

Interview with Jolane Hollander

Holocaust Media Project

Date: Place:

Interviewer

Transcriber: Elizabeth R. Miller

A: My name Jolane Hollander

Q: Where were you born?

A: I was born in Czechoslovakia. 1928.

Q: Where?

A: Whary

Q: Whary?

A: Hm, Whary.

Q: And you lived there?

A. I lived there. In 1938 the government changed, you know, and came in to Hungaria.

Q: It became Hungary?

A. Yes

Q: And what were you doing in 1938?

A: I was a schoolgirl.

Q: What grade were you in?

A. I didn't finish my school that time, just when I came back from concentration camp. Then I went to school again. And I finished. I graduated 1962.

Q. Congratulations! That's nice.

Q. What were your circumstances at that time? Your family - what

did they do? How did they live?

A. My father, he was a carpenter. And I have two brothers and my sister, we were six and both my brothers working and my sister also. I was the youngest and didn't work. And at that time, you know, began the antisemitism in Hungary and we had very hard time.

Q: What was it like?

A. We couldn't go to school, because we was Jew, it was start in Hungary. (several sentences in foreign language, cannot print)

A. 1944 came in Germany and we still in Germany and they came in 1944 March and two, three weeks later they pick up us and they put to Ghetto.

Q. What was that Ghetto?

A. "Barraksas" (several foreign language sentences)

Q. What does that mean?

A. That is a city.

Q. That is where you lived?

A. We not lived here, we lived in "Whaary". This was like a village and when they picked up all Jewish people to put to Ghetto, this is the city.

Q. They took you to the city?

A. Yes, yes, everybody. Like here we have villages in the Bay Area; it is not all cities. Right? In a large city like San

Francisco, they have also "sagn".

- Q. Before you were put in the Ghetto, between 1938 and 1944, how did your family manage to live? Was it difficult?
- A. Uh, very, very difficult life we had, because Jewish kids couldn't go to school. That was our main thing, we were small and everybody just show she is Jewish, she cannot sit with me.
- Q. Did you have to wear that star?
- A. Yea, when German came in.
- Q. Could the adults work?
- A. Yea, they could work, but always was teasing and
- Q. Harassing?
- A. I cannot ..
- Q. The workers were harassing the Jews?
- A. Yes, yes. This is just, you have to start. You have so many friends, you know, who not agree with you, opposite, you understand?
- Q. They were against you, you mean, because you were Jewish?
- A. Yes. Yes.
- Q. Were you poor?
- A. Well, we not was rich, but father made a very good living. He was a carpenter, he was on his own, working with hands.
- Q. So you had enough to eat?
- A. Yes. We had enough to eat.
- Q. What happened after the Germans came?

A. When the Germans came, they came in March, 1944. And we couldn't go out to the street because all over they came with many kind of cars and motorcycles, grab the girls, you know, and they raped, understand?

Q. Sure.

A. And we was very young and my mother even didn't want when we going outside. And they lived in our garden too, our "largo". But they know we are Jewish people.

Q. They lived in your garden?

A. Yes.

Q. Soldiers?

A. Yes. Yes. They have a lot of cars and. how to say..... Well, it is not a point. They came in, they eat separate.

Q. At your house?

A. No, no. They came with a group, not one, not hundred, and thousand and thousand. In our whole village. And when they could stay a car or two car, they moved to there and lived there. They keep their power, you understand? Somebody going to shot or something, thousand and thousand came. Is not one or two car, a lot. And everybody talking they going to do something with Jew. But they were very rough. They not talk nice and we was very scared.

Q. Did you know about the Concentration Camps?

A. No, never, never. And just start at Easter holiday, and the first two days we had a terrible time. Since they came in we

have to wear arm the yellow star. Without we cannot go to store or outside. That was a very shame.

Q. You were humiliated?

A. That was a shame.

Q. Well, o.k.

A. Humiliated? Yes that's the word. But, anyway, one day they liked to have silver. They give commitment. (searching for a right word) They give a report. From the Jew you have to collect silver, money and gold. And when it not will be, we are going to do, so and so and so. Then they pick us up after. I was very little girl, you know. I just remember how my parents crying and they have a very hard time. I was fourteen year old.

Q. When they picked you up. did you stay with your parents, or they just gradually took you away?

A. No. No. After holiday, that was April 16, they pick up us and they took to Ghetto.

Q. The whole family?

A. The whole family. All family. And they are asking for earrings and rings. We couldn't take it out, because we was very small when my parents "walked". And they break it out. They break and they take out. Yea. And they said you have to pick up from home warm clothes and three days' food.

And we went to city of "Baraksas" (what I tell you). There was our Ghetto, where they making brick, brick fabric. Red brick fabric. They making there brick. There was our Ghetto, it was very big, very big. And we lived there. And they pick up from our food, you know, from home, all furniture.

Q. They took it all?

A. They took it, they destroyed it and even though what we had at home, they break up the door and they going in; they throwing out everything. We don't own nothing, nothing. We was close in Ghetto, but was so strictly "post", German "post", we couldn't go out. And they give what they made food.

Q. They gave you what they made?

A. Yea. They made from our.

Q. And what did they make you?

A. It's no matter what kind of food. They give from our food. They make food and they give for us. Very little, but they give. We live there for three weeks. (some foreign words) Three weeks. After three weeks the train came in. Many, many train. Twenty and twenty five was one line, you know how much it is, a lot. And they said, you pick up your stuff what you have, what is necessary, and we are going to leave. But they don't tell where we're going and they

put hundred people for every wagon.

Q. Car?

A. Car. Hundred people. Kids, and old and young and middle age and every kind. This is a lot. Too much people. And no window, no light, no water, no food. And the train start to move. And they locked all wagons with Jews. We just listening how the German talk with each other, their "posts".

Q. Guards?

A. Guards. They talking together and they with gun and dog, they think we are going to make fire or we going to fight them or something. They were "built up" very well, you understand?

Q. Built up? You mean arms, many guns?

A. Yea, yea.

Q. They were very well armed?

A. Yea. They have a back-up, you know, where somebody going to happen, they going to have help, you understand? I don't speak so well English.

Q. I don't speak any Hungarian.

A. Well, and the train begin move. Started to move faster and faster. And then we see, you know, not a ... I was, I am telling you, I was a little girl, but many was on train who said it is Czechoslovakia.

Q. Where it's going?

A. Where we're going. "Ushgerod", "Koshitsey", people know their stations. And this way they know where we are. And one time, no light, no light, going into the tunnel. They special "bured", until to from "Bergervort" or until to "Koshichek", we went outside the train and after they made a special line to Auschwitz. That was underground.

Q. A trainline underground?

A. Yea. Underground. And they drive so fast. And no water, no food.

Q. How did you go to the bathroom?

A. On a

Q. On a bucket?

A. Yea. On bucket.

Q. Did anyone die on the journey?

A. Yes, yes, yes.

Q. Many or only a few?

A. Kids and old people, who couldn't breath, because not was air, and begin spring, getting harder in "Urals".

Q. How many days were you on the train?

A. Two days and a night. And when was a night, the train stopped and had a very little window, very little, and everybody can look out from this window and they said a big noise was, like a water. Like "dipping" the water. Like you see the ocean hose working.

Q. Like waves? Like ocean waves?

A. Aha. We listening, you know. And everybody want to see outside, what is it? And they said, we are standing on a bridge. This is a bridge. Under there we have a water. And they said in German language "absteigen." And this is the meaning, get off, get out. And we think they are going to get out everybody and they going to shot us to the water.

Q. Push you into the water?

A. Shot. Shot. Gun.

Q. Shoot you into the water?

A. Shoot to the water. Because you know was many journals came out from 1938 until 1940 "Jose" did in Czechoslovakia, "Jose" did in Poland, "Jose" did in Holland and France. You know, came out, when German occupy these countries that years went through. But the journal showing, I was a kid as I was telling you, but I remember how my parents always talking about it. Was in journal, you know, "Jose" kill Jewish people. Shot, like standing at a ocean and one by one they shoot down. They said they're going to shot down us. Everybody begin crying. They asking what's wrong? And they're asking you going to shot us? And they said, no, no we have to change the guards, because they get tired, they give a backup. And they close every wagon back, but no food,

nothing, no water. The kids crying, everybody thirsty, nobody don't sleeping and smell was - one going for "pee" one going for "popo". You know, like a gypsie. And that was on morning, that was night when we was on water. And early in the morning, just start to came light, that was 4 o'clock, and slow down the train. Not go so fast, just step by step. And everybody like to look outside and they said, oh my goodness, this look like Jewish people there. Men and women with a stripe dress and stripe pants and jacket and talking to each other they said: you think we going there? No, they going to kill us.

Q. Who said that?

A. People talking together. And just they open the door. Train stopped, it's so noisy, so "vald".

Q. Where were you?

A. Where was I? I was on train too.

Q. No, but where did you stop? Was that Auschwitz?

A. Auschwitz. That was Auschwitz. But we don't know. You know that Auschwitz was a city, but we don't stop at the station city, we stay outside, where is a big "Lager" camp. That was 80 kilometer, 80 kilometer for site. That was so big . 80 kilometer was for site. (somebody talking in back).

Q. You were in "Birgenau", you said?

A. Yes. (more foreign talk in back) Yes, there was a "Lager". In Auschwitz, Birgenau, "A Lager" and "B Lager", A-camp and B-camp, C-camp, Gypsie camp, it is all in Auschwitz. But you know it is 80 kilometer one side, another side, a very big place. And they opened the door and they said 'move out'. Everybody. All packages, together. All Jews together. Hurry-up, hurry-up, hurry-up. And many Jewish people worked already there. These people who we see with striping suit and they said in Jewish language. 'Never tell old, just tell you like to go for work.'

Q. Don't say how old you are, just say you like to go to work.

A. Yes. You just go to work, you know. But since going so fast money was until here, "unstripped", until to here, gold, money, package,

Q. Where? On the ground?

A. Yea, on the gound.

Q. How far would you say? About two feet of money?

A. Yea, paper money.

Q. Two feet of paper money. They take that from the passengers?

A. No, everybody throw. Not need nothing. Because everybody was so bitter, everybody see we going to die. No more life, until when the people have a little hope, you know, you hold

your money for the last moment. But that time, everybody sees no more life. "The wind it blow like that."

Q. Oh.

A. Oh, my gosh. And that was so fast; and my mother like to have for young woman "she a tricket". And she like to take it. And I said, no, you come with us and I hold her on one side and my sister on the other side and we stand right away to Mangele. Mangele, he was a doctor, who selected. Right, left, right, left.

Q. Where were your brothers and sisters?

A. My brother and sister? My sister was with us and my brother went with the men. Right away they selected men here, women there. And have to stay and "Schimpferei", you know, fight people for our line. And we go and I see my father and my brothers. And when we stand, we went, they standing. We see each other and telling each other when we want to come home, just to our house. And we never see it again, never. And right away we stand in front of Mangele. He said, how old are you? But I don't speak German and I even don't understand. But my mother, she speak Jewish language, and she said 'seventeen'. And I was fourteen. But she made me up. And he said how about she? My sister was seventeen and she said she twenty. And Mangele said, how old are you? And my mother was 57.

Q. She was 57?

A. 47. And she want to make her young and she couldn't say so fast, because she don't speak German, just Yiddish; and he said, Mengele said, you tell you are 22 and you go with your children. And this was we go right . And who went left, all went to gas.

Q. So your father and brothers went left?

A. No, no.

Q. So Mengele let you all go to the right. How about the rest of the people of your transport? Did most of them go to the right or to the left?

A. From one transport, was 3000 people, went from one wagon, 3000, - left over 220, or 250 or 180; the rest of them went just to the gas.

Q. Why do you think he let your mother and you go to the right?

A. Why? To work.

Q. She was older than most people. Was she strong?

A. No, she was very bitter. She cried too much what was going to happen and we suffered, we suffered. We too. I was very young, but I suffered every day. We don't eat, we don't sleep, we're so scared what's going to ..

Q. But why do you think he let you go to the right and all the other people to the left?

A. Oh why? Who was a young lady and had two, three kids. They have to give for right, for left, cannot go to to

work with kids and kids not staying, or went to gas. But we don't know that at the time what's going to happen.

They put us for left and we went. Was very, very hard day.

Very, very hard. And we went to (Zonoff). We walked. This is about three miles from the station.

Q. After you were selected?

A. Yes, selected. And we have to walk.

Q. To (Zonoff)?

A. To (Zonoff). That was (some foreign words). There everyone can have a shower. How do you say in English? We don't sit on top. Shower, shower. We went there. But first of all we went there and they said: One place you going to throw your shoes, one place you going to throw your clothes. And everybody go in to their room. And one man standing there make us shave. And you have to run more and another man shave you here.

Q. Were those Germans or Jews shaving you?

A. They were Jewish, who were already there.

Q. They all wore striped suits?

A. Yes. Another man cut your hair. But all men; for women making men's, for men making women's. Can you imagine this? It's like a joke.

Q. It must have been humiliating?

A. Yea. And everybody nude. Everybody nude. And even we don't recognize each other, because we was very different. Without hair, you know, everybody look like crazy. And everybody crying each other; everybody looking for somebody.

Q. Were you still together - your mother and your sister?

Yea. And then we went to the shower-room. And they give hot water, right away hot water. Then they give cold water. But anyway you have a shower, no matter what kind. And when you came in, your shoes you have to keep in your hand; you have to sterilize. And again they put something on your head to sterilize something.

Q. Disinfectant?

A. Disinfectant, yea. And (ho?) did you run, somebody jumped on you very hard clothes grey color. For moment they give grey color. That was brand new, but so hard like a..

Q. A rock?

A. Rock, like a wood. Like a wood. And no bra, no under-clothes, nothing. No panties, no pantyhose, just some socks, different colors and your own shoes. And when you dress up you look like crazy.

Q. Did they tatoo you then or later?

A. First there was that. It was the first day when we went. Then we have to walk to the block where we live. (pause) Then we went to block and have three beds. Lay upon lay and relay.

Q. In what block did you live?

A. "A". Block "A". (uncle Steven open the door)

Then we went to block. They count thirteen people for every bed. That made from brick.

Q. The beds were made from brick?

A. Yes. And one blanket we received. For thirteen people one blanket. At night were so many cockroaches, we just have to (pinchtree, pinch ?) or something. We don't know first what is it. But in morning we have so big spots, red spots all over.

Q. Bites?

A. Spots. Pinched you are by cockroach.

Q. Bites?

A. Bites, aha. But so big spots came up like swollen. And we received for evening - like a tea. For thirteen people one bowl. One bowl for thirteen people. No spoon, no cup. No sugar, no lemon. But we drank. Everybody was very thirsty, it was a very hot day. We couldn't lay down, we just sit like that. Everybody like this way, you know the legs ... And we just warm up from each other, because the blanket doesn't cover thirteen people. And in morning five o'clock, - four o'clock, - three o'clock, somebody ran into the room and said: "Wake up, make your bed, fix your bed, go to the bathroom and go out and stay at the line. And we think it is so dark, how come it is wake up and fix your bed.

But we have to go out. No matter if it rain or not we have to wake up. And you think we have a bathroom? We have a latrina. You know what is a latrina? Like a piece of wood and you stepping on and you have like a (yum ?) And you just have to sit and no nothing. You just have to step on. That was a bathroom. And no washing. You cannot wash your hands, your face (no way worth it ?) And the room, the whole room, they call it barrack. Many rooms have, many rooms, they call it barrack and in the middle side was like a hallway. And was one girl, she take care of everybody; and she said: "Don't drink here water. You are going to receive stomach-cramp. Here water is - how do you say?

Q. Contaminated?

A. Something they put in not to drink.

Q. Poison?

A. Poison. Poison. The water was poisoning, you know. Special. Not to drink. And we have to stay five people for one line. And you have to stay. You are staying from three o'clock and six o'clock, seven o'clock, eight o'clock. Nine o'clock came and the German officer woman came and she count how many people. But until then everybody got tired. And who taking care of us? They have a belt, you know, and they so hit. You know - spank, spank.

Q. Beat?

A. Beat. But so, it was terrible.

Q. With a belt?

A. Yea with a belt. "Stay in the line." And the line has to straighten out. One is standing, one is (doesn't want ?), one is standing with one foot.

Q. Was this the second day, or was every day like this?

A. Every single day. Everybody crying, everybody crying. Nothing to do. And we was there four weeks. Every evening we received for seven people one bread, a loaf of bread like a kilo bread for seven people and a piece of margarine. And for thirteen people a bowl of soup. For every evening. Nothing else. And the whole day nothing. No tea, no coffee, no milk.

Q. What did you drink?

A. Nothing.

Q. Only that soup?

A. Yea. But for thirteen people one bowl. About one liter.

Q. Did you eat anything else?

A. Nothing. I put here my bread, because no pocket, not a piece of paper, nothing, nothing you have.

Q. Did they put you on a work detail?

A. Wait a minute. That'll start.

Q. Sorry.

A. And we were there four weeks. Four weeks we cried day and night, day and night. It was so raining days and we have to go three o'clock and we have no cover, no sweater, no

blanket, nothing. And we went inside evening (my daughter came with baby - pause). We were there four weeks and one day came, we standing in the line, you know, and came to select people to work. Every day, but they don't select us. Other girls, you know. And one day came this German officer woman and she said: "Come with me." And she hold my hand. And I said no, I can't, I have a mother, I have a sister. She said: "where are they?" And they standing behind me, because I have a tatoo. Oh, I forgot to tell you. After a couple of days later, they take us for a tatoo. We have not name, just tatoo - A6517.

Q. That's your number?

A. Yes. And my mother same 18.

Q. A6518 ?

A. Yes. And my sister 19. We are standing in one line.

Q. That was three days after the showers?

A. Yes, yes. And she said: "Let's get your mother and your sister too." And they counted one hundred people. And she said: "Let's go. We are going to work." She said: "You are very lucky you are going to work."

We went there where there's a transport come in. You know the transport. And they put us to work what the transport bring. You know, packages. We have to open and, you know, food to food, and soap and powder and that kind of stuff one place and clothes another place.

Q. What was the name of your work party - commando?

A. "Brashinka". "Brashinka". This part, you know, like here we have a street, a long street and two side houses. Same, just wood. And this is called "Brashinka".

Q. They were huts? And this is where you put clothes and the soap and the food?

A. Yes, yes.

Q. They came on transports?

A. The transports come in and all packages and everything they bring there that was "Brashinka."

Q. "Brashinka." And what was the name of your commando?

A. That was the name "Brashinka." And six weeks we have to go every morning to work to there, but evening we have to go back to sleep there.

Q. How many miles each way?

A. About three four miles. Not was a long walk, but we have to walk. And we have to sing, we have to sing. We have to march and sing. And when we went there, this was near where we were working, there was an orchestra. The girls wore dark blue skirts with (holes ?) like that.

Q. Pleats?

A. Pleats, yes and white blouses. And they playing on piano outside. Piano and cello and all kinds. And we have to sing. And the Germans standing there and watching us. And who not sing, they hit. We have to sing. Our hair is cut

down like my hand, you know. And our socks is broken and our dress is very bad. But we have a hope that we have to sing. That is (gamut ?) very nice in German language.

And we went to work every day. And after six weeks they burned our place where we have to stay for night. And we worked one week daytime and one week nighttime. And that was the place where they burned people. Four crematorium were there and we worked in the middle side. There was a gas(gin?). And you know that people just coming day and night and day and night. And they going to gas. You know we see it all eye. They pick up two people, Jewish, that died.

Q. Did you do that?

A. Not me. Somebody else does. I was not that kind of commando. I worked with suitcase. The men and they (droud ?) and they (droud ?). They put one line people, one line - wood. And they burning outside too, because inside was very busy. And they couldn't do so fast. But when we leave our Lager we smell always and we ask what is it? And this girl who is taking care of us, she said ("Lumpia" ?). Burning the (Lumpia ?). Lumpia is translated from Hungarian like a drunk man is a (Lump ?). But we don't understand, we don't understand German. But when we worked on a job, we see it; this fire going up to the hill, up to the sky.

Q. You also saw the bodies?

A. Oh yea, yea.

Q. How did it feel?

A. You can imagine. I want to die. This smell! When burning hair and nails, this is terrible smell. And that was summer, May, June, July. We worked there nine months. That was terrible! We worked night-time and the German officer came in to see us. And we have a forewoman, like a foreman, and she (walk in god ?) with the German. And he said: " (Roshika ?), how is Jewish God can stand this fire?" Forewoman said: "I don't know." And he said: "Where is the Jewish God? Why cannot see?"

Q. The German soldier said that?

A. Yes, yes. You know so many religious rabbis went to the gas and children and they tell in Jewish language (several words I cannot understand then Shema Israel?) I don't know how to tell this. But anyway, that was terrible. We worked there nine months. And this job is - they pick up me and my sister, and we have to jump on car and they took us to this place where there is a crematorium, where there's gas. And people just have to take off dress on one side and one side shoes. And we have to pick up this stuff and take to "Brashinka." You understand?

Q. Right. Did you ever try and talk to the people?

A. Oh you know they just hate and beat.

Q. Where was your mother?

A. With us. She worked.

Q. Could you get extra food on this commando?

A. No, no. We received very bad food. Very, very bad food. That was terrible what they give us. We couldn't eat. But we were lucky. Transport brought better food and when they don't see it, we open the box, we eat, we grab something. And one day, that was January 17, 1945 they made everybody go to the street and everybody have to stand in line. Five people was a line and everybody have to stand with me. And the commander, the very big boss, his name was "Hauptschaftsfuehrer" and I don't know his other name, he said: "Let's go dress up everybody. Because we have there a lot of clothes. Because we have to leave from here." And they for everybody a kilo bread and nothing else. And we have to walk. And we have to walk day and night.

Q. Was your sister still there with you?

A. My sister, my mother, me and many, many. Thirty thousand people they liquidated from there.

Q. From the camp?

A. From the camp. But you know from one camp from another camp was a so big (lock ?) and all over was electric, electric. When you go near to it you can die. Many, many died there. And when it was raining day, you just had to go near it and

Q. To become electrocuted.

A. Yea, yea. And we walk, we walked three days and nights.

They give us sandals. You know what I mean?

Q. Sandals?

A. A boot sandal and a top have two stripes.

Q. Strap.

A. Strap, yes. And we have to walk day and night. January 17 can you imagine, the snowing so big pieces, you know, but around evening we were very tired and we asking from the guard where we going. And he said: "always forward." And he said after three days you will be like cooked rice. And after three days we get to Oslo. That was a city named Oslo. The same night all is get freed. The place is get freed. Russia and American came and get freed from the German. Can you imagine? That's why they evacuated us.

Q. Right.

A. Thirty thousand people. (a lot of talk in foreign language) But nighttime and daytime so many planes came, so many bombs, you know.

Q. What country were you in?

A. Germany. We were in Germany. We were in Oslo, a city named Oslo. They sent us to the train, to the station. And when there we have to sit on and a hundred people take for every train, not train, like a room, you know. And we went to Ravensbrueck. They give for everybody one bread, just one bread. No water, nothing.

But was so - not was covered the room. Was open and was half coal, black coal.

Q. The floor was covered with coal?

A. Coal, yea, yea. And you have to sit on. It was raining and our hand are frozen, our legs are frozen. We went there was so big winter, snow like ...

Q. Three or four feet high?

A. Yea, I never see this kind. And we have to walk about six or seven miles to the camp, from the station to camp. That was in our (while in the forties?)

Q. How long were you in the train?

A. I guess three days.

Q. Three days?

A. Yes. But we don't go always. You know the train, that is lifting train. That is going very slow. When the line is open then we can go. And at that time was war. You know the line was always busy. This is not like an express. An express the line is always open, you can go. And there was very big winter and they built for us a so big barrack, a barrack like a house, but no wall. Like going camping, you open a camping tent, it was so big, 5000 girls can go in. And it was made wood beds, three layer beds and for each bed three people have to . . . sit.

Q. Sleep.

A. Sleep, yea. And morning, three o'clock we have to come

out and evening we can go inside, six o'clock. And then they give for everybody a piece of bread. For ten people a kilo bread. For ten people one kilo. One slice.

Q. How long were you in Ravensbrueck?

A. We were there three weeks. My sister get very sick. We have a diary. We was very sick from cold, from not to eat. We was so sick, we every minute had to sit down to make (koko ?). But no bathroom. Just on the street. You know we had a little coffee-spoon and was a (koko ?) there, we pick up a little snow to eat, we was so hungry. Don't ask.

Q. Did your sister survive?

A. She was very sick, I was very sick, my mother was very sick and we sometimes went in and we couldn't get a bed. There were so many people, we couldn't get a bed. And my mother was very sick, she had a backache. And my friend said: "I am going to stay up one night and let your mother lay down, because she had a very bad headache." And when we walked, my mother had such a bad headache, can you imagine? I was very young and my sister too, but we have good friend and they pick up my mother like that, hold your hand like that and she sit on and we walk this way.

Q. Carried her on your back?

A. No, on my hands. You know like you hold your hand and she sit on and she hold your neck and my neck. Because she had so big backache, she couldn't walk anymore.

Q. Did the friend who helped you lift, did she survive?

A. Her sister, yea, one, she live in New York and of them she died.

Q. The one that did lift, does she live?

A. Yea, one.

Q. Did your sister survive?

A. Yes.

Q. She did.

A. We lived there three weeks; we don't work. We have a terrible time. After three weeks they sent us to (Tachau ?)

Q. Dachau?

A. Tachau (some foreign words)

We went there and we have to go to the train and it was a very dangerous time, because so many planes came and they throwing bombs. You know bombs. And here was a crash and there a crash, but anywhere we went there. And my sister was very sick. And we received a place, not bad, just on floor. They don't give food much. Just once a day, very very little. And my sister was very sick and they just sprinkled her dress and her shoes and we think she already die. And the lady say, your sister she very sick, she has a fever. And she lost her hair. She was three weeks there in a hospital. And my mother she couldn't go to see her, because we cannot go near to a, a, a, like a hospital, but not was a real hospital. And she went nighttime, when

nobody don't see her. And when see her, the German officer with a (barrel ?) spank her.

Q. Beat her?

A. Yea, yea. And you know the commander said, we're going to leave from here, we're going to leave, because we have to leave, we don't work. We just live there. And my sister run away from the hospital, can you imagine? She was sick and we have outside, we're standing in the line, we have sourcream, cheese and bread. And they want to give for everbody. But came a lot of planes, was alarm, you know, sirena.

Q. Siren?

A. Yea. And they said, now let's go to the station, to the train station. And they're going to put everything in the train and when you're going to get there you are going to receive food. We went day and night, two days and we don't receive nothing. One girl died here, but we were happy, because we had a little bit more space.

Q. You were happy when they died?

A. Yea. And you know Russia throwing bombs, first of all, our life like a candle. Where to throw to the bomb, you know. And they give very (life ?). And this is dropping down. And we are praying to God just we should receive a bomb to die here. We don't want to live anymore. We don't need nothing. Just not to suffer anymore. We

are very tired. We cry and cry and our heart never stop to cry. When we get there ..

Q. Where did they take you?

A. That was (Marhall ?). And he said when they opened the door, the train door, he said, the commander, "what happened, the dying transport come in?" It is a surprise. They put us into a wagon, the open rooms again, because there is too much bombs they are throwing, let us receive a bomb.

Q. They wanted you to receive a bomb?

A. Yea. But we don't receive a bomb. But the guards, they went to the bunker and they received a bomb. We don't receive a bomb. Then we walked day and night, day and night, from January until April 26, we just walked and walked and walked. We never had just on the street, on forest, one, two hours, can you imagine. And no cover, no coat. For winter we received summer clothes, for summer a winter clothes. But we were just shaking.

Q. How did you make it?

A. (laughs) I don't know. God gave us energy and hope. We were very bitter and I cried always for food, for freedom, and my sister gave her portion to me. That's why she get sicker and sicker like I and I never have a hope I am going to live. But my mother always tell don't cry, someday we'll all be free and we'll go home.

Then we walked and walked. And on April 26, the German, who came with us as guard, he taking off his clothes.

Q. His uniform?

A. And he have under private clothes. And he said "Go everybody to the Freiheit (to the freedom).

Q. In April?

A. April 26. And we are middle in the forest, can you imagine? We always went in a forest.

Q. So the people wouldn't see you?

A. Not to see. We went to the front. We was in a (Magdenburg ?) It was a big, big (bomb ?). (Magdenburg ?) (Leipzig ?) And I remember when we walk and we see the sign, we always tell each other not to forget where we walking, where we are. And we just walked until the freeway. There is a freeway going, you know, and many cars, army cars. And we went there and this car stopped. And they ask: "What kind of people you are?" We don't speak English, but was many educated women. We said we Jewish people, we came from the camp. "Oh, Jewish people" they said. Jewish life is up. I don't know how to say in English. Jewish Leben is frei.

Q. Jewish life is free.

A. Jewish life is free. Yea. And no more suffer. They gave us candy and cheese and bread and cookies.

Q. Did you eat it?

A. Yea. Everybody. They were American soldiers. And we are very tired. We can't walk anymore. We like to go to city. And they said: "You have to go to (Kremer ?) (Kremer ?) is a very, very big city. In the middle side have a Elbe. One side American, one side Russian. And you have to go there. We are going to take care of that. We are going to prepare bed and food and clothes and everything. We said, why we cannot sit on your car. This was army car. They said no, we can't, because we are taking a lot of back-up for the war. You know, gun and bomb and everything. But you have to go there. You just walk this way, where we are going on the freeway.

Q. How far was it?

A. That was 33 kilometers from there. This is very far, I am telling you. And we have to sleep one night in a German house. We went in and we are telling where we came from. And she gave us food. She was a very young lady, she have a little girl.

Q. How many were there at the time?

A. Just three of us. Yea. Everybody went, because we had to rest. It get dark and we couldn't walk in the dark. And she cooked us cream of wheat for dinner. And next day we waked up she gave us comb and a (power ?) and a gun and a cooked potato and jello. What she have? Her husband was in the war, she was (yellow and deserted ?)

with a little daughter. But anyway we went there and we received really food there. And they said we have to go to the Elbe. Because this place is not Russian, not American yet. They don't know what's going to happen. But this Elbe river, that bridge was bombed. And Americans making a ladder and there is a water two side like that. They making like a step. And they help one by one to going down to the water and they put down the two ladders and we had to walk up, up until we came up. And they helping there also. There was American flag and on the other side there was Russian soldiers and Russian flag. But there was, I can't tell you. They raped the girls.

Q. Who raped the girls?

A. Russian soldiers. And the water going with the sugar and a dress with the honey. And everything robbed. The stores, the houses,

Q. The Russian soldiers were robbing everything?

A. Yes, robbing. And the American captain said: "how many people we have here?" And he counted 600. And he check everybody have a tatoo. And he said: "Don't worry, you are going to receive enough bed, enough food, enough clothes and a haircut. Everything. And we went there. That was (mandatory ?). You know where kids study in university and sleeping there.

Q. In a dormitory?

A. Dormitory. Yes. It was empty. They emptied it for us. They give for everybody a bed and for everybody a white blanket. And a Red Cross package. This is army package. There was food and a needle. You know, when need something to sew. And toothpaste and pasta and cheese and crackers and sugar cubes, you know this kind of thing was inside. And everybody received a shower. A warm shower and soap. My goodness, one and a half year we don't have shower. But we have a lot of (louse ?)

Q. Lice.

A. And we had itching all over. Had a lot of spots. And they said we are going to take care, we have doctor. And they give cream we have to put on and this is going away lice and we have to take more showers. Anyway, they taking care of us. But I am telling you, we received such good food from Americans. That was excellent.

Q. How much did you weigh when you got to this American camp?

A. We were there just six weeks. And they asking where you from, where you want to go. And they said, don't go home, we are going to take care of you, we are going to send you (interrupted by child and asks did you break it?)

Q. That's o.k. I have it on tape.

A. And we said, no, we have our agreement with our family. And my brother. Somebody going to stay alive. We are

going home and we are going to see each other there.

(A lot of baby talk, could not understand a sentence)

They sent us on a very nice tourist bus and we sit down.

Because all over was bombed the train lines. Planes we did not have at that time. And we came to Bratislava. From Germany we came to Bratislava, (Braga, Forshoin) and Budapest. And when we came to (Forshoin, Bratislava ?) we meet people who knew my father. And they said your father leave and he going to come home. He was in Theresienstadt.

Q. He lived?

A. Yes. My brothers, they died. A German shot them down.

Q. How many brothers?

A. Two brothers.

Q. How many children?

A. I have two brothers, me and my sister. Four we was.

Q. And the two boys died and your father lived.

A. Yes, yes. And we came home and after one week my father came home too. But he was very sick. But we were so skinny, he and me and my sister and my mother. You know we are eating sardine and margarine, everything came out of our mouth, because we not used for one and a half years.

Q. You mean you threw up?

A. No, no. When you not eating sardine and sugar and that kind of thing, you live just from your body. And we start

to eat, we have so many spots in our mouth, on our body.

Q. Sores?

A. Yea, how to say.

Q. Boils?

A. Cists. All our body, we was so sick. It is unbelievable.

Q. So you saw your father again?

A. Yea. He came home. One year he couldn't work, he was so sick.

Q. When did your father die?

A. My father died 1971. And he don't know we going to come to United States. He don't know. We never tell him. And I want to tell you, when we came home we want to leave from there. Because Russia was there and they closed all borders. And no way we could go.

Q. You couldn't get out?

A. No, but we have a chance ten years ago. I have a sister-in-law here, Gloria. We meet her in 1962, she came to visit us in Europe. When we went to part, we tell her we like to come to the United States.

Q. She is your sister-in-law?

A. Yes, my husband's sister. She sent for us an affidavit and then we came.

Q. Your father died before you came?

A. Yea. We came in 1974 and he died in 1971.

Q. How old was he?

- A. 69. He was 69, yea. That was a terrible life, I am telling you. I never can forget and when my children are growing I always tell them. And they say: "Oh, you just make up a story, that never was true, and so on."
- Q. Your children told you that?
- A. Yes. When they were small they believe. After they are growing they listen to the radio, they never read a book from that, they don't believe. When we came to United States and they seeing on movie, now they believe. You went through this life. Remember you lived, when so many died. The life was that promise for us, more to live more to suffer, or more to be happy. I don't know.
- Q. So it was God's will.
- A. We believe God. And we always pray to God to get free. And maybe one day God listen our prayers. I don't know. Or just was our luck. I don't know.
- Q. Do you think it was pure luck, or do you think that your attitude was important in your surviving? Do you understand?
- A. Not really.
- Q. Do you think that it was only luck, the reason you lived was only luck, or something inside you, some will, some strength, some desire.
- A. Well, we have strength to hope and I don't know. I am telling you, so many friends die around me and we were so

many strange moment. We walked, can you imagine, and they never give food, never, never, never. But finally they give a little rice for us. And my mother, as we walked, picked up two pieces of iron. They make a fire and she cook upon that a (consert ?) a dish and we eat that. And it was spring and the German people put potato on earth for new potato. And my sister and my mother went to stole it, open the earth ..

Q. In the field?

A. Yea. And we eat this raw potato.

Q. Didn't the Germans see you do that?

A. Night time when they sleep and we walked. And one time my sister was very, very lucky. When we walked, she went in a German house and she asking food.

Q. At night?

A. Day or night. When we went village or a town, but this very sad sometimes. And she received a bag sugar. or a bag salt, or a piece of bread. This way we lived.

Q. During the march?

A. Yea. Or have like a bunker and they have beets and potato inside. And the snow go away and they open. Storage. And we rob potato and rob beets. We lived that. In Germany how start to growing the grass have like a tail, we eat that. And begin growing that, I don't know Hungarian (rugse ?). This is very early

greens for the cow, and give a lot of milk. And how they are growing. We chew it like milk. I think, maybe this way we could hold up our body. Because we eat something, you know.

Q. Do you know how much you weighted at the time of liberation?

A. When I came to home from the camp, I was 35 kilo and I was 15, almost 16.

Q. How tall are you?

A. I was tall like narrow.

Q. But how tall are you?

A. Oh 5.3 or 4. I am not tall, but I was very, very thin. And you know from this dangerous life we received nervous. We are very nervous people. And we still nervous, we are still scared. I grow up in a scare. And I still now.

Q. What are you afraid of?

A. I am telling you, I grow up that kind of life.

Q. Yes, I know. But are you afraid of anything in particular, or are you just nervous?

A. I am very nervous for everything. For everything. And I am crying so easily. My nerves is very, very weak.

Q. And your mother also?

A. Yes, yes.

- Q. Where is your sister?
- A. My sister, she live in Israel. She one year emigrated to Israel.
- Q. Did she emigrate here first?
- A. No, no. Ten years ago I emigrated. And she eleven years ago emigrated to Israel and we here. But she was here visit us two times (something I cannot understand). Three times she visit us. She was here last year, last July. (Again some foreign sentence I cannot understand) She said she hungry.
- Q. Oh, I am sorry. We are going to finish now. O.K., well, thank you. I know you have to eat.
- A. Well, we are very sick people from this time. Very, very sick. I just can't tell you. I was younger, I don't feel so much, but now I am getting older, I am in trouble. And my mother too. We have a backache, I have a frozen leg, I have a frozen hand. Is not too cold I have to cover my hand and I have always trouble with my leg. I have my leg broken two times. Because I grow up no vitamins. And I was pregnant with my last baby and I just walked a street, just I walked, I don't fall down and I was five months pregnant and I break my leg. Just broke my bone. Because the doctor said not enough calcium, not enough vitamin. You grow up, because you grow up, but you never have vitamins.

Q. When you went back to Hungary, how did you live there?

A. Oh, very hard life we have. First of all our house they taken care; somebody lived in our house. And they doesn't want to give back for us. They ask: "Why did you came back?" And we said we need our house, we need our garden. We need our furniture. But they stole everything. But after one year we received back our house. Can you imagine? After one year. And nobody pay any penny.

Q. How did you live for that year?

A. In one year how we lived? I'll tell you. My father was very sick. Very, very sick. He lost his eye. He got a bit and he lost his eye this way.

Q. One eye?

A. Yes, one eye. And he was very sick. He lost a lot of weight, a lot of energy and he couldn't build up. It is not so easy when you lost your health, your energy, it is very hard to gain back. You can eat strawberry and raspberry and everything, you never can gain. Years you never can gain. And I and my sister we begin making sweater with hand. This way we lived.

Q. Making sweaters?

A. Sweaters and pullovers, yea, with hand. And after one year, my father, who was a carpenter, he making windows and furniture and doors and cabinets and chairs and tables and everything. He start. He had own business,

but was empty, he don't find nothing. He had to buy every piece of wood, every instrument. Because we had nothings; everything was stolen. And the Russian government don't pay back to us nothing. Nothing. And after he start to work and then he made our living. And I don't work, because I was sick too. I couldn't work, I couldn't walk. My leg was so weak, have not any energy. I couldn't walk and all my body had cists. One was just finished and another came. One year I couldn't work. Nothing, nothing.

Q. How about your mother?

A. My mother too, my sister too.

Q. It took a year to recover?

A. Yea. But we always have doctor taking care of us. We using medicine and vitamins and injections. We pay for the doctor for that. But we was -

Q. Unhealthy?

A. Yes, unhealthy. And after one year, we built up a little bit, to get stronger, to get energy and disappear these cists. And we get formal face, until then we was like a (wald ?). (Wald, wald ?) Robbed, you know. When you have cists everywhere, you not itch.

Q. You had scars?

- A. No. You not itch. Just came out also. Like all your body was sick. All cists then. But after one year we built up. We looked different. And my sister got married in 1947. Her son was born in 1948. And I get married in 1949.
- Q. Did you know your husband before the war?
- A. No. I didn't know him. And my son born 1950. He was also in camp, my husband. But a different camp. He came home from the family first. He came home. He start to work. He was a young man, he was 25 when we get married.
- Q. How old were you then? You were about 18 or 19?
- A.. 20 was when I got married.
- Q. In 1949 you were 20 ?
- A. Yes.
- Q. My last question. Was there ever any time during your experience that you almost died? I mean, you almost died every day, but that you were beaten, that you decided you wanted to die?
- A. We decide every minute we don't care. We praying to die and not suffer anymore.
- Q. Then why didn't you touch the wire, if you wanted to die?
- A. We not was in a wire, we was on way. I told you.
- Q. During the march. But before the march, when you were in Auschwitz?
- A. Well, we was smarter like run to the wire. Who run to the wire, who go out there - nerve. One people have stronger nerve, one people have weaker nerve. You understand me?

Q. So you didn't commit suicide because you had weaker nerve?

A. I didn't run to the wire. I know that I can't go near when its wet, because they're going to jump me, the wire. And then who would get crazy, who was a weak nerve, who cannot stand anymore, you know.

Q. I understand. So you had stronger nerves, you could take it.

A. Yea.

Q. Was there any time when you were beaten or tortured, that you almost died?

A. Can I tell you more like a fifty or sixty planes in a sky. And bomb and bomb and bomb. Now all over burning and you sitting in a train open, no roof on.

Q. Where you ever selected to die?

A. (Some Hungarian sentence). I always prayed to die, not to suffer. Always. My God give me the energy to live. We was done. I am telling you. Without energy, without hope, without clothes, without food, without sleeping. But until now I am always sick. Always. I can't sleep, I never have relax and always have a headache. And sometimes I have a shake. And even my children, they are so nervous. Because they are born from a nervous body. And same life went my husband through. But he had a different story. But he was also there. Have many camp, women camps and men's camps. My husband, he worked in an underground - - you know stone. Stone inside.

Q. Shelter?

A. No, like under the ground, have a stone like a hill, like a mountain. And they put in (acrasit ?) and this is (fold ?) and pieces. And they lift it up and they put in a car and they delivering. They building house, making (fundarmen ?), making bunker.

Q. He worked in a factory?

A. It is not a factory. This is a stone and you put inside a (acrisit ?) like a fire and you make a light and you have to work with machine and this is 'boom' and break off a piece. And break off another piece.

Q. Oh, mine, mine. He worked in a mine. They dynamited?

A. Yea, dynamited.

Q. I am sorry, I couldn't understand it at first. I kept thinking you meant an underground factory.

A. In Germany, everything is under the ground.

Q. So he worked in an underground mine?

A. Yea, yea.

Q. In a quarry, a stone quarry?

A. I don't -

Q. Well, it's the same thing. Anyway, I better stop, it's almost two hours.

A. And I never was out without my mother. I always was with my mother. She always taking care of us. She always was like that, always.

Q. During the whole time?

A. Yea. During the whole time.

Q. Do you think you could have lived without your mother?

A. Oh we like her very much. And we still right now.

Q. Do you think you would have made it without your mother?

A. I don't think so. She feed us, she teach us to pray, she teach us to hold it and she prepare for us for good or bad. You cannot go through that kind of life. Believe me when you tell me, I didn't believe you too. But this is, I am a life witness, I came from there and I know what I saw. It is (very important ?) between four crematorium, you can't imagine what we feel and how we feel. That was terrible.

Jolane Hollander
b. CZECH.
Auschwitz - Birkenau
Death march to Germany
Ravensbrück, Dachau
4/26/45 abandoned by German troops - some fastest in Germany -
liberated by Americans

Hollander - 23

- Q. Could you get extra food on this commando?
- A. No, no. We received very bad food. Very, very bad food. That was terrible what they give us. We couldn't eat. But we were lucky. Transport brought better food and when they don't see it, we open the box, we eat, we grab something. And one day, that was January 17, 1945 they made everybody go to the street and everybody have to stand in line. Five people was a line and everybody have to stand with me. And the commander, the very big boss, his name was "Hauptschaftsfuehrer" and I don't know his other name, he said: "Let's go dress up everybody. Because we have there a lot of clothes. Because we have to leave from here." And they for everybody a kilo bread and nothing else. And we have to walk. And we have to walk day and night.
- Q. Was your sister still there with you?
- A. My sister, my mother, me and many, many. Thirty thousand people they liquidated from there.
- Q. From the camp?
- A. From the camp. But you know from one camp from another camp was a so big (lock?) and all over was electric, electric. When you go near to it you can die. Many, many died there. And when it was raining day, you just had to go near it and
- Q. To become electrocuted.
- A. Yea, yea. And we walk, we walked three days and nights.

They give us sandals. You know what I mean?

Q. Sandals?

A. A boot sandal and a top have two stripes.

Q. Strap.

A. Strap, yes. And we have to walk day and night. January 17 can you imagine, the snowing so big pieces, you know, but around evening we were very tired and we asking from the guard where we going. And he said: "always forward."

And he said after three days you will be like cooked rice.

And after three days we get to Oslo. That was a city named Oslo. The same night all is get freed. The place is get freed. Russia and American came and get freed from the German. Can you imagine? That's why they evacuated us.

Q. Right.

A. Thirty thousand people. (a lot of talk in foreign language) But nighttime and daytime so many planes came, so many bombs, you know.

Q. What country were you in?

A. Germany. We were in Germany. We were in Oslo, a city named Oslo. They sent us to the train, to the station. And when there we have to sit on and a hundred people take for every train, not train, like a room, you know. And we went to Ravensbrueck. They give for everybody one bread, just one bread. No water, nothing.

But was so - not was covered the room. Was open and was half coal, black coal.

Q. The floor was covered with coal?

A. Coal, yea, yea. And you have to sit on. It was raining and our hand are frozen, our legs are frozen. We went there was so big winter, snow like...

Q. Three or four feet high?

A. Yea, I never see this kind. And we have to walk about six or seven miles to the camp, from the station to camp. That was in our (while in the forties?)

Q. How long were you in the train?

A. I guess three days.

Q. Three days?

A. Yes. But we don't go always. You know the train, that is lifting train. That is going very slow. When the line is open then we can go. And at that time was war. You know the line was always busy. This is not like an express. An express the line is always open, you can go. And there was very big winter and they built for us a so big barrack, a barrack like a house, but no wall. Like going camping, you open a camping tent, it was so big, 5000 girls can go in. And it was made wood beds, three layer beds and for each bed three people have to . . . sit.

Q. Sleep.

A. Sleep, yea. And morning, three o'clock we have to come

out and evening we can go inside, six o'clock. And then they give for everybody a piece of bread. For ten people a kilo bread. For ten people one kilo. One slice.

Q. How long were you in Ravensbrueck?

A. We were there three weeks. My sister get very sick. We have a diary. We was very sick from cold, from not to eat. We was so sick, we every minute had to sit down to make (koko ?). But no bathroom. Just on the street. You know we had a little coffee-spoon and was a (koko ?) there, we pick up a little snow to eat, we was so hungry. Don't ask.

Q. Did your sister survive?

A. She was very sick, I was very sick, my mother was very sick and we sometimes went in and we couldn't get a bed. There were so many people, we couldn't get a bed. And my mother was very sick, she had a backache. And my friend said: "I am going to stay up one night and let your mother lay down, because she had a very bad headache." And when we walked, my mother had such a bad headache, can you imagine? I was very young and my sister too, but we have good friend and they pick up my mother like that, hold your hand like that and she sit on and we walk this way.

Q. Carried her on your back?

A. No, on my hands. You know like you hold your hand and she sit on and she hold your neck and my neck. Because she had so big backache, she couldn't walk anymore.

Q. Did the friend who helped you lift, did she survive^v?

A. Her sister, yea, one, she live in New York and of them she died.

Q. The one that did lift, does she live?

A. Yea, one.

Q. Did your sister survive?

A. Yes.

Q. She did.

A. We lived there three weeks; we don't work. We have a terrible time. After three weeks they sent us to (Tachau ?)

Q. Dachau?

A. Tachau (some foreign words)

We went there and we have to go to the train and it was a very dangerous time, because so many planes came and they throwing bombs. You know bombs. And here was a crash and there a crash, but anywhere we went there. And my sister was very sick. And we received a place, not bad, just on floor. They don't give food much. Just once a day, very very little. And my sister was very sick and they just sprinkled her dress and her shoes and we think she already die. And the lady say, your sister she very sick, she has a fever. And she lost her hair. She was three weeks there in a hospital. And my mother she couldn't go to see her, because we cannot go near to a, a, a, like a hospital, but not was a real hospital. And she went nighttime, when

nobody don't see her. And when see her, the German officer with a (barrel ?) spank her.

Q. Beat her?

A. Yea, yea. And you know the commander said, we're going to leave from here, we're going to leave, because we have to leave, we don't work. We just live there. And my sister run away from the hospital, can you imagine? She was sick and we have outside, we're standing in the line, we have sourcream, cheese and bread. And they want to give for everybody. But came a lot of planes, was alarm, you know, sirena.

Q. Siren?

A. Yea. And they said, now let's go to the station, to the train station. And they're going to put everything in the train and when you're going to get there you are going to receive food. We went day and night, two days and we don't receive nothing. One girl died here, but we were happy, because we had a little bit more space.

Q. You were happy when they died?

A. Yea. And you know Russia throwing bombs, first of all, our life like a candle. Where to throw to the bomb, you know. And they give very (life ?). And this is dropping down. And we are praying to God just we should receive a bomb to die here. We don't want to live anymore. We don't need nothing. Just not to suffer anymore. We

are very tired. We cry and cry and our heart never stop to cry. When we get there ..

Q. Where did they take you?

A. That was (Marhall ?). And he said when they opened the door, the train door, he said, the commander, "what happened, the dying transport come in?" It is a surprise. They put us into a wagon, the open rooms again, because there is too much bombs they are throwing, let us receive a bomb.

Q. They wanted you to receive a bomb?

A. Yea. But we don't receive a bomb. But the guards, they went to the bunker and they received a bomb. We don't receive a bomb. Then we walked day and night, day and night, from January until April 26, we just walked and walked and walked. We never had just on the street, on forest, one, two hours, can you imagine. And no cover, no coat. For winter we received summer clothes, for summer a winter clothes. But we were just shaking.

Q. How did you make it?

A. (laughs) I don't know. God gave us energy and hope. We were very bitter and I cried always for food, for freedom, and my sister gave her portion to me. That's why she get sicker and sicker like I and I never have a hope I am going to live. But my mother always tell don't cry, someday we'll all be free and we'll go home.

Then we walked and walked. And on April 26, the German, who came with us as guard, he taking off his clothes.

Q. His uniform?

A. And he have under private clothes. And he said "Go everybody to the Freiheit (to the freedom).

Q. In April?

A. April 26. And we are middle in the forest, can you imagine? We always went in a forest.

Q. So the people wouldn't see you?

A. Not to see. We went to the front. We was in a (Magdenburg ?) It was a big, big (bomb ?). (Magdenburg ?) (Leipzig ?) And I remember when we walk and we see the sign, we always tell each other not to forget where we walking, where we are. And we just walked until the freeway. There is a freeway going, you know, and many cars, army cars. And we went there and this car stopped. And they ask: "What kind of people you are?" We don't speak English, but was many educated women. We said we Jewish people, we came from the camp. "Oh, Jewish people" they said. Jewish life is up. I don't know how to say in English, Jewish Leben is frei.

Q. Jewish life is free.

A. Jewish life is free. Yea. And no more suffer. They gave us candy and cheese and bread and cookies.

Q. Did you eat it?

A. Yea. Everybody. They were American soldiers. And we are very tired. We can't walk anymore. We like to go to city. And they said: "You have to go to (Kremar ?) (Kremar ?) is a very, very big city. In the middle side have a Elbe. One side American, one side Russian. And you have to go there. We are going to take care of that. We are going to prepare bed and food and clothes and everything. We said, why we cannot sit on your car. This was army car. They said no, we can't, because we are taking a lot of back-up for the war. You know, gun and bomb and everything. But you have to go there. You just walk this way, where we are going on the freeway.

Q. How far was it?

A. That was 33 kilometers from there. This is very far, I am telling you. And we have to sleep one night in a German house. We went in and we are telling where we came from. And she gave us food. She was a very young lady, she have a little girl.

Q. How many were there at the time?

A. Just three of us. Yea. Everybody went, because we had to rest. It get dark and we couldn't walk in the dark. And she cooked us cream of wheat for dinner. And next day we waked up she gave us comb and a (power ?) and a gun and a cooked potato and jello. What she have? Her husband was in the war, she was (yellow and deserted ?)

with a little daughter. But anyway we went there and we received really food there. And they said we have to go to the Elbe. Because this place is not Russian, not American yet. They don't know what's going to happen. But this Elbe river, that bridge was bombed. And Americans making a ladder and there is a water two side like that. They making like a step. And they help one by one to going down to the water and they put down the two ladders and we had to walk up, up until we came up. And they helping there also. There was American flag and on the other side there was Russian soldiers and Russian flag. But there was, I can't tell you. They raped the girls.

Q. Who raped the girls?

A. Russian soldiers. And the water going with the sugar and a dress with the honey. And everything robbed. The stores, the houses,

Q. The Russian soldiers were robbing everything?

A. Yes, robbing. And the American captain said: "how many people we have here?" And he counted 600. And he check everybody have a ^{or} tatoo. And he said: "Don't worry, you are going to receive enough bed, enough food, enough clothes and a haircut. Everything. And we went there. That was (mandatory ^{dormitory}?). You know where kids study in university and sleeping there.

Q. In a dormitory?

A. Dormitory. Yes. It was empty. They emptied it for us. They give for everybody a bed and for everybody a white blanket. And a Red Cross package. This is army package. There was food and a needle. You know, when need something to sew. And toothpaste and pasta, and cheese and crackers and sugar cubes, you know this kind of thing was inside. And everybody received a shower. A warm shower and soap. My goodness, one and a half year we don't have shower. But we have a lot of ^{lice} (louse ?)

Q. Lice.

A. And we had itching all over. Had a lot of spots. And they said we are going to take care, we have doctor. And they give cream we have to put on and this is going away lice and we have to take more showers. Anyway, they taking care of us. But I am telling you, we received such good food from Americans. That was excellent.

Q. How much did you weigh when you got to this American camp?

A. We were there just six weeks. And they asking where you from, where you want to go. And they said, don't go home, we are going to take care of you, we are going to send you (interrupted by child and asks did you break it?)

Q. That's o.k. I have it on tape.

A. And we said, no, we have our agreement with our family. And my brother. Somebody going to stay alive. We are

going home and we are going to see each other there.

(A lot of baby talk, could not understand a sentence)

They sent us on a very nice tourist bus and we sit down.

Because all over was bombed the train lines. Planes we did not have at that time. And we came to Bratislava. From

Germany we came to Bratislava, ^{Praha, Pozsony} (Braga, Forshoin) and ^{the} ~~Pozsony~~ Budapest. And when we came to (Forshoin, Bratislava ?)

we meet people who knew my father. And they said your father leave and he going to come home. He was in Theresienstadt.

Q. He lived?

A. Yes. My brothers, they died. A German shot them down.

Q. How many brothers?

A. Two brothers.

Q. How many children?

A. I have two brothers, me and my sister. Four we was.

Q. And the two boys died and your father lived.

A. Yes, yes. And we came home and after one week my father came home too. But he was very sick. But we were so skinny, he and me and my sister and my mother. You know we are eating sardine and margarine, everything came out of our mouth, because we not used for one and a half years.

Q. You mean you threw up?

A. No, no. When you not eating sardine and sugar and that kind of thing, you live just from your body. And we start

to eat, we have so many spots in our mouth, on our body.

Q. Sores?

A. Yea, how to say.

Q. Boils?

A. Cists. All our body, we was so sick. It is unbelievable.

Q. So you saw your father again? ^{not}

A. Yea. He came home. One year he couldn't work, he was so sick.

Q. When did your father die?

A. My father died 1971. And he don't know we going to come to United States. He don't know. We never tell him. And I want to tell you, when we came home we want to leave from there. Because Russia was there and they closed all borders. And no way we could go.

Q. You couldn't get out?

A. No, but we have a chance ten years ago. I have a sister-in-law here, Gloria. We meet her in 1962, she came to visit us in Europe. When we went to part, we tell her we like to come to the United States.

Q. She is your sister-in-law?

A. Yes, my husband's sister. She sent for us an affidavit and then we came.

Q. Your father died before you came?

A. Yea. We came in 1974 and he died in 1971.

Q. How old was he?