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Interview of:

HEDY WERNER

Date of Interview:

May 15, 1986

Transcriber:

Maryanne Stinson

*Interviewer:
Marty Ockenfels*

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1 I'm Hedy Werner. I was born in Vienna April 5,
2 1912, and went to school there, lived with my parents and
3 married in 1935.

4 Then, in 1933, Hitler became the Fuhrer, or
5 President of Germany, but that didn't influence Austrians at
6 that time because in Vienna everything went on the same way
7 as before and there was no occupation; we were separated. We
8 never had much sympathy for the Germans in Austria, so we
9 ignored.

10 But then, in 1938, one day in April he just
11 marched in. It was like taking over, invasion, but he had
12 nobody to cut it off. The Austrian people let him in and it
13 was like a demonstration; hundred and hundred German soldier
14 marched through the main street. And that's when it started.

15 There were signs all over that Hitler occupies
16 Austria, Vienna. He takes them in and all Jews are to leave
17 their businesses and he puts a manager in. Manager will be
18 Aryan, will ren-or-ra-sig.

19 So they went from the big stores to the big
20 stores and kicked the owners out and took over as it was, didn't
21 give them anything, just they couldn't come anymore. All Jewish
22 employees had to be fired and they were replaced with Aryan
23 Germans; Austrians, too. And then that went on til it got
24 worse and they started to go to apartments. Most of us lived
25 in apartments buildings.

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1 They went to the apartments and they took the
2 men and arrested them, just for no reason. Because they are
3 Jewish; that's reason enough, so they were arrested. They left
4 the women for the moment, but then in later months, again, they
5 took whole families and the children and everybody. We didn't
6 know. They were arrested but we didn't know where they will go.

7 Later on we heard that there are camps, concen-
8 tration camps, where he puts all Jews in.

9 On one day I walk to a street, was a Saturday
10 morning, that's the biggest temple in Vienna where I walk by,
11 and there were Jews in top hats and black top coats washing the
12 sidewalk because they made them do that instead of going into
13 the temple, what they intended to do, they didn't let them in
14 and they gave them a bucket and water and broom and made them
15 wash the sidewalk. That was a terrible sight, and they were
16 mostly old men, too.

17 Many coffee houses had the sign out, "No Jews
18 Allowed". All businesses had to relieve the Jews who worked
19 there. So, they didn't have work, they didn't have a house,
20 they didn't have a business, but somehow everybody survived a
21 little, and they unfortunate, were taken to the -- arrested.

22 INTERVIEWER: Were you working at that time?

23 MRS. WERNER: Yes; I was working. I was working
24 in the office at a wholesale shoe firm, and my boss was Jewish
25 and he had to close the shop and I was fired. I did not get

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1 unemployment because Jews didn't get unemployment even if they
2 worked. That was the end of it.

3 Then we wanted to emigrate and try to get out
4 of there as quick as possible.

5 My husband worked for a Czecho-Slovak firm.
6 The factory was in Czechoslovakia, but he traveled. He was a
7 traveling salesman. In 1938 he was in Yugoslavia traveling
8 still for the firm, so they didn't get him. Besides, he was
9 born in Vienna, raised in Vienna, lived in Vienna all his life
10 but he kept the nationality from his parents, which was Czecho-
11 Slovak, and he worked for Czecho-Slovak company. That made him
12 a foreigner in Vienna and they couldn't touch him because they
13 left the foreigners alone. And, he traveled.

14 At that time it was September, 1938, when Hitler
15 occupied Czechoslovakia and he started the same thing there, to
16 do everything to get the Jews out.

17 Our intention was before he took Czechoslovakia
18 that we will emigrate to Czechoslovakia, but when the time came
19 in September of that year we couldn't anymore so we switched
20 out plans. My husband was in Yugoslavia and phoned from there,
21 phoned home, and told me, you have to go out; we have to go
22 away and I can't come back anymore at that moment, and you come
23 to Paris and we will meet in Paris and then we will see where
24 we can go.

25 So, we did that. I packed up and gave everything

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1 to a big moving company to store it. They did and then I said,
2 you keep it, we will tell you where to send it.

3 So, I went with a little suitcase, nothing else,
4 and my husband said, you know, I can come to the border, that's
5 Marbreck;(phonetic) Yugoslavia and Austria, that's Marbreck,
6 the border, and I took the train, took a ticket to Marbreck and
7 sure enough, he was waiting for me. I got out, but when I had
8 to show my passport they said, where is your -- what's that
9 certificate -- birth certificate.

10 So, I didn't have it, I said.

11 Where is your Christian paper?

12 I said, I left it home. I didn't take those
13 things with. I have a passport.

14 He was suspicious and he said if I don't have
15 the identification that I'm Aryan, I have to go back to Vienna
16 and get it, and he told a guard to stand with me and wait for
17 the next train and go back.

18 I could talk to my husband; he waited with me
19 on the train station there, and my husband showed papers that
20 he works in Yugoslavia, he had money there, he had working
21 papers and everything. Nothing helped. They let him be there
22 but I couldn't get in.

23 So, I had to go back. I went to my parents. They
24 were surprised. We talked it over while we were together that
25 I should find another way to go to Paris. So I did get a ticket.

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1 When I came back the next day I went to get a ticket to
2 Cologne over Germany to another route to Paris, direct; no
3 Yugoslavia. So, that worked.

4 INTERVIEWER: Did you fly?

5 MRS. WERNER: No; train, train. That was all
6 too expensive. By train.

7 I went there, I came to Paris, and we made a
8 date because we had a friend who moved, that was September, '38,
9 and we had friends who emigrated in April, '38. We had their
10 address and we made a date we will meet in their apartment.

11 Sure enough, I arrived, I came to that apartment.
12 I took a taxi cab and came to the apartment.

13 They didn't live there. So, I didn't know what
14 to do. I stood in front of the house and waited and waited til
15 somebody comes by I can ask, do you know the people. Many didn't
16 know.

17 Finally a young guy comes out of the house and
18 I ask, do you know them, and he said, yeah; they moved to that
19 and that address. So, I was glad.

20 I took another taxi cab, went to that address and
21 my husband was there and they were there. But he went through
22 the same trouble because he had no other address. Anyway, we
23 both met there. Our friends were there few months so they could
24 tell us where to find a cheap hotel and we started out in that
25 hotel. I bought a burner to make a meal and I bought a couple

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1 dishes and just the most necessary. What I could make is a
2 quick dish.

3 But, then in Paris was something like a meal
4 center that was through the Jewish organizations. They
5 sponsored that and they gave us free meals at a certain place
6 everyday. So, we went there, we had the meal, and mostly
7 Russian Jews who came long ago there were here ladies and
8 waited on us.

9 They put basket of bread on the table and we
10 put some in our pocket to take home because we had not much
11 to spend on food.

12 We got then to the -- what was it? -- hires?
13 Little spending money; they give it to the refugees, and our
14 friends were working, he was a furrier in Vienna, and he started
15 to work in Paris, too, as a furrier. So, he gave my husband
16 a chance to sell linings for coats and accessories.

17 So, he went, and most of the retail furriers
18 were Jews anyway in Paris, and my husband could speak French.
19 But most of them wanted to speak Jewish to him but he couldn't
20 speak Jewish.

21 INTERVIEWER: You mean Yiddish?

22 MRS. WERNER: Yiddish, Yiddish. He never could
23 speak Yiddish. But, he managed in French to get on and he made
24 a little money so we could live on.

25 We stayed there til nineteen -- we came in 1938,

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1 end of 1938. Beginning of 1939 -- '39 the war broke out. War
2 broke out in 1939. My husband could have a choice; either he
3 declares himself a Austrian, he would be interned. They
4 interned all Austrians. Or, he's a Czecho-Slovak. Then he
5 has to join the military company for the Czecho-Slovaks in
6 France with the Allies.

7 So, when we are there he decided he will do
8 that; he will fight and he went. They sent him to the south
9 of France to be mobilized. There was a camp and that was
10 specially for all the foreign Czechs. They were trained, they
11 were outfitted with uniforms, with military outfits and guns
12 and what's necessary.

13 I was in the meantime staying in Paris. I could
14 stay with another couple. They let me stay with them. But then,
15 the time was -- for them it was dangerous. They were French
16 but the time was dangerous for them, too, and they wanted in
17 time to get out of France, of Paris.

18 They lived in an apartment building. They left
19 their apartment as it was. They just took their personal
20 belongings and left. I don't know where they went, but they
21 went to the south they said, and so I stayed on. They let me
22 stay.

23 Then one day there was a big -- the planes came
24 and bombs were falling and we had to go in the shelter down in
25 that apartment building. I never was down, so I went anyway

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1 with all the rest from the building. A few minutes later this
2 one man in charge of the -- what do you call it? The shelter
3 commander or so, he said, you have to open the door; we have to
4 go in the deeper shelter because that was a bigger one. So I
5 stood there. I opened the door and it was dark; I didn't see,
6 and I walked in and fell down, was a whole floor down. So, I
7 got hurt and bruised and got a shock, and I stayed in the shelter
8 while people were around me, but they couldn't do much. When
9 it was over and we could all get up people from the apartment
10 building helped me to get to a hospital.

11 I went to the hospital and I stayed there for a
12 week. I had a big bandage on my head and it was bruised and I
13 had the shock. That was the worst.

14 After week when I was in the hospital there were
15 a lot of bombardments and they were so bad that they evacuated
16 that particular hospital. It was a general hospital. They went
17 to -- the doctors and the nurses went from bed to bed and said
18 everybody has to be evacuated. The ones, maybe old people who
19 can't go, get up or be on their own will be transported to
20 another hospital in a ambulance. The ones who could get up and
21 go, I was one of them, they gave me a big bandage on my head and
22 said, you go. Just take it easy, though. So I went.

23 I went home, packed a few belongings in a big
24 towel, not a suitcase, nothing; just rolled it up and made like
25 a bedroll, and I started out to go to the Metro, and I didn't

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1 know where to go. I had nobody. I was all alone.

2 I went to the Metro and I took the train to the
3 end of the line. End of the line I saw so many people walking
4 and some on bikes, some with cars, and so I followed. When
5 I -- I followed, okay? I have to go back.

6 When the nurses and doctors came to the hospital
7 they said they're leaving too, they won't stay. So, some nurses
8 had their bikes there and said from here, now, we'll go out;
9 we'll go away.

10 Okay; I was on the road and walked -- I don't
11 know anymore how long, not too long, maybe an hour or so, and
12 there was a Red Cross truck and people from the Red Cross stopped
13 me and called me over and said, what happened.

14 I told them. They gave me chair. They say you
15 sit down, we'll get somebody who takes you along. They stopped
16 lot of cars, but people had their cars filled up with their
17 belongings who had cars. They had no room for me.

18 Finally they found one car with one seat for me
19 and they put me in and I went -- everybody asked, where do you
20 want to go, and I said where everybody goes; I don't know. So,
21 they took me, and then after driving maybe couple hours they
22 stopped and they said they had to make a exit, they go to some-
23 body and I can't come along. So I was landed on the highway
24 again, I'd say about two hours from Paris.

25 I was standing there on my own. There was no

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1 more Red Cross. After a while -- I waved some cars, trucks,
2 nobody stopped.

3 Finally one stopped. You don't need more than
4 one. On the truck were about twenty women and men standing and
5 the truck was filled, but he stopped for me and he asked where
6 I want to go and I said where you go.

7 He says, to Bordeaux.

8 I said, okay, I go to Bordeaux if you take me.

9 He said, yeah, get on.

10 I got on that truck and we drove to Bordeaux.
11 But, on the way there were more bombardments and they had to
12 drive in to houses where we can get in the shelter, or sometimes
13 we stood only in the door entrance from the house to be pro-
14 tected. So, that happened several times on the way from there
15 to Bordeaux.

16 In Bordeaux I got off, thanked them and they went
17 this I found out was a group of people who worked for the
18 government for ammunition, you know, to make ammunitions, and
19 they evacuated their own people to go to Canada. If I tried,
20 maybe, I could have gone to Canada with them but I didn't want
21 to because I knew my husband is here in that country, how do I
22 get ever to him. So, I said I stay in Bordeaux.

23 I went to a hotel, got myself a cheap room. From
24 Paris I knew a family who had a store, a chain store in Bordeaux
25 so I went to that store and I told the manager that I know the

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1 family and what happened to me, and I told him all that.

2 One lady said in the store, you know, my husband
3 is in the war too and I'm alone, I live with my father. If you
4 want to you can live with me without pay. So, that was nice.
5 She worked. That was a break.

6 So, I went to her house and stayed there and
7 tried to get a job. I must say, Bordeaux was not occupied at
8 that time. The Germans were not there.

9 I looked for a job. I went to a restaurant and
10 I was a kitchen help. That's good enough. I had my food and
11 I got little money.

12 That didn't last too long, a few months, and then
13 the Germans came to occupy the west and they came to Bordeaux.
14 Then they said all the restaurant owner and all the other people,
15 Jews out. You can't employ Jews or foreigners and so they had --
16 even the kitchen help to let go.

17 Then I got a connection when the Germans came
18 from a German commander to a -- it's like city hall, and I asked
19 if I get a paper to visit my husband. In the meantime, my
20 husband became prisoner of war. He was caught with his company
21 and he was interned as a prisoner of war about an hour away from
22 Paris. So, I knew that.

23 I knew that because he sent a note when he became
24 prisoner. He wrote a note in French on a piece of paper and my
25 address in Paris on the backside and he threw it while he was

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1 walking. They had to walk for hours when they were taking
2 prisoners to go to the military building. So he threw that
3 away and French people picked it up and mailed it to me. He
4 put several on the floor. I got two. But, I was no more in
5 Paris.

6 When I arrived in Bordeaux and lived with that
7 lady I wrote to that janitor in Paris that my address is now
8 such and such, if she hears from my husband she can forward it
9 to me. That happened. He wrote the papers, she got them and
10 she send them to me. So, I knew where he was.

11 I tried to get to go and visit him. I had no
12 right to travel. I needed a paper and the papers are not given
13 to Jews regular.

14 I talked them into give me a paper, travel paper,
15 to visit my husband.

16 They ask why he's prisoner of war and I said he
17 lived here long before and he was forced to go. You know, I
18 switched that around. I couldn't say I'm Jewish, so --. So,
19 that was that.

20 I went -- I took the train and went to see him.
21 He got permission -- they got permission with that paper to let
22 me in and visit. So we talked and made a plan.

23 It was a little town. In that town was a grocery
24 store. The grocery store owner was very anti-German. We talked
25 to him and we asked, I asked if I can send him a package, my

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1 husband.

2 He says, yeah, I will; I will do that. I keep
3 it. He can pick it up.

4 In the meantime, my husband was interpreter and
5 he could go out in town because there was the com-man-di-da-ture,
6 this is a office, and he had to go there and go back in order
7 to be the interpreter.

8 So we talked it over and I said I will send him
9 civilian suit, shoes and a beret and shirt and send it to the
10 grocery.

11 Then I went back and I procured all this and
12 I send it and he picked it up. When he picked it up he left
13 everything on his cot in the barracks where he was sleeping so
14 it's not obvious that he's going away.

15 He went to the grocery store. From the grocery
16 store he went to a bar, but he went to the toilet in the bar
17 and he changed his clothes and left the military uniform in the
18 toilet and he took the train -- he walked out as a civilian and
19 he took the train to Bordeaux.

20 He wrote himself a paper in the camp that he is
21 prisoner so and so, allowed to go to Bordeaux because of health
22 reason. But, he didn't need to show it. He had it only in case
23 he will be asked on the train.

24 He took a night train and he went tonight to
25 Bordeaux, which is about four or five hours. He arrived in the

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1 morning, early morning, maybe five o'clock in the morning. I
2 was there with my friend to pick him up. She was a very nice
3 person and helpful and she told us we can't come to her place
4 anymore because there's a janitor who watches too, so he can't
5 come in, and they will look for him and they will maybe try to
6 catch him.

7 So, she advised us to go to the border of France,
8 take a train ticket and go there and then try to go over in the
9 unoccupied part of France.

10 We did this. We came out of the train. Nothing
11 happened. There was no control, and as I remember, it was a
12 Sunday. There was a whole group of people going, getting off
13 the train, young men that's about our age then. There was a
14 football game. Actually, a soccer game. We walked out with
15 them.

16 They went someplace we couldn't go. We saw the
17 border police, the Germans, standing there and we are ask them
18 then, can we go over, we want to visit friends there. Just you
19 could see the houses, you know, across.

20 They said, no; can't go.

21 There was no way that we could cross the border.
22 The guards were there, there was no other way we could slip
23 through; impossible. So, we decided we'll go back, but there
24 was always control. That was the border station. They didn't
25 control for people to come, but they control people to leave,

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1 and when we saw the guards at the train we couldn't dare to get
2 on, on the train.

3 My husband said, you know what? We'll walk maybe
4 one mile to the next station and maybe there won't be a control.
5 This is the border, you know.

6 So, we did that. We went to the next station
7 and when we came there they said the train doesn't stop there.
8 There is an express train coming in an hour, in another hour
9 the express station is leaving the border station but it won't
10 stop there. It goes through. So we had no way other than go
11 back and try our chance.

12 We were scared, and we walk back again. Somehow
13 we could slip in without being checked, so that was lucky. But
14 then, in the train my husband made like he would be asleep when
15 he saw the controller go through, and he ask for I.D's. I pulled
16 mine out. I was official. I was a civilian and I had the I.D.
17 and also because my husband was in the military, so I got the
18 I.D.

19 I showed him my I.D. He didn't bother about my
20 husband. He walked on. He didn't have a thing. The only thing
21 was, he was prisoner of war. If they would have caught him he
22 won't be here anymore. With everything there was a little bit
23 of luck.

24 We were on the train; we came back to Bordeaux.
25 I phoned my friend and she said, I tell you what; I meet you

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1 there. You get there and I will see that you can stay overnight
2 someplace. I can't come to her place.

3 So, we are met, and she knew a couple who owned
4 a bar, a small bar. They had a attic above the bar. It wasn't
5 used but it could be a bedroom, or it was a bedroom. So, they
6 let us sleep there for nothing and we stayed there. My husband
7 had a shock; he had such a shock, he couldn't go, he couldn't
8 bring himself to go out on the street and he stayed in bed.
9 That lasted about three days. I went out to bring something
10 to eat in and he couldn't do it.

11 INTERVIEWER: He was sick?

12 MRS. WERNER: No, he wasn't sick. It was a shock.
13 It was in his head; he can't go out. He was so scared, he was
14 so scared that they're looking after him, the German military,
15 because he evaded, he's evaded prisoner of war, and that means
16 that if somebody arrests him.

17 So, after three days I talked him into try it.

18 The people who owned the bar gave us a plan how
19 to get to another border and go to a farmhouse that's a little
20 further away. There's a farmhouse between the occupied France
21 and the unoccupied France, because the Germans occupied only
22 half of France up to that date.

23 In 1942 they went then to the rest of France,
24 the southern part. So, we had a chance to go to the southern
25 part of France. We took again a bus. He told us where to stop

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1 and we stopped, got out, and walked up to the farm. But the
2 farmhouse had a little booth there. The gendarme was sitting
3 inside. The booth was not bigger than a telephone booth here.

4 He was sitting in and there were glass windows
5 because it's the border. But it was pouring; coming down so
6 hard. I had the umbrella and we walked under the umbrella and
7 we looked down and walked into the house and he didn't bother
8 to come out. It was raining too hard. Again our luck.

9 We went into the house and that woman was nice,
10 too, and helped us to get out to her backyard, to her back fields,
11 vineyards they had. We had to bend down so that we are not seen
12 and go to the vineyards. It was lucky.

13 We arrived in -- there was again a station of
14 French military who gave my husband -- he told him what he was
15 and where. They give him a ticket to go to Burze. (phonetic)
16 By train this is for the refugees. They gave us I think a loaf
17 of bread and a bottle of wine and you go. And, they gave us money
18 so we can go to that Burze.

19 Then we decided -- my husband said, I'm not going
20 to Burze. I heard there is a camp that's a -- it's a concentra-
21 tion camp so I'm not going there. So he took the tickets for
22 Toulouse, which is on the way; much earlier.

23 In Toulouse we are asked again around and we are
24 told the best thing for you to go is to Acht. (Phonetic) Acht
25 is a little town in the south, and that's where he was mobilized

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1 in the beginning. They sent him to Acht to be mobilized and
2 trained. So, that was a good idea and we liked it and we went
3 to Acht then.

4 In Acht he went to that camp, to that military
5 camp and they did let him out. They said, yeah, you are fine,
6 you are here, but where do you want to go?

7 He says I'm here and he wants to go to live here.

8 They said, you can't. We can let you only go if
9 you had a residency before you were engaged in the military, but
10 you had no residency.

11 We couldn't go back to Paris and we couldn't go
12 any other place. So he says he keeps him there. But, he could
13 go out in the daytime. It was not like a prison. It was he
14 had to stay in the barracks there.

15 In the meantime, I rented a little apartment.
16 We were told through other people when I have a residence then
17 he can come out of the camp and he can stay with me because
18 that's then the residence. So we did that. Maybe he stayed
19 there less than a week.

20 So, we stayed about two years in that little
21 town in Acht. To support ourselves my husband learned pedicure
22 in Paris. He had a diploma. In that little town there was one
23 barber, one store, one of everything. One church, one movie.
24 So we went to the barber and he asked him if he can help him,
25 that he can do pedicure in his place. So he agreed and he gave

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1 him one day a week. In the back room he can do his pedicure.

2 Some people came, not many, but he could make a
3 little money.

4 Right around the corner where we lived was a
5 bordello. There were there maybe fifteen, fifteen to twenty
6 women, but they had -- what is that -- they could not walk alone.
7 They had to go in the group altogether and madame was with them.
8 They walked around lunchtime around the town with the madame.

9 The police commissioner came everyday to check
10 the books and to check their health. They had the doctor, too,
11 and they were controlled. They could not go alone, as I said.
12 They had to be inside that place.

13 My husband asked if he can make pedicure there.
14 He got some, he got some customers and I figured maybe I can go
15 too because I can make money here. So I went. Some, maybe I
16 had three, four who let me come and make money here. So, that
17 was little money that helped.

18 INTERVIEWER: Did you do it there?

19 MRS. WERNER: Yeah; in their room. And if they
20 had a man in -- that happened to me once -- she said you wait
21 outside a little while. It doesn't take long. So, I waited
22 outside and I came in their room. But, it helped a little, and
23 they were decent and nice.

24 Then came the fall. Fall there was a harvest
25 for grapes. The farmers put out the news, they're hiring grape

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1 pickers. So, we went for it, but we had to have a bike. It's
2 miles away. So, we tried to get a secondhand bike very cheap.

3 I didn't know how to ride a bike very good but
4 I learned it fast and I did. So we went every morning at six
5 o'clock to the vineyards to pick the grapes. That lasted only
6 three weeks.

7 We had very little pay but we had a pound potatoes,
8 a box of sardines, one egg, things like that in addition. That
9 was very useful for us. We had -- there was -- food was restricted.
10 You needed -- once a week we got meat.

11 INTERVIEWER: Rationing.

12 MRS. WERNER: Rationing.

13 Once a week we got a quarter of a pound meat.
14 You can't order what you want. You have to take what they get.
15 That quarter of a pound would be with bones, too. Once a week.
16 One egg a month. So, it was real tough. But we made friends
17 and French people who gave us a little bit grocery of their own
18 to help us out. So, we didn't starve, but it was hard. That
19 was in 1942.

20 So, I went to harvest along then and I bought
21 jars, glass jars, and put it up. Green peas and carrots and the
22 potatoes I had in bags. And with all that -- that was my biggest
23 luggage I had to take along. And with that I came then to
24 Marseilles. So, I thought, we had some food.

25 Again, I cooked in the hotel room on a little

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1 burner. We stayed there maybe not longer than two months. Then
2 the Germans were again after Marseilles. They came slowly up.

3 One morning we woke up, maybe four o'clock, five
4 o'clock in the morning. We heard steps like SSmen steps with
5 boots. They came and knocked at the door. We woke up and heard
6 that; I -- I could hear my husband's heart beating. I could
7 hear it. We so scared. But it wasn't -- they didn't knock at
8 our door, they knocked at the next person's door and they
9 arrested them and took them away.

10 Now, my husband thinks they did not knock on our
11 door because they are reading the registration. If you had a
12 Jewish name you're in. But my husband has first, not a Jewish
13 name and the other thing is he put down prisoner -- evaded
14 prisoner. That means could be a French too. You know, it's
15 not Jewish. It doesn't have to be Jewish. So they didn't
16 bother. That's what he thinks to knock at our door. But we
17 wouldn't sleep in that hotel anymore.

18 The next morning we went to -- there was a big
19 store. They had yardage. A yardage store. We went in and we
20 knew they were Jewish and we told them what happened and we told
21 them we can't sleep there anymore. We tried to get away from.
22 We wanted to go to Switzerland if you can sleep at night there.

23 She said she has an employee who is not Jewish
24 and she's very faithful and she took, I read, a lot of merchan-
25 dise, yardage, into her apartment. She had only one room that

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1 she can fill up with the yardage. So she asked that woman if
2 we can stay there, and she agreed. She said, yeah. If you want
3 to sleep on top of the balls of yardage it's okay with her.
4 So, we did that. She put a sheet over and we slept over them.

5 We were kind of lucky to be safe the night.

6 The next morning we tried again and we tried to
7 go on to how do you get to Switzerland. So we talked a lot with
8 people and one told us there is a guy, a Jewish guy who leads
9 people over to Switzerland for a lot of money.

10 In the meantime, we had a little money saved.
11 Not much, but whatever we had we saved because we were not
12 spending on anything. So, we asked for the address of that guy,
13 and he lived in Grenoble. We went to him. We took the train to
14 Grenoble, visited him and he said, yeah, I don't know, for so
15 and so much I can bring you over Mt. Blanc to Switzerland.

16 Fine. But we have to come to ^{Chamonix} ~~Sha-mo-nee~~ and his
17 wife will be there; he's not going. His wife will be there and
18 from Sha-mo-nee you start going up Mt. Blanc.

19 Okay; we agreed. We paid him and he said then,
20 my husband asked, what if we can't get in. He says if you have
21 any difficulties come back. My wife will be still in the hotel
22 there and you get your money back or we'll put you through
23 another time, the next time. So, that was fine.

24 We went maybe half a day up the mountain, Mt.
25 Blanc. We walked. Sometimes we had to go sideways because the

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1 road was so narrow. It was a real hike; a long hike.

2 When we came up to the top before the border --
3 there's a Swiss border in the mountains. You could look down
4 and see the frontier house and the guards there. That's just
5 the border. And the guide said, okay, you see the house there?
6 There you're going and then you're in Switzerland. That's what
7 it is. He didn't go with us and he says he cannot go into
8 Switzerland, he has to go back to France from there. We were
9 not alone.

10 When we left that hotel in Sha-mo-nee we were
11 about twelve people. He had accumulated a whole group, but
12 nobody knew each other. So, the twelve of us walked down and
13 they came down. He asked for -- the border police asked for --
14 it was actually military, our passports, our money.

15 We gave it to him and then he said he doesn't know
16 if he can keep us, he has to ask his superior and he has to
17 phone. In the meantime, it was evening and he says, you can
18 sleep here. They had kind of a barn, straw, where we could
19 sleep on.

20 INTERVIEWER: This is in Switzerland?

21 MRS. WERNER: In Switzerland at the border.

22 So, we could sleep on that straw overnight and
23 he will tell us in the morning what happened.

24 In the morning he gave us back the passport, gave
25 us back the money and he says up you go; you have to go back.

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1 Can't take you because when you are caught at the border we
2 can't let you in. We have a law; we don't let you in.

3 My husband was again very nervous and very upset
4 because when the French arrest him again he's their prisoner
5 and he says -- evaded prisoner and he told that guy that he's
6 evaded prisoner and if they catch him they shoot him, so why
7 don't you shoot me now, he told him. Didn't help. We had to
8 go back, all of us.

9 He said if you try once more to go over that
10 frontier then you are given over to the French, to the Germans.
11 This time they let you free and you find your way but never come
12 back.

13 So, we went up. We dispersed, all the people and
14 then we walked down. It was raining again. That was our fate.
15 We walked and walked, only the two of us. The others dispersed.
16 I don't know which way they went. We went one way down.

17 Then another old man, a guard, came by and we
18 looked down, you know, on the ground and he didn't bother us,
19 so we passed. But in our heart we felt trapped. But we could
20 walk on. We were hungry; we had nothing to eat, but there were
21 blueberries in the mountains and they were ripe so we picked
22 some while we were walking and that was our food.

23 We went down to Sha-mo-nee. Nobody there. His
24 wife wasn't there anymore. That hotel owner said she left right
25 away after you left, so we had to take again a train to Grenoble.

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1 We wanted our money back or be taken over again. When we came
2 to Grenoble to his apartment he said, oh, I don't have the
3 money, I sent it to Marseilles and, I don't know, I'm sure --
4 I don't know what's wrong because he sent other people and other
5 people could go there and nothing happened, and he says come
6 back in an hour, I talk with Marseilles in the meantime.

7 After an hour we came. They lived on the third
8 floor, no elevator in the apartment building. When we were
9 about on the second floor we heard trip, trip after us, but in
10 those apartment buildings they had toilets in the hall, the
11 hallway, so we disappeared in the toilet, closed the door. We
12 heard the trip, trip going up, knocking on the door just one
13 floor above, talking and going back, going down. When we heard
14 they went down, we went up.

15 When we went up his wife was there and she says,
16 oh, my husband isn't here yet but he's coming in five minutes,
17 can you wait. So, we waited.

18 She walked out. She said, wait, I have to go to
19 a neighbor here, and she went out, left us alone and in another
20 five minutes she came back. When she came back immediately
21 after that again the trap, trap and two men came, one in
22 civilian clothes, one identified himself as a policeman, the
23 other not, but the other looked Jewish to me so I said well, how
24 about your identification and he got mad and he says, you're
25 arrested, you go with us or else you be handcuffed. So, we

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1 decided to go with them.

2 There was no money back and no other chance of
3 going to Switzerland. Was all lost, and that was a Jewish guy
4 who organized it.

5 They asked us to come with them to the next
6 police station. At the police station the one that I said I
7 thought he's Jewish disappeared and the one who identified himself
8 as a policeman in civilian clothes took us in and told the
9 policeman on duty, separate the two and leave them here till I
10 get back. That's what he did so we two couldn't speak with each
11 other.

12 We waited maybe half an hour, maybe little longer,
13 and the guy came back and he says, come out, and he took us in
14 front of the police station to tell us, here is the way to
15 liberty or here is the way to jail, to camp. The way to liberty
16 was a ticket to Aviogne. Aviogne is on the border in Switzerland
17 again. All he did was give us a ticket to go with the train
18 away.

19 So, we took it. We didn't make fuss, there was
20 nothing we could do. He said he will try to -- the other guy
21 promised only to see to give us another chance to go to Switzer-
22 land. So, that's the chance. But the thing was that he went
23 with us to the train. He waited at the steps when we got on. On
24 the steps of the train he waited till the train moved then he
25 got up and away. He want to make sure we stay on that train.

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1 Okay; we didn't know what to do. We were already
2 moving. It got dark, it was nighttime, and all of a sudden --
3 we had no luggage again, nothing. All of a sudden the train
4 stopped. It was a long train. My husband was so alert and
5 watching where we go, what happen. So he said, let's get out.
6 The train stopped. Regardless where, let's get out.

7 There were only fields. It wasn't a train station.
8 There were fields and there was one train (waah) that the woman
9 handled to open up or close and then -- so we rushed out. There
10 was not a long stop, just enough that we got out. We asked that
11 woman, where's there a hotel and she told us to go down this way.

12 We went to the hotel. We asked -- my husband
13 told him right away, I am prisoner of war, I am evaded, and can
14 I sleep here without registering, and he says, no. You have to
15 register, but the only thing I can do for you is -- I mean, the
16 French people were sympathetic to him because he -- in a way
17 they felt he fought with the French. So he said, you sign, you
18 register and leave before seven in the morning because at seven
19 they come to control the registrations. So, if you're not here
20 it's okay, and we did that. We slept till -- we were out before
21 seven.

22 We went there to a cafe to have breakfast. It was
23 kind of downtown. It was also a little town but they had a city
24 hall. Across the city hall was that cafe. So, we had breakfast
25 there and my husband asked the waiter if he would know a way to

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1 go to Switzerland.

2 A day before or two days before they send -- they
3 had boats from I think it's (Tunone), boats going over to
4 Switzerland to bring refugees in. A couple days before one man
5 was so frustrated because police came after them on the boat
6 that he shot the policeman and since then they don't -- the boats
7 didn't go anymore. They were afraid to go.

8 So, what else can we do?

9 He asked if the owner was there from the coffee
10 shop and the owner says, come to my office. He showed us in
11 the office and he drew a map and showed us where to go, take a
12 bus to go to Switzerland, again over the vine fields. He drew
13 a map very good that we could follow. We took again a bus and
14 we went there. We had to walk again through -- to a farm house.
15 The woman in the farm house said also her husband is prisoner
16 in France and she's alone and she has little help there, and we
17 begin to talk.

18 She says she has a young boy there who could take --
19 I had the umbrella and you had the little things like that. My
20 husband's pedicure set; that's what he carried. I had a handbag
21 and an umbrella. That young guy could carry it over to the wire
22 fence on his back and then when he comes back he will tell us
23 the direction and we can find it and that's where we should go
24 to the wire. That was very good and we went to the wire and we
25 went to Switzerland.

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1 INTERVIEWER: So you finally got there?

2 MRS. WERNER: Yes, and when we went through the
3 fields we came to a street. There was a streetcar and we asked
4 where we are and it was Geneva. That was very good. So we
5 asked again, we walked around and we saw people who looked
6 Jewish and we told them we're just coming, what should we do,
7 where to go. They all advised us to go to the police.

8 We were afraid. We thought maybe we'll go to
9 highers, and they said no, if you go to highers they send you
10 to the police so go right away to the police, so we did, but
11 first we went to a department store and bought chocolate. We
12 were so hungry and had not enough money to eat, but chocolate
13 we could buy, so we had something.

14 We went to the police station and they were very
15 friendly. They took us in and we told them what happened and
16 they said sit down and wait, a truck will come and will pick you
17 up. In the meanwhile have some grapes, and they had fresh
18 grapes there to offer us.

19 It took maybe one hour to wait and a full truck
20 with people came, all refugees. They picked them up from all
21 kind of stations and then they brought them to a camp where I
22 stayed two years. That camp was in Roudone, and it said only
23 it's an interring camp.

24 There I think I slept the first night really
25 good. Safe, and I felt I'm out of danger. We slept about eight

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1 women in one room and nobody had much clothes or luggage or
2 anything.

3 INTERVIEWER: What was the camp like?

4 MRS. WERNER: The camp, it was a old military
5 where the soldiers were and they emptied it and left it for us.
6 On the bottom the men slept on straw bag all in one hall and
7 the women were on the first floor. They had cots. So, we
8 stayed.

9 They had a big kitchen like for military, you
10 know, established, and so they asked the men to help, whatever
11 they can, and the women to help, and we were self-sustaining.

12 The food was rationed for the camp, too, but they
13 managed to -- we were not hungry. We didn't have good food but
14 we had the salt pork, we had a potato. I don't remember much
15 meat, but we were not hungry. No desserts.

16 We were, as I said, self-sustaining. Some women
17 worked in the laundry and some in the -- men mostly worked
18 in the kitchen.

19 After few months -- I don't know even what I did
20 there. Maybe I just cleaned the rooms or so. After few months,
21 after six months maybe, they sent my husband to another camp
22 to establish the office because they opened up one camp after
23 the other. So many people came so they had to expand. They took
24 old hotels or old big military places to fill with refugees and
25 they had to be established and the office had to be set up. They

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1 had rationing too, and they had a big staff in the office to
2 work. My husband was good in that so they took him and asked
3 him to open another camp, the office. So he did. He went away.

4 After six weeks he could come back to visit me.
5 Every six weeks for a weekend. They paid the fare.

6 We were there for four years in Switzerland.

7 INTERVIEWER: What years were they?

8 MRS. WERNER: From 1940 -- '42 -- 1940 we were
9 in France. 1942 we went to Switzerland till 1946. So, four
10 years in France and then the next four years in Switzerland.
11 That was 1942 when we left, actually Marseilles, the last big
12 stop to go to Switzerland. That's the time when the Germans
13 took over all France, all the way.

14 INTERVIEWER: So you got out just in time.

15 MRS. WERNER: Oh, yeah; we were chased. I mean,
16 we knew it. We had to go. We were on the go.

17 In Switzerland I stayed at that camp for almost
18 two years.

19 INTERVIEWER: Was it clean?

20 MRS. WERNER: Yeah, yeah; it was okay. I mean, I
21 had no complaint. It wasn't -- I don't know, maybe I forgot
22 because it's a long time. It's forty years ago.

23 In the beginning I was happy that I was safe,
24 and that counted more than all the rest.

25 While my husband came every six weeks, after some

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1 time I got pregnant. So, I had my daughter in 1944, January,
2 1944, and she was born in Luzerne. I was brought to the general
3 hospital there.

4 Then I stayed only a few months and my husband
5 was transferred again to a camp in the mountains, and that was
6 called Champ Peree. Champ Peree was a ski resort and it had
7 a big hotel with chalets. They wanted to have this installed
8 and sent my husband and my husband asked if I can come with the
9 baby. They said first no because no children, only adults, but
10 they wanted him and he insisted he want to have his wife and
11 child with him so they made an exception, not only exception,
12 they changed it to infants; adults and infants. Not older
13 children.

14 So, we came there and we had our own room. Our
15 daughter was in one of the chalets because there they had all
16 the babies, and the mothers who were not -- who did not have
17 their children there were supposed to work in the nursery. I
18 nursed my child so I had to go in the morning at six, every
19 mealtime till ten o'clock at night to go over to the snow to
20 the chalet. But it was good to be there.

21 Then we stayed there. That was '44. We stayed
22 there maybe one year. When the child was one year old they
23 transferred my husband again to Clarence (phonetic), which is
24 close to Montreaux. He ask if I can be freed then with the
25 child. They agreed and they referred me to a boarding house.

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1 So, I came with her to the boarding house and my husband was
2 close by in the camp. There we stayed till end of '45. Then
3 he applied at highers, if the highers would take him in their
4 office. They took him so we went to Geneva. He was paid for
5 office work with the highers. We rented a furnished apartment
6 and stayed there. We waited for affidavit to come to America.

7 We couldn't get -- we couldn't get the affidavit.
8 In the first place, we got one -- my parents went to the United
9 States in '39, beginning '39. We were given one maybe 1940, but
10 then was war and was impossible. In the meantime it expired and
11 when we are asked for it in '44 my parents and my sister was
12 here and they sent me one. We got that and then there was no
13 ship to take us before 1946. That was in April, 1946 there came
14 with one of the first liberty ships and there were only ten
15 people, ten adults on that ship. It was a small ship. There
16 were ten refugees. One was a lady, she was a Swiss lady who
17 lived in the United States. She visited her mother in Switzer-
18 land and she couldn't come back.

19 There was an older couple. Ten people altogether.
20 Our daughter was the only child. The officers gave us their
21 cabins, the officer cabins.

22 It took us seventeen days to come over and was
23 very stormy. We were supposed to come to New York and on the
24 way they had directions not to go to New York. The captain had
25 to make a detour and go to Boston.

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1 Now, we didn't know that Boston, how far it is
2 and how much money it would be to go from Boston to New York.
3 In New York I had my parents and my sister and her husband.
4 We didn't know if they will know.

5 Anyway, we talked to that lady who had her mother
6 in Switzerland and we told her we don't know how much it cost
7 but we don't have enough money. We have little money and I
8 don't know what to do and if the family doesn't come to Boston
9 to pick us up I don't know.

10 She says, you know what? I give you \$200.00 and
11 you give it back to me whenever you can. She gave us \$200.00
12 and that was forty years ago. That was lot of money. She fell
13 in love with our daughter and she played with her and she was
14 trusting us. Anyway, that was the nicest thing of all. We
15 stayed in contact and in the meantime she died. We paid her all
16 back and we stayed in correspondence.

17 When we arrived in Boston my brother-in-law was
18 there. We didn't know him because they married brand new, but
19 we had pictures. He recognized us from pictures, number one.
20 Number two, there was only one little girl. That was it and it
21 must be them. He came to Boston because he was notified in
22 New York that the ship will land in Boston. So, he came. He
23 took us on the train to New York and then we were reunited with
24 my sister and my parents.

25 We stayed with my parents for -- from April, 1946

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1 till October; six months, six months. My parents had a small
2 apartment, one bedroom.

3 INTERVIEWER: Did they live in New York?

4 MRS. WERNER: Brooklyn. They had their
5 apartment in Brooklyn and they had a one-bedroom apartment, but
6 they had the living room and the couch and so we could sleep
7 on the couch.

8 In the meantime my husband looked for a job and
9 it was very hard for him to find a job. That was the time that
10 all the soldiers came back from war and for refugee was no way
11 of finding a job. But he found one in a furniture shipping
12 department so he was shipping, packing the furniture. He was
13 paid, not a union, very low salary, and he didn't like it.

14 We had a cousin, I had a cousin here in San
15 Francisco who was in the diamond wholesale business and my
16 husband wrote to him and asked if he can maybe give him a job.

17 He answered, yes, you can come and he should
18 come alone and they will train him, and he had a job. So, he
19 left and I stayed with my parents.

20 At that time it was very hard to find an apartment
21 also, not only a job. Everything was taken again, and so they
22 told my husband here in San Francisco that on Market Street is
23 a radio announcer, his name was Dean Maddox, and he has a radio
24 show on Market Street and if people are looking for something,
25 buying or selling, they can come and talk to him. So he did it

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1 one lunchtime and he told on the radio show that he has his wife
2 and child in Brooklyn and he comes from Europe and he wants to
3 start out here and he needs an apartment, furnished, very low
4 rent. He gave the phone number from the office.

5 When he came back to the office he had five
6 calls, people wanted to rent him. So, he picked one, and that
7 was down on Bush Street. They gave us low rent and they were
8 French Canadian.

9 I didn't mention before; I started to talk French
10 with my daughter. We lived all the time in France or French --
11 Switzerland. So, I didn't want her to learn German so I said
12 I speak French. I don't know how long we have to stay in
13 Switzerland so she should be able to talk with other people. So,
14 when she came over she talked only French.

15 This family, the lady was actually the French
16 speaking one, and she was happy. She was like a grandmother
17 to her. She invited her for dinner and she took us shopping.
18 We didn't have a car and when she went shopping she said come
19 along. They were very nice. But, it lasted only two years
20 again. After two years they decided to sell their house, to
21 move to their daughter. They didn't feel well. Maybe another
22 year or so they died.

23 We had to look for another house, for another
24 place, and that was in a mission next to general hospital.

25 One of the janitors of the building where my

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1 husband where my husband worked had a flat there for rent so
2 we got that. We stayed there another two years.

3 That was about -- yeah; I should come back to
4 when my husband was trained in the diamond business. He had
5 to travel afterwards, after he knew the business and he was
6 traveling sometimes for two, three weeks. So, maybe after
7 another two years he didn't like it anymore because he says
8 everytime I come home the child gets bigger and I don't know.
9 I'm not living with her. He wanted to be living as a family.

10 He started to ask around and we met people here,
11 Vieneese people. There's the ha-core, or watch the ha-core,
12 which was also a sport and a social club. We met lot of people
13 from Vienna there. We didn't know them before. So, we socialized
14 actually with the ha-core people. One of the people was in the
15 dry cleaning business. He had a dry cleaning agency and he
16 said there are sometimes stores to buy, you can buy, and he
17 said he will show him how to work it.

18 He was interested. We didn't have the money to
19 buy it so I wrote to my sister and asked if she can lend us some
20 money we will pay her back so we can start. She did and we
21 bought and we had the store on Mission Street for -- how many
22 years? Thirty years maybe, till we retired. You know, I worked
23 there too. I did alteration and my husband -- we had the agency
24 taking in and giving out clothes. But it's lot of work and he
25 worked ten hours a day, six days a week. We couldn't go on

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1 vacation. If we went on vacation we went -- when the children
2 were small we went one week to Grenville and the next week one
3 went home and one -- only one went, let's say. One week to
4 Grenville with the children and one worked. The other weekend,
5 let's say, I came and he went back to work so the children had
6 two weeks. But, the vacation was a big problem.

7 Anyway, we managed and we worked hard, and that's
8 actually, I think -- till we retired, the end of our story.
9 I don't know if I left something out, but I think that's it.

10 INTERVIEWER: When did you retire?

11 MRS. WERNER: Ten years ago. Ten, eleven years
12 ago. So, now we are --

13 INTERVIEWER: Now we are here today.

14 MRS. WERNER: Yes.

15 INTERVIEWER: So, your story, that part in France
16 especially has a lot of -- it must have been scary a lot of the
17 time.

18 MRS. WERNER: Yes, yes; it was.

19 INTERVIEWER: You barely evaded getting captured
20 several times.

21 MRS. WERNER: Yes. And then everyday on the
22 street or everyday where you were you could be picked up.

23 In Vienna it wasn't so easy but my husband wore
24 a Czecho-Slovak sign, you know, that he could -- that everybody
25 sees he is a Czecho-Slovak. I wore it then, too. We had a

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1 passport, actually, Czecho-Slovak passport.

2 INTERVIEWER: Did it have that you were Jewish
3 on it?

4 MRS. WERNER: No, because --

5 INTERVIEWER: Was that the I.D. you used later
6 in France?

7 MRS. WERNER: No, not the passport, no. In France
8 I became -- I got a card, a I.D. card because I got allocation.
9 What does allocation mean? Military --

10 INTERVIEWER: Oh, right; and you didn't have to
11 put "Jewish" on that either?

12 MRS. WERNER: No, no, because that was all French.
13 That was not German. We didn't get into the German hands. We
14 tried to flee from them.

15 INTERVIEWER: Right, but if you had been stopped
16 that's the card you would have had.

17 MRS. WERNER: Yeah; but that happened to me. I
18 had two passports. I had one passport together with my husband
19 in Vienna. We took that passport maybe two years before. And
20 one passport with my own picture. The other passport with both
21 pictures. When I went to Yugoslavia to meet my husband at the
22 border that guy who sent me back wrote in "Jewish". With that
23 passport I went back to Vienna.

24 Then I took the other passport and went to Paris
25 and it didn't say anything on it. So, was a good thing I had

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1 two passports.

2 INTERVIEWER: Yes, I should say. One was the
3 Czechoslovakian one and one was the --

4 MRS. WERNER: No, both; both Czechoslovakian but
5 one was for me alone, the other was for both of us.

6 INTERVIEWER: Oh, right.

7 MRS. WERNER: You could do that, you know, have
8 a double picture. But, I mean, luck was with us because whatever
9 I told you if there wouldn't be a little bit of luck we would
10 have been gone. And so many times, so many times we were close
11 to it and just slipped through. It was a very sad experience.

12 I didn't mention that, you know, to get out of
13 Vienna we needed a affidavit to go to America and we couldn't
14 get it. We didn't have it. Generally it's not important.

15 We could go to France without visa. That's why
16 I could go to Paris. I didn't need a visa, only --

17 INTERVIEWER: Or a passport.

18 MRS. WERNER: Oh, yeah; passport I needed.

19 INTERVIEWER: Oh, you did need a passport?

20 MRS. WERNER: Yeah; I had it.

21 My husband learned pedicure in France and that
22 was -- I don't know which Jewish organization, but Jewish
23 Ort (phonetic) who provided courses in different fields, and
24 he took pedicure.

25 February, '39 my husband had acute appendicitis.

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1 He was immediately sent from the doctor's office to the hospital
2 for emergency surgery in Paris. He had to stay three weeks
3 there after they sent him to a convalescent home. He had a
4 ruptured appendicitis and after a few months again it ruptured.
5 So, it took him a long time.

6 I had -- three months after I had appendicitis,
7 but mine was not complicated. Then a lady whom I gave manicure
8 in Paris asked me one day if I want to go to a family with two
9 children. The children were four and six years old, as a
10 governess. So I did because at that time my husband decided
11 to go to be mobilized and I would not have to stay alone.

12 Besides, I was paid and had room and board. I
13 Accepted. I had practically no work; only with the children to
14 do. They had a cook and a housekeeper. I just took care of
15 the children. They went to the Breton for a vacation. That
16 comes before.

17 So, the family went to the Breton for vacation
18 and I took care of the children and went to the beach with them
19 and we had a good time.

20 After couple months, when the German took Paris,
21 the family packed up and wanted quick to return to their
22 apartment. At their apartment they packed everything to go on
23 again, I don't know where. They said maybe they go to South
24 America, but I was free on my own to go where I want to. But, I
25 had no place to go so from there I went then to -- I don't know.

HEDY WERNER

1 I went then and did manicure again. That was the time till the
2 air raids came that I went to the shelter and fell down and then
3 I had to go on to the end of the line.

4 INTERVIEWER: It must have taken a lot of courage
5 so many of the times that you just were on your way and not
6 anyplace to go or anybody to be with.

7 MRS. WERNER: No. I was all alone. I was always
8 frightened and fearing everyday or everytime I was on the street
9 that I will be taken, and I couldn't help it. I couldn't -- I
10 mean, that was just the life living under German occupation in
11 France. That's why every night we were afraid they knock on our
12 door and get us. In the daytime wherever we walked we were
13 afraid if one looks at us. We tried to avoid every look of
14 anybody.

15 In Switzerland I was relaxed and feeling free.
16 Not that I was happy, but I was in camp but I was feeling free,
17 nobody would arrest me.

18 INTERVIEWER: What was the name of that camp again?

19 MRS. WERNER: Mont Tashee (phonetic) was the camp.

20 We went a few years ago back to look at it and it
21 looked so little I couldn't imagine that that was holding so many
22 people.

23 INTERVIEWER: About how many do you think were
24 there?

25 MRS. WERNER: Maybe two hundred. It was closed

HEDY WERNER

1 when we were there. The sign was out; it's a museum and it's
2 only open so many hours a day so we couldn't go in. But, you
3 know, you forget after years how little it was. After being in
4 America that was a little place. But when you come from Europe,
5 then that was a big place. So, that is the difference. But,
6 that was Mont Tashee.

7 This should be said in the first place. If they
8 wanted to leave for the United States we needed a affidavit from
9 somebody from the United States.

10 We had to register at the American Consulate in
11 Vienna and register for a quota. Our quota had to be good or
12 we would have to wait so many years till the quota was good to
13 be used for the affidavit. Even if you had the affidavit you
14 couldn't come if your quota wasn't ready.

15 So, in the first place we didn't get the quota
16 until we got the affidavit. We couldn't go because the war broke
17 out, and then the affidavit expired and so we had to wait again
18 for a new affidavit until we got it from my parents and my sister.
19 We had to wait till the first ships go to the United States.
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