don't think there was anybody left. The only one left in this country now is his -- his daughter. The daughter of Uncle Sam. The daughter and her children. You see, he didn't -- Uncle Sam didn't want to see his grandchildren or his children. And he didn't want -- he just left them and he didn't want to see them. And they were sad, they wanted him. And after he died, he just left them and that was it. He didn't want any part of them, and they live in Baltimore. I know them, but not too well.

Q I WANTED TO ASK YOU ABOUT THE CORRESPONDENCE AND THE CORRESPONDENCE FROM BIALYSTOCK THAT YOUR HUSBAND AND HIS MOTHER RECEIVED. WERE THERE SIGNS IN THE CORRESPONDENCE LEADING UP TO A CRISIS OR DID THEY JUST STOP?

A It stopped at a point but there was correspondence. There was a time for a time period during World War II when the Russians were in Bialystock, before the Nazis got in, and they weren't doing too badly. They were living -- they were eating, you know. They were living like always because even during World War I in Bialystoc the Germans over ran Bialystock in World War I for three years. The Germans were there in World War I so Bialystoc has always been subjected to a lot of different occupations. In fact, even before in World War I they weren't in Poland yet. So the correspondence they got was that the Russians were there. They were working and they were doing their productivity. But it was a

little bit more difficult for owners -- people who owned businesses. But the people were working and they were productive and they would stop when the Germans came in. I told you what happened when they came in. The Germans were going to wipe them out. That was the whole idea to right from the very first day they marched into town. There was no ifs and buts, they just came in. I think they might have even gotten at least till 1942 or '43 maybe. I'm not sure till they got correspondence until that happen because the Russians were there for a while and it was towards the end when the Russians were pushed out and the Germans went in, you know. And I don't remember the date too well -- I don't remember the dates too well. My husband would tell you that because he read all the books and things to tell you all the dates but I didn't pay much attention to all those things. I had other things I was interested in and I didn't want to make that my whole life.

Q WHEN YOU WENT BACK TO BIALYSTOCK IN '81 AND/OR '85, DID YOUR HUSBAND MEET ANYBODY WHO KNEW ANYBODY IN HIS FAMILY?

A No. There was no conversations, none. You couldn't do that -- you couldn't talk to anybody. We asked people questions and people gave you a terrible look. Like, I don't know -- I don't know. I don't speak the language, but they couldn't say that to him because he spoke the language. But, you see, even then they were -- not even in the store. The only one -- what happened was when we went into museum and the woman in museum responded and said, "Yes, I can help you," and got us in touch with this man. She called him up on the phone and this man came and he talked to us. But it's the man who went around with us.

By the way, that was an interesting thing too. That man was not from Bialystock. He came from somewhere else -- from somewhere else in the war to work and he was in Bialystock now, living in Bialystock, and he could just tell you what happened. So I spoke to him in German. He spoke German very well. He might have even been German, I don't know what he was. He could have been German. Anyhow he spoke -- took us around -- in and around the area of where my husband was interested in going around. And then I took a picture of him. I don't know if I have the picture -- I took a picture of him and I sent him the picture when I left him my address. A few years later I got a letter from him and requesting that I let his -- one of his children come to United States. I mean clear out of blue would I help this -- and I didn't think I wanted to do that after I had, you know; because I didn't find that there was such love. I didn't get the feeling that this was some nice, friendly person. But now he was giving his name and giving me ultimate responsibility to have somebody come in and, for all I know, he was a Nazi or something.

Q HE ASKED YOU TO RESPOND OR SOMETHING?

A Yea, or to be responsible for the child. It was a very peculiar. It didn't seem right. Whoever I showed it to said, "Forget it; just forget it." I didn't respond to it. I didn't because there had been such bad feelings, you know. I did read some of the same things I get from that magazine. Is it the Honcore? That magazine I get from Simon.

Where the Bialystock surviveors went back to Poland and were killed -- were actually killed for trying to go back to their own

-- so there was that feeling and it was a very, very thin line. And you could feel that. You couldn't ask somebody, "Do you remember who was here?" And the only thing that that guy could show us was who was burned. Two thousand people burned in the synagogue, and that wasn't showing us very much. That was already known, it existed. You see, Warsaw was more than a town, and I think you have more different people in Warsaw. But we didn't spend much time in Warsaw because he always wanted to go to Bialystock, you see.

Q WAS IT FAIR TO SAY THAT THIS IS ANTISEMITISM?

A What was that?

Q IS IT FAIR TO CALL THIS ANTISEMITISM?

A Yes, I think so. I think it is, and I think that if it was deap rooted before Hitler ever came to surface. It's not something that just happened, you know. I mean they're trying to do something about it but its still there. It's still there quite a bit. I mean it is all over the world. Let's put it this way, there is still some in Germany too. There is some rooted in Nazis too. Not all Nazis got it in the neck and there are a lot of people -- but about the whole idea of antisemitism goes back so far in Poland, the Jews. Many, many years ago and all the things you know and just -- and a lot of them. Even the Jews who escaped the concentration camps and went into the woods, they had trouble with the Poles. You know some of them could have escaped but they couldn't because they had trouble with Poles. Some of them were gunned down by Poles. When you go into a country like that, you don't know. It's just a question you're not real sure.

Q DID YOUR HUSBAND SPEAK OF ANTISEMITISM IN HIS CHILDHOOD?

A Definitely. Oh yea. You had a to be very careful as a child. The Jews stayed with the Jews. You didn't have any non-Jewish friends. Very, very rarely that you had non-Jewish friends, you know. I mean you might have had some. I wouldn't say you didn't have any. But, as a rule, you didn't. The Jews stayed in Jewish section and the others stayed in another section. You knew they were there and you talked to them, but there wasn't any assimilation. Assimilation was in the west, not in the east. Not in the east at all accept a place like in Hungary. There was assimilation in some of them, you know. But certainly not in Poland. Well that's sort of the rife between the eastern Jew and the western Jew, and I still get that from my mother-in-law because that's the feeling -- you western Jews really were not Jews at all. You didn't go to Synagogue or you didn't do this and you didn't do that. There was always a feeling even among the Jews themselves about that. I just happened to marry into that. That's one of those things. But I am used to it now. She makes lots of remarks to me about that.

Q CAN YOU MAKE ANY REMARKS ABOUT THAT IN YOUR MARRIAGE?

A Hum?

Q CAN YOU TALK ABOUT THAT IN YOUR MARRIAGE, THE DIFFERENCES?

A No, between my husband and myself we didn't have it, you know. Not at all. We didn't -- not that generation, but my mother-in-law's generation. Oh, she is going to be 93, but in that

generation there was always that feeling. And then, of course, a lot of people say that German Jews were assimilated and they thought they were part of the country, and look what happened to them. True. Look what happened.

You know, you can be assimilated and you have still have to know who you are. That's a bad feeling. That's true, you know. But because my parents and their generation were all gung-hoe for their countries, I'd say it was 50/50. 50 percent was for country and 50 percent for Jews. Jews, they were like half and half. Whereas the eastern Jews were all Jews and the country was way below what was in their feelings about the country. Sure it's my country, but they don't care that much about me, you know.

Q IN BIALYSTOCK OTHER THAN THE PLAQUES THAT YOU FOUND, WERE THERE ANY MEMORIALS ABOUT THE HOLOCAUST? ANY MEMORIALS ERECTED FOR THE JEWS OF THAT CITY, SINCE THERE WERE SO MANY JEWS IN THAT CITY?

A Not that I saw. I saw them in Poland and in Warsaw, but not in Bialystock. No.

Q AND THE FEELINGS OF '81 AND '85 WERE SIMILAR? THEY DIDN'T WANT TO ACKNOWLEDGE --

A Well, we didn't acknowledge them in 1985. He didn't want to see them. He didn't want to have anything to do with it. He wanted to see a happier side. I was glad to see that from him. My husband, since 1983, had a cancer and I didn't want to aggravate any of his problems any more than necessary. So I thought it was better that he saw a more positive aspect of Bialystock. If he looked at happy times, it

would be better than to eat himself up. He was eaten up already, that he didn't need all that thing all the time, and so from my point of view I didn't mention it and he didn't mention it. We didn't even go visit anybody. We just walked around the town ourselves and we went back. We thought that was a better feeling.

Q DO YOU THINK HE FOUND WHATEVER HE WANTED TO FIND, WHATEVER HE WAS LOOKING FOR?

A Well, you never find what you are looking for. In any situation, you can never go home again. Not even if you have a normal situation, you can never go back home again. But maybe part of his childhood or youth or something, he found something, but its not -- it's mostly bad, but there was also good that he still saw and that he wanted to see. He just wanted to see that, you know. And I think that's -- so that's what he saw, you know.

Q DO YOU THINK HE EVER HUNG ONTO THE IDEA THAT THERE WAS SOMEBODY FROM HIS FAMILY THAT HE COULD FIND?

A No, they gave that up. The only one that they found -- somebody in family was found and I have a picture of this. There was a cousin of his. His cousin that he played with as a child. She was the only one alive who came out of that and she was in Russia. She lived in Russia, and she left Russia to go to Isreal. And we went to see her in Isreal. We went to see her and so did my mother-in-law go to see her and so did my sister-in-law go to see her. We all went to see her and her children and it was a very moving experience. She's still alive and in Isreal.

Q HOW DID SHE SURVIVE?

A What?

Q HOW DID SHE SURVIVE?

A Well, she was a young girl. She saw her parents killed right in front of her. And she was about 15 or 16. And I don't know how she escaped. She was in a concentration camp for I don't know how many years. And she was rescued by a Russian soldier who became her husband. A Jewish soldier, and he married her. And he was a very brave man, a Russian soldier, and he had a very good stature in Soviet Union. In fact, after the war he became head of a big plant -- made him head of a plant and they had a very good life and all the modern conveniences, everything you want.

We didn't know that. We thought she survived in the Soviet Union and she has nothing and we were sending her coats and God knows what and it cost us a fortune to send her stuff and find out later that they had more than we have. She left the Soviet Union with a mink coat. She had a mink coat. You know that the state of Isreal paid for their move. They moved with a piano, a mink coat, she had beautiful dishes and stuff, and all that she left the Soviet Union with. And Isreal paid for all that. Isn't that amazing? I couldn't believe that. When I went to visit her and I saw all the stuff they had, I was just thinking of all the times we went to all the trouble to be sure we -- (End of Videotape 1.)

Videotape 2 of 2:

A You know, there were searches for all these people.

All the searches you put -- these searches and they finally found this was the only living person. And finally they left the Soviet Union because her daughter was a concert pianist, but but weren't being admitted as a Jew. She was given all these chances. Her son was also something and they didn't have -- for the children's sake not for their sake. For the children's sake because her husband was a Soviet citizen. He was very well -- they had plenty of money, he was very well liked, and didn't have any problems. But for the children's sake. So the children had some kind of future they went to Isreal. Actually, if they had waited a while they could have seen how things might be even better. I don't know, maybe they would have been better off to stay in Soviet Union. It was very hard for them in Isreal. They came to Isreal with all that stuff and all this fancy stuff. He had to go into business and had a to make a living and he didn't live very long. Her husband died. And she tried to get me to bring -- to sell the mink coat. That was in 1977 I visited them and she wanted me to bring the mink coat to California and sell it. That was the first visit I made out of this country and I said. "No, I'm not going to bring a mink coat into the states." You know, leave the country and come back in a mink coat. How am I going to bring a mink coat when I'm coming from Isreal? It just didn't make sense to me. Becides, who wanted a mink coat in California. Maybe in New York. And I didn't want any part of a mink coat. I don't know what happened finally. But we planed -- anyway, my sister-in-law and myself planned on sometime in near future to pull our resources together and invite her to come and visit in the United States. She is alone now and her children are married and her daughter is still

playing music and she is married and has children. Her daughter left the Soviet Union, but her husband stayed behind because he didn't wanted to leave. So had he stayed behind and she left with her child.

Q OKAY, URSULA, YOU HAVE TWO SISTERS THAT YOU CAME TO THE UNITED STATES WITH AS CHILDREN. HOW DO THEY FEEL ABOUT SHARING THEIR STORY?

A Well, they did share their story when we came back from Germany. There was a lot of publicity until the papers and publicity on T.V., and all that stuff, and my sister, Gertrude, spoke in front of a unitarian group in Los Angeles and conveyed her story there. And so they have all been through -- they feel they have done their thing and they have gone through -- and they just felt that that was -- and now with war and all that's going on, they felt that they just dont have the time and effort right now to do it. And they felt that they have told their story and that's it. And they dont want to continue to tell it. They do not see the value as as much as I do. They just don't see it. And then as I told you before, I feel that both my sisters have not had an environment, a Jewish environment like I've had. They both married non-Jews and they have been, you know. They haven't observed any of the Jewish -- anything because they have lived their lives so to them it's not -- it's not as deep as it is with me because I've been not only married into -- married a Jew, but I married a eastern Jew, and it's a whole new ball game and I am sort of inbetween. And, of course, I have the problem with my hearing and all that so that it just doesn't mean -- it doesn't mean that it doesn't mean that much to them, but it's just that they want to let it go at this

point. They do not want to go on. They tried to convince me of the same way. They said because it upsets you and they saw I got upset by it, and I was trying to dig up some of the things and they said that's why we didn't want you to do it. You get upset and we don't want you to be upset. And so that's the reason. Its not any bad reasons or anything like that, it's just their part of their lives. They just don't want it right now. Both of them. They don't even like to talk about it. If I was telling them I was coming today -- I even told my sister last night that in a couple of months when you get me the tape I'm going to invite them to come and to see it and I said to my sister, "Are you interested?" And she said, "I'm not sure." And I said, "I'm not going to force you if you don't want to come, you don't have to come." Something to that effect, you know.

Q AND WHY ARE YOU WILLING TO TELL YOUR STORY?

A Pardon me.

Q WHY ARE YOU WILLING TO TELL YOUR STORY?

A Why do I want to tell my story? Well, I just feel that it's necessary to tell my story. I feel I want -- I think that somebody else can maybe learn from it and also I think it's good for me personally. I think it's good to have it out because maybe a lot of it has been sizzling inside of me for a long time and I just sort of got a lot of things out that I might not have thought of getting them out. Maybe they haven't come out. Maybe this is a good way, you know. And I think that with the way the word situation and the way things are going. Generations die and are forgotten and maybe this is the only way they can

be remembered. How do we remember the generationsbefore us? I've discovered by going through my parent's -- going through those tapes -- you see the value of listening to my own parents speak on a tape today is invaluable to me. I think it's terrific. I didn't realize it until I started listening to them again. So then I could -- why not. If I do that, my children will someday see that of mine. I think that would be a real good thing for them.

Q AND FINALLY, DO YOU THINK THE HOLOCAUST OR AN EVENT LIKE IT COULD HAPPENED AGAIN?

A Unfortunately, yes. It could happen again if we let it, and there are enough people who unfortunately are letting things happen again. And we have had a -- besides our Holocaust, there are other holocausts going on throughout the world. It's happened to people so I think that everything can happened again, you know. Nothing is absolute that it's not going -- that's the way and going to stay and it's all open there for infinity, and we really have to fight so that it doesn't happen again. But there is vindications throughout the world that these things happen. So you don't -- I think if we're aware that we're that much ahead. So we're aware of it. But I think one of the things that happened to us in Germany, and all those countries, is that we weren't aware. We never in a million years dreamed something like that could happen. We said, "Oh, come on nobody would ever think --" But now we don't think that way any more. We have different ideas now, you know. We know what can happen. So with that idea, I think we're that much ahead.

Q THANK YOU.

A Your welcome.

Q OKAY, THIS MAY BE REPETATIVE BECAUSE I DIDN'T HEAR THE FIRST PART OF YOUR INTERVIEW. YOU MADE SOME REFERENCE ABOUT YOUR HEARING LOSS BEING DUE TO HOLOCAUST CAN YOU TELL US A LITTLE MORE ABOUT THAT?

A Okay, when I was in Germany I didn't have any problems hearing or anything like that. When I first came here, I was suffering from what they called -- some of the doctors called it shock because we had quite a few little shocks there where we were, waiting to see if we were going to be picked up -- the Nazis were going to come and pick us up. Even when we were on the ship, we were hiding in the basement of the ship because they were picking up people on the ship and taking them to the prisons. So when I first came to United States, every time the bell rang I was like that. As I child -- I was only 8 years old. So when I went to school I found out I was having some hearing problems. I didn't detect it too soon because my name was Bodenheimer, and in those days they sat you according to how your name was. Luckily my name was "B" so I was up front. If I had been Sabel, I would have been back there and I would have found out immediately. Anyhow it was found out that I do have a hearing loss. Actually nothing much more was really done. But it was a hearing loss, and it was difficult.

And then I went to extensive tests and things in New York City and the doctor felt all of it had a something to do with my experiences in Europe. The coming and going and all those things. And since I was in a

shock it had affected my hearing to some extent. I think, also, that it might have been something traumatic too because my sisters are finding even now that they are having hearing problems now later in their live. But mine started very early, but the doctors felt from my experiences and you know and as time went on, I had more physical experiences. Each time I had a child, or each time I had an operation or something, it got worse. And now I have a 50 percent loss. It's a pretty big loss, and I wear hearing aids, and living in my house -- it's very difficult situation for me with this hearing loss because I have to have all kinds of gadgets, et cetera, to hear the telephone and having things like that and even with that I have a lot of trouble. Sometimes I don't hear and so that's where it's affected me, and they claim that's what it was. I sort of assume that. It didn't help it. Maybe it wasn't the sole cause, but certainly it helped it along to come to the surface.

Q SO ITS NOT PHYSICAL, ITS PSYCHOSOMATIC?

A Psychosomatic. I think that if I had -- maybe if I had more experiences, if my parents had more experiences, if I had more psychosomatic tests and stuff when I was younger, I may have been able to do something more for it. But you see, I've tried acupuncture. It doesn't help me now but I think it would have helped me in the beginning. Probably would be. But you see, in those days nobody new. Nobody -- it wasn't there and so you know I just have that loss now and have to live with it, you know.

Q I UNDERSTAND.

A Yes.

Q A DIFFERENT KIND OF A QUESTION.

A Okay.

Q IT WAS OBVIOUS FROM YOUR STORY THAT YOUR HUSBAND FELT MUCH MORE POSITIVE ABOUT HIS EXPERIENCES IN GERMANY THAN ABOUT HIS TWO VISITS TO POLAND. ABOUT THE WAY THE PEOPLE RELATED TO HIM AND THE JEWISH EXPERIENCE. HE FELT MUCH MORE POSITIVE ABOUT THE GERMANS THAN HE FELT ABOUT THE POLES. AM I RIGHT IN SAYING THAT?

A Yes, but that's only after we went to see that.

Q I UNDERSTAND?

A Because up to that point -- up to the time that we went, he didn't want to go to Germany with me either. You see, at first I didn't want to go. And when they finally convinced me to go I said I didn't wanted to go without him. Because, after all, my husband had a cancer. I didn't know if by next week he was going to be alive and I wasn't going to leave him. Well it turned out that they said there is no reason why he can't come along, they would certainly pay for him. Well that was all and he said he would go. And I'm glad he went. But at first he didn't want to go either. I'm sure because we hadn't been by German things and we had pretty bad feelings against the Germans. But then he changed his mind because he was there first hand and he saw how he was treated and that changed his opinion.

Q THE SECOND PART OF QUESTION IS THAT I'M NOT SURE THAT YOU FEEL THE SAME WAY. YOU STILL HAVE SOME DOUBTS ABOUT THE ATTITUDE OF THE GERMANS YOU MET?

A Pardon me?

Q YOU STILL HAVE SOME DOUBTS ABOUT THE ATTITUDE OF THE GERMANS YOU MET. YOU SAID YOU'RE GOING TO GO BACK AND RECONFIRM YOUR FEELINGS?

A Yes the doubts I have -- I felt the overwhelming feeling of -- overwhelming feeling of some of them. But there were some people who said, "Don't you remember when we were together in school?" And showed my pictures; and I didn't remember them so there was some people there. I felt maybe they are all coming out and trying to show how good they are and some people really weren't true about what their feelings were. And even though I felt very good at the time, and looking back, I thought I would like to see them in a different situation. A situation where we're not a whole big group and they don't have to show the whole town how everybody is. Maybe everybody in the town was told you have to treat them nice. The town is paying for this thing and you better do it. Now I do believe that the Mayor is a wonderful man. The Mayor of the town I really liked, and I really feel he was sincere in everything that he said. And maybe some of the other people in town. But there were some people I wasn't sure of, you know. But I sort of let that go. I didn't think about it. But now I do want to go back and see how they would react. How would they feel when I come with my grandchildren or daughter and something. How would they feel? Do they still feel as open and friendly or is it just because this were supposed to feel that way. Because I know the Mayor feels that way and there are people in the town that do. But it isn't the whole town. So I would like -- its true, I would like to see for myself. I get that feeling. And I think also is

that -- I tell you the truth, since my husband died, I think in some ways I'm more sensitive about a lot of things. In everything. So I look at everything twice before I can confirm it.

Q YOU SAID YOUR FATHER FOUGHT IN THE GERMAN ARMY IN WORLD WAR I AND HE OBVIOUSLY FELT A PART OF GERMANY IN ORDER TO FIGHT.

A Yes.

Q WOULD YOUR FATHER HAVE EVER RETURNED TO GERMANY AFTER WORD WAR II AND WAS IT DIFFICULT FOR HIM OR DID HE DENY HIS BEING GERMAN AFTER WORLD WAR II?

A Oh, no. No. My father would have -- if he had lived he might have gone back with us to see -- you know, with us. But after what happened to him, you know -- after what happen to our family and everthing, he didn't ever want to go back or anything. He didn't have that strong German feeling. Just during World War I, when he was a young man he was in his 20s. He lost a eye when he was in his 20s and you know how you are when your fighting. And even though you have to say this, the German government did support him. Every year they sent him a new glass eye after Word War II. It's difficult to buy -- very expensive to buy a glass eye. And they had a brand new glass eye every year and they gave him over a thousand dollars a month they sent him to live on and when they burried him they even paid for his burrial. They did everything because he was a soldier and they treated the soldiers -- which is amazing that they did that. But he didn't have any German feelings. I don't think he had any German feelings any more after what happened during World War II. But my mother also had German feelings too. My mother, during Wold War I,

her father was in the service too, you know. And she was very, very -- but then they were occupied by the French where my mother was in Aibencorbin where she lived so they were assimilated. This was their country -- yes. They were assimilated up until Hitler surfaced. Up till that point they felt they were part of the country. This was their country and they were in it just like anybody else. But after that you couldn't still have that feeling even after 1930 because first Hitler said Jews can't do this and then Jews can't do this. By 1938 the Jews were eliminated from many, many parts of the german life already so that they had -- does that answer your question? Okay.

Pheon.→

Q WELL, THANK YOU I WISH I WOULD HAVE HEARD THE FIRST PART. COMING LATE, IT MAKES IT A LITTLE MORE DIFFICULT, BUT I ENJOYED HEARING YOU. YOU AND YOUR HUSBAND HAD VERY DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES?

A Yes.

Q BECAUSE YOU EXPERIENCED IT DIRECTLY ALTHOUGH YOU WERE VERY YOUNG WHILE HIS EXPERIENCES CAME FROM BOOKS AND MAGAZINE AND NEWSPAPERS AND STORIES?

A That's right. That's right.

Q BUT HIS LOSSES WERE MUCH GREATER. DID YOU LOOSE ANYONE FROM YOUR NEAR FAMILY DUE TO THE HOLOCAUST?

A Well the only loss I had was that cousin because the rest -- you see, because of rest of family had really gotten out in 20s and 30s. That some left early and then, of course, he might have some questions that I had some relatives that went to Brazil. That's another question.

Q YES, COULD YOU TELL US ABOUT YOUR UNCLE WHO EMIGRATED TO BRAZIL?

A Okay. That's right.

Q COULD YOU TELL US THAT STORY?

A My mother's younger brother was living in Berlin and he had a his business and apparently, right after Hitler, I guess he realized things were not too great and he decided to emigrate to Brazil and he established himself in Brazil and opened up a factory of children's clothing, and he did very well in Brazil. I don't really have that much knowledge of exactly what he did. It was after the crash -- after 1929. I think he probably lost money in Berlin, and then in 1933 with Hitler and all that, that's what made him finally leave to see his way clear to move Pheon→ to Brazil. He moved to Sapalo. I still have cousins living in Sapalo. And then his parents, my grandparents in Aidencorbin. There was another example of how they were assimilated in Aidencorbin to such an extent that they were in no hurry to leave and finally it was pretty late, and we couldn't get them in United States. They finally emigrated to Brazil.

Q SO YOU NEVER SAW THEM AGAIN?

A Pardon me?

Q AFTER THEY WENT TO BRAZIL, WAS THERE EVER A REUNION WITH YOUR GRANDPARENTS?

A I've never seen my grandparents, no.

Q YOU NEVER SAW THEM AGAIN?

A Never saw them.

Q THEY DIED IN BRAZIL?

A They died in Brazil. But I did see -- my Uncle came to visit us quite often and my cousins have come from Brazil to visit us quite often. At one point, even my parents went to visit them in Brazil. And my uncle -- they had a very hard time at the end there in Brazil. He finally lost the whole thing and he lost the whole thing when things were -- after this was all over and, I don't know. There were all these changes in the government and Brazil wasn't so good either. And he came here -- he lived here for three months. My uncle lived here for three months before he died -- with my mother. This was a mother's favorite younger brother, and they were very close and it was wonderful that he was here his last three months and he went back and he died almost -- when he got off the plane he had a heart attack and that was it. And then he died shortly afterwards then.

Q ARE YOU IN TOUCH WITH YOUR COUSINS DOWN THERE?

A Not very much. I tried to call them because one of my cousins died and sent condolences and tried to call them and I haven't been able to reach them when I try to call them. I plan sometime maybe to try to visit them. You know, I've been traveling quite a bit lately. I'm going to Europe in August and then to England and Germany and so I thought maybe at one time, if I can get ahold of them, sometime I might visit.

Q WHAT WAS YOUR UNCLE'S BUSINESS IN BRAZIL?

A He had children's clothing -- children's clothing factory and he made beautiful children's clothing that he sent me when my children were small. It was a big factory, and he employed -- he had his own family quite a bit. He had three daughters and he employed some of

their -- the husbands were employed in his -- were part of it and daughters were part of it. It was a whole big family thing. At one time they asked my husband to come because they liked him. They thought he was very good in business. But I didn't want to go.

I would just like to say that I'm glad I have been able to tell my story. It's not the most exciting story in the world, but it's certainly something, that even if it's just for my own family history, but for whoever hears my story that I hope that they learn something from it or they remember what the people -- what the Jews have to go through during World War II and during that period, and I hope they will always remember that we have to protect our rights and we have to make sure that these things don't happen again. That's all I can say.

Q THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

(Description of Pictures Begins Here)

Q TELL US WHO THIS IS, PLEASE?

A This is my husband's Aunt Lana who was in Bialystock and she was a young girl. She dressed as a Gypsy. That was her way of dressing like a Gypsy. And this was a picture she sent in 1940s. This was one of last pictures we got and then she parished in the Holocaust.

Q AND WHAT WAS HER NAME AGAIN, PLEASE?

A Hum?

Q WHAT WAS HER NAME AGAIN, PLEASE?

A Lana.

Q LANA. LANA.

A Bareman. Well, my mother-in-law's maiden name was

Bareman.

Q WHAT IS THIS, PLEASE?

A This is my husband's grandfather.

Q YOUR HUSBAND'S GRANDFATHER?

A Grandfather, that's right. He had a red beard and a red thing, and his name was Itzrack. That's what I remember him saying -- his name was Itzrack. That's right. And he had sort of a severe eye but I guess you can't tell it in that picture. He had a severe eye where a Kusack hit him during one of progroms or something and one of the Kusacks hit him and his eye was sort of closed. But you can't tell this on that picture.

Q AND WHAT WAS HIS LAST NAME?

A Well, I guess they were called Bareman. Bareman because my mother-in-law's name would be Bareman.

Q OKAY. WHAT IS THIS?

A Okay. This was my husband's grandmother. Mrs. Bareman, and she ran the roost. She was a very strong, strong very harsh strong woman. She did the cooking and she took care -- she had eight children and she helped in store and she was really the big person in the family. She was the overhead over everybody. And they were all afraid of her. Everybody in family was afraid of her.

Q TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE.

A This is probably the ship my mother-in-law, Anna Sabel, came to this country in 1923.

Q THE QUNARD ANTONIAN?

A Yes, and that's the ship. You see the Name of it?

Q THE ANTONIAN. A QUNARD SLIP CALLED THE ANTONIAN.

A Yes.

Q VERY GOOD. WE SOLVED THE MYSTERY.

Q TELL US ABOUT THIS PHOTO, PLEASE?

A I don't know when he came to this country. I didn't -- but --

Q OKAY, THE MAN?

A He met my mother-in-law Anna Sabel and he married her and he accepted both of her children also.

Q AND THAT'S THE MAN IN THE MIDDLE IN THIS CASE?

A The man in the middle, yes.

Q AND WHAT IS HIS NAME AGAIN, PLEASE?

A Jack Sabel.

Q JACK SABEL; AND --

A I don't know.

Q WHERE WAS THAT PHOTO TAKEN?

A Well, the other people look familiar to me too and I don't know who they -- they look very familiar to me but I can't tell you who they are.

Q OKAY.

A Maybe they're cousins.

Q OKAY. BUT URSULA, I THINK THAT PICTURE WAS STILL TAKEN IN RUSSIA. JUDGING FROM THE HATS.

A It would have been when he was a young boy. There

was a picture of him when he was a young boy. Here is a picture of him when he was a little older over here.

Q OKAY. YOU SAID THIS IS JACK SABEL?

A That's right.

Q OKAY. WHAT IS THIS PHOTOGRAPH? DO YOU KNOW WHAT THIS PHOTOGRAPH IS OF?

A This was more like he was in United States when he finally met my mother-in-law. This was years later when he was a young man and he was in the United States.

Q TELL US ABOUT THIS PICTURE, PLEASE?

A Her name was Martila, and she the only living relative that survived the Holocaust and she met and married a Russian soldier and they had two children and those are the two children and you can see underneath Velva -- let me look here.

Q MARY AND VELVA.

A Mary and Velva; that's right.

Q THEY WERE NOW IN ISREAL?

A That's right. And they are living in Isreal. That's an old picture. They were all grown up. The children already have children of their own, but this is a old picture of her.

Q SO THIS WOULD HAVE BEEN TAKEN IN THE EARLY '50S PERHAPS. THE EARLY 1950S?

A Yeah.

Q STILL IN THE SOVIET UNION?

A In the Soviet Union. That picture was taken in the

Soviet Union; that's right.

Q TELL US ABOUT THIS PICTURE, PLEASE?

A Okay. The man in Bialystock, when we were in Bialystock in 1981, the man who we met there said that the Germans took the tomestones of Jews and started putting them in the streets and they had a collection of them and he showed us the collection of tomestones there. He showed us to a place where they had all the tomestones and they just put them together like that.

Q SO ITS NOT A CEMETERY?

A No, this was not a cemetery. They just took them from the cemetery and put them someplace. And they were going to use them. They did use some of them to pave the streets or whatever else they did with them, I don't know.

Q THESE NEXT --

A This is one of photos of Bialystock before the war. What Bialystock looked like before the war. Before they were bombed out and went through rubbel and stuff.

Q THIS IS BIALYSTOCK AGAIN?

A Bialystock before the war one of main streets and the small people in this Jewish city in Poland. It was considered a Jewish city. This is another one of photos of Bialystock before World War II.

Q OKAY.

A This is another one of the photos of one of the streets of Bialystock and you can look and see what the name of the street

is, I believe.

Q NICKOLISTRAUSA.

A Yeah.

Q IT'S IN GERMAN AND RUSSIAN. NICKOLISTRAUSA.

A Yeah.

Q OKAY. MORE BIALYSTOCK?

A This is another one of the --

Q ITS CALLED ENCUMBAT AND NICKOLISTRAUSA THE CORNER OF MARKET AND NICKOLISTRAUSA.

A Yeah.

Q OKAY. AND NOW WE'RE IN POST-WAR BIALYSTOCK.

A This is Bialystock, 1981. This is the pictures that I got from 1981.

Q THIS IS A POST CARD YOU GOT IN 1981?

A Post card; that's right -- that I bought there. Buildings and --

Q OKAY. THIS IS MORE OF BIALYSTOCK WITH HIGHRISES AFTER THE WAR?

A Uh huh.

Q THIS IS BIALYSTOCK AGAIN AFTER THE WAR.

Q THIS IS MORE BIALYSTOCK AFTER THE WAR.

A Bialystock, 1981.

Q TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE?

A Hum?

Q TELL US ABOUT THIS?

A Okay. Here is a picture of my husband Herman Sabel and driver -- taxi driver from Warsaw looking at -- getting out of the taxi. And he had just directed him -- told him where to drive the taxi to.

Q AND YOUR HUSBAND IS ON THE LEFT?

A No, this is my husband.

Q YOUR HUSBAND IS ON THE RIGHT?

A Yeah. This on the road on the way coming into town. Some of the old part of town, still using the old methods.

Q OKAY.

A Here is a picture of me with the man who is showing us different parts of the town that he thinks -- the old town of Bialystock that's left of Jewish life.

Q THIS IS THE OLD JEWISH MAN?

A This is the German man; that's right, yes.

Q WHAT'S HIS NAME DO YOU RECALL? DO YOU REMEMBER HIS NAME?

A No.

Q OKAY.

A Here's another picture of me and the man and he's showing us all the different things. I think he's now going to show us the synogogue soon. It's on the way. He was taking us around to see what happened to Jews during World War I.

Q HOUSES RIGHT?

A Yes. The houses were 50 years old. He showed us old

houses. They weren't old enough. The real old ones were already rubbel. After all it was many years. That's just me standing there. I was posing; that's right. My husband was taking pictures of me posing because he didn't want to feel strange. We felt uncomfortable so he said, "Just pose." So I posed back there and that's where we got all these pictures of me, because he felt uncomfortable just walking around there. Some more poses. That was supposed to be the oldest house that they had there like the houses that were 50 or 55 years ago of -- and that's all that was left of them. That's when the Natzis destroyed all the houses of all the Jews and all of the surrounding houses. And that was the last part.

Q OKAY. YOU WANTED TO TELL US ABOUT THIS PLAQUE HERE?

A The man took us to show us the sign on the building which said that this was originally part of biggest synogogue of Bialystock. And this is the spot -- the area -- the spot where the Nazis put 2,000 people in the synogogue and burned them -- burned the people with the synogogue and that's a plaque in Polish and in Hebrew saying what happened right on the building. Can you read that Jewish.

Q NO.

A Okay.

Q SORRY.

A That's Okay.

Q OKAY. AND THIS?

A To the right you see the Catholic Church which is still standing there which is the same way which my husband had a known it which was many years before. That part of town was still the same. It

hasn't changed at all. The same with the other church behind that. That church also, with the white. Okay, this is a plaque saying so many people were shot. Yeah remember how many, but there were quite a few people that were just shot down and this plaque right there, it's the -- and that person -- that man -- that's the man from -- that's not the driver. I don't think so. That's the Polish man that we met that took us there. He's a survivor. That man is a survivor of the Holocaust.

Q HE'S ONE OF THE 11 JEWS --

A He's one of 11 Jews, yes.

Q TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE?

A This is a memorial of how many people were shot and killed in that area.

Q ON THE 19TH OF NOVEMBER OF 1941?

A 1941.

Q 19TH NOVEMBER, 1941?

A November 9 , 1941; right. That must be when they came in.

Q THIS IS A DIFFERENT PHOTO OF A SIMILAR TYPE OF MEMORIAL?

A Here's another memorial of other deaths. What happened to people. I don't know exactly how many.

Q AND THIS, PLEASE?

A And there is another one. They were just all over -- some of it -- this was in the forrest where they took people.

Q THIS IS NOT A JEWISH MEMORIAL. THIS IS A CHRISTIAN ONE BECAUSE OF THE THE CROSS THERE.

A This one is a Christian one.

Q YOU MIGHT SHOW THE CROSS.

A The cross; that's right.

Q THERE YOU GO. BECAUSE IT'S A CRUSIFIX.

A Okay.

Q ALSO A LARGER SHOT IT IN HERE.

A All of them.

Q OKAY.

A These are all memoriums of death where the Nazis killed people. Both Jews and non-Jews. And there is my husband standing at one of them. There is another memorial on the tree there. Its another memorial. And this was a big one that there were thousands and thousands of people. This was more than a few thousand. That was a very, very big one. Very big memorial where there as much as 5,000 or 10,000 people. These are some more memorials.

Q THIS IS THE SAME DATE WE SAW EARLIER. I THINK IT WAS ON THE 19 OF NOVEMBER 1941 WHERE THEY MUST HAVE HAD A BIG ACTION?

A Big action; that's right.

Q KILL AS MANY AS WE CAN, THAT SORT OF A THING, BECAUSE IT'S THE SAME DATE OVER AND OVER AGAIN?

A Yeah.

Q THIS IS 3,000.

A 3,000.

Q THIS IS IN MEMORY OF 3,000 PEOPLE WHO WERE KILLED BETWEEN 1941 AND 1944. I CAN READ THE NUMBERS BUT NOT THE LANGUAGE.

A Here's another memorial. That's the one for the 3,000.

Q YES, TELL US ABOUT THIS PLEASE?

A This is a sculpture showing the death of all these people in that area. I believe this was also both Jews and non-Jews this particular one. Yes. This was in the forrest. Part of the forrest of Bialystock. My mother-in-law would tell me that that was such a beautiful forrest and they had such beautiful memories of that forrest.

(End tape 2 of 2)