United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Interview with Doris Greenberg
November 22, 1998
RG-50.549.02*0028

PREFACE

The following oral history testimony is the result of an audio taped interview with Doris Greenberg, conducted by Melissa Block on November 22, 1998 on behalf of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The interview took place in Stamford, Connecticut and is part of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's collection of oral testimonies. Rights to the interview are held by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

The reader should bear in mind that this is a verbatim transcript of spoken, rather than written prose. This transcript has been neither checked for spelling nor verified for accuracy, and therefore, it is possible that there are errors. As a result, nothing should be quoted or used from this transcript without first checking it against the taped interview.

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Beginning Tape One, Side A

Question: Okay, United States Holocaust Memorial, Jeff and Toby Herr collection, this is an interview with Doris Greenberg, conducted by Melissa Block, on November 22nd, 1998, in Stamford, Connecticut. This is a follow up interview to a USHMM videotaped interview, conducted with Doris Greenberg on November 27th, 1990. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum gratefully acknowledges Jeff and Toby Herr for making this interview possible. This is tape number one, side A. That's the official business. I wanted to just go back and ask you, your parents, I needed to know their names and their -- what they did for a living, what your father or your mother did for a living.

Answer: My father's name was Elkanon Fochs. My mother's name was Gitl. Gitl translates to Tova. They called her in Polish Gutcha and my father was called Henry. T- They had a -- a store in Warsaw, haberdashery. Also, in those days, you needed license for selling tobacco or lottery tickets. My father had both and they used to sell both.

Q: What was the name of his store?

A: There was no name, just -- just haberdashery store and I don't remember seeing any name over a particular store. Although, next door, there was my grandmother's store and she had electrical appliances and her store had a name. So I -- I don't know why my parent's store had no name. My grandmother's store na -- store's name was Znicz. Znicz, Z-n-i-c-z in Poland, and that means a flare or a -- in Hebrew, mare tahmid, a light

forever, Znicz. And that was my grandmother's store, which was next door to my parent's store.

Q: Okay, and you had -- your sister was older than you, or younger?

A: My sister was older than I, five years older.

Q: And her name was?

A: Her name -- the Jewish name was Malka Arahel. Malka Rachel. She was commonly known at home as Mareesha.

Q: Five years older, okay. You mentioned in the videotaped interview, back in 1990, that your parents disappeared at certain points during the war. Do you remember what years those were or how old you would have been?

A: I can give you approximate times. A-All I remember, actually, was the seasons of the year, whether it was cold or hot. My mother disappeared, I think it was 1942 and it must have been July, or August, was very hot. And I understand that there was a big German aktion in town and that's when she -- when she was caught in the street and brought to the Umschlagplatz, which was the -- the railroad station, where they took all the people, to send them out. I found out later on that people who were caught and -- that day, were sent to Treblinka right away.

Q: So that was 1942, in the summer --

A: Yes, 19 --

Q: What about your dad, was that earlier?

A: No, later. That was later. When there were the factories, the German factories opened up in -- in Warsaw ghetto, there were different factories in different parts of -- of Warsaw. Where we lived, we went to work at the brush makers, making brushes. And my father and my sister and I, we lived at the Narlefke Street. This was already maybe the third or fourth time that we have moved, since we were thrown out of our own apartment and moved into the ghetto. My father went to work at that particular time and did not return. It seems to have been an aktion and all people from the factory were taken out. So he never returned.

Q: Do you have any idea when that was?

A: It must have been a few months later. Must have been a few months later, can't remember the date.

Q: Okay, so we're still probably in 1942.

A: Late '42, I would think, yes.

Q: Okay. And it was then after that, that your sister was captured?

A: Yes.

Q: Do you remember when that would have been?

A: After my father. I-It must have been -- it must have been the end of '42, I think. There was an aktion where the Germans came into the building and flushed out -- or at least tried to flush out everybody from their hiding places. And at that time, we were in an apartment on -- on the street floor, just a few steps going up. And the -- We were left -- my aunt was left, my Aunt Esther. My grandmother was left. My Aunt Esther's little boy,

who was about three years old, yeah, it must have been ‘42. And my sister and I. And when we heard that the Germans are coming in, we started hiding. Now, my grandmother, my aunt and her little boy, went to a little cabinet underneath the window, which was used instead of -- instead of a refrigerator. And th-the walls of the building were thick, so there was enough room for those people to get in and I closed the door and put a chair in front of it. And my sister didn’t know -- I -- we didn’t know what to do. So we had a folding bed that when it was folded up, it looked like a table. And she crawled in there and I put a -- a cover over it and then I didn’t know what to do, the Germans were already in, so I opened the door to the bathroom, but they looked in the bathroom, too. Then I saw on the -- at the wall -- on the wall of the bathroom, it was a ladder and on top of it was a shelf. There was also a light bulb above the shelf. And I don’t know how I was able to, but I really went up the ladder and sat down on the shelf and unscrewed the bulb, making sure that no-none of my clothes hang down. By that time, I could hear the Germans in the hallway, coming in and my heart was banging so hard I hoped they didn’t hear it. And that’s when they found my sister, and they took her out. At that time they didn’t find my grandmother, my aunt or my little cousin. But they did find my sister. Some people told me afterwards, some neighbors, that she was shot. I cannot recall -- I was in such shock, that I don’t remember what I heard and what I saw. I just remembered that I heard her cry and they took her out. They found her in the bed.

Q: And she would have been about 17, it sounds like.

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: I'm curious, with -- with your mother and your father, your description in your videotaped interview was, they went out and they never came back. And I wonder what that was like for you, what you remember feeling, that you never really knew what happened to them, you s -- they just disappeared.

A: Well, where my mother's concerned, we heard from her from Umschlagplatz. She managed to send word that she is there and asked [phone ringing]

Q: Before the phone rang, we were talking about yo-your mother and your father, when they disappeared.

A: Yeah, well we got word from Umschlagplatz that my mother was there and she was asking for help. And my uncle, at that time, tried to -- to contact some friends who worked with the police -- with the Jewish police. But, before anything could happen, we got word that the trains left. So, we know that she was caught there and that she was there. And of course, the trains left to Treblinka, that's what we were advised. When my father didn't come back, we did not hear anything, except that there was the aktion in the factory and the people were taken out. And this was, oh, I would estimate maybe two months or three months after my mother, because I remember the weather was windy. I really had to judge everything by the weather. I had no knowledge of dates. There was no calendar to look at. And I think that I was too young or inexperienced to -- to really remember dates. Life there was like life of a rat that is hiding and it's constantly chased. And one does not know exactly where and when it is, day, night, summer, winter. This kind of sticks in the mind because it is -- you remember whether you were cold or -- or

hot. But the dates -- exact dates are not known to me. Later on, when I listened to some people, who were a little bit older, even three, four years older than I am, they knew dates. I have a friend who is 10 years my senior, she remembers every date and she has a terrific memory. But I don't remember the exact dates.

Q: Do you remember what you were thinking or feeling? You were about 12 now, a very difficult time --

A: Yeah, 12 and a half, something like that.

Q: Do you remember how -- what -- how you reacted when you found out about this? When you realized that first your mother, then your father was gone?

A: I was in shock and I don't know if I can -- if I can assign any thoughts to that period. I know that I was in shock. I know that the thought that was the most important, was survival and probably I -- probably I thought, "How can I survive without them?" It was actually a -- a selfish feeling, probably. It's very hard to describe, I even get goosebumps when I -- when I talk about it, even now, because now I -- I miss them. For all these years, I've been missing them. But in those days, I think it was more of a -- of a self-preservation feeling. Of a, 'What am I going to do without them?' And that's all that comes to mind. What next, how to survive.

Q: Were you very close to your parents?

A: Very close. Very close to my parents, to my grandparent. I was the youngest grandchild until my little cousin was born. I was quite spoiled as a child. Had terrific childhood, very, very good. I had good school, good teachers. I had everything I needed

or I wanted. I can't imagine anybody having a better life than I did at home. My sister and I, we were kind of spoiled children. But I was even more, because I was the younger one, yeah.

Q: You mentioned in the videotaped interview that -- that you had made efforts after your sister disappeared to try to find her and I'm curious what -- what you did -- that you just sort of were never sure she was really gone.

A: I was never sure that she was gone, because I didn't hear or see anything. And the efforts I tried to make would be after the war. I tried to put ads in paper. Went to agent -- Jewish agencies to look for survivor's names. I wrote to the international Red Cross. I even wrote to them to find out if they heard anything from my parents, because I hadn't seen them being killed and -- and -- and I thought that maybe miracle do happen and people do survive. But everywhere I turned there was a closed door. There was -- Not a closed door, but there was a 'no' answer.

Q: Was this when you were in -- where were you when you were making contact in the papers?

A: I was -- I started doing that when I was still in Germany. And then I went to Israel, tried from there. And when I came to America, tried again.

Q: And did they have any record of your mother at Treblinka, any --

A: No.

Q: Nothing.

A: No records whatsoever, not that I could find any. There is one place, very curious. It -- It happened kind of in the last two or three years, that I came across a book of pictures. And those pictures were compiled by a professor from -- from California and I contacted him and he said that he went to the archives in Koblins, Germany, where they have many, many films taken by German soldiers during the war, and the pictures -- th-the films have only dates on them, dates and places, but of course, no names of people or what th-they took pictures of. And I looked through -- through this book and I found two pictures where my uncle was in it and that's when I contacted that professor and I wanted to know and that's what he told me. He said if I went to Koblins, the people there are very accommodating and I could look through any pictures I want to. But of course, I didn't do that. I had a sick son, whom I lost since.

Q: I'm very sorry. The uncle, whose pictures you saw, which uncle was this and where was he?

A: This was the uncle who helped my escape, as well as the escape of my grandmother, my aunt and her boy and his brother and the wife. He helped us all escape from the ghetto, just as the Warsaw ghetto uprising started in '43.

Q: And what was his name?

A: His Jewish name was Mordechai, but he went by the name of Mietek. Yeah.

Q: And where were these pictures taken, that the professor had?

A: It seems to me that it was taken on the stage of a theater in the ghetto. There were two or three theaters, one of which was familiar to me because my uncle performed there.

And th-the name of the theater was Azazel. And I used to go there, almost daily to watch the performances of -- of the theater, I used to love it. And I used to go there every day after so-called school. There was no school for us, but we had a professor who formed classes in his house. And he was paid by my parent with whatever they had. Could be a pair of socks for his children or whatever. And he formed a class. So some of us -- we started out with about eight or 10 children in the class and little by little, there were fewer, because they were caught, they died, or whatever. So, every day after the classes, I would run over to the theater and watch the performances. So, when I saw the pictures, I saw also the other actors, whom I knew, whom I met there. And I tried to even locate them, but it -- it is not very easy. Although I was good at locating people -- I knew where to go and how to go about it, but those people I couldn't locate. So, I recognize on the picture the stage, and it must have been taken there. I would have loved to go there, to Koblins and look for more pictures and God knows whom I -- I could identify. But, at that time, my younger son was very, very sick and I just -- I just couldn't do it. I went away somewhere for a week or 10 days, I think to Florida and -- and I was sorry I did, because he couldn't -- he couldn't really look after himself, he was very ill. And he passed away Friday the 13th of December, of '96. So this Friday -- that -- this 13th of December that's coming, will be two years that I lost him. So I didn't pursue any more looking and with me getting so -- falling apart, kind of. It's -- It's tough to -- to concentrate on everything.

Q: You mentioned that Uncle Mietek was the one who smuggled you out of the ghetto.

A: Yeah, he did.

Q: Forgive me for asking you a date again, but do you remember what -- around when that would have been?

A: Yes, yes. It would have been in 1943, a little before or after my birthday, which is in March. Probably was in March, maybe in April of ‘43.

Q: Okay. And then you describe that there was a period of you living outside and then at one point, you went back to Warsaw on the train. And that would have been ‘44?

A: Oh, that was still ‘43. When -- When we were at -- when my uncle smuggled us out of the ghetto, we -- he prepared, with the help of my other uncle, his brother and -- and her -- and his wife, they prepared an apartment. And my aunt’s brother made a double wall in a room without a window and we could hide there. So, if anybody knocked on the door or anything like this, we would just crawl in and hide there until we were found out and of course, thrown out.

Q: When -- After you went back to Warsaw, after your uncle was shot, you went back to Warsaw and you described that the city was -- everyone was forced onto trains and you ultimately went to Ravensbrück.

A: Well, that was a year later.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: That was -- I would say more than a year later. The -- The ghetto revolt was Passover of ‘43 and the Polish revolt was September of ‘44. So, it was a year and a half later.

Q: What do you remember about those two events? Were you in Warsaw at that time?

A: Yes, I was in Warsaw. I was working as a cook's helper, in one of the suburbs that's called Jolybush. When the -- When the Polish revolt started in September, at that time, my aunt was across the river, in Pragga and her little boy was on our side, in Warsaw, take -- being taken care of by a Polish woman named Olga -- Ola. I remembered that day. I went to visit my aunt in Pragga and she knitted a sweater for her s-son. She gave me that sweater -- of course, nobody knew we were Jewish -- she gave me that sweater, I brought it to her son and by the time I got back to Jolybush, I heard shots. And that was when the Polish revolt started, September of '44, yeah.

Q: And what -- And what was -- What was going through your mind at that time? What did you think was happening?

A: I was not terribly emotional about that. I just thought, this is a war. Nobody's after me, specifically. This is a war, there were all kinds of rumors going on, because at -- at some point, we were -- we were bombed by the Cartushas from -- from the other side of the river. And they were, I think, the Russian Cartushas. And sometimes we heard airplanes and shooting, lot of shooting, and there were some direct hits. But it was a different feeling for me. They were not chasing me because I was Jewish. It was just a war. And of course, we want to stay alive and we want to survive the war, but it was not the same as being chased because you're Jewish.

Q: When you got on the train and you were being taken to Ravensbrück, had you heard any stories about what went on there? You described that when you went to take a

shower, you thought that you would be gassed. And I was curious how you even would have known about that.

A: We have heard that in the ghetto, some time before.

Q: Really?

A: They were -- It seems that there were some people who jumped the trains and came back to the ghetto. And since the ghetto was very small, they -- they were tightening it all the time and rumors spread all the time. There were some rumors to that effect. So, when we were taken, in ‘44, as Christians, there was a thought about it, but the thought was immediately countered by a feeling that this cannot happen because I’m here among Christians and not Jews and they probably would not do that. At one time, there was a possibility to escape and I did not take that chance.

Q: When -- When was that?

A: The train slowed down and it was not part of the way, it was an half open wagon where they keep cattle, in a half open wagon. They -- Only later they switched to a all closed. But at that time -- and it was still on Polish soil, there was a -- a way to jump out of -- of a train when it slowed down. But I did not take the chance.

Q: Why not, do you think?

A: Well, I was with my friend, Peppy. We looked at each other and I think -- I don’t think we talked about it, but we both felt that this -- they are not going to kill us. And I don’t think I could jump or she could jump. We were not that a-athletic. So -- And it was just a matter of a short time when the possibility presented itself. The trains were -- were

watched by the German soldiers with rifles, so no, we didn't take the chance. Just like we didn't take the chance to swallow the poison.

Q: Do you remember being afraid on that train, as you were going to the camp?

A: Yeah, yeah, of course. But, you were with other people who were talking and -- and they never heard of dying or being gassed or anything like that. The mood was different. It was like we know that we're political prisoners. We were taken as political prisoners of war.

Q: Because they didn't know you were Jewish?

A: That's right.

Q: I want to ask you about that, let me just -- I'm curious how -- you -- you'd had to hide your identity, I'd -- I don't know, did your identification papers say you were Catholic?

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah, Catholic. How was that for you? You'd been raised in a Jewish home?

A: Yeah.

Q: Wh-What did that do to you, to be suddenly Catholic?

A: Well, it meant to survive. I also went to see a priest. And the priest apparently was very smart, because he told me that -- that religion -- God is for all --

End of Tape One, Side A

Beginning Tape One, Side B

Q: This is a continuation of a United States Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with Doris Greenberg. This is tape number one, side B. You were talking about the priest who you'd come to know.

A: Yes, I had -- I had gone to see him more than once and he was encouraging all the time. Sometimes I -- I thought that he probably knows who I was. Sometimes he would -- he'd give me some nuts and candy to take with me in my pocket. And he was very encouraging and very nice. Kept me going.

Q: Was there any -- Did you feel any conflict internally, th -- wa -- about having to hide your identity as a Jew?

A: Absolutely, yes. I knew very well that I'm not supposed to be in church. And yet for -- in order to survive, I had to go to church. I had to do what every -- every other person did upon entering the church, put the holy water or make the sign of the crest or whatever. Yes, I felt very uncomfortable. But the thought of survival meant more than anything else. And I just kept thinking, when I -- if I survive -- when I survive, I'm going to be who I am and not who I pretend to be. And I also know that Jewish religion tells you that life -- a human life is very dear and should be preserved. People are allowed to eat on Yom Kippur, if their life depends upon it. So, I thought that I'm allowed to -- to go to church and pray, because my life depends upon it. It was -- This was my mediation in church, really.

Q: Did the -- Did the religion -- Did that faith in church, was it a comfort to you, to be able to do -- worship in some way?

A: I don't think so. I -- I think that my religion was my religion and whenever there was a speech by -- by the -- by the priest, it was a good speech, but I -- I can not identify with Jesus. I -- I am -- I wasn't brought up that way. I couldn't identify. But, in my mind, I would just substitute the word God. I was praying to God, no names, just God. And that's what made it possible for me. And this was my meditation, that I'm preserving my life. That's what I have to do to preserve it. Same thing with eating non-kosher food, I have to do it. And that was the -- the power of survival is enormous -- is enormous. I went once to a course, oh, years later, here in -- in New York. Was a course of -- I think the power of negotiation or something like that. Was given by a very good instructor. And before the course, the instructor told us to write down everything we know how to do. And people were writing and writing and writing and I just wrote one word, survive. The instructor was not very pleased and she wanted explanation. But that was what I thought my main achievement in life, to survive. It is -- That feeling is terribly strong, especially it was for me, I -- I -- I figured fo-for everybody. And people did lot of things to survive.

Q: What -- When you -- When you got to Ravensbrück -- on the video interview you described seeing writing on the wall in Yiddish from something.

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: Were there Jews at Ravensbrück still when you were there?

A: No.

Q: No.

A: There were none, no. The only way -- because Peppy could read Yiddish and she pointed out very discreetly, so that other people cannot see what we're looking at and she showed me that there were Jewish names and I -- I don't know what else was on it, but there were messages in Yiddish.

Q: That must have been a real moment, I would think, that hit home, that had your identity been known, your fate might have been very different.

A: Oh, we knew that all along. We knew that all along. We had to even be very careful sleeping, not to talk in our sleep. When -- Because we were not alone, we were in big barracks. And if we would say one word that the people don't understand or they think it's Yiddish or anything like that, it would be bad. I thought later on, not at the time -- at the time it didn't bother me, because I didn't speak Yiddish. So I -- If I dreamed, it would be in -- in Polish. So, it didn't bother me, but I remember it did bother my friend Peppy, who spoke Polish and Yiddish. And we had to watch each other, to kind of -- not to talk in our sleep. There's so many details when you -- when you want to hide under somebody -- to be somebody else. Doesn't pay, unless your life depends on it, it does not pay. It's a -- I-It's a very, very i-involved task.

Q: You went to a labor camp after Ravensbrück --

A: Yes.

Q: Do you remember the name?

A: Noibrandenberg -- Noibrandenberg. That was in a forest. There were barracks dug in the ground and also barracks of factories. So -- huge barracks and the factories were

outside of the camp, but also in barracks. So, we were brought there and I remember the walls were dripping with water and when -- this was wintertime, yeah. We were brought there, was wintertime, right.

Q: Of 1944?

A: 1944, right. And then they sent us out to the -- a -- a group of laborers, women laborers, we laid tracks for a train. So we -- They used to march us out with SS people and dogs and went to -- marched to -- to the place where they wanted us to put their railroad tracks. We worked for 12 hours a day and then they marched us back.

Q: You then went to something called free work and I'm curious if you had any notion of what that was, or --

A: Yeah, when I said free work, I meant that there was no camp. That you living in freedom, that you can go out on the street or -- or go where and come wherever you want. That it was not in a camp, not in a jail. That is what I called free. Although you were assi -- I was assigned to a couple who owned a store downstairs and they lived upstairs and I think they were assigned a slave, me, because they had a daughter who was an SS person. I didn't know it at the beginning, but I was assigned to this elderly couple and they were quite good to me. They demanded their work and they gave me a place to sleep and some food to eat. They did not hit me, they did not treat me badly, so it was okay, except when their daughter came to visit. They were shaking, they were very nervous, and I didn't know why. Come to think of it, maybe they were afraid of her, too. And when she saw me, that daughter, she wanted to know if I understand a lot of German, because it's

similar to Yiddish and if I can say something so that she could see that I speak Yiddish. Ma -- I don't know whether it was my imagination or -- or it was for real, but she did a- ask me questions and most of the time I -- I just didn't know what to say. I could say yes, I could say no and -- or I could gesture with my hands like maybe. And she was quite unnerving me. I think maybe she was doing the same to her parents. I noticed they felt much better when she left. So that's what I called free work.

Q: When they announced that they were going to be sending you there, do you remember what your emotions were? I mean, did you sort of feel like the worst was over? Was it any kind of relief or did it not seem that way?

A: They did not announce anything. They just put you on the train and -- and got you there. They didn't announce anything. In the last minute, they say, "You are going be here. You are going to work here." But, in the camp, they did not announce anything. Said that we're going to go out to work. We really didn't know where we were going. But it turned out that -- that's where we went. And it must have been -- must have been what -- end of '44, beginning of fort -- no, it was in '45. It was already in '45, because I remember being there not a very long time, when we were liberated. And we're liberated in May of '45. So we must have gone to that place in '45, I assume.

Q: So you were there for a few months? [indecipherable]

A: Yeah, right.

Q: Okay. I want to ask you about liberation. Can you tell me what you remember about that day?

A: Oh, that was a miserable day for me. It was awful. I got almost killed. The Russians came to town and apparently they had to fight very hard and they were very excited about everything. And their idea of survivors was a mistaken idea that whoever survived, must have cooperated with the Germans. And out of this assumption, they almost killed us.

Q: What happened?

A: We talked. They talked to me, I talked to them and I talked again and again. The whole day went by talking. And for some reason, there were other soldiers that came in and talked to others and somehow we survived.

Q: Do you remember -- I'm curious how it happened, did -- did you see troops all of a sudden, did they walk up to the house?

A: Yeah, yeah, oh yeah

Q: Tell me about that.

A: Oh yes, the-they -- they went into the house. They were looking for things that they wanted. Food, drinks, watches, bicycles, anywh -- anything. And there was a bicycle upstairs in the attic. It must have been the bicycle of their daughter, I don't know. But they went up and they found it and they took it. They wanted me to go upstairs and -- with them, but I was afraid, so I didn't. And I just told them where the bicycle was. Now, those people had the store with foodstuff. There was sugar, there was flour. And I don't know they took anything, they must have taken some edible things that you don't have to cook, but they did take the bicycle and they were running around looking for things that they wanted. And at -- at the same time, they were talking about the survivors who were

cooperating with the Germans. And I kind of tried to stay away, if I could. Then another group came in and they met and they talked and they talked to me and to the -- to the German couple. They really were looking for things, maybe they took something from them, their watches I suppose, I don't know. And -- And they -- Then they went the next house. So it was a very, very tough day. At the evening, after I was all alone, I decided to go to Peppy.

Q: What happened to the family?

A: Oh, they stayed there, they were fine.

Q: Oh, you said you were all alone, so the soldiers had left?

A: Yeah, the soldiers were gone, yeah.

Q: Okay, you mentioned you had been afraid to go upstairs with them. What were you -- What were you afraid of?

A: My room was upstairs and there was a bed and things. And I didn't want them to -- to go to my room with -- with me in it. So, I didn't want to go upstairs. And they went and they got their bicycle or whatever else in the attic and there were others who -- wh -- when -- when this group was upstairs, others came in, because they were coming in -- the troops were coming in, pouring in. And they came and went and whoever got what. I suppose they wanted to be ahead of their friends to get more stuff, I don't know. I was scared.

Q: Did they mistreat you in any way?

A: No, except that they talked to me like that. Not all of them, but many of them would say, “You’ll get yours. You cooperated with the Germans.” I never mentioned to anybody that I was Jewish. I was still afraid. So, i-it was tough. It was very, very scary.

Q: And they left the couple alone?

A: Yeah, oh yeah. I suppose they left everybody alone after they took what they wanted and after they had a night’s sleep, when the fighting stopped. They seemed to be very excited, nervous, tired, hungry. They were the -- the front line soldiers.

Q: And it’s curious to me, they were essentially setting you free, but it do -- doesn’t sound like you viewed them as your ally at that point.

A: Well, I did, in my head, I did. Because they -- they freed me from the Germans. So, I -- I felt very good towards them, but they put other thoughts -- they had other thoughts in their mind about people like myself, who survived. Maybe they were told that this is the -- the case. Maybe it was their own idea. I’m not talking about a whole regiment of soldiers, I’m talking about those who came my way. And those that came my way, some of them -- many of them had that idea.

Q: How did that make you feel?

A: It made me feel helpless. And not knowing what to do. What do I tell those people, no, you’re wrong? And all together, your -- you’re wrong assuming anything that you assume, because I’m not really the person that you think I am. Couldn’t say anything. I -- I was really upset and -- and helpless.

Q: And you didn’t tell them you were Jewish?

A: No.

Q: Wh-Why didn't you tell them that?

A: Because I learned by then that nobody likes Jews. And therefore it isn't going to do me any good.

Q: So, even though they were the liberators, presumably they were not the enemy.

A: They were not the enemy. They were -- They were the liberators. I wish they could behave a little better than they did, but yes, I was glad to be liberated from the Germans, yeah. I heard later on different stories of different people who were treated very badly by the Russian liberators, but I have not experienced that and I have not seen that.

Q: Treated badly how?

A: Oh, there are people who told me that they were mugged. That they were -- they were hit. I hadn't seen anything like that. I -- I can tell you what I saw and I'm telling you what I heard, but I felt good to be liberated from the Germans and that was the main thing, but they scared me because of their thoughts of why I was spared. Because they were mistaken. I did not cooperate with Germans, besides, no German wanted my cooperation. I -- I just rode out the waves of the war and I was glad that the war is over and maybe some peace will come and -- and I -- even then I hoped that I could find some of my family. That was always, in my head. So, I -- I felt good about being liberated.

Q: And you went to find your friend, how did you get to her house?

A: I walked. I walked. At that time I would walk a couple -- a few miles. She was in a very small place a -- that -- ba -- at a farm. Th -- She was farmed out to the farmer from

the camp. And it just so happened -- happened that in that farm where she was, I -- I came there to -- to be with her, because I was very much afraid. And then the Russians decided to be there to -- to take that farm as their headquarters in the area. So, i-it was -- it was an unexpected event. However, it was not bad because by that time when I went there, she represented herself as my mother. So I kind of felt protection. And indeed, I got a lot of protection because they knew that there is a mother and daughter, and that we were Polish. So, it went much easier. And those people who came there, the Russian military, not all of them had this idea that the survivors were cooperating. They set up their headquarters and they had Peppy work for them, interpret. And Peppy said to them that she will be very glad, but to announce that her daughter is here and she is not to be touched. And that's exactly what happened, so I was protected.

Q: And how long did you stay there?

A: We stayed there not long. Maybe some -- Maybe two months. It was still not cold out when -- it was still summer, maybe deep summer, we set out to go to Berlin.

Q: Now, how did you decide to go to Berlin? Did Peppy decide? Did you talk about it?

A: Oh, we talked about it, sure. And by that time we knew that in Berlin there were armies of all the allies and we better get there as a first stop and then see if we could go back to our respective homes, to hope to meet our survivors -- our family who survived. But Berlin was the first stop.

Q: And how did you -- how did you get there? How far away were you?

A: We were very far away. We had -- the farmer had a horse and the Russian found, in another farmer's place, a little carriage, which they took. And what they did, they brought Peppy and me to the railroad station on that horse and buggy. And then we went on the -- on the train to Berlin.

Q: Tell me about Berlin.

A: Well, we came to Berlin and we wanted to s -- and we went to the Jewish -- society or Jewish headquarters or what do they call it here? The Jewish government kind of -- was in Oranyanboogerstrasser. The Yiddish Agaminda. And at that time, it -- there was some people there and it was not excellently organized, but pretty good. And there was -- there were some people coming and needing things and there were local people who manned that -- that -- what shall I call it, club, or the Jewish -- what do they call it? The Jewish government, if there is such a thing. Anyway, I was interviewed by one of the people there and when I told him that I was Jewish, he wouldn't believe me. He thought that I told him I was Jewish so that I can get a package of food, or a place to stay from the UNRRA.

Q: United Nations Relief wor -- agency?

A: Yes. Which at that time -- I found out later it was bringing a lot of help, blankets and clothes and food to Berlin for the DP's, displaced persons. And this particular person that interviewed me was under the impression that I'm telling him I was Jewish so that I could get some of the goodies. Well, I had a problem convincing him. And he asked all kinds of question and then he asked me to recite the shmisered, the prayer. I didn't know the

whole thing, but I knew some of it. Although -- he asked me the names of my parents and I told him the Jewish name. I told him my Jewish name. I had to recite the schma, which I did a poor job, but I did some. And finally, reluctantly, he thought that I was Jewish.

Q: That's a curious thing, isn't it --

A: Yes.

Q: -- because you'd been having to deny that Jewishness --

A: That's right.

Q: -- for so long, and here was someone who didn't believe it. How -- How did that register for you?

A: Ver-Very awkward. Very awkward. I had the same comment you just did. I had to fight all this time to dispel from other people's minds that I might be Jewish, and here I'm trying to tell him I am and he doesn't believe me. Very awkward.

Q: Where were you staying when you were in Berlin?

A: We found Peppy -- Peppy found actually, an apartment of a young, German lady with a baby. Her husband, I think was a -- a prisoner of war. And she had an extra bedroom. So she rented us the bedroom for some food. I don't think we paid her anything but food. Peppy made the arrangements, I'm not sure. But she gave us that bedroom, which was very nice and finally we could sleep in a -- in a bed, in a house, rather than all kinds of other bad places. So that was nice.

Q: Do you remember that first night, when you actually had a bed in a safe place?

A: Yeah. It was very, very funny, w -- because the -- the apartment, th-the room, everything was very nice, but I thought, “Oh, I’m loo -- going to look around and see what it is like.” Well, I fell asleep like a log, did not enjoy anything else but sleep.

Q: And you stayed in Berlin about how long, do you think?

A: I stayed in Berlin, let’s see, four, five, probably six to eight months, something like that.

Q: That’s a long time.

A: Yeah.

Q: Why don’t we take a break here, the tape’s running out.

End of Tape One, Side B

Beginning Tape Two, Side A

Q: This is a continuation of a United States Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with Doris Greenberg. This is tape number two, side A. We're still in Berlin. Tell me what the -- what the atmosphere was like at that time. Was it filled with people? Did it -- What did it seem like?

A: Well, the atmosphere was chaotic. There were a lot of foreigners, many people, many survivors came. They were military of all area -- al-allied groups. And people are trying to find things -- find other people, find their relatives, find a place to stay, acquire some clothes, acquire some food. It was quite chaotic, but the allies brought in a lot of help. There was one synagogue, I remember, and in that synagogue, they had brought in blankets and clothes and some food packages I think, I'm not sure. And they were distributed to -- to people who needed them. The German people were -- also were quite depressed and they needed some help, too; they had no food. However, it was in a short period of time, there was -- a black market developed. I'll never forget that, it was called Alexanderplatz and in -- in that place, you could probably trade for everything you needed. You could buy or sell or whatever. The German people would bring out their wares, maybe their clothes or their watches or whatever, to sell, to exchange for food. The survivors were -- were looking for everything that they couldn't get from the Jewish agency. Oh, that's the word I was looking, the Jewish agency, not government. So, it was a time of confusion and people, being very eager and looking for things and for people. Somehow, one tried to help the other. It was a very nice day and I can't remember what

kind of a Jewi-Jewish holiday it was, it's very hard for me to tell. There was a Jewish holiday and Peppy invited the Jewish soldiers from the allied armies to come and celebrate the Jewish holiday. And I remember they were Russians, they were Americans, British, French. I don't think there were any Polish. And whatever Peppy cou-could get in the way of food, she would prepare and there were candles lit and this was -- this was a -- a thing that will always bring tears to my eyes, because this is the first time that people in different uniforms of different countries, sat at the table and recited the same prayer. Whatever food there was, I don't remember. Probably wasn't much and probably some of it was that the allies brought in in cans or whatever. But the li -- the -- the candles were lit and all the different nations, who couldn't speak to each other because of the language barrier, they could recite the same prayer. And that was something that I will always remember.

Q: Did you -- Did you start going to synagogue regularly? Were there places to worship for you?

A: No, no. I did not go to worship anyplace at that time. I just didn't know where I was, what I was doing and I was planning to -- to look for my family, if anybody -- and -- and I figured that if anybody survived, they'll go back home. So, I wanted to go to Warsaw and go to the house where we lived and see if anybody shows up. Or go to the Jewish agency and see if anybody registered. That was my first and only thought at that time.

Q: And did you -- did you do that? Were you able to go to Warsaw?

A: Well, I started. I was on my way in a train, from Berlin, to go to Warsaw. And in a

town of Dresden, the train was held up by the Russians and all the foreigners were taken off. I don't know if the Germans were taken off or not, but all the foreigners were taken off the train and hold into the jail. And the explanation given was, that the Russians are going to help us go home. Originally, I wasn't worried, well if -- if the Russians are going to help me to go home, that would be fine. That's where I was going anywhere. But, as we were put in the jail cells, there were some people from Ukraine. And they told me that you really don't go home, they don't send you home. They send you somewhere in Russia, wherever they want to. I was scared. I don't want to go anywhere in Russia, I wanted to go to Warsaw. And the mere fact that we were locked up and not let out, scared me again. So this -- this person that was there told me how to escape, and I did.

Q: Tell me about that.

A: Well, you asked the guard to escort you to the bathroom. And the bathroom was on the entrance, on the street level, kind of. Just a few steps. So, he escorted me to the bathroom and he was walking up and down the hallway, huge hallway. So, I watched when he was very far away with the back to me, and I walked out and down the stairs and I -- very wide stairs. On each side there were policeman. Polish -- No, not a Pole -- German police and German soldier, I think. I remember the police, but there were two of them on each side. And when I walked out, I walked in the middle of the stairs, head high and very sure of myself. And nobody said anything. I -- I looked left and right, wherever I saw a corner of the -- of the street, closer. I think it was to the right. I turned right and I walked -- I kind of marched, until I hit the corner. When I went around the corner, I

started running. And I ran very quickly. I went back to the railroad station. I had no money for a ticket, but it was -- I just went so quickly and I yelled something, I think in Russian or in Polish, when they wanted a ticket -- I didn't give them. And -- and because I saw the train started moving and I hopped in the train. And the train took me back to Berlin. It was the only train I could see there. It lucky took me to Berlin, it could have taken me somewhere else. So I went back to Berlin. On the way, they stopped and they looked for people again, but then I was lucky. I -- When -- When I jumped in to the train and I saw there were some Russian officers sitting and they showed me that I could sit next to them, so I did. And that's where my Russian language kind of -- although broken, but it was helpful.

And they started talking to me a-and I said, "I'm on my way." They told me, "Are you going to Berlin, too?" So I said yes. I was glad to know it's Berlin. And I told them yes, I was going to Berlin too, to see my relatives, who were there after the war. And we developed a nice conversation. And when the train stopped at night and the other Russian soldiers came to look for foreigners, this particular officer, who sat across this -- the bench from me, he said to the soldiers, "Go away, it's middle of the night, we're all sleepy. Go away." I couldn't be happier. And the soldier went away. So I could go back -- otherwise, I would be caught again and brought to jail again. And I didn't know -- it -- it scared me, the fact that -- that they put us in jail before they send me away, that scared me. I would have been glad to go home, just because I was on my way. And -- And that's why I -- I never went back to -- to Warsaw after the war. I came back to Berlin.

Q: I'm curious about that, you mentioned about being back in jail. I'm wondering if, in the time that you were berl -- in Berlin, did you feel genuinely free?

A: More or less, yes. I felt good because I was with Peppy and she -- she really took good care of me. It was not only name that -- that she was my mother, she -- she really tried her best to be my mother and she behaved like one. It was a -- a great feeling to have somebody watching over you. Oh, many times I gave her aggravation. Refused to do whatever she said, you know, but -- but it's part of it.

Q: So, on this train to Berlin, I'm figuring you were about 16?

A: 15.

Q: 15.

A: Yeah.

Q: All by yourself?

A: Yeah.

Q: She let you go?

A: Yeah.

Q: And then you f -- How did you find her when you got back to Berlin?

A: Well, we were in the same apartment in -- in that place where we had the room, a bedroom. And she was there, so I could go there. As a matter of fact, this officer, who sat across from me, he apologized aft -- to yell -- for yelling at the soldier. And I said, "That's okay." He was a gentleman and -- and I told him that I was going to Berlin and my mother is there and all that. And he wanted the address and I gave him. And he

showed up. He showed up, he came in, he -- had a very nice reception, Peppy and I. He -- He had tea, or whatever there was. And we had a very nice visit and he apologized again for yelling at the soldier and he left. Wasn't that nice?

Q: You had mentioned earlier that you were trying to find your family. Ha -- Did you try to do that in Berlin? How would you go about doing that?

A: Well, in Berlin, there were several ways that ja -- that one could do it. The Jewish agency, they had registry. People that came in from other countries, they would register there that they are alive. There were also soldiers from different countries. Some of them took -- I asked them to put ads in the paper. There was the international Red Cross. I tried to -- to reach -- to find where they are. It wasn't easy, because it was all chaotic and -- and it was all new established and some offices there were before, were not any more. But it was possible to find. And -- And I put in inquires everywhere.

Q: Did you have any luck?

A: None. There is one thing that -- one thing that came out of it is that after awhile the -- I asked a British person, who went home for vacation, to put in England an ad, because my father had a brother in England with family, for many years. So, they put an ad, and sure enough, I found my uncle.

Q: Which uncle is this?

A: My father's brother.

Q: What's his name?

A: Philip. And -- Philip Fox. And he -- his friend saw the ad in the paper and called him and within a little while -- there were some British soldiers in the area and my uncle knew their parents. And they wrote to them and they came to visit and I was in -- in the orphanage then. They came to visit, they said their parents wrote that here I was, to find out how I am and if I want to go to England.

Q: I want to get back to that in a second, but I'm still curious about one other thing in Berlin. Was it even anything as -- I imagine you would be walking down the street just looking at faces, trying to find familiar faces, and --

A: All the time.

Q: Tell me about that.

A: I look at faces wherever I go, for 50 years or more, hoping to find a familiar face. I joined the [indecipherable] the Warsaw ghetto resistance organization in New York, because for awhile we lived in New York, in Manhattan. So I joined them, and every time there was a meeting, I would just go there and stare at faces. I didn't find anybody. A friend of mine find -- found friends. The one that is a little older and she could remember better, or maybe her friends didn't change as much. I didn't find a soul that I know.

Q: What is that like when you're looking at faces? I mean --

A: Very disappointing, and the question is here, look at me, don't you know me? It's not as if I am supposed to know you, because I am a child. It's that you are supposed to recognize me. Without realizing that this is not possible, children change faster than

adults. Didn't realize that. Don't -- Doesn't anybody know me? Nobody knew me. Even if they did know my parents, they wouldn't recognize me. I didn't know that. So this looking at faces, whenever you are at a Jewish gathering, is something that I do automatic, wherever I go.

Q: Well, your next stop after Berlin, what was that and how -- how did you decide where you were going? How did that get figured out?

A: Well, to begin with, after -- after a little while, the -- Berlin was divided into zones, into different zones. And there was Russian, an American, a British, a French. And they started closing in. At that time, Peppy, who was very active in helping everybody and she got me involved in it, too. Like when -- when some survivors came in, she would say, here is the Jewish agency and here is their -- the synagogue and what -- she tried to -- to help a lot of people. She got me involved in it and -- and at one time, she said to me that she and some other people organized for a group of orphans to go to the British zone. But I -- I have to be in that orphanage. So she registered me in that orphanage in Berlin. And one day there was a British truck, covered truck. Came up, pick up the children from the orphanage, including me, and they drove us off to -- to Bergen-Belsen. And that's how I got to Bergen-Belsen.

Q: Did you know where you were going?

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: And had you said goodbye to Peppy? Did -- What --

A: Peppy said that she will come as soon as she can. That she will come to the British so -- zone, as soon as she can. Becau -- She got involved in helping others so much that people came to depend on her and she didn't want to let them down. So, she send me out and she knew where we're going, because it was arranged. And then she said that as soon as she can, she will come to join me.

Q: Did you know that you were going to a place that had been a camp, during the war?

A: Well, we did not go to a place that was a camp, it was the same town, but the orphanage was in the barracks of -- in the former barracks of the soldiers.

Q: Ah.

A: Was not the camp. It was a building and it was in-indoors, it was in a nice area.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: Like a -- a barracks, but built out of brick. I even have the pictures of it.

Q: And tell me about that time. How -- How did you feel about being there? What was it like?

A: It felt like a temporary assignment, like a temporary thing, because it was in the back of my head still to go back to Warsaw to find relatives. I thought about that most of the time and it felt like this is a good stop, a place to stop and wait until the opportunity presents itself to travel to Warsaw, to find my relatives.

Q: What -- How were you -- How were you treated? What were -- What were the conditions like for you?

A: I was treated as good as could be. Everybody had to eat -- needed things and people mainly were survivors there. Conditions were not that great, but they were the best they could be. They gave us some clothes, they gave us a place to sleep, food to eat and then -- th-th -- there was one nurse there, I -- I just went to visit with her in Ramatgan. She was just fantastic, she would care about all the children. She would act like a mother to everybody. And that's where I met her. She apparently was liberated from the camp in Bergen-Belsen with a group of children and when they brought us from Berlin, we were just additional children. And it was fine.

Q: What's her name? Tell me about her.

A: Oh, her name is Hela.

Q: Hela what?

A: When I met her, her name was Hela Wash. Of course, now her name is Hela Yafare. She was -- She is a fantastic lady. She treated us well, she was -- ca -- she cared about all the children. Now, when I was in Ramatgan, and I came to visit with her. I came with my son and daughter-in-law and she was at home with her husband and she kept referring, whenever she talked to my son and daughter-in-law, she kept referring to me as her children. She would say, you know, another one of my children, such and such, called. And -- So we were her children. And it was great to see her.

Q: Have you -- you've stayed in touch with her all this time?

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: Wow. Ha-Has -- Tell me about that, how have you -- how did you find her and how did you keep in touch?

A: Well, we -- we went to Israel and we were in, Kayata Navim and she came to Israel, she came to visit and the whole group just loved her. And for awhile she was there and then she moved to -- to Tel Aviv. And we each visited her whenever we had a day off, or so. We would visit and she would visit and we -- we stayed in touch.

Q: I'll come back to the Israel chapter in a little bit, but I want to get you there first. How many -- Was it all girls at fir -- at the orphanage camp, was it --

A: Oh no, girls and boys.

Q: Girls and boys.

A: Yeah.

Q: About how many, do you think?

A: In the orphanage, I don't know how many there were. But, when we went to Israel, out of that place, I know we were 80, a group of 80. We were divided into two groups and each one went to a different kibbutz, cause they had the reunion fo-for which I -- I got a tape of the reunion, I wasn't there. I was there in the previous reunion, but this reunion I wasn't there. And they made me -- for me a -- a tape, which I brought with me, I saw it. And she was there at the reunion, she's there at every reunion. She's just a fantastic lady.

Q: Did you -- I don't -- How long were you at Bergen-Belsen [indecipherable]

A: We were at Bergen-Belsen just a couple of months -- a few months.

Q: Okay.

A: And we're transferred to a -- ablankanasia, which is near Hamburg.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: There was a -- an estate, I think the Varburg estate. And they have arranged for us to be there to -- to transform it into an orphanage and we were brought over there, so it was beautiful, it was beautiful. And from there, we were sent to Israel, via Marseilles.

Q: Okay. Now, in this time, when you were at these orphanages, did you -- did you have any kind of boyfriend?

A: Not really boyfriend, but developed friendship with a few people, girls as well as boys.

Q: Yeah? These people you're still in touch with, besides the -- the nurse?

A: Some people, yes. One of them brought a book, and when I got there now to Israel, there was a copy of the book for me, with her writing because she couldn't come to meet me, she was going out of town to a seminar. So -- and I was so sick, I read the book. I was surprised that I could still read Hebrew with -- without punctuation. I haven't done it in a long time, but slowly it came back to me and I read her book about her life. Very interesting. And then I went to visit my room mate and she invited a few people from the same group, who came to visit and brought pictures. So, it was nice.

Q: Th-The children, or young adults -- you were, at this point, I guess 16 -- 15 -16, at the camp, did you tell each other about your experiences di -- during the war? Did people talk about it?

A: I don't think so. I don't think so. The main thing was i-if -- when you made acquaintance with another survivor, the main questions was -- were, which camp did you go to? Which camp did you survive? If the camp was the same as that person, then they would compare notes to people they knew or the -- the bad guys or what -- what it was like in the camp. But, this is how people got acquainted, what camp were you in.

Q: Did you see a lot -- any evidence of trauma, of people who were really scarred after the war emotionally or physically?

A: We were all scarred. We were all scarred and I think that this is going to last a lifetime. I thought that I can always point out a person -- a survivor -- from any group of people. I can do that, I think. Because we have a scar. We have a certain way of behavior, a certain way of speaking or behaving that points to the fact that we're survivors. That's in my opinion.

Q: When we change sides, I want to ask you about that a little bit more.

End of Tape Two, Side A

Beginning Tape Two, Side B

Q: This is a continuation of a United States Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with Doris Greenberg. This is tape number two, side B. You were talking about being able to recognize survivors. Tell -- Tell me what you mean by that. What do you -- What do you see?

A: I find that we survivors have a certain way of speaking, of behaving, that I don't find among other people, who never went through the hell we did. That's how it seems to me.

We -- We can compare -- We can compare to each other, but we don't have the good times that other people talk about. There's some among us that block out the -- the happenings during the war, although it was just a few years, but it left a big scar on everybody. And even, it -- just like in the Jewish religion, whenever there is a holiday, there is an eeskar. That's the prayer for the departed. I find that whenever we have even the greatest simcha, which is a celebration, we always remember the bad times. And I find it many times in people's eyes, in their voices and behavior. I'm not trying to analyze, but it seems to me that I can recognize people who are survivors.

Q: Other kinds of survivors, as well? I mean, if you were to find someone who'd survived Cambodia, or Rwanda or any other sort of mass slaughter of people, do you think it would be the same, or is there something unique?

A: Well, I can only speculate on that. My speculations would point out that yes, you can. Because people who have such past, where they suffered a lot, they usually behave in a milder way, I think. But that would be just speculation.

Q: Okay. I think where we left off, you were -- you had just left Bergen-Belsen, you were in the other camp in -- oh, I wanted to mention one more thing at Bergen-Belsen. You had mentioned a woman, Haddassah Rosenzaft, who was there.

A: Oh, yes.

Q: Tell me about her.

A: Well, Haddassah Rosenzaft, when I met her in Bergen-Belsen, her name was Haddassah Bimko. She is also a survivor -- was -- she passed away since. She was in the

camp of Bergen-Belsen, and sister the -- we call her Sister Hela, the one I spoke about before, the nurse, sister. Everybody called her Shustra Hela. Polish, shustra means sister. She knew Dr. Bimko quite a lot from the camp and they were apparently saving a lot of children in Bergen-Belsen camp during the war. And Dr. Bimko was very helpful in securing things that the children needed. Hela was in -- in the orphanage all the time and also trying to help out. Dr. Bimko did not reside there, I don't think so, but she was in different committees to help.

Q: Do you have any strong memories of her, of things she did?

A: Not really. I remember that she got married in the camp, to ros -- Mr. Rosen -- Mr. Rosenzaft. Was his name Joseph? I don't remember -- Yosela, I don't know. I can't remember his first name. I used to -- to know it, because it went together in my mind, but something happened to my mind since then. She married Mr. Rosenzaft. And then I met their son. I think he was born in -- in Bergen-Belsen., Menachim Rosenzaft. Dr. Bimko, well Haddassah Rosenzaft, she traveled with me to Washington, to bring me to the Holocaust Museum, to do the tape. It's -- Actually, she contacted me and she made all the arrangements for travel. And we flew together, there and back, so we could talk a little. And then we were in touch on the phone. And then, one day I went to visit Hela in Florida and she told me that Dr. Bim -- Dr. Haddassah Rosenzaft passed away.

Q: Had either of the two of them, over the years, mentioned Anne Frank? I'm wondering if they knew her at Bergen-Belsen.

A: No, no, I don't think so. I don't think I knew that name at all. I think Anne Frank came from a different country, she went to different camp, that we -- the people from our area did not go to. So, I don't remember hearing anything about Anne Frank.

Q: Okay. So you've now left Bergen-Belsen, you've gone to another orphanage in Germany.

A: Yeah.

Q: And then -- How is it -- Did you decide where you wanted to go? Did you know where you wanted to go?

A: Well, actually, the whole group was talking. We had some people from Israel come. We had even from the Jewish brigade, that joined the British army, they were stationed somewhere in Holland, I think. And they send us gifts for Hanukah, with letters. Each one wrote a letter to the kids and another roommate of mine got a letter in her package and she did not want to respond. She gave it to me and I responded. Developed great friendship with a young man. As a matter of fact, I visited him, too, and his family.

Q: In Israel?

A: Yeah. First through the mails, and then, when I was in Israel and he was discharged from the for-forces, he came to visit, so we could meet in person. Also, some other members of the Jewish brigade came to teach us. They formed a school. They taught us English, math, whatever we could, whatever they could teach us and give us and do for us, they did.

Q: Where was this?

A: That was -- It started in Bergen-Belsen, and it continued in -- in Blankanasa. And then later on, when we were in Israel, we stayed in touch with them. The tape I mentioned before, of the reunion, has one of them giving a terrific speech.

Q: Hm.

A: Couldn't recognize him, because he's all gray and when we went to visit Hela, she had copies of the same pictures that I had and I showed my son and daughter-in-law this -- this particular soldier -- he taught us I think, math. No, he did not teach us math. For math, there was a Mr. Kaplan, Shopdike Kaplan. He taught us math. This particular one, Alleeyahu Benyuhuda, I don't remember was -- what he was teaching us, but there were classes and there was another one, Mr. Schwartz, Aria Schwartz, from the Jewish brigade. We kept in touch with them all these years. They came to reunions. And the reunions happened every five years now. I don't know if there is another planned, because we're getting old. We're getting old.

Q: Well, how -- how was it decided then, that you would go to Israel from the camps [indecipherable]

A: Well, since we were in a group, and we had all the influence of the Jewish brigade, we also had visits from Golda Meir. We had a visit from Ben -- Ben-Gurion, who came to talk to us. There was no doubt about it and no question about it, that that's -- we're going to go.

Q: Tell me about those visits. Where was this and what -- tell me about that.

A: Well, the visits happen in -- in Bergen-Belsen, and of course Ben-Gurion came to talk to us in Yiddish. He talked to all the survivors and of course, we were there to hear his speech. So, i-it -- it was very, very -- how to say -- it was ins-inspirational. And, after being treated so well, and taught -- we were taught the alphabet or Hebrew, there was no doubt about it, there were a few people who -- who didn't -- there were maybe a few people who didn't want to go or had found relatives, I don't know, but the whole group -- it was decided for us and nobody objected.

Q: Tell me more about that speech. Do you remember what he said, or how -- what -- what were you thinking when you -- did you know who he was?

A: I didn't, originally. Originally, I didn't know. And the speech was mainly about -- about Jews having a country. And that -- that we're this -- he came to greet the survivors, invite us to build -- to build Palestine -- it was Palestine at that time, and it was mainly an invitation to come and help them build. This was before the state was born.

Q: Do you remember what you were feeling when you heard this?

A: I don't remember, really, how I felt about it. I thought it was a good vibration, it was something that, oh yes, let's go and do it. Something like that. Although, all the time, in the back of my head was to go to Warsaw and find family and then maybe go together with the family. I was not -- I was undecided, really. But it didn't matter. This -- There was freedom, there was enough food, there was what to wear and nobody chased me. And that was good enough.

Q: Where did -- Did Golda Meir come to Bergen-Belsen as well? What was the --

A: Golda Meir came to Bergen-Belsen too, yes.

Q: Together?

A: No, no, at different occasions. But I hadn't heard her speech. Sometimes, when -- when things got a little organized, they were having -- they formed commissions and -- and different organizations and they had everything indoors, and it became not as outdoorsy as at the beginning. Maybe the weather also interfered, I don't know. But later on, we could -- we knew that somebody was in town, but not necessarily -- we were not necessarily invited.

Q: Mm-hm. But you did hear him?

A: Yeah, yeah. I heard -- he spoke in Yiddish, I could understand it, but this was not my language.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: But I could understand what -- the gist of it. Years later, I found out that I can speak Yiddish, too, which I never tried before, I never knew I could. But I could understand because my mother and grandmother, whenever they didn't want me to understand something, that's how they spoke. So, maybe that's why I -- I could understand. Later on -- years, years later, I found out that I could speak it too. I tried and it went.

Q: Were you concerned that you're going to Palestine or Israel meant, in some sense, that you were giving up on finding your family?

A: Oh no. No, because you could find people wherever you are. You could write letters, you could teleph -- well, telephones were not that popular at that time, but you could

always write and there were always people who traveled and they're helpful. They want to help you. So, you could ask somebody to place an ad in the paper or I could write to Warsaw, whether I am in Israel or in Germany. So, no, I was not fearful.

Q: Okay. And how did you get to Israel?

A: Oh, we -- we got to Israel in a -- in a great big, old ship, by the name of Champalion, which afterwards sank. Yeah, we went from Marseilles to Haifa and the ship was packed with people, there was no place to lie down or sit down, just to stand up, almost. The trip was not very comfortable, but we were moving across the at -- the sea, the Mediterranean, towards Israel and we got there and the British put us in a camp again, in Atleet, there was a camp. But we were in -- not too long there, and we were assigned our destination and we went to -- my group went to Kayata Navim, which is not far from Jerusalem.

Q: Had you ever seen water like that before? Had you ever been to the sea before?

A: I don't think so, no. I don't think so. I have hardly traveled -- when I was a child, I hardly traveled out of Warsaw, just for summertime. My parents used to rent a place outside of town, which was reachable within an hour, so that my parents could come out for the weekend to be with us. And that was the extent of travel I did before the war.

Q: Do you remember any impression once you were on the Mediterranean of seeing what you were seeing, or seeing Israel for the first time?

A: If I was lucky, I could see it, because there were so many people around, you can't even see out. Th-Th-The boat -- The ship was really full, because among us who -- who

had legal papers, there were many more who were just smuggling through. So that's why the ship was so packed.

Q: Uh-huh. And there were how many of you together, the group that you were with?

A: Well, we were 80 in our group from the -- from the orphanage.

Q: And tell me about your impressions when you first arrived in Israel. What do you remember?

A: I remember being in -- in Atleet, in the camp, the British camp and it was terribly hot. Was very hot and I did not have a lot of clothes to wear, ex -- but I did have a little coat. And it was too hot with the coat and I couldn't take it off, because what I was wearing underneath was -- wasn't good. So I remember that, suffering from the heat. But, as I said, we did not stay there long, because of the fact that we were children and we came legally, we were assigned our respective places quite quickly.

Q: And do you remember what -- when this was that you came to Israel, what the date would have been?

A: I have -- I have a document there that tells the day -- with a picture, you should see that picture. I think it was April, '46, if I'm not mistaken.

Q: So you're 16?

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay. And where were you sent? What -- What did you do?

A: We were -- We were sent to Kayata Navim, and there was a program that the Jewish agency had -- the program was deyuse aleeya. And within that program, they send us to

Kayata Navim, where we were supposed to work a half a day and study a half a day, and that's what we did.

Q: Is this a kibbutz?

A: It's really a kwootsa, but everybody called it a kibbutz, but it was kwootsa.

Q: Mm-hm. And what were your impressions? Was it a -- did you like being there? Was it hard work? What -- Tell me.

A: No, it was not hard work, and if it was, it was the -- the -- the feeling of doing something, accomplishing and -- and being proud of it, so whatever assignment we got, it was fine. We were taught a -- a lot of stuff. We were treated well, we were given clean rooms, with clean beds, with clothes to wear, with food to eat. We were treated well, just -- some people talked to us Yiddish. They assumed that everybody knows it. And sometimes it was hard on me. So, we had to study Hebrew quite quickly, to be able to communicate. And we worked and we studied.

Q: What had happened to Peppy at this time? Were you still in touch with her?

A: I was in touch -- She was in touch with me, actually. She -- At that time, when I came to Israel, well, let me tell you what happened before. In the train from Hanover -- from Hamburg to Marseilles, we were on the border of France, I think, when my roommate heard somebody calling out my name as the train was stopping. And sure enough, it was Peppy. Peppy was on that train and she was running alongside to -- to find where I was. So, I saw her and she was traveling with some people from the UNRRA and from the Joint -- AJDC, American Joint Distribution Committee, and she was traveling with them

to accompany the -- all the people who go to Israel. And she told me that she'll see me as soon as we are in Marseilles, which really did happen. So she saw me off to the -- to the ship. She also gave me a name and address of her husband's nephew, who was supposed to live in Israel. There was also a gentleman from America, who was in the armed forces, who accompanied our group on the ship. And Peppy was going back to France, to Paris. Apparently she -- she was involved in rescuing some children from different countries or from different places -- rescuing Jewish children. And she was going back to France, to -- to Paris from Marseilles. This gentleman, who was in the armed forces, the American one, David Eisenberg, a redhead -- I remember him so well. He accompanied the -- the ship, with the children. And we got to Israel and after we settled in Kayata Navim, he came to visit. And I asked him to help me find my uncle. I knew I had an uncle there, my mother's brother. And I asked him to help me to find Peppy's husband's nephew. Well, he found the nephew very quickly. I called him, told him where Peppy is and then I didn't hear from him any more. This David Eisenberg, he traveled with me to find my uncle. And we traveled quite awhile, we traced him down, oh yeah. I remember that he lived somewhere in Rananna. We went to Rananna, he wasn't there. We went to the post office, we inquired, we asked. Somebody walked in and knew -- and knew my uncle's wife's sister lived in Rananna. We went there and they told us where my uncle was, in Haifa. So David Eisenberg really helped me a lot, finding people. Well, coming back to Peppy. When I found the nephew and -- actually, David found the nephew and he was informed where Peppy was, apparently he got in touch with Peppy and told her that her

husband is alive. He was in Russia somewhere and he survived, and that he came back to Poland. So Peppy went there to see him, yeah.

Q: So at this point you had found one uncle?

A: Yes.

Q: And did you stay in Israel? What happened next?

A: Well, I stayed in kibbutz, yes. I went to visit with my uncle and aunt and their two children. One was jumping around in his playpen and the other one was outdoors, so they must have been like a year and a half, or -- and the other one, maybe six, seven. Little kids. I just saw the -- the one that was older, is a grandfather, yeah. Anyway, that -- time flies unbelievably fast.

Q: How was that, to find that you had some family?

A: Well, it was great. And my uncle Aram, he spoke to me Yiddish, too. And he likes to speak Yiddish or Hebrew. He knew I don't speak Hebrew, so he spoke to me Yiddish. And I tried to do my best, so I replied, because I took some lessons in German and I could speak at that time, German. And he laughed at me, that I don't speak well Yiddish. So I said, "Let's speak Polish." He said, "Nah." And it was very, very nice. And the second time I went to visit with him, which must have been a holiday, he told me that he got the letter from his sister, my aunt. The one I hid under the -- the window in -- in that room with her little boy. That she survived and her husband was in Russia and she found him, too, cause he returned to Poland with the Russian army. And that they were hoping to find their son, the little boy. Which they found. So that's what I learned from my

Uncle Aram. And sure enough, I wrote to them that I am around. That letter that my Uncle Aram received, stated that my aunt thought that maybe I am alive, because she saw me -- so -- she saw me in -- must have been September ‘44, was the last day I saw her and she thought maybe I was still alive. So, I wrote her and it was -- it was quite a -- quite a thing.

Q: Did -- Y-You were in Israel in -- during the War of Independence?

A: Yeah.

Q: Were you involved with that?

A: Yeah.

Q: Tell me.

A: Well, from -- from the time that we arrived there, we were studying, we were working and we were also involved in military exercise. It started as a gymnastics, as a field trips and it turned into throwing stones and then throwing grenades and then a little rifle -- target, and little MG 34’s, shooting and stuff. We were involved in exercise, war -- war exercise, or whatever. They taught us about it. I don’t remember how often it was, but quite often. Boys and girls. And when the war started, we were -- we were involved in doing all the services that everybody else did. And then there was the pamah that came and they were -- they were even having uniforms and stuff. And our group --

Q: Oops. Hold up.

End of Tape Two, Side B

Beginning Tape Three, Side A

Q: This is a continuation of a United States Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with Doris Greenberg. This is tape number three, side A. You were talking about the War of Independence.

A: Uh-huh. Well, when the pamah came in, they had the command an-and things and actually, we were supposed to do whatever we were assigned to and some of our boys were assigned to join an-and go to a -- how do you call that? The positions that were prepared -- and the girls, too. So, we were actually kind of mobilized to -- to be -- to help with the pamah. And I know that some of the elders from the kibbutz were also in charge. So, there must have been cooperation of forces, and we were involved in that. They needed a lot of help. It was -- It was a very bad area where the war was concerned, near Jerusalem and th-the location of our kibbutz was very vulnerable. Well, we participated in -- in that war and we were assigned different duties. I remember I w -- I tried to help out as a nurse, and when they brought the -- a wounded soldier and I was supposed to wash his head -- he was wounded in the head -- I was supposed to wash off from the blood, so that he can be treated, and -- and I kind of blacked out. I think that was the -- the end of my nursing career, very short-lived nursing career. And I was assigned then to communications. That lasted. So I was involved in communications. We also went on patrols, night patrols, day patrols and whatever needed to be done, we did participate. However, I understand that we were not sent out of the area. We were only in that area, because I remembered when a different group of pamah came in. One group moved and

one group came in. But we were on the left, where we were. So we're actually under their orders when they were there, but would -- we were in the -- in Kayata Navim for the defense of the place. So we lasted there quite a bit. And you know the outcome.

Q: How do you think your -- your past experience as a Holocaust survivor affected how you viewed that war? Did that -- Did the two come into connection at some point in your mind?

A: Sometimes, but not very often. Don't forget that at this age, you don't think much about comparing things. But sometimes a thought came to mind, like why doesn't anybody like us? What is it that we have done to the world? The Germans don't like us. The Arabs don' t like us. I was not a good politician, I never was, I never will be. I just see things from the point of view of -- of being human, being a person. So my concern sometimes was, why don't they like us? What have we done to be so disliked? And I couldn't figure.

Q: How -- Tell me about how you met your husband.

A: Oh. Well, I -- I went to visit my uncle, eventually, after the war.

Q: Which uncle is this?

A: My Uncle Philip in London, in England. I went to visit and I stayed there for about a year or so, came back -- I came back to Israel and I stayed with my Aunt Esther -- the one that survived -- her husband Shalom and their little boy, Yakov. I stayed with them in Ako and there was their cousin -- my Uncle Shalom's cousin, I think and his wife, who had the little place also in Ako, but it was not in the town, it was kind of out of town,

where the government built places to live. Actually it was like a barrack or some, but it -- it was -- people have a little room, kitchen, share a toilet with a next door neighbor, and a shower. These cousins, they lived there and we used to see each other once a week or so. At one time, I had a little dispute with my aunt and uncle and decided to leave, and of course, where did I go, I went to the cousins. They invited me to stay. So I went there and those cousin -- in the same place where they lived, lived my husband, and they introduced us. So, we met, we went out a few times and I don't know, we -- we -- we were dating for about two years before we were married.

Q: And you were married in what year?

A: 1952.

Q: '52. Did you talk with him about your experiences during the war, as a survivor? Was he also a survivor, or was h -- no.

A: No. He had a good time. He -- He lived in China, in Shanghai. And anytime -- if I met -- if I met a friend who was a survivor or I talked to my friend as a survivor, he just couldn't understand. Say, "Oh, what a terrible thing, what a -- we knew about it, but much later," he says. And I said, "What have you done during that time?" He says, "I had a good time. Went to cabaret, nightclub, theater, lived it up."

Q: So, he couldn't understand really, what you'd been through.

A: This I don't know. This I don't know.

Q: Oh.

A: But he had different past. His childhood and youth were different from mine.

Q: Was it -- When you got to know each other, was it a problem that you had had such a different recent past?

A: It was not a problem for me, I don't think so. As a matter of fact, I thought it would -- it was very nice to listen to good stuff. It was not as depressing as to listen to the bad stuff, so it was okay.

Q: So you married in '52 and at some point you came to the United States. How did that happen?

A: Well, my husband's parents came to the United States from -- from China and they also had a daughter in the United States, my husband's sister. And they wanted to have both children near them. I asked my husband to write them and invite them to come to Israel, but a letter came back in which they said, "If we come here, we still have one child somewhere else." So we decided to go. At that time, the parents wrote to -- to him about coming to America and -- and settling down and having his parents nearby and -- and I thought that if my parents lived anywhere, I would go there. And, of course, I wanted to be good, enjoy parents. So we wen -- we went.

Q: And when did you come -- when did you come and where did you enter? Do you remember what --

A: W-We came here, I think it was November of '55. November of '55 and we went to my in-laws house. They had a pretty large apartment in Manhattan, on 79th Street. And they gave us a bedroom with a bath and it was very, very beautiful, very beautiful.

Q: Did you come on a boat?

A: No, we flew.

Q: You flew?

A: Yeah.

Q: Do you remember what your -- what your feelings were about coming to America, leaving Israel, coming this far?

A: I really didn't feel great about it, no. I wanted to stay in Israel. The family I had, whatever it was, it was family, friends, and I thought I wanted to stay in Israel. But I also thought that, as I said, if I had parents in Siberia, I would try and get there. So -- So we went.

Q: And you had one son at this point, with you?

A: Yeah, yeah. He was born there. He was about a year and a half, or a year and three months, that -- when -- when we took him in.

Q: Did -- Did your husband or you begin working in New York, did you stay in New York? What happened?

A: Oh, we -- we came in -- we came -- end of November. In December I had a job.

Q: Doing what?

A: Assistant -- Assistant to the bookkeeper.

Q: Of what -- of --

A: There was a factor -- an office, Dunmore. This was an office of a manufacturer of boy's wear. And th-they had a bookkeeper who was actually an office manager. She --

The books -- She had -- She -- A lot of people that worked there and did the payroll and stuff. So, I was her assistant.

Q: And your husband?

A: He -- He tried to get all kinds of jobs as a salesman. Actually, he used to deal in furs, in Shanghai. He's -- He tried to get into the fur business here, but he found it impossible, almost. So, he tried other jobs, a salesman, he sold eyeglasses for awhile. He also -- He also went -- in order to get som -- to earn some money, he went to the funeral parlors to be a night watchman. Slowly, he developed all kinds of theories and tried all kinds of things to make a better living. I was working all the time. I was lucky that my mother-in-law took care of the baby. I could leave the baby at home and go to work. And that was pretty -- a great help.

Q: And you had a second child. How -- When was that?

A: He was born in 1959, in Mount Sinai Hospital, in New York. And by that time, we moved out from my in-law's place and we had an apartment on Riverside Drive. And my Hank, my bigger boy, went to -- well, he started with the nursery, then he went to school, went to Hebrew school. And when -- when my younger son was born, Sid, Hank was five, so he was going -- he was going at that time, I think, to the nursery school. And I took some time off from work and then later on, hired a babysitter so I could go back to work.

Q: During this time when you were here in New York, did you talk about your war experience?

A: No.

Q: Did you seek out any other survivors?

A: No, did not talk about it, did not seek out anybody. I was quite busy with work and family. The only thing that I did do, was, soon as I heard from this organization, Bugrow, I joined them in hope of -- of finding somebody that I know or that kn-knew my people. So I used to go with my husband to their meetings. But that was about the only thing.

Q: And he would go with you?

A: Oh yeah. Very sociable fellow, likes company.

Q: Mm-hm. As your children got older, enough to understand the war, did you talk to them about what you had gone through? Were they curious about it?

A: Yes, my older son, he gave me an assignment to write my memoirs, of which I wrote five pages. And that's it. He would -- is very curious. Always asks questions. Even when we went now to visit my old friends, he wanted to know more, and his wife, too. She's a journalist, so i-it was for her also something probably interesting to hear. The younger son, he would ask a question or two. I think that -- that he was not up to it yet. There -- There has to be a time in one's life when one becomes to -- becomes -- comes to a point where he needs other information -- more information or where he wants to know different things. It is -- probably happens to everybody. He would ask some questions, but he was not as persistent. My Hank tells me quite often and he's persistent -- maybe also different character, different types of people. He could have wanted me to do that, but did not want to press on me. I don't know.

Q: And with your husband, was he curious?

A: Not in particular, no. I think that he -- he was satisfied with what he knew and what he read and what he heard from other people, and from me sometimes.

Q: I'm wondering how he reacted to that. I mean, did you feel like you had enough chance to talk about it, or did you feel you didn't need to talk about it so much?

A: Well, I wasn't looking for chances to talk. As matter of fact -- and right after the war, for quite a few years, I couldn't talk about it. I remember when I was in England and my aunt and uncle wanted to talk, I couldn't. It was very hard. It took quite some time to be able to talk about it. It -- The whole thing, it was such a humiliating experience, to be chased, to be -- to be at the target of somebody who wants to kill you because why? And the way we were treated by the Germans, it was so humiliating. This wa -- This was probably what they wanted to do, so that we can forget that we're human beings. It was very humiliating. It was very tough to -- to reverse that, to say well, it is not what anybody else thinks, we are people, we have feelings, we're -- if -- we're not better, but just as good at least, as anybody else. Took a long time to -- to get back to what I call, to normal. Maybe that's the reason that I can recognize survivors. There is something that tells us, oh, we're all right. We're okay. We're not what the Nazis told -- told the world that we are. We're a people and some of us are -- are really nice. And then, when you think about it and you read about it, we have given the world quite a few good things. So, I don't think anybody should hate us, but that's my opinion. That's my opinion.

Q: Do you think your experience as a survivor, especially the notion that you had to hide who you were for so long, affected how you raised your kids, do you think?

A: Yes, I think it did.

Q: How so?

A: I raised my kids to like everybody, to begin with, and treat everybody very, very well. And -- And they ask, “No matter what?” Well, it’s not no matter what. If they don’t treat you well, you can find out why or you can not communicate with these people any more. But you, as my child, your approach should be to everybody, treat them the same and treat them well. I think I did the right thing by telling them that. I even look back and I see -- you saw now my friend that came in to -- to -- to do the air conditioning [indecipherable]? This person, I don’t think I have anything in common with that person, and yet, he’s my friend. I have quite a few friends with whom I have nothing in common, not in the past and not in the present. But I met them and they’re nice people and I like them and they like me and we’re friends. I find this to be the right thing for me. It always -- It is sa-said, you have to choose your friends. That’s true. You don’t become close friends with just anybody, but you -- there is a difference between friends and -- and -- and acquaintances. Your acquaintances can be very friendly and if you treat them the same and they treat you, that’s what I find. I have a lot of -- not a lot, some different -- some -- different friends who -- with whom I have nothing in common, and yet we’re friendly. And we see each other and we discuss things. I’m glad to learn their point of view and hear what they have to say. And I have nothing but the best wishes for them.

Q: I'm curious too, since you lost your parents when you were so young, you were, I guess, 12. You didn't know what it was like to be an adult with parents. I wonder if that affected your parenting and the way you've raised your children?

A: I can't tell that. I think you have to ask my son. But, very often, when I hear or read about people who have difficulties communicating with their mothers, usually mothers and daughters have problems. I can't understand that. I simply cannot understand that and I cannot see why that would happen. Well, maybe there is a reason, but I don't know it.

Q: Why is that, do you think? The -- The -- That that's your reaction?

A: I really don't know, but if I were to speculate, I would think that maybe the both parties want to -- to impose their views on the other party, whether it's mothers and daughters or vice versa. I find it possible to express my views to my son and not impose on it. He should know my views. If I wouldn't tell him, it wouldn't be fair. He should know his mother just like I would like to know him. He would know my views, but I don't impose. Maybe those people try to impose those views, one upon the other. I don't know, but that's how I would speculate it is.

Q: You mentioned that you -- I believe you had gone back to Warsaw for the 50th anniversary, tell me about that.

A: Yes. My son Hank -- that was the same year that the museum was opened and I received and invitation as one of the, I don't know, not founders, but people who gave their -- their life stories or whatever and I was supposed to go to Washington, DC for that

opening. But my son suggested that since the whole thing is happening in Warsaw, we should go there, so we did.

Q: This was -- What was it exactly that was going on?

A: It was the 50th anniversary of the ghetto Warsaw. And, I still have an uncle in Warsaw. I saw him, too.

Q: So tell me about that, you went with your son and anyone else?

A: No, just with my son. We booked a one week tour of the -- of the camps and the important places during the co -- Holocaust. So we were driven by bus and we had a ga -- a tour guide and we visited the camps and this was for one week. And the second week, we spend two days with my uncle and then we went back to Kraków to look around ourselves for things that we didn't have a chance to -- to see enough or we wanted to revisit. And we saw a lot of stuff. We also, one day, went back -- he wanted to know where I was born and where I lived and my side of the family, because some years back, he went to China to see where his father grew up. So this time he wanted to see about me, so we went, we took some pictures in front of the house and we walked around, we saw where it was and then we went -- I explained to him a few things that I remembered. He was very impressed. My uncle took us to an Israeli restaurant in Warsaw, which was -- by which I was very impressed. And I recalled a few things that happened and where it happened. I think my son was very impressed wi-with -- with things that he heard about and now he saw, but he was -- he was so upset when we went to the camps. Couldn't -- Couldn't tear him away from looking at those shoes and those glasses and -- and things

he -- he was -- he was really upset. And then we had some experience with the modern anti-Semitic behavior.

Q: Let me just [indecipherable] tape for a second. Actually no, I think we're okay. Wh-Wh-What experience was that?

A: Well, there were still signs on some buildings and especially in the -- in the -- where the train goes, on the sides, there were walls and there were still signs there that said, 'Out with the Jews'. You know, derogatory statements for the Jews. There -- There are still people who speak badly about us, and when I'd experienced that a little bit. So, on the other hand, they cook very delicious food, very rich and delicious food and they have some nice things. But the ghetto Warsaw is non-existent. And when we tried to see --

End of Tape Three, Side A

Beginning Tape Three, Side B

Q: This is a continuation of a United States Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with Doris Greenberg. This it tape number three, side B. How -- How did you respond when you saw that graffiti, that -- in the place where you had grown up and seen so much pain?

A: Well, I had -- I had no one to respond to. I just felt that it's insulting, it still exists and it's bad. And nowadays we hear even more about it, of what is going on in Russia and in other countries. It's very upsetting and I cannot respond to that. I wish it was nonexistent.

Q: And it was upsetting for your son, you said?

A: Very much, very much.

Q: Did you go back to Ravensbrück, was that one of the camps that you visited?

A: No.

Q: No.

A: No. We went to Majdanek, to Treblinka, to Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Q: Was it an emotional thing for you to be back in Warsaw, to be back?

A: It was. It was emotional f-for s-several reasons. To begin with, it's the place that you thought you know. And all of a sudden, I find that I couldn't recognize everything. Mainly the things that were rebuilt and of course, they could have been rebuilt a little differently. But, also, I couldn't recognize -- I thought there was a street somewhere and then you go there, no, that there was no street, there is just a block. In other words, the memory plays a little trick. And I was upset about that. On the other hand, there were some things that I remembered and I told my son, "When we'll go around the corner, we'll see steps mai --" At that time they were made of stone, I think. But they go all the way down to the -- to the river. And he looks at me, we take a walk. Just around the corner, here are the steps, only they are made of wood and they are much nicer now. So, it brought back -- it brought back my -- my self confidence. We had -- he -- his birthday was while we were there, so we went to a very fancy restaurant and we were much impressed with -- with the restaurant and with the food they served and with the service they had. So that was one nice thing about it. But, when we went to another place, we found some -- some anti-Semitism exists, yeah. Which was not that great, and I wish it would go away.

Q: Is that also something you've confronted here in the United States, ever?

A: I did not confront it here as openly as in Europe, no.

Q: Mm-hm. And when you confronted it there, it was in the graffiti that you saw or was there anything else?

A: There was graffiti, there was also -- some expressions exist that people use. I know that there are some expressions in America, too, but I didn't hear them -- I didn't hear them being used. Over there, I s -- I heard them being used a lot and it seems to be kind of degrading. Why don't they get rid of those expressions? There -- There are very few Jews now in Poland, very few, and mainly they are old and they are there because they have no place to go. I wonder why the people are so angry with us. There are no Jews there for 50 years. What could we do -- what we could have done to make those people still angry with us? A-And they are still using some expressions, they probably inherited them. Maybe they -- I don't know if they stop to think, but they should.

Q: I want to ask you finally just to -- if you wa -- can give me some sense of how your experience during the war has shaped your life now. What do you think the most long lasting effect of that has been?

A: I think that -- that I have become a milder person, a more understanding person of others. And if somebody is persecuted or singled out, for anything for the bad, I -- I really feel for them and I wish it would go away. Of course, when I say singled out, I don't mean people who are lawless. I'm talking about the political things that are happening. For politics people get killed and mistreated. I simply wish it would go away, because it -- it isn't worth it. Life is so short and when you treat people nice, you treat everybody

nice and everybody treats you nice, isn't that a world we want to live in? To help one another, rather than to fight. I see no good reason to -- to have any wars. I may be very, very stupid, I see no reasons for it, or -- we're talking now about -- about preparing weapons of mass destruction. That is awful. Who needs that? And sometimes I think that having gone through what I have, I wish I could live in a world that is peaceful and the same for my children, my son and daughter-in-law, their families. For my friends, I wish we had peace, we -- everybody would really benefit from it.

Q: Are there particular events, political events that have happened over the last 50 years, that have really triggered a response for you?

A: I cannot very well answer this, because I am very -- a very poor politician.

Q: Or -- Not necessarily political, but historical events, and -- you know, there have been any number of things. The Civil Rights movement, the Women's movement, the McCarthy era.

A: I think the McCarthy era was before my time here.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: Women's movement, in my mind -- in my mind, women should get paid the same if they do the same work as men. Women should get jobs that they are good for, just like men should get jobs that they are good for. I don't think that they should be chosen on the basis of their sex, but because of what they can do on a job. That's what they should do. But, I also believe that women are different from men. So, some of those movements that you mention, don't fall into any category. I would pull out -- some points out of it

and say, where work is concerned, it goes by ability, who is able to do what. Should be doing th-that thing and get paid the same. When it comes to personal lives, women are different from men, period, no matter what. And as -- as such, we have to behave as such and we shouldn't change our behavior. I don't like to see boys walking around in dresses or -- or -- or -- or girls wearing man's suits. We are -- I feel that in private life, in personal life, men are men and women are women, should act as such and behave as such. That does not mean that it's a woman's job to cook the supper. If he is a better cook, he should do it. If he comes home earlier from work, he should do it. It is sharing, it is -- it is equality in where it counts. But we're -- we're not the same, we're much different. And as they say, vive la différence. I believe in that. But I'd like to get paid as much as a man if I do the work that a man does.

Q: Great. I think we can stop there. I want to just give you a chance, if there was something else you wanted to add, that I didn't get to.

A: I don't know of what I wanted to add, because I didn't plan on what you're going to ask. I'll be glad to answer any questions if you have any. If I can, I will answer, be truthful. But I really don't know what you would like to hear. To encapsulate 50 years in two or three hours, is very hard. And I'm sure that when you leave, I will probably think, oh why didn't I say so and so or such and such or explain this event or that. It's very hard, but it might happen. So, I'm glad that I could answer some of what you asked and if you have any more questions, I'll be glad to -- to supply my answers, however poorly they may sound.

Q: It was terrific. Thank you, Doris. This concludes the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with Doris Greenberg.

End of Tape Three, Side B

Conclusion of Interview