

ALEXANDER ROSENBERG

June 13, 2000

Tape 1, Side A

[Copy-checked and partially authenticated by A.D. --9/20/05]

Q: Okay, so we're just going to start with a test of your voice. How many days were you in Ireland?

A: 15, plus a traveling day at each end. We were gone for 17 days.

Q: And what kind of... what was the most memorable sights, some of the most memorable sights that you saw?

A: Well, the Cliffs of Moher, and believe it or not my brother.

Q: Oh, your brother?

A: Yeah, my brother happened to be in Ireland at the same time and we managed to meet.

Q: Was that pure coincidence?

A: Pure coincidence, right. I got an e-mail from him two days before we left about my cousin's cell phone number. And I said what is this all about? And called him to find out. I didn't know he was going to be there and he didn't know I was going to be there.

Q: That's something.

A: And we met. That was fun.

Q: Okay, it's June the 13th of the year 2000 and we are in the home of Alexander Rosenberg for an oral history interview that's mainly going to focus on his experiences after the Holocaust because he has been interviewed by the Survivors of the Shoah Foundation once before. And we're mainly going to be following up on that interview and asking some pre-war and wartime questions to clarify and expand and then moving on into the post-war era. And my name is Arwen Donahue and we are in Louisville, Kentucky, this is tape number one, side A. I guess what I'll do is just briefly summarize for the tape some of what was discussed in your first interview and then you can correct me if I get anything wrong. So, Mr. Rosenberg was born in 1927 in Frankfurt am Main, Germany, and moved with his family in 1937 to... well, moved to Berlin and between then and 1937 and then moved to Holland in 1937, where he lived until he and his family were deported to the Westerbork camp in Holland. And were there, and that was, you said you weren't certain whether it was 1942 or '43, when you were...?

A: That is correct. I keep thinking it was September of '42 and we were there until the beginning of '43. My brother thinks I'm off by a year, but I think he's off by a year. I clearly remember

Easter of '44 and we had to have been there about a year by that time, so I think my dates are correct.

Q: And Easter of '44 what you remembered was being in Bergen-Belsen.

A: That is correct. Yeah, it was an air attack... well, a group of B-17's was returning from a bomb run, possibly Hanover, and the escorting fighter planes came down to have a look. And our super-smart guards decided to let go with machine guns from the guard towers and they fired back. And nobody got hurt, but I clearly remember that incident.

Q: I wanted to ask you a little bit more about Bergen-Belsen, but I guess first what we'll do is... okay, so you were deported from Westerbork to Bergen-Belsen some undetermined date. And then were in Bergen-Belsen until 1944.

A: '45.

Q: Oh, yeah, around April 10th, 1945 you were away, and it was close to the time... of course. And liberated somewhere outside of, somewhere in Germany.

A: Yeah, east, Tribitz (*ph*) was the name of the little village, which is about ten, 15 miles east of Torgau. Torgau is on the river Elbe, where the German and Russian troops met on that same day, April the twenty-third, that we were liberated early in the morning by the Russian army.

Q: Let's go back then, one question that I had was about your earlier childhood before the war started. And you had mentioned in your first interview something about your family. Your father was an investment banker. You had a brother who was ten months... was he ten months older or younger?

A: Younger, younger.

Q: Ten months younger. And did you, and you said that your family was not very religious. You basically went to synagogue for high holidays. Was your family really very assimilated?

A: Yes, I would say so, with hindsight in particular I would say so. Yes. My dad certainly considered himself German first and never expected the violence to get to the level that it did. And certainly would not affect him since he was a veteran of World War One that was wounded. Had volunteered for the army in the first place and was wounded, I believe two or three times and had the Iron Cross, which I've been trying to locate and can't find. So that I would say they considered themselves primarily German and assimilated is the right word.

Q: Did you speak Yiddish or Hebrew?

A: No.

Q: Were any of your friends, were most of your family friends Jewish and your own personal friends?

A: I think so, but I wouldn't know for sure. In Amsterdam I would say that was not necessarily the case. But I really don't remember, I remember only really family from Germany. I don't remember any children from school or acquaintances of my parents. For that matter I wouldn't know what their religion was. So, I really can't answer.

Q: And then another question from a different time. When you were living in Amsterdam, I believe you mentioned in the first interview that before your family was actually caught in a round-up and deported to Westerbork, you had been caught in another round-up and somehow managed to get out. Now that wasn't clear to me from the first interview what had happened during that time.

A: I don't remember whether I was picked up at home or off the street and taken to a collection point where we were supposed to have been deported somewhere. And I walked away from it, and wasn't challenged in the process and got back home.

Q: So it was just you? It wasn't members of your family?

A: I don't know. I think it was just me, that's right.

Q: And what happened the second time when your whole family was deported?

A: The second time they, as they always did, they came in the middle of the night and you had five minutes to get dressed and get your, your bags were always packed because you knew it could happen. And you were hauled off in a truck along with other people, taken to the railroad station. Put on a train not knowing where to. And then I went to Westerbork, which was the transit camp that the Germans had established; it's in the eastern part of Holland near Zwolle. And we were held there for about six months. I don't think there were any other deportations. There may have been one or two trains before we were hauled out. And I think the general impression was that they were going to go to Theresienstadt. Why I don't know. But... never heard of Belsen before. As a matter of fact, we were one of the earliest ones in there. Belsen was... I'm not sure if it was on a previous tape or not. When we got there, of course it was a very large facility. Part of it was a Russian POW camp. But obviously designed for officers, because they had little cabins and gravel walks between them and that sort of thing. And then there were two sections to the non-POW prisoners. One was for, called criminals and the second section was for the Jews. And as they started to fill up the Jewish section there were a number of trainfuls of Jews from Holland, a lot of Hungarians, French women. They were the wives of officers who were POW's from the French Army. And then after the, in '44, after the invasion of Italy, a lot of Libyan Jews that Rommel had shipped off to Italy and they had been held in camps in Italy and apparently under Red Cross supervision. They all had British uniforms and heavy British, woolen coats and the like, and lots of good food.

Q: Yeah, you did talk some about that in the first interview. When you were heading towards Westerbork, did you know anything about Westerbork before you arrived?

- A: No, never heard of Westerbork. And of course, you know, it's maybe a two hour train ride at most. No, never heard of it before, at least I hadn't, I don't know whether my parents ever had. No idea.
- Q: Did you have any idea at the time of what had started to happen to Jews?
- A: No, no. They always said we'd be relocating in a work camp or whatever. Or vague promises of exchanging for money, that relatives, particularly in America could buy you and so forth. But no, nobody had any inkling of what lay ahead in terms of the violence.
- Q: And you talked in some detail about what you remembered of your time in Westerbork and that you had been, you had contracted polio. Had you really recovered from the symptoms of that by the time that you were deported to Bergen-Belsen?
- A: I would say so. The problem that I had were primarily with the right knee and I still have some problems with that knee. But I was spared the recurrence that apparently happened to older people when it was discovered in the last ten or 15 years or so. It must have been a fairly mild case even though polio, of course back then was rampant.
- Q: Tell me if, I have an impression, and tell me if it's correct. I have the impression that your family was fairly close-knit and that you're weren't necessarily forming strong bonds with other people outside of your family. Is that correct?
- A: Yeah, I think so. I don't think anybody formed any bonds at all. It was a matter of survival and I don't mean to imply that you tried it at the expense of somebody else. But once we realized, I'm not sure we really realized, but when it became a matter of trying to survive, you didn't and a fellow that was in the bunk either with you or next to you may not wake up in the morning. Nobody really tried to get attached to anybody else. You didn't form any bonds other than to, you didn't try to antagonize anybody, but there wasn't any real friendships or relationships of any kind. Well, there really wasn't much time either.
- Q: Do you remember, was there kind of a gradual sense of deepening horror and insecurity or was there a moment when you really, that you remember having been really, realized what was happening?
- A: No, it was, that was, in a way the tragedy was that it was a gradual tightening of the noose, so to speak, in that... I remember the first two days in Belsen, there was so much food we couldn't eat it. There was no nutrition, but a liter of soup, even if it was only a liter of warm water with nothing in it. You're not used to drinking a liter of volume, a quart. It took two days and you ate it all and were hungry. And then the amount of food that you got kept getting less and less. And initially there were, the guards kept changing constantly and surprisingly they kept getting more and more vicious rather than less so. The last group which maybe was there for a year, year and a half, I don't recall for sure for how long, were World War One veterans who were too old or too feeble or had been wounded. But they were not suitable for frontline service in the German Army. And you would think that they would be not so hateful. And they weren't maybe the first

week, but they got there very quickly, got to be pretty vicious. And I'm not sure whether they were told to or it was a natural progression as the sensitivities wore off.

Q: So even as a young child you grew somehow hardened to this experience would you say?

A: Well you had to if you wanted to survive. You couldn't, it wasn't that you wouldn't help somebody up if they had fallen, but you had to be very careful. Yes, you probably were... maybe more encapsulated than hardened.

Q: Do you remember private conversations that you were able to have with your family?

A: None, absolutely none. I don't really remember very much. You remember the weird things but not the everyday. And I'm sure that others would have remembered something totally different that I don't even remember happening. Like that Easter Sunday, the fighter attack. Well, because of it, one of the barracks that got shot up was the warehouse. And one thing the Germans had were cans of beef in its own juice. And apparently some of those got bullet-riddled so they had to use them right away. For a couple of days we actually got food, but then they made up for it for a long time with nothing, because the food was gone again.

Q: Do you remember the day that you were deported from Westerbork to Bergen-Belsen? Anything about that?

A: No, nothing in particular. They, I guess in the afternoon the train was pushed into, the empty train was pushed into the compound. It was passenger cars. Then they posted names, they called them out and you had to be there whenever, an hour or so later. Got on the train, nobody knew where it was going to go. Supposedly it was just a relocation and they always promised you something better. Of course it never was. But particularly initially you didn't know. And I guess they had to, that I'm sure explains why there was no really massive resistance. If you knew you were going to go to the gas chamber you may as well try and fight it. So you get shot on the spot. I think that's why there's, the general docility of the deportees.

Q: Had transports been leaving from Westerbork for some time before yours left? In other words, were you...

A: We were not the first ones, but yes, but I don't know whether we were the third or fifth or tenth. But yes, there had been others. And of course you never got any feedback in terms of where they went or how they were treated.

Q: So, you may have had the sense then that at any point your name could be called and you'd be getting on the...

A: Yes, yes, I think so. Yeah, I think it was generally recognized that Westerbork was a transit camp and not a permanent installation. So, I think so.

Q: And about your time in Westerbork, I'm sorry, in Bergen-Belsen. You were there relatively early as you just mentioned. And I wondered if in the long term you feel that having been there

early on enabled you to, or was an advantage as far as... you did mention that it was an advantage as far as food. But I wondered if your resistance was stronger and if you knew the system better?

A: Well system, there was really no system. But yeah, I think so, because the people who came very late, particularly if they did not come from another camp but straight from home so to speak. They were plunged from a normal diet to 200, 300, whatever it was, calories a day. And I think they died faster than those of us who, even though they may have had physical, physically more reserves than we did, who our reserves were spent. But we may have been a little bit more cautious. And also we were so disease-ridden and I don't know whether our immune systems had strengthened. Those are medical issues that I don't know about. People who were plunged into this diarrhea, flea, lice, you know all the vermin. They could not tolerate it as much as those of us who were exposed to it more slowly.

Q: To what extent did you have contact with the other members of your family while you were in Belsen?

A: We saw them almost every day. My dad and my brother and I, we were in the same barrack. At night the men and the women were separated, but during the day they could mingle freely if you were there. We all were in work details. My mother worked in the, what do you call it? Hospital, there was no hospital, so the infirmary. So, she physically stayed inside the camp. My dad worked, I think he worked the whole time on the shoe disassembly detail. I was on it for a little while before they shipped me outside to work details outside. My brother was working outside the camp too, I think. But I don't remember where, what details he was assigned to.

Q: And what about, you mentioned having to steal food in order to survive. Was that something that the newer prisoners maybe wouldn't have known how to do or that you kind of eventually learned?

A: Well (laughs)... no, I think everybody... you didn't steal from each other, generally. Even though it was a matter of survival. I mentioned the Libyans who came from Italy. They came with humongous quantities of food. And we had the opportunity to steal some of it. And we actually buried it between the tracks so we could bring it back slowly. The other thing is being on the outside you were, not always, but sometimes you were patted down, and so you couldn't have anything on your body that didn't belong to you. They must have had a bad storm some years prior to establishing the camp. Bergen-Belsen was inside a military training camp, similar to Fort Knox. A lot of trees had been, had fallen over in this storm or storms. And they had cut the trees and hauled them off, but there were the roots, you know, standing up. And for a number of months I worked in the woods digging up those tree stumps, which were then, were hauled into... once a week they came out with the horse-drawn wagons and we had to load those tree stumps that we had dug up on it and they were hauled in. There was another detail inside the camp that was chopping them up into firewood. That's the one I was assigned to the day of that air attack. There were blueberries growing in the woods and one, of course we ate as much as we could, but also we all had, like a bag that was tied to your belt inside your pants. So you could pick berries and bring them in for the family to eat. So there was that and then, of course, if we could we stole the food from the guards. [Laughing.] Boy, they'd take a whipping. They

would get their food and most of the time if they didn't finish it, it just sat there. And if somebody, we got a chance, we would try and get those cans and eat it. But apparently one day we ate them before they had eaten and so we got a pretty good whipping for that. It was probably worth it. It was good food. They didn't eat too bad. They got pretty decent food.

Q: Was there a real uniformity of cruelty among the guards or were any of them kind at all to you?

A: There was one sergeant, who the rumor had it later on that he was a spy for the British, he seemed to be more of a... I wouldn't want to call him humane, but had a better sense of humor. And some individual guards were exceedingly cruel and would use any excuse to either kick you or club you with a rifle or shoot you, shoot at you. There was one incident that I recall where one of the guards was giving one of the men, this was in the woods, gave him hell. And he responded in Dutch, "Man, you're crazy." And it turned out to be a Dutchman, the SS guy was a Dutchman, and boy did he beat the living daylights out of him, out of the prisoner. And then when we came back that evening, the sergeant was there and he, we all had to stand at attention. And he demanded to know if anything had happened and this turkey said, "Yes sergeant, this man said I'm crazy." The sergeant said, "That man was right, detail dismissed." We got sent on. But it varied. Some of them would turn their back and just did their job. But they constantly changed. You never knew. You never spoke to any of them. Some of them would drop a cigarette butt and walk away. Others would drop the cigarette butt and wait for you to, try to pick it up and then step on your fingers. You never knew.

Q: What about friendships in Belsen? Did you, was it still pretty much each one for his own?

A: Yeah, you didn't have time for friendships. You tried to sleep as long as you could in the mornings. You had a few minutes to wash your face and get dressed and stand at reveille, that's not the right word.

Q: Roll call?

A: Roll call, thank you. Until they got done, depends on how they felt whether they got done or not. And then you went to wherever your work assignment was and then when you came back at night, there could have been another roll call before or after and you may have got something to eat and you went straight to bed. There was never any time to talk to anybody, unless somebody you worked with, the guard had a back turned you could talk to each other. But most of the time you couldn't. They wouldn't let you.

Q: So was it seven days a week, every day the same?

A: Oh yes, pretty much so. Except they got better food on Sundays. They got three cans instead of two.

Q: Did you have any sense of time or way to keep track of time?

A: Yeah, you knew pretty much what day of the week it was, what time of day it was, I'm not sure. I don't think anybody had watches. Because at noon time they would bring the food out to

where you were working. We may get five or ten minutes to eat and that was it. And sunrise and sunset, but other than that whether it was ten of eleven or ten of twelve, nobody cared whether you knew it or not.

Q: You mentioned that you were transferred after you were chopping the stumps into the detail that was meeting the rail cars as they were coming in, and you said something about the Libyan Jews. I was wondering if you, were you there when the French women prisoners were coming in?

A: No, I think they were already in the camp. Trains came and went all the time, not only with prisoners, but also soldiers. They used the same railroad station. Occasionally we would meet POW's. The Americans always were good. They would throw us packs of Camels where we could get them. But I don't remember when the French women came. There were only two hundred of them, so they may have come in a group with others. Probably since very few of them died, I would think they probably came fairly late. But I just don't remember.

Q: I read something about it, that was partially why I asked. It mentioned they came in the first half of '44 from Drancy in France. And I just was curious if you remembered anything else.

A: Oh, I would think they would have been longer than that. I'm sure they were there longer than that, because first half of '44... Oh, I'm sorry, forty, yeah it would have been about a year and a half, a little over. Yeah, that's about right, I would think. No, I don't remember, other than I knew they were there, and...

End of Tape 1, Side A

Tape 1, Side B

Q: Tape one, side B of an interview with Alexander Rosenberg. So you want to just repeat what you had just said?

A: Yeah, later on they brought in women from Auschwitz. And I have to back up here a minute. There was an area where they had a huge circus tent, was set up. That's where they had the shoes. Apparently, I don't know over how long or what, the Germans had collected shoes for recycling or for donations or whatever the reason they gave to collect them. And then also there were a lot of military boots in there since many of them had bullet holes in them or shrapnel holes apparently from either wounded or dead soldiers. And what one of the big, quote, "industries" was, was separating the upper leather from the soles and heels and then separate the leather from the rubber heels and/or soles. And that was done in that big tent. And then there was a... the leather soles, I guess, was what they couldn't reuse. And so they were stacked up in a humongous pile that was on the main drag and kept getting higher and higher. People, that was my first assignment was working on that. You had a wheelbarrow hauling those, and then you had to stack them so the whole thing wouldn't just fall over. And they emptied that, emptied that tent of all the shoes, and they started to bring in women and they established a separate woman's camp. And it turned out that one of the first groups in there included the wife, who had been with us, of a fellow. She had worked in the kitchen and she got caught taking some food to try to give to her husband. And first they shipped her to, I guess to Lüneburg, to jail. And she was there in jail for a while and the police apparently were trying to protect her from the Gestapo, but couldn't. And ultimately she was shipped to Auschwitz. But the police had warned her about Auschwitz and so as she arrived she managed to walk from the incoming group to an outgoing group which happened to come to Belsen. And so she was back and she was in that group. And she went to the fence and hollered at somebody to tell her husband that she was back by way of Auschwitz. That's how we knew that group had come from Auschwitz. You could talk to them usually across the fence as long as you didn't get too close to the fence.

Q: Were you mostly speaking in German while you lived in Belsen?

A: Dutch.

Q: Did you use your German in speaking with any of the camp guards?

A: No, you never spoke to the camp guards. And I'm not so sure I still could speak German back then. But no. They may give you an order, but that was it. You never talked to them. There was no conversation at all.

Q: Okay, moving to the time when you were, when you were shipped out of Belsen again, you described that time in the first interview and how you had kind of gone on a two-week tour of Germany. And seen Berlin completely destroyed.

A: Beautiful sight.

- Q: I thought maybe we could just pick up with that time. And I wondered if you could tell a little bit more about, well the time of liberation, encountering the Russian soldiers. And you mentioned how they were sharing bread and so forth. Were they, the Russians have... had a reputation for being sometimes vicious even with the people that they liberated. Did you witness any of that?
- A: No. Initially we woke up because of... we were on the train still and the train was stopped. And all kinds of noises, and here were the Russian Cossacks just the way they were pictured, you know, in their furs and horseback and rifles slung over their shoulders. And we had learned, like you said, the one word in Russian, *chleb* (*ph*), which is bread. And they let us off, and so we went on into town. Then there must have been some discussion about where to go and whoever, they told us just to go and if you need to, throw the Germans out. And we happened to go into a fairly large house along with some others, who... the woman claimed they were in the Nazis, but her husband was a minister. And he sure was in the SS. And so we didn't have any compunction about bullying them. Somebody, apparently there must have been some people who spoke Yiddish or either the Russian soldiers spoke Yiddish or they spoke Russian. I remember somebody said something about food, and so one of the Russians just pulled out a gun and shot a cow and said help yourself. One of the French women recognized the opportunity and went with the frontline unit. And of course, that morning crossed the Elbe River into the American part of Germany and managed to get back to Paris, which of course had been liberated the year before. And put an ad in the Paris paper, those who were looking for their wives, and I don't know whether she mentioned names or it was a specific group. And they responded. Many of them were of course in the French Army. And so they got the American Army to send two of those two and a half ton trucks over to come and get them. And of course, everybody wanted to go. And they promised they'd be back and they did. I guess in the euphoria, you know, the war was over by that time. I think we were in Tribitz (*ph*) for about six weeks. All of the people that were still alive from that train, there were about a thousand of them, were evacuated by the Americans and taken to Leipzig, where they had a DP camp. And the Russians let the trucks come in and get them.
- Q: What kind of condition were you in at the time of liberation?
- A: Barely alive if you can even count that. We had to be very careful. Many people died because they ate things that they couldn't digest. Their digestive system was so severely weakened or disturbed that a glass of milk would kill you. You just couldn't tolerate that sort of thing. You had to be very careful that you ate only a little bit and a little bit. And of course a little bit was always more than what we had had for a long time. So that was important that you didn't... I remember getting a hold, we heard that nearby was a Army depot, food depot, and we went there. And sure enough there was. And I got some... I'm not sure I got cans or an open bucket of condensed milk, you know, had a lot of sugar in it. And we just couldn't eat it, not for a while. Because we couldn't digest it, it was that rich.
- Q: But you were able to walk?
- A: Oh yeah, yeah.

Q: I think you mentioned how much you weighed, did you?

A: Well when I got back to Amsterdam I weighed 78 pounds. So I don't know how much I weighed then, maybe fifty or sixty, strictly skin over bones. If I would have gotten a haircut, I would have taken a pound off. (Laughing.)

Q: They didn't shave your head while you were in Belsen?

A: Yes, of course.

Q: Were you with your entire family at that point while you were riding the train?

A: Yes. Yes. We were all together.

Q: Was that moment of encountering the Cossack unit, were you aware this is it, it's over?

A: Yes, yes. Absolutely, absolutely.

Q: Was that a particularly emotionally charged...?

A: Oh sure. Oh absolutely, joyous. Now you had an opportunity, you might live. Might actually see 1946. Definitely. Yeah, everybody... I'm digressing, but I didn't know anybody on that train. I had never run into anybody who was, for that matter, never ran into anybody who was at Belsen. And I guess it's three years ago now. We were, we took a trip, first grand circle tour we ever took. It was a river cruise from Vienna to Amsterdam. It was the first time that I was back in Germany and I wasn't sure whether I could tolerate it or not. We decided on this trip because I could just stay on the boat. Didn't have to go on land where I would have to be in contact with any Germans. But one night we're having dinner with two ladies. One of whom, very interesting woman—she was the one who introduced the Lamaze method to the United States—and her cousin. And somehow the other woman was telling us that her daughter was taking her daughter, the woman's grandchild, to Europe, Amsterdam. They had discussed Anne Frank in class and she wanted to see the Anne Frank house. And she said, "I told my daughter there's always long lines at the Anne Frank house and if you can't get in, go next door, that's where your father was hidden during the war." And I said to her, "Oh, were you in Amsterdam during the war?" And she said yes she was, but her two sisters both got found out. They all had gone into hiding. And they ended up in Belsen. I said, "Oh, that's where I was. I never met anybody from Belsen." I said, "Are they still alive?" And she said yeah, the one sister was. But the other sister and her husband died after they were liberated. They were hauled by train. "Oh," I said, "to Tribitz?" And she said "Yes, how do you know?" And I said, "I was on that train also." And so that's as close as I ever came to meeting anybody or knowing anybody. But the irony, irony, small world: the sister who was still alive lived next door to my mother's closest friend in New York. So you never know. But no, I didn't know anybody and outside of that incident I have never talked to anybody who was there. As a matter of fact, my brother is very active. He's on the Board of Directors of the Anne Frank house. And I happened to be talking to him about a year or so ago and he told me, and I didn't realize, I went to school with Anne Frank. I was in the same class, but I don't remember her at all. And I got to wondering if there is a class

picture that exists. I'll have to ask him of the grade school. Because we both should be in it. Just curious.

Q: There is another woman that we interviewed last year or so, who went to school with Anne Frank as well. I don't recall her maiden name, but her married name was Barbara Rodbell.

A: There is somebody and my brother knows about it, her, that is apparently active in the Anne Frank House Foundation and goes around speaking. I'm not sure if it's the same woman or not. But somebody that was either a friend of Anne Frank or knew her.

Q: And actually I might be mistaken, she might not have been in school, she was a friend of hers. Her sister especially. But they might have lived nearby. So, you're with your family and you're returning to Amsterdam, and you described some, in the first interview, some of that... you were housed first in the DP camp in Leipzig?

A: First in Leipzig. Essentially what it was, was a military barracks that was used. We could come and go. We were not prisoners. They let us come and go. Matter of fact, very grateful about many things. De-lousing with DDT. They sprayed us from head to toe with DDT. Think how environmentally unacceptable that is today. And I'm still alive in spite of it. But it got rid of the fleas and in particular the lice which was so important. But we could come and go as we pleased. And I don't remember it was with my brother or some other boys, anyway, young men, we would get on the trolley and the conductor trying to collect money from us and we told him what he could do, or what we would do. We were pretty nasty. So they left us pretty much alone. And then we weren't there all that long. And then when they were told, they're going to take us back to Holland, it was on a Red Cross train. We wouldn't go onto the beds because they were absolutely starched, bleached, perfectly white sheets. And here we were, in spite of getting regular baths, pretty filthy. We only had one set of clothes and shoes. I'm sure we had shoes. I had a woman's blouse, because I remember it, Army blouse, because it buttoned the wrong way. But they weren't even able to fit, not small enough. They insisted we get in the beds and don't worry about getting them dirty. And then they brought us bread that was as white as the sheets were. Couldn't believe that. But anyway they took us back to Holland and they put us in a convent in southern Holland, where the Dutch then sorted things out. And you had to have a place to stay before they'd send you back to Amsterdam. And that was taken care of.

Q: While you were still in Germany did you witness anybody, any of the former prisoners taking revenge on Germans or did you desire that yourself?

A: No. Well, I suppose if you would have known somebody or run into somebody that you knew had been a, recognized a prison guard, I don't think he would have survived. But that would have been such a chance encounter. No. Well, for one thing we were wearing what looked like American Army uniforms because that's the only clothing, I guess, that we were given. I'm not sure what else the Red Cross had that they gave us. So that the Germans gave us a pretty wide berth. Because they didn't have anything to do anyway. Things were pretty chaotic.

Q: Do you recall how you felt at the time? Angry or happy or any hopes?

- A: Hopeful is probably the best. No, I don't think anger set in until later. At that point you're just trying to revive, was probably the closest word to describe it. You're still fairly weak. You're beginning to get a little better. You can eat a little bit more. Beginning to feel a little better all the time. And at this point you're just trying to survive. You're really not thinking about the future, what you want to do, or what you have to do or what you're going to do. You're still preoccupied with eating, primarily.
- Q: And getting enough to eat?
- A: And getting, yeah, yeah, sure. And we did.
- Q: What about your, when you returned to Amsterdam and just adjusting to daily life again?
- A: Well, initially of course, I think we were all spread out. I stayed with one family who was a friend of my parents. My brother stayed with a friend of his. His closest friend was an American. His father was the distributor for Holland and Belgium of RKO, the movies. And I think he stayed with them. And my parents stayed with, I don't even remember who it was. Somebody. So we were in different locations. We weren't really, and this was like, talking the summer of '45. There really wasn't much going on. Trying to see about getting back into school. My high school class had graduated. I think we may have actually been back in Amsterdam when the graduation was, but of course they wouldn't give me my diploma. Hadn't been there in four years. Four out of six wasn't good enough. And so my mother was making arrangements to see what the school about me trying out, well both of us, trying to get back into school in the Fall. What the requirements would be, and trying to line up a tutor and a place to live. And I think, somebody... the Dutch did things fairly reasonably. The person that was living in our house had gotten there in good faith. He did not know, or they did not know that was the property or the residence of deported Jews. And so what they did, if the person had something in good faith, so you don't have, just transfer the victim from one person to another. They could stay there. So my parents found a place to live. And I don't know where the furniture came from, whether that was, whether those were donations or purchases or whether they had given some of that furniture to somebody to hide. But anyway we ultimately had an apartment where we lived. And then school started pretty soon. We had a tutor trying to get us up to speed, because I was allowed into the senior class on the condition that if I didn't measure up, that the school would have the right not to let me take the comprehensive exams at the end of the year. Well that's the deal they made with my parents, obviously. Apparently I did all right because... and I do remember having to go to a couple of teachers after classes for additional instruction. It's kind of tough to pick up solid geometry if you haven't had trigonometry. So, trying to catch up.
- Q: Was it easy for you to focus on studies after what you had been through? Was that a challenge at all?
- A: I never thought of it in those terms, but I suppose so because that's the only thing we did, was to go to school. And you come home, and you may have had to stay after class for additional instruction. And depending on—I'm not sure whether you're familiar with the European system—it's not ten minutes worth of homework. You spent every night doing homework, and

we went to school on Saturdays half a day. And so maybe we were allowed to go and play for ten minutes before dinner. Or if we happened to get done by eight o'clock, the homework, we could play for a half hour before going to bed. But it, it was all-consuming, essentially, except maybe for the weekends.

Q: So you didn't, you weren't necessarily ever... was there a point where you remember you started really reflecting on what had happened to you?

A: No, not really. It really would have been pointless anyway. The Dutch had been exceedingly helpful, and trying to shield people. And not personally, but from others that they tried to hide an awful lot of Jews. The population as a whole, with minor exceptions, had always been very supportive. And now you're back after the war and you're no longer wearing the star, you're no longer distinguishable from the rest of the population. And so there was no need for anybody to either bend over backwards or kick you in the shins. So, no, I don't think, as a matter of fact, I really haven't dwelled on it much all my life. I have a cousin who was a professional Holocaust survivor and I always detested that. It was one of those things that happened, nothing you can do about it. I'm not ashamed of it certainly. I'm not proud of it. I mean, nothing you can do about it. I suppose like most unpleasant things, you try and put them out of your mind.

Q: This maybe is kind of a digression, going out of the chronology, but was there a point where you really felt compelled personally to talk about your experiences to anyone? Like that would help you or help other people to...?

A: No, never did. I've never been much for psychologists. (Laughing.) No, I never, and I suppose a lot of the reason I don't remember a lot of things because they're probably suppressed memory, and why bring it up? What purpose does it serve? I know a friend of mine keeps after me to try and write a book. And I don't, I say absolutely not. One, there's not enough to fill a page, but aside from that, no, I don't... matter of fact, there's somebody come from the Holocaust Museum this month. Did you see that?

Q: I heard something about it.

A: I think it's, Goldfarb, is that his name?

Q: Marvin, Martin Goldfarb.

A: Yeah, whatever. It is Goldfarb, isn't it?

Q: I'm pretty sure. I'm blanking on his name right now, but I know him.

A: Yeah, okay. That's okay. Okay, that's all right. I got invitation, I don't know where it came from. It was an invitation to the Holocaust survivors in the second generation. And I was debating whether to go or not. Because one thing, I don't know any of them that are here. And I'm not so sure whether I care to or not. I haven't made up my mind. I may decide on the last minute whether I will or not.

Q: Okay, we have another minute or so on this tape. Well, that's interesting. Your brother has, it sounds like, taken kind of an active role in something that's related to being a Holocaust survivor.

A: Yeah. And that came about because he saw an article in a paper about the Anne Frank Foundation and somebody's name who was, I guess the Chairman of the Board, who lived near where he lived in Vermont. And he had never heard of the man before and he called him to meet him, just out of curiosity. And apparently they got friendly and he got him involved in the Anne Frank Foundation and he's on the Board of Directors now, has been for a few years. And he goes around the country every so often making speeches and fundraising and that sort of thing. And I'm not sure whether he knew, because looking at his tape, I'm not sure whether he mentioned the name of the school that we went to or not. Anyway I don't remember what it is. But it was obviously the same school that Anne Frank went to. The only thing I remember about that school is we made honey in the Fall. They had bee hives on the roof. I was thinking about that earlier, I don't know why. Whenever it was ready we would go upstairs and they would take the hives, the honeycombs out and put them in a centrifuge and we made honey. And I guess carved up the combs and sold it with the wax and the honey. That's about the only thing I remember. (Laughing.) There was something else, too, animal-related about that grade school. Can't think of it.

Q: Let's go ahead and change the tape.

End of Tape 1, Side B

Tape 2, Side A

Q: This is tape number two, side A. And would you say a little bit more about that? I was wondering about, continuing in this same vein of digression, I was wondering about your feeling as a Holocaust survivor, whether you feel that there's any benefit to be derived from identifying yourself that way? With the work that your brother... (Rosenberg bursts out laughing) ...it's a strange way of putting the question, isn't it?

A: No, I tell you reason I am laughing is I suppose if you look for sympathy it would be. But no, I don't. I've never found any benefit to either, occasionally if I get pushed I will mention it. I normally don't as a matter of conversation. We were in Spain and there was a couple in that group that we were with, who were Germans, who had retired. He had worked for General Motors and they lived in Windsor, across in Canada. And they had invited a friend of theirs from Germany to come down and join us. We were on the trip up to Granada to see the Alhambra. And on the way back we were sitting at a table and this man came wandering in by himself. I said to him in German, "How are you doing?" He complained, "Not very well." He didn't speak English, and so unless his friends were around... blah, blah, blah. And then on a stop on the way back, we were standing in line together and he said, "How come you speak German so well?" And I was debating what to say. I just said, "I was in a concentration camp." And I totally devastated that man. And that evening he sought me out in the bar and came to apologize. I said, "Hey, it's not your fault, you were too young." This man was in his fifties, he may have been a child at the time. "Oh, please come to Germany," he would host us, et cetera, et cetera. So I'm always very careful because there's no need to upset people that have no, you know, no responsibility. I'm not looking for an advantage. So no, I rarely volunteer the information.

Q: What about, you're doing this interview today. You did one other interview. What has made you agree to do those?

A: Well, it's the neo-Nazism that says it never happened. And I think there needs to be as much evidence as possible to show that it really did happen. And that those many of us who survived are perfectly normal people. Or what passes for normal, at least I think so. (Laughing.) And don't all go around looking, "Hey, you owe me a favor because I survived." But it's not a bias free society. Until whatever it is, say five years ago... I've been wanting to go and visit my grandparent's grave. I just couldn't bring myself the thought of going to Germany. One, because it's Germany; and two, that I wasn't sure whether I could control my temper if somebody were to say something to me that would set me off. And so we decided on a trip and that was we went to Switzerland for a week with day trips out of Lucerne. And the first trip was to the Black Forest. You get out of it for lunch and you get back on the bus. The bus was the safe haven. And then another day for a couple of hours. And it went all right. I didn't feel particularly bad or tense. But on that boat trip, after Cologne it got to me suddenly, and I had to get out of there. And I actually during dinner, got up, went up on top of the boat, on the top deck, to make sure we passed that border back into Holland. Because I just got obsessed all of a sudden, panicky. And haven't been back since.

Q: What about your children? Have you... people who are as far as can be from Neo-Nazis: do you feel like it's important to you to leave them some kind of information or some kind of knowledge about your life and your experiences?

A: Well, they know about it, of course. At least one daughter, I think has... no, I think they all have copies of the tape of the interview. The tape that one of my... it's really my father's cousin that was much more informative than mine or, for that matter, my brother's. This fellow got to Belsen the day before the liberation or two days before the liberation. The Swedes took him out, sent him to Sweden. He was in a Swedish hospital for a year. But he decided to use that year to write down everything he could remember. And then spend the rest of his life filling in the details that he didn't remember, and try and get the... and he wrote a book. The original was published in German and just before he died, supposedly it was published, finally got published in English. And I never did get a copy of it. I'll have to ask my cousin for it. But I got a copy of his tape. But he remembers names and dates and... and he went from one labor camp to another labor camp, and the name of the commander of the camp and all that kind of stuff that I have no idea about and really, don't really care. And yeah, my kids know, but they also really have no relation to it. My youngest daughter couldn't, when I said something to her about the Vietnam War, she says, "But Dad I was only six then." You know, so it's all ancient history. Just like World War One is ancient history to me. I know about it. I'm a bit of a history buff and I wanted to see the Bosphorus. That's a World War One site. The British took one hell of a beating there. That was Churchill's doing. And went to Yalta, wanted to see that. But no, they're not really interested.

Q: Did you intentionally at some point start telling your children about...?

A: No, no.

Q: ...your history? It just kind of gradually...?

A: I'm not sure. My wife may have told them something or my mother may have. It may have come out, a comment here or there or something that occurred that made me bring it up or a program that I watched. Spielberg had a program, was it last week or week before last, it was on HBO. I was going to tape it, but I don't have HBO. When there's something on the Holocaust I usually tape it. More for my information than to show others.

Q: And I'm curious about what you mentioned a little earlier about someone who you know who's a professional Holocaust survivor.

A: That was my cousin.

Q: Your cousin?

A: Well, my father's cousin.

Q: And is that something... and you mentioned that it bothers you. Can you say more about what bothers you about that or what you think the danger of that is?

- A: Oh, I don't think there's danger in it, it may bore people to death, but you can do that with other things, too. That was the singular defining incident of his life. And everything is being related to that. I... that may have been the most important event in my life, even though I don't think so. I think there are much more important things, I mean it's part of my history. I was fortunate that I survived it, and I moved on. I don't particularly dwell on it. Or try and say, "Now wait a minute, I married that woman because I didn't see that woman..." or you know, and relate it to the Holocaust. It has nothing to do with it. Well, in his case everything was. It came up in every conversation.
- Q: And have you had the experience as somebody who has survived the Holocaust, of people maybe assuming that because you are a Holocaust survivor that was the defining event of your life and therefore kind of maybe not seeing you clearly?
- A: No, because I doubt whether anybody that would know me or that I would know, would find out that I am a Holocaust survivor until they really have known me for a long time. Because it's, see I don't normally bring it up. Not unless something happens to make it pop up for some reason or another, inadvertently, but no, I wouldn't think so. They just see the lack of hair. (Laughing.)
- Q: Is being Jewish important to you?
- A: Yeah, definitely. I am the only Jew in my family.
- Q: Is that right?
- A: Yes. (Laughing.) And I am proud of it.
- Q: So, what does that mean to you, to be the only Jew in your family?
- A: Oh, I am saying it jokingly and seriously. My wife is Episcopalian. Our children were baptized in the Episcopalian church, but are not particularly religious. My youngest daughter was married in the Catholic church and now her children were just baptized in the last month, because they want... the older one now is going to first grade. And with the public schools here in Louisville in such a mess, they want to put the boy into parochial school. And they belong to a parish and apparently they are now going to church regularly, which is fine. I have no problem with it one way or the other. Our oldest daughter was married for the first time in the Episcopal cathedral in Lexington, which as you may know is so orthodox that the mass was in Latin.
- Q: They don't even do that in Catholic church.
- A: I know. (Laughing.) That marriage didn't last and her current husband is a Baptist. I'm not sure that they are going to church, but their son goes to Bible school. He was in, going to public school, not this Fall, but he was in a Baptist kindergarten and preschool. And the other one doesn't have any children and as far as I know, they were married by a minister who was, whom they knew. So that's why I'm saying that.

- Q: So, what does it mean to you, can you say what it means to you to be Jewish?
- A: No, not really. No more so than what it means being a chemist or of German extraction or married or grandfather or anything else. You better not say anything anti-Semitic or I'll blow your head off. (Laughing.) But other than that, no.
- Q: It doesn't necessarily mean keeping certain traditions or going to synagogue?
- A: Not really, no, no. Keep certain traditions, but I... bit of a pragmatist, and I'm not all that tradition-bound. I think the dietary laws make good sense from a health perspective, but I don't particularly find the need to avoid eating shrimp.
- Q: What about, do you think of Judaism as a... when you say it's important to you to be Jewish, is it as a religion?
- A: Well it's really more ethnic than a religion. Did you by chance see that program on trying to find the lost tribes a few weeks ago on PBS? Fascinating program. To some people being Jewish is a religion, obviously, Sammy Davis Jr. is probably the... Elizabeth Taylor. But to... I would think most Jews, it's more ethnic than religious. You can't help whatever your racial or ethnic background is. I'm not hiding it and I'm not flaunting it. So, I don't care. You know, whether somebody knows or doesn't know. It's not that I don't care personally, what I mean is I'm not concerned about it.
- Q: So you're not a particularly religious person?
- A: No, I'm not.
- Q: Okay. Let's go pick up the timeline again.
- A: Okay.
- Q: We left off in Amsterdam just after the war. You're going back to school, you're working hard at being a student. And as far as, you were talking about being hopeful at the time. What were you, do you recall what you were hopeful for, what you really wanted for the rest of your life?
- A: Well, initially to graduate from high school, you know, trying to pass the exams or get far enough along that I would be allowed to take the exams. And then once they decided that I could, then of course sweating like everybody else to pass them. But I did. I wanted to become a chemist or a chemical engineer. And after I graduated from high school I went to Delft, Technical Institute in Delft for one year, '46, '47, to study chemical engineering. Then much to my dismay, my parents decided to come to the United States and I didn't want to go. Well for one thing, you had to leave your friends, just getting into the swing of things having done my freshman year in college. But they didn't give me a choice, and so then of course the logical thing was... a lot of my mother's family and some of my dad's family were over here, had been over here for years, so we came over here in '47, Memorial Day, '47.

Q: Did you consider not coming and staying? By then you were an adult.

A: Oh yeah, yeah. Not coming, I said, I wasn't given that option. I said, "Okay, I'll go with you, but I'm going to go back." You get used to... it's a changed situation, and I probably didn't really give it much serious thought after some months or some years to go back. Go ahead.

Q: Did you have any... what were your notions about the U.S. at that time?

A: Well, you know the only notions you have are the cowboys, and the skyscrapers of New York. And since it was Memorial Day when we got here, the night before traveling along the South shore of Long Island you saw the fireworks. Of course, you didn't know what was going on. Memorial Day didn't mean anything to us. Then it was hot. I'm not sure if it was hot for Memorial Day, but like it is right now. It was one of these early hot spells. Our, my mother's brothers came and picked us up, met us at the boat, and took us over to my mother's sister's apartment.

Q: Where was that?

A: In New York, New York City. My mother was one of 13 brothers and sisters. And one, two, three... four sisters were in the United States, and three of her brothers. And the three, *three* sisters and the three brothers lived in New York City. And my dad's sister, I think she may still have been in Rochester at the time. I'm not sure. And matter of fact, they had written, my mother's brothers had gotten an apartment for us, which was across the street from one and next-door to one of the other ones. In Queens, in New York City. And so we lived there. I guess, but I'm not sure, we stayed with my aunt for a while until our furniture arrived, because I'm not sure it was on the same boat. It came later. I don't remember, it's been a long time.

Q: So, you came by ship?

A: Oh Yeah, yeah. The Veyndam (*ph*) was the name of the ship.

Q: Dutch?

A: It was a Holland-America Line freighter built in 1914. I looked it up recently, that's why I can spout that stuff. (Laughing.) It was requisitioned during World War Two and was used as a troop ship. And then this was the last trip across the Atlantic to the States to be reconverted, to have all of the bunks and all that stuff taken out and be converted back to a freighter and was retired in 1954. I couldn't remember the name of the ship. I looked it up in the New York Times a year or two ago. They had the comings and goings of all the ships and they listed them in the New York Times. Listed as May 30th, Memorial, May 30th with 112 passengers.

Q: You remember anything about the journey?

A: Oh yes. (Laughing.) The... I'm not sure how many, 20 or so people could live in the cabins and my parents had a cabin. Most of us were down in the hold and like all troop ships, you know, seven stacks. And we used the bottom one or the second bottom one, there was nobody there.

And it was pretty good until the weather got rough. We really got tossed around and that day that we got tossed around the dinner was bacon and beans. I just stayed in the bunk. But one fellow, he was a big eater. He never missed a meal and he came charging down the steps, threw his teeth on the bunk and ran back up and fed the fish. Then he came back, got his teeth, and went back to eat the second time. (Laughing.) That's about all. It was a long trip. It was 14 days, the ship was slow. But that's all I remember. It was unremarkable. Left from Antwerp, stopped in South Hampton to Hoboken, which was the Holland-American Line terminal. Ellis Island had been closed about a month or two earlier, so we didn't come through Ellis Island.

Q: Remember first impressions of New York?

A: Hot, hot and dirty. Of course the high rise, and the frantic activity, cars going everywhere.

Q: How was your English?

A: Non-existent or very poor. Well, I had high school English. But didn't have much choice, had to learn in a hurry, because I got a job within a week as a lab technician at Mount Sinai Hospital. Paid the glorious wage of 100 dollars a month. And we had to work half day Saturdays. And then we took, had to take... we didn't have to, we took turns taking calls on the weekends. That paid an extra six dollars. And the girls all were more interested in going to the beach, so I took all of their calls, because I needed the six dollars more than I needed a suntan. And then I got a ticket. Two weeks in this country and I got a ticket. That was Saturday morning, going to work, I was going down the subway and a cop stopped me. I didn't know what he wanted. I didn't understand enough of what he was saying. And so I pulled my passport out and I opened it on the immigration stamp to show him I don't, you know it was two weeks. I did understand what identification was. And so he proceeded to write and tore this thing out, gave me my passport back and tore this thing out and told me it was a ticket. Well the only meaning of the word ticket I knew was admission to a theater. Didn't want to, don't have time to go. Tried to explain... finally made me take it, he told me I didn't have to go myself, I could give it to somebody else. When I got to work I tried to tell the fellow I work with, I asked him if he wanted the ticket. He said what for? (Laughing.) I told him I didn't know, but a cop had given it to me. So he explained to me that I had gotten a ticket for whatever, well, it was June and first of July was the end of the fiscal year and he had to make his quota, so he was writing tickets furiously and I guess I looked like a good sucker for one. And when I became a citizen you have to list all non-moving traffic violations excepted. So I went back to court to find out what the heck I had done. Whatever it was, violation of city code something or other, disposition, two dollars. Fine of two dollars, that was it. But it's on my records.

Q: It's not on your records as having, the infraction was not listed on your records?

A: No, I had to list it on my citizenship application.

Q: I mean the cause of the ticket being given.

A: Oh it listed whatever it was, the code violation, but I have no idea what it was that I did. You know, hopscotch down the steps into the subway, who knows what it was. The reason you had

to be so careful... in the '30s and '40s, well prior to let's say the '50s and '60s, anti-Semitism was an acceptable feeling in this country. And the State Department was so strongly anti-Semitic, they saw it as their function to keep as many Jews out as they could, not to try and rescue as many and let them in. And the Immigration Service didn't help matters either. An uncle of mine when he went for his hearing was asked for his convictions. He said he didn't have any. The judge says, "Think it over and come back in six months." This went on twice. You know, what the hell are you talking about? Well, it turned out that there was somebody with the same name, apparently, who had gotten a parking ticket in Buffalo, New York. And they accused him of lying because he didn't list it. And he said, "I don't even know where Buffalo is and I don't have an automobile." So they finally... but his citizenship was delayed for a year over something like that.

Q: And you think it was because he was Jewish that they...?

A: Oh sure. There wasn't any... they put a lot of barriers in the way. Of course then too, you know, the rules were a little different. You had to be a resident for five years. You had to demonstrate your fluency in English, not like today where they'll give it to you in Spanish or French or whatever. And lastly you had to demonstrate a knowledge of American history. And the Daughters of the American Revolution used to give courses in American history for foreigners. Who was the 23rd president? They asked my dad to name the 13 original colonies. And he got as far as one or two, I remember, and the judge said, "Guess I asked the wrong person, *you* tell me." Well, I started out with Georgia going up the coast, because I could never remember whether it's Maine or New Hampshire. (Laughing.) And he stopped me when I got to Vermont. So I got off easy. I got at least 12 of the 13. And he asked me, I still don't know why that was the wrong answer, he asked me, "Why do we celebrate the Fourth of July?" I said, "Because it's Independence Day." That wasn't the right answer. I'm not sure what it was supposed to be. But they were pretty strict and... depending on the judge, most of those were not all that bad. But there was... well Dupont did not hire its first Jew until World War Two. And when I graduated from college in '54, Armstrong-Quartz (*ph*) still didn't hire Jews. It was that pervasive still.

Q: When was your citizenship?

A: '52. Matter of fact, my brother couldn't become a citizen because he was not in the country. You had to be in the country. He was in the military. He had been drafted. He couldn't become a citizen because he was not in the United States.

Q: So you in those years, those first years that you came to the U.S... you came in '47?

A: '47.

Q: Were you, you were aware of having to be very cautious as a Jew?

End of Tape 2, Side A

Tape 2, Side B

Q: This is tape two, side B.

A: Well in New York there really was very little that you could or couldn't do as such. But being ignorant as to the American way, I asked a girl in one of my classes at City College for a date and she turned me down flat. She was Italian and I was Jewish and it just didn't go. I didn't know that. I applied for admission to Columbia and RPI, Rensselaer in Albany, Schenectady. And I was turned down. In one instance, the Dutch quota was filled. You know, all kinds of barriers that existed that you ran into either unwittingly or stupidly, whichever, for me mostly unwittingly. Natives would have known better and would have avoided the... either embarrassment or whatever you want to call it.

Q: What were your parents doing once they arrived here?

A: My... you were, you had to come with a job offer and the company that my dad had worked for in Berlin in the thirties had a... what was then a branch in New York, which then or now was of course was the only office. And they had offered him a job there and so he went to work there the second day we were here or after the first week we were here. And I had gotten the job at Mount Sinai Hospital. My brother got a job somewhere, I don't remember. And so everybody worked.

Q: And you all shared an apartment?

A: Yes, we lived with my parents and since we were... I've been thinking about that, and of course, never asked. But we were expected to contribute to the household. And I'm not sure whether that was a matter of need or a matter of discipline. That you live here, you gotta pay for it. Earn money, your share, which was no problem. Once in the Fall, I started at night at the City College of New York, went to night school and worked during the day. Did that all the way through.

Q: How did you end up feeling about this country? You hadn't been happy to come. Did you end up feeling, at some point feel at home here?

A: Oh yeah, very quickly, certainly. And I don't want you to think that I was paranoid about these barriers that you ran into. It was just ignorance, you learn from it. One of my uncles took me aside and gave me the facts of life. That there are some things that Jews can't do in this country. (Clock chimes with bird-call.)

Q: Cardinal? That means it's three o'clock?

A: That's right. (Laughing.) I guess you didn't hear the two o'clock bird. It's like the rules in, whether you like them or not you have to abide by them. You're not supposed to drive more than 65 miles an hour. And then New York being such a big place you can avoid unpleasanties. There's no need to go looking for them.

Q: Did it strike you as hypocritical? Or did you think about that? This so-called Home of the Free, discriminating against...?

A: No, frankly, no, no, I really never thought about it. There are some things that you... I guess it really wasn't very important. They were minor inconveniences. It wasn't any big deal. I can't complain about that.

Q: So, what happened next? You're going to school at night and you're working in the day. And...

A: Trying to get better jobs. Getting paid more. And then I, of course, the Korean War started and I had to go for my physical. I was classified 1-A to begin with before I ever took the physical. And then trying to get a student deferment. I had a very nasty Draft Board that made all kinds of unpleasant remarks when I went for a hearing for a student deferment, about "What's the matter, don't you want to shoot some Chinks?" You know, that sort of thing. I graduated in January of '51. And went on to Graduate school, and they just gave me fits all the way through. They would re-classify me 1-A, had to appeal it. Then they would get it back to a student deferment for six months, but retroactive to a date of... so half the time I was deferred, half the time I wasn't, which was a real distraction while in school. But I made it through all right. Didn't even think about it, I went to work for Shell Oil Company and that was deferrable employment because of the oil industry. Of course the war was pretty well over by that time anyway, '54.

Q: Would you have felt willing to go and fight in the Korean War if you hadn't been involved in this student... or what were your feelings behind that?

A: Not very happy about it. I wasn't even a citizen. As a matter of fact, my brother, who was drafted, he did not go to school, he was actually sent to Germany. And when this citizenship hearing came up, he couldn't, because he was overseas. I mean, that's the most preposterous thing. He was in the U.S. Army therefore he couldn't become a citizen. But not particularly happy about it. Wasted enough time in my life already without having to serve a few more years in the Army. But no, I wasn't particularly, I was not unwilling. I mean, I wasn't going to refuse. But I wasn't going to volunteer either.

Q: When and how did you meet your wife?

A: We lived in the same house. Well, I have to say that I was too poor to live in the dormitory and three of us shared an apartment.

Q: I'm sorry, what school was it?

A: This was at Duke, at Duke University in Durham. And this is one of these old, you know, like old Louisville. Big homes and they made it into a number of apartments. We had one apartment upstairs, it was a Divinity student and his wife. Another apartment upstairs and the landlady rented out one of the apartments downstairs to Alice and her roommate. That's how we met. I was at Duke, she was working. She was a lab technician working at the VA hospital.

Q: And what was your major at Duke?

A: Chemistry.

Q: A particular type of chemistry?

A: Analytical chemistry. That's what I used to do for a living for a long time.

Q: Had you thought... well it sounds like you didn't have any feelings as far as dating a Jew versus a non-Jew or caring a lot on that?

A: No.

Q: Was your family equally indifferent?

A: I think so. My dad certainly was, my mother, I'm not so sure. I don't think any girl would have been good enough for my mother.

Q: Did you ever talk within your family about what had happened during the war or was this kind of a moot subject?

A: No, oh no, no. They uh, no, certainly not. They, well as I mentioned, my mother is one of thirteen children, two of them were killed in World War One. Of the remaining eleven, three brothers were here and four sisters. And the one brother was picked up during the Kristallnacht thing in '38 and taken to Dachau. And then was released because he had pneumonia, so he wouldn't die in a concentration camp, so they could count him as having released him, rather than having him die there. And he died at home. And they decided they better get their son out before he's going to get it too. But my mother's sister-in-law with her daughter stayed and they perished. And another sister and her husband had moved to Belgium in the early '30s. He was a very prosperous furniture manufacturer. They had two daughters. And they actually helped one of the other sisters' children, they managed to get out, I guess, as late as '42, by way of Belgium and through Portugal. They stayed for a while with them. But that couple with their children, the sister, they perished. As a matter of fact, I had documentation of them at one time, their death certificates. And then on my father's side, my grandmother, my dad's mother, lived in Amsterdam also. And she had cardiac problems so bad, she couldn't have walked from here to the front door without taking nitroglycerine, but she survived the cattle car ride to the gas chambers and died at Auschwitz. And one of, his sister was here, but his brother was still in Germany and he perished. And so no, we, and fortunately for my mother's, my grandmother, my maternal grandmother, she died in late '44, so she never did find out what happened to her children, those that were in Europe. But no, that was a common topic of conversation in the family. My... the son that was sent over, he went back to his hometown looking for his parents or for his mother and sister. He was in the Army. Some of my other cousins that were in the Army went looking for the relatives and for us. Of course once we got back to Holland, my parents, my mother contacted her sisters, and let them know that we had survived. Of course, they also asked to see if we could find out from there what happened to the other relatives. And there's the extended family as I mentioned, my dad's cousin, his parents did not survive.

Q: What was his name?

A: Robertson, he... (Laughing.) I'm laughing because you ask about the name. His name was Rosenberg also and when he was in the hospital in Sweden a man came in, a British Army officer and said to him, "Are you Hans Rosenberg?" He said yes. He said, "I'm Peter Robertson, your brother." (Laughing.) He had been sent out and was drafted in the British Army and they wouldn't allow the name Rosenberg. Because in the event of he would be captured by the Germans that they wouldn't... he wanted to just anglicize it and make it Montrose, but there's a Lord Montrose and you're not allowed to use the name of a famous person, so they made it Robertson. And so then when he came over here and became a citizen he decided so he would have the same name as his brother he changed his name to Robertson.

Q: What was his first name?

A: Henry, Hans.

Q: Okay, and this is the same one who you mentioned earlier, who had written the book?

A: Yes, right.

Q: So, most of your family's conversation then, when you were talking about wartime issues was concerned with what had become of various family members and tracking people down and making...

A: Family members, to some extent, property, the carpet which is in our family room used to belong to my parents and then of course, the Germans got it. And my dad was, sometime, I'm not sure when, in the fifties, he was in Holland on business and he saw it hanging in a carpet store in the window. And he went in and said, "That's my carpet." Fellow says, "Tough luck, it cost you so much," whatever it was. He took a picture of it, but it didn't do any good, because as I said earlier, the Dutch didn't want to transfer the victim from one to another. But they ended up buying it again. And then I got it after my mother died. There are other things that come up occasionally or would come up about something that was missing, or wondering where it was. I had a fairly nice stamp collection that I had given to a friend for safekeeping. And all the valuable stamps are gone. You know, you can be harsh about it, saying they stole from you, on the other hand, they may have traded it for food and needed it. They didn't know whether you were going to come back or not. The only one that was absolutely and scrupulously honest was the concierge of the business where my dad worked. He had everything that my dad entrusted to him and gave every bit of it back. Where many of your so-called friends denied they ever had anything. And there's one thing that's unfortunate and I didn't know about it until fairly recently. Apparently my mother had written a long letter to one of her sisters, or maybe to all of them, same letter addressed to all of them, about the deprivation, et cetera, et cetera. She said her ambition was to die in her own bed between clean sheets. And that letter wasn't discovered until one of my cousins, one of the sister's daughters, who lived on Long Island, but was moving to Florida and was going through the stuff to throw things away and came across that letter and gave it to... I think there may be one or two pages missing. But it was not until a year or so, two years after my mother had died. And that explained a lot of things to us. But fortunately we

were able to do that unknowingly. She died at home in her own bed. It was difficult to do it that way, but...

Q: From where had she written the letter?

A: From Holland after the war, she had wrote that to her sisters, describing what had happened to some extent during the war and the deprivations and how that was her ambition. She wrote in there, "I wasn't going to give those bastards the pleasure of throwing me into a mass grave. I want to die in my own bed between clean sheets." Probably one of the reasons for our survival was my mother's strong will. I think that had a lot to do with it. Probably didn't realize it at the time.

Q: More so than your father's? Or your father was more of a...

A: Much more easier-going person, yeah.

Q: Was your family very close after you came to the States?

A: Oh yeah, yeah, definitely. Not only... you talking my parents and my brother and I, or overall the relatives?

Q: Both.

A: Oh yeah, yes definitely, and still am. I mean there aren't that many of us left. But I talk to some of my cousins on a fairly regular basis. We don't see each other all that often because we're now scattered. A few years ago in Spring we decided to make a round-trip to Florida and visit Alice's brother and then take a few days on the beach and then went to visit some of my cousins. When everybody lived in New York, when all they lived in New York I would see them whenever I got to New York once a year, but now they're scattering too. Retiring and dying, too. Not all of us are alive anymore in our generation.

Q: When you met your wife, did she have any idea of what your history had been during the war? Did you talk about that during your courtship at all?

A: I don't think so, I don't think so. You'd have to ask her, but I don't think so.

Q: And did that become a, later, as you recall, a topic...?

A: That never became an issue, no, not really. No, it would have to have only become a topic of conversation... well it did. I had back problems, it's now, what? 30-some years ago. And when I asked the surgeon what, was there any indication what the cause was. And he said, without knowing what my background was, he says, "Yeah, severe malnutrition during your growing years." But other than that, normally it was not a topic of...

Q: Does she ask you at all about it now or in recent years?

A: No, no.

Q: Does she know now?

A: Oh yeah, she knows. I'm sure my mother told her probably a number of things, and occasionally... well, she's seen the videos also. All the kids have seen them. I'm pretty sure, I may even have made copies for them. They're aware of it, but it's just a piece of history, not "the". A lot of difference there.

Q: So, what happened after you got married? Did you move?

A: Yeah, we... a bit hectic few days. I had my Ph.D. orals on Thursday and a final in a class on Monday. We got married on Tuesday and we left during that, after the wedding and went around the coast of Houston, where I had to report for work a little less than two weeks later.

Q: For Shell?

A: Yeah.

Q: What were you doing for Shell?

A: I was a research chemist. I stayed there for five years. I didn't like what I was doing and started looking for another job and got a job with GE in Cincinnati and was there for almost ten years and then got transferred down here.

Q: Where were your parents and your brother during those years?

A: My parents, my dad actually died in '67 of a second heart attack. And my mother lived in New York, New York City. My brother, after he got out of the Service in early '53, got a job with a Dutch Ore company that had holdings all over the world. And matter of fact that's why he changed his name. His last name is Rosley, R O S L E Y. He anglicized it so he wouldn't be mistaken for a German after the war, when there was still a lot of anti-German feeling all through the world. He was essentially overseas in one place or another until 1963, I believe, is when he came back after having been in Brazil for a number of years. And he lived in New York then until he retired, oh, some ten years or so ago and moved to Vermont. Where he still officially lives in Vermont.

Q: What was your real interest as far as your profession? Did you have any kind of guiding thing that you really loved to do?

A: Problem-solving using chemistry as a tool to solve a lot of technical problems. That was probably my forte. I was pretty good at it, at the time.

Q: So you were seeking work that, in which you were really able to do more of the problem solving type than... what didn't you like about the job that you had in Texas?

- A: Shell? Well, it was a particular development scheme, you took one step forward and maybe two backwards. It just got to be a bore. And I asked for a different assignment and they said, "No, no, you're doing too well. You're getting where we want you to go." And I didn't want to go there. And so I started to look for something else. And the most interesting job that I was being considered for was with the Navy in San Francisco. But the chief of that office was on a year's sabbatical in Belgium and they weren't going to make a decision until he came back. And I wasn't going to wait another year. And the assignment that they talked to me about in Cincinnati was pretty interesting. And I had a good time. It was nerve-racking, because I didn't realize it at the time, it was ACE, the Atomic Energy Commission was the primary contractor. And so it was at the whims of the government. And two years after I was up there we went overnight from three thousand to three hundred employees. Fortunately I was one of the three hundred that they kept. I finally decided this is getting too much, these ups and downs, and mostly downs. And there was another one coming, so I decided to look around the company for other possible opportunities and they happened to have an opening down here, so I applied for it and got it.
- Q: This is still for GE?
- A: Yeah, in the appliance business here as an analytical chemist. And then a year later or two years later, I was made manager of analytical chemistry, chemistry and processes. But anyway, essentially a multitude of problems.
- Q: Did you have any preconceived notions about living in Kentucky?
- A: Well... (Laughing) funny, because we talked about it yesterday. While we were still living in Ohio, the Riverfront Stadium was the big issue. It was being built, where to build it. They started construction. And they said when they got done with that they were going to build the biggest zoo in the world. They were going to put a fence around Kentucky. So, that answers that question, right? No, not really, didn't know much about it. I was commuting for about six weeks, no, longer than that, two months. And so got acquainted a little bit with the area while I was still living up there. And there wasn't that much difference. People are people everywhere. And a pretty nice group of people here that I worked with and worked for. Matter of fact, I'm still friends with, fairly good friends with one of my former bosses. And I'm particularly happy about that.
- Q: For your community of friends, you said... when did you move to Louisville?
- A: '68, a little over 32 years ago.
- Q: And your community of friends and so forth here are most, acquaintances here are mostly through work or...?
- A: Work, neighbors, people I worked with or for, or that worked for me, neighbors, people who live in the area or met at the swimming pool, or wife was in a bridge club. And still have friends from Cincinnati days, too. In fact, one of our good friends, who was a neighbor in Cincinnati, now lives in Fort Worth. Known him for 35 years maybe.

Q: And no involvement with a synagogue here?

A: No, not particularly. Now I'm on every Jewish organization's mailing list.

Q: Why is that?

A: There was an article in the Courier Journal, maybe a year ago, whenever it was, about the Temple and how the Temple needed expansion and they were going to have a quiet campaign for construction funds, for building funds. So, I sent them a check with a note attached that "Since you're having a quiet campaign I'm sending you a check on the QT." And got a very nice letter back, as a matter of fact, a friend of mine who is quite involved with the Temple, the lady showed him the letter not knowing that we knew each other. But that got me on the mailing list for every Jewish organization locally, of course mostly asking for money.

Q: And you mentioned a little bit earlier about how you don't really have contact with other Holocaust survivors in the area. And you're not sure you want to.

A: Not on that basis. I mean, I'm not saying that I say, "You're a Holocaust survivor, move aside, I don't want a part of it." What I'm saying is, if I happen to meet somebody who also is, I have no problem with that. That's just...

End of Tape 2, Side B

Tape 3, Side A

- Q: Okay, this is tape number three, side A of an interview with Alexander Rosenberg. You were just saying about the Holocaust survivors in Louisville. Did you want to add anything else to what you had said?
- A: No not really, as I say, I'm debating on whether to go to this meeting just out of curiosity. See, I don't think I know anybody... well, I'm pretty sure I don't. I'm sure they have to be all older folks. (Laughing.) So I may. I haven't decided yet. But no, no special interest as a criterion.
- Q: How about other, just looking back over your years here after the war in the United States. Were you really mainly just focusing on your work and your family or did you have other interests or passions outside of that?
- A: Oh yeah, I have a number of hobbies. For one thing, I like to cook and obviously like to eat. (Laughing.) And gardening, although my garden right now doesn't show that. And I always like to travel, but of course, with a family and work that isn't always possible. So we made up for it since I retired. And I enjoy history, learning about it, learned more about it since I retired, I guess. Now I have time to watch television and the History channel and A&E and of course, KET to some extent. So that... a lot more exposure and therefore an ability to learn a lot more. And then too, when we travel, we do it with the intent, not always the same. I don't go for these Caribbean cruises, you know, "Show me, feed me, entertain me." I like cruises because they are a lazy man's way of traveling—you only pack and unpack once—but there has to be a reason for it. And sometimes they are real eye-openers. A couple of years we went on an Eastern Mediterranean and Black Sea cruise and we were in Constanta, Romania, which is the major port of Romania on the Black Sea. Ovid was exiled there for seven years or whatever. Well, never even thought that the Romans as well as the Greeks, both came up the west coast of the Black Sea, east coast of the Balkan Peninsula. And that they had gone that far North into what is now Odessa and to the Crimea. I'm sure it's of no importance right now, but in terms of historical event, just didn't think about that or heard about it. A lot of things like that. But as we talked earlier about the famine, and what complicity the British had. The other day there was a fascinating program on the Vikings. They were the kings of Kiev in Russia. They went east. Nobody... I never heard that before.
- Q: What about Holocaust-era history? Have you done much reading about that or taken an interest in finding out what happened on a broader scale?
- A: Oh yes, yes, definitely. As you know there are a lot of programs, bits and pieces. There is a lot... new things, but also things that are being, I think, being hidden from view that never show again. The... well of course, in addition to Spielberg's movie, I'm not sure what the show was the other day, but there are a number of programs that deal with the Holocaust or deal with certain aspects of the Holocaust. Or for that matter, not necessarily in that context, but primarily in the context of Nazis or Hitlerism and their henchmen and how they got involved and what they did. And the Holocaust in the broadest sense, in terms of the enslaving of particularly the Slavs, the eastern Europeans and the murder, genocide of them, not necessarily just the Jews. But then one thing, and I have a video of it, it was on PBS maybe twenty-five years ago, about

Fort Ticonderoga, and I have never seen it again. I mentioned to you earlier the anti-Semitism of the State Department. In 1943, when the Holocaust became pretty well-known in government circles, but was being hidden from the American population, a number of Henry Morgenthau's employees went to him and said, "You go to FDR and tell him he does something or else we're going to go public that the U.S. government knows about this and isn't doing anything." And as a consequence of that, they brought some six, 800, what was then called DPs, displaced persons, to this country. They had to sign a statement, which of course anybody in his right mind would have, that after the war they would go back to their country of origin. And they put them into Fort Ticonderoga. And after the war was over with, they tried to ship them back. Well, you know, you signed this thing. But a number of couples had had children here. They were born at Fort Ticonderoga and therefore they were native-born citizens, and therefore their parents were entitled to stay here as the parents of minor American citizens. The State Department declared Fort Ticonderoga was not American soil and therefore they were not American citizens. Can you imagine a place that is so historically important in the American Revolution being declared not being a part of America? I mean that's the kind of convoluting, convolutions, unfortunately, our government went through. As I said, that was a PBS show, 25 years ago, I have never seen it again. I guess too many toes were being stepped on. But... and of course, I went to the Holocaust museum, but I couldn't take it, make it past the Saint Louis, because I remember that one vividly. Another black mark in our history.

Q: So, it was too painful to be going through and reminded?

A: Yeah, I mean the thing is, painful and the thing is that the Saint Louis had roughly nine hundred passengers and I don't think two dozen survived. It's incredible that the things that the U.S. government could have done, should have done and never did do. It's that kind of malfeasance that really upset me, particularly in that context.

Q: Related to that, I'm interested in something you said in your last interview, which was a piece of advice that you were giving to other Holocaust survivors. That many have met with very good fortune in their post-war lives and that they ought to do what they can to give something back to the community. And so on the one hand you have that compulsion or that desire and on the other hand, you have this knowledge of the shortcomings of this government and the ways that they have, have really not served the... and in particular in the couple of instances you just brought up, Holocaust survivors. How do you reconcile those two?

A: Well, those are, in my opinion, two totally separate issues. Maybe they are related, and that is by giving back to the community, by helping people that are in need of help. Maybe because the government should and isn't, that you're overcoming the shortcomings of our government. Even though I don't take that into consideration. There are two ways that one can give back, one is financially and that's the easy way out that most of us take, is to make contributions to a variety of charitable organizations, or non-profit organizations. But then the more important one is to give of your time and help people. I'm sure the same thing holds true for Lexington, in Louisville there is a shortage, an incredible shortage of volunteers. And all of us retirees who have spare time, and we should have spare time, should donate some of that time to some of these organizations. Whether it's Dare to Care to sort out cans of food, or work at the Wayside Christian Mission as an example, any of these shelters, and dish out food for people in need. Or

I work in the tax program, in fact I have somebody come in who needs help with their taxes. One of the great organizations in general of a variety of needs is Catholic Charities. And they're desperate for volunteers. Obviously: they asked me to help. (Laughing.) And I have. But the thing is, that is one way that you can give back. And whether it's in your own expertise or if it's just plain labor. Some people are unwilling to become raw labor, drive for Meals on Wheels or drive for Dare to Care and pick up bread at Kroger or whatever. But that's the kind of jobs that need to be done. And that's the kind of things that makes many of these non-profit organizations click. Newt Gingrich, who is so maligned, some four or five years ago, for his reasons felt that the public radio should no longer be funded by the U.S. government. And I completely agree with him. But that doesn't mean that today they give them big hunk of money and tomorrow it's zilch. Cut it back. I work for the public radio stations here as a volunteer. And they used that withdrawal of government funds to encourage the public to contribute and they did tremendous, the biggest drive they ever had. And rightly so. I'm a firm believer in putting the public back into public radio and public television, but it requires a commitment on the part of the people to make financial donations. And that's just one, that's not nearly as, I suppose, important as helping somebody who's hungry or reading for the blind, but it's one of the large variety of volunteer jobs that needs to be done. It's amazing, I don't do that much. I'm not trying to pat myself on the back. But one of the people that used to work for me professionally now actually works for me in a volunteer, one of his volunteer activities, got the GE volunteer award of the year, he and his wife, jointly, this past year. Between the two of them they put in three thousand hours a year, that's a hell of a lot of hours. That's almost a fulltime job. If we could get half the people to do half that or for that matter, ten percent of the people to do ten percent of that, it would be a lot of help. And that's what I mean by that.

Q: Have you traveled much within Kentucky?

A: Not that much. I mean we've been all over. Been both west and east, and south. Essentially covered the whole state more or less, but not extensively.

Q: Does the culture or the history of the state interest you particularly or are you more kind of limited...?

A: Oh yes, well, no I think or it appears at least that more recently that the antagonism toward Louisville, Louisville versus the rest of Kentucky, seems to be diminishing. But that is, you know the large city versus the rest of the state. Look at New York and New York City, Georgia and Atlanta and you know, you can go on. I think it's probably true of most states that the large cities are thought to be representative and they're not. Even though they contain most of the population. And I can understand that. And the interests of Kentucky in particular are so diverse, from Appalachia with its problems, and Western Kentucky with some of the same problems and some totally different problems. And Louisville, of course, for painfully obvious reasons having totally different problems that people in Appalachia couldn't care less about. But that's true everywhere. And it's amazing, the thing that I thought that the United States was unique, unfortunately, in its race relations problems. They're not. It's the same everywhere. It doesn't matter what country you go to, it may not be like we have, black and white. But we were in New Zealand and there was a big ruckus and the Royal Commission on Race Relations or whatever it was, got involved, refused to get involved in it. Well, the mere fact that they have a

Royal Commission on Race Relations says there's a problem there. And it's the Maoris, which are no longer in existence. The purest Maori is one-eighth Maori and seven-eighths white. And in Australia it's the indigenous people versus the settlers. And then of course among the settlers you get the same ethnic divisions that you get everywhere else. Look right now, Fiji, the Solomon Islands, the whole world is erupting in ethnic and race problems. Africa is just a terrible situation.

Q: Were you... was that something that you were particularly aware of in your early years in the U.S., segregation, the Civil Rights Movement, any of those?

A: No, not really. I read about it and I heard about it and was only peripherally affected by it. But in the early fifties, while I was in Durham, the mayor of Durham was Jewish. Why I don't know. There's a fairly good sized, there was a—there may still be—a good-sized Jewish community in Durham because of the tobacco industry. Apparently they brought the Jews down in order to make cigars, like they did in Tampa with the Cubans. And then, I still remember the man's name, Bishop Waters was the Catholic Bishop for North Carolina. The little town of Washington, North Carolina was two parishes, a black and a white. Neither one of them could support a priest, and he ordered them integrated. Boy was there ever a stink, but it worked. Wasn't... no more than two months and they essentially had ninety percent attendance of the two parishes in one church building. It was unheard of. Of course the press would claim race relations are only bad in the South. Well, they're probably a lot better in the South than they were elsewhere. But yeah, I certainly was keenly aware of it, and cautious. Before I bought a house in Houston, this was in the late fifties, I consulted with a local friend to say "Hey, so that I don't stub my toe, is there anyplace that I cannot go? Where I would be refused because I am Jewish?" And he said, "Yes. Don't go to Oak Forest," or Forest Oaks, whatever it was called, which I couldn't anyway, that was the rich neighborhood. But you learned to do those things.

Q: Is there something else that I haven't asked you about that you'd like to talk about today?

A: No, I can't really think of much. I don't know whether this gets perpetuated or not, but I certainly would urge, not just Holocaust survivors, but all retirees to think about give something back to the community.

Q: This is something that's very important to you, it seems. I mean, you brought it up last time, too.

A: Yeah, I think so. There's such a terrible need. And what makes me particularly, actually angry... I have two or three acquaintances who are retired, who went back to work on a part-time basis, because they don't know what to do with themselves. They're bored. This is utterly ridiculous. And I keep trying to get them enrolled in some activity and they just won't do it. But there's just too many people that need help, who cannot help themselves. And throwing money at the problem is not necessarily the solution. It isn't that it can't be done without money, but it's the personal help that's required. And here in Louisville, we are blessed with a number of things. We have here three groups that make recordings for the blind. The Recordings for the Blind, the Audio Studio, and there's a third one. There isn't another city in this country that does that. We have three public radio stations. There is not, even New York only has one. There are

a lot of things that are good things, matter of fact I don't brag about Louisville, keep down the population influx. (Laughing.) Selfish.

Q: So, you're pretty much of a Louisville patriot, huh?

A: We have it very good here in Kentucky, and particularly in Louisville, and of course, Lexington in many ways, much more dynamic than Louisville is, for one thing they've got the city-county government, which we won't get. It's up for voting on election day, you can bet money on it, it won't happen. The race relations right now are just so terrible. All you have to do is look at other communities and other cities and that's not just... take this house here as an example, which you can buy similar house here for depending on the condition and age, but let's say 150 to 250. Go to Silicon Valley you couldn't touch it for two and a half million dollars. In other areas, yeah you may be able to get for less, but most areas you can't touch it for twice the amount of money. Matter of fact, most retirees moving out of California, sell their houses and live happily ever after, because they can buy another house somewhere else in Arizona or in Florida for a fraction of what it's worth in California. Our food prices are reasonable, with the exception of gasoline in Jefferson County. I went to Shelbyville last night and paid 40 cents a gallon less than what it is in Louisville. I mean that's ridiculous. Could have gone as far as Simpsonville, that's only ten miles, 25 cents a gallon. But outside of these temporary distortions, Louisville has grown up a lot in the last 15, 20 years. I used to get all my bread from Chicago, now there's a grocery store over on Taylorsville Road that carries it and I can go get it there. We used to go to Cincinnati to get a three month supply of cold cuts, now I can buy almost all of it here. And so on and so forth. We're blessed here with, within two miles or three, excellent bakeries and different bakeries. If you want a certain thing you get it here. How many communities can you say that? In 20 minutes I'm at the airport.

Q: You feel welcome here, comfortable here as a Jew?

A: Oh yes, absolutely. That is not an issue at all in this community. I'm sure there's always, well like the Ku Klux Klan exists here, but you can ignore that. No, I have never had anybody make a disparaging remark to me or denied me something because I'm Jewish. Absolutely. Until the present mayor, the Mayor of Louisville was Jewish, Jerry Abramson, one of the most popular mayors that the city of Louisville has had. I think he was in there for thirteen years, the longest that anybody ever has. And he was quite, I mean it was not anything that was hidden. He was quite open about it. No, I don't think there's a problem at all here.

Q: Anything else you'd like to say?

A: No, nothing in particular. Keep the good works up.

Q: Thank you very much.

A: Thank you.

Conclusion of interview