

INTERVIEW WITH SARAH KLEIN

DECEMBER 8, 1994

**Transcending Trauma Project
Council for Relationships
4025 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104**

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INTERVIEWER: This is an interview with Sarah Klein, a survivor. It's December 8, 1994. Mrs. Klein you wanted to just dedicate this tape.

SARAH KLEIN: I would like to dedicate this write-up to my children and to my grandchildren, and to the generation that was fortunate enough to be born after the Holocaust. It is my hope that this volume will share the feelings and emotions which I did suffer during the Second World War.

INT: Could you tell me just some information about you right now. You were born, how old are you, and when were you born?

SARAH: I was born in Poland. The city Tomaszuw, Lubelski.

INT: Could you spell that, please?

SARAH: [Spells it]. And Lubelski means like...Pennsylvania, like PA.

INT: Like a section of Poland. And how do you spell that?

SARAH: L-u-b-e-l-s-k-i.

INT: Could you tell me what big city would be near there?

SARAH: Near this was the big city Lwow. Lwow you spell L-w-o-w.

INT: And when were you born, what was the date?

SARAH: I was born 6/20/22.

INT: And you're married now?

SARAH: I'm married now. I'm remarried.

INT: You're remarried. This is your second marriage?

SARAH: This is my second marriage.

INT: How many years have you been married with your second?

SARAH: It's going to be twelve years in February.

INT: Okay. And your first marriage? How many years?

SARAH: My first marriage was in 1947 to Reverend Herman Klein.

INT: Okay. And what happened?

SARAH: He passed away in 1976. He had lung cancer.

INT: And children?

SARAH: Children, I have two children. My older son, Morton Abraham Klein, was born in October 16, 1947. And my younger son. My older son was born in Germany, in Ginsburg. And my younger son was born in the United States, in February 28, 1953. His name is Samuel Klein.

INT: Okay. And grandchildren?

SARAH: Grandchildren, I have three grandchildren. One is Morton's daughter, is Rachel Klein.

INT: How old is she?

SARAH: She is eighteen. And my younger son, Samuel Klein, has two children, a boy and a girl. His name is Avi Jordan Klein, and he's five years old, and my younger granddaughter, her name is Hannah Klein. Her age is two and half years old.

INT: Oh, so they're little.

SARAH: Yeah, they're little.

INT: And your son Morton lives in...

SARAH: My older son Morton Klein lives in Merion.

INT: Pennsylvania.

SARAH: In Pennsylvania in Linden Road.

INT: And how about your other son, where does he live?

SARAH: My other son lives in St. Louis. He's working in a hospital.

INT: So who's older, Morton?

SARAH: Morton is older.

INT: Oh, okay. And are you working now?

SARAH: No, I'm a housewife.

INT: And your husband?

SARAH: He's retired.

INT: And what did he do previously? Your second husband.

SARAH: He used to be a mashgiach in York House, a geriatric center, in Old York Road section.

INT: And could you tell me the level of your education, what did you get up to?

SARAH: In Europe I went to school, I went to Hebrew school, to the Jewish school, and to the Polish school. And I was very good in math. I was a very good student. Before the war, I was accepted to the bookkeeping school, to the biggest school in the country, in a different city, not in my city where I was born. But the war came, and they bombed our city, and I lost my education. I couldn't finish up my education because of the war.

INT: Did you go back after you came to this country?

SARAH: No, I didn't come back, because when we were in Siberia in Russia, taken to, during, from 1939 to 1945, we were in Russia, sending there all the people in Siberia. And they want us to work, cut trees and chop wood, and that's why they brought us there. They need people to work in the forest.

INT: Okay. But when you came to this country, were you able to continue your education?

SARAH: When I came to this country, I came with my older son, G-d bless him, Morton. He was a young child. He was not even three years old. And we came to this country. We didn't know language, we didn't know anything. We didn't have nobody here, and we had to start a new life, and it was not easy. I couldn't even think to go back to school. And then my husband was looking for a job, and he couldn't find even a job, because he was very religious, he was a brilliant scholar, and he was religious, and he didn't want to work on Saturdays and the Jewish holidays, so it was very hard for him to find a job. So in the meantime, the Jewish Family Service helped us.

INT: Okay. Before we get into that, though, would you say then, that you finished high school, or the equivalent of high school in Poland before the war?

SARAH: Yeah, I was finished the lower high school, and then since I was so good in math they wanted to transfer me to a good bookkeeping school, because they saw that I'm very good in this.

INT: And that's when the war came.

SARAH: And this is 1939 when the war came, yes.

INT: Let me just think if there's any other questions. How would you describe your economic level? Lower class, middle class, upper class. Your economic level. Your level of income. You don't have to tell me what your income is, just are you comfortable, are you not comfortable, financially?

SARAH: From before?

INT: No, now, right now.

SARAH: Now? Well, I always tried my best, even when we came to this country, we didn't have anything, and I tried to make the best out of everything, to stretch my dollar. And I'm used to that, and I try to be comfortable now, too. So I'm not complaining.

INT: So you're living pretty comfortable.

SARAH: Yeah, thank G-d, no complaints.

INT: And do you belong to any organizations?

SARAH: Yes. I belong to a lot of organizations. I belong to Shaarei Shamayim Synagogue Sisterhood.

INT: Is that a Conservative, or an Orthodox synagogue?

SARAH: It's a Conservative, yeah. I used to live in that area. My husband used to be a clergyman there. My first one. This was my synagogue. Then since he passed away in 1976, after seven and a half years, I'm married my second husband, so I came to live in this area, on Algon Avenue.

INT: So where do you go to synagogue now?

SARAH: I go now to a synagogue, a strict Orthodox synagogue in the same street, in Algon Avenue. And I belong to the Hadassah. I belong to the Emunah. I belong to the B'nai Israel synagogue sisterhood, and the New Americans.

INT: Oh, my goodness. So the New Americans is the survivor organization.

SARAH: The New Americans is the Holocaust survivors group. And we have a very large turnout. We always, every year it's getting bigger and bigger with the membership. People like to belong because we get together, and we meet people, and we, and it's good to belong. It's good to see people from our country, from different countries. Like New American.

INT: Do you belong to any other survivor organizations? Or Newcomers is the one.

SARAH: This is the name. Newcomers.

INT: So how much time do you spend in these organizations? For instance, Hadassah?

SARAH: Well, every organization has, I forgot to mention, I also belong to the Agudah Women. The real strict religious. I belong to them, too. So every organization has every month a meeting, so they don't have it the same time. So I always participate. I go to the meetings. So this is like in the evening. 8:00 in the evening, so I'm able to go, and I'm going with friends. And we learn a lot of things. We hear a lot of things, and I give donations for Israel any time I come to the meeting, I always leave a couple dollars to help others. That's what I always do.

INT: How often do you go to the Newcomers meetings?

SARAH: Once a month.

INT: Could you describe those meetings, what happens there?

SARAH: Well, at their meetings, we raise money, as I said before, this particular organization helps a lot Israel in hospitals, like the Nahariya hospital and other hospitals. And Red Cross ambulance. And also yeshivas. They send in a check every month. The president sends in a check any time they ask for help. And all the donations we give, all the people give, so they try to help others with the money. And a lot of Jewish institutions. Scholarship children who can't afford, parents can't afford to pay for it. The New Americans send in a check.

INT: That's very nice. I didn't know they did that. So it's a charity organization as well as a support group?

SARAH: Yeah. Charity organization. Yeah.

INT: But what happens at the meetings? Do you talk about your experiences?

SARAH: No. We don't talk about our experiences. We always have a person who gives a talk from Allied Jewish Appeal, and then they hire a show, like a Broadway show, or a singer, or a cantor, or it's always something.

INT: I see. Entertainment.

SARAH: Entertainment. Always.

INT: But it's a chance to get together with people who are from a similar background to you.

SARAH: Yeah, it's a very pleasant. I mean, I don't call this pleasant, because we always have in our mind what we went through when we start to get together. People tell their stories quietly. But it's still good to get out and to belong, and to give charity, and to help others. And to see people.

INT: So you enjoy this group. You look forward to it?

SARAH: Yeah. Yeah. I do.

INT: Any other organizations? That's a lot.

SARAH: Well, as I told you before, Emunah Organization, the Hadassah, in Shaarei Shamayim Synagogue, I used to belong to the sisterhood. They have also get togethers about charity and helping others all over the world. For Jewish people, for Russians. And the N'shai women, that's the name, the real strict Orthodox organization. So I always send them a membership. Even if I skip a meeting, but my membership is always there. I always pay.

INT: That's wonderful. And you would describe your religious observance as Orthodox? You belong to an Orthodox synagogue?

SARAH: Yeah. I was brought up in a very strict Orthodox family. They're from generations to generations back.

INT: But right now. How would you describe?

SARAH: Right now I also have a religious family in New York. Everybody is religious, the children, they go to yeshivas, and they are very Shomer Shabbos, and they are strict kosher, and they observe every holiday, and every Jewish law. And they send their children also to strict religious schools.

INT: How would you describe your level of observance in your house? Today, what you do now.

SARAH: Well, I'm strictly kosher. I don't buy anything that's not kosher. And I don't drive on Saturday, and I don't write on Saturday, I don't shop on Saturday, I don't clean on Saturday or Jewish holidays. I don't turn on lights, I don't cook.

INT: So you're Shomer Shabbat.

SARAH: Yeah. I'm Shomer Shabbos.

INT: Do you go to shul?

SARAH: I go every Shabbos to shul, and I go every holiday, of course, too. And unless I don't feel good, then I can't go. But if I feel good, I'm always in synagogue Saturdays and Jewish holidays.

INT: So then you would consider yourself Orthodox.

SARAH: Orthodox, yeah.

INT: You walk to synagogue, you don't use the car, and you don't work.

SARAH: I'm strict Orthodox, yeah. I am.

INT: Okay, now I'd like to go back, okay, to where you were born. And if you could describe for me your family. Your mother, your father, and any siblings that you had, and where you come in that line of children. You know, if you're the first child, or the last child or whatever, in your family. Could you do that?

SARAH: You mean my own children?

INT: No. When you were born, in your town.

SARAH: Okay. I was born in Poland. The city is Tomaszów, Lubelski. This is not far from Lwow. It's a bigger city, so it's easy to describe my city.

INT: How big was your town? How many people, do you know?

SARAH: Several thousand Jews, yeah. Sure. It was a very religious city.

INT: Were there non-Jews living there, too?

SARAH: Yeah. Non-Jews was living, but our family lived in a particular section, strict Orthodox. And also observant and everything. My parents had a grocery, delicatessen store, in Europe. My grandfather was a shochet. I don't know how you call this in English. Shochet.

INT: On whose side? Your grandfather on whose side? Your mother's side?

SARAH: My mother's, yeah. And my whole family comes from strict, from rabbis and almost everybody was a rabbi and a shochet, or a brilliant scholar. From this category.

INT: Were you Hasidim?

SARAH: Hasidic, yeah.

INT: Oh. What group?

SARAH: Strict Orthodox Hasidim.

INT: No, but I mean, is it, like Belzer...

SARAH: Agudah. Agudah. Oh, the Belzer, yeah. That's right. The Belzer Hasidim. That's right. My father, let him rest in peace, used to belong to the Belzer shul in Europe.

INT: I see. What was the family name? What was your maiden name when you were born?

SARAH: Sarah Griner. G-r-i-n-e-r. My family, as I said, I come from a very religious family, and observant. And my mother had thirteen children. Four children died as infants when they were small, so we were left with nine before the war. Then my oldest sister got married before the war, and she had a child. And when the war start, I mean, I come from a family like almost a hundred people. The whole family. They're all wiped off. They all got killed. We are alive because the Russians took us away to Siberia. When the Germans came in...

INT: Okay, but before we get to the war, though. I just want you to describe your family. So you have your mother, your father. Your mother's from a rabbinic family.

SARAH: Rabbinic family. My father is also from the same family. They were cousins.

INT: Oh! First cousins?

SARAH: Second cousins. They were second cousins. And my father comes from rabbinic, and my mother comes. And my grandfather was the main...how you call this in English?

INT: What did he do?

SARAH: Outstanding, a very outstanding person that everybody knew that he's the first in the city.

INT: Wasn't a talmud chacham?

SARAH: Yeah. He was a talmud chacham. He was a shochet.

INT: Was he a rabbi?

SARAH: A rabbi and a shochet. When he went to synagogue, he had an open house. Any time he went to synagogue, when he came home, back from davening, he brought with him like a dozen people to eat breakfast. They had big long tables, and they ate breakfast, and they could sleep over.

INT: Do you remember this?

SARAH: Yeah. I remember this, yeah. They could sleep over, and they could eat. Anybody who was hungry, he was feeding...

INT: He opened his house to people.

SARAH: Yeah. If anybody any time, they didn't have enough, in Europe they used to make warm in the house with wood, like an oven. With wood. He used to go to the market, when he went from synagogue, to buy some wood for poor people, and he paid, and they delivered to the poor people, with not even asking. They shouldn't freeze. Because they couldn't afford it.

INT: He did a lot of tzedakah.

SARAH: Yeah. A lot.

INT: This is your mother's father.

SARAH: This is my mother's father, yeah. He did a lot of good deeds. He always tried to help, to help, an open house. That's the way I am. My mother was the same way.

INT: Did he live near you in your town?

SARAH: Yeah. I remember him, yeah, sure.

INT: Did you used to go there on Shabbos?

SARAH: I used to go. It's a walking distance. I used to go there, he came to us. And it was a very close family. That's why I'm wondering in this country. In the beginning I was not used to that. I know everybody was so close, and here is different. So it's alright, everybody's nice. So...

INT: So your mother and father came from the same family, so they had the same kind of background.

SARAH: Right.

INT: Religious, and rabbis, and talmud chacham. So how about the children? Could you tell me their names, the children who survived infancy. I know that you said four of them died that your mother had, but could you start from the oldest and tell me their names, your sisters and brothers?

SARAH: Well, my oldest sister's name was Tema.

INT: Tema?

SARAH: Tema. And the second sister's is Etle.

INT: How do you spell that?

SARAH: E-t-l-e. My third sister, this is second, my third is Mala. M-a-l-a. Then I came, Sarah. Then Chajka.

INT: Is another girl.

SARAH: Another girl.

INT: C-h-a-i-k-a? [Chajka]

SARAH: Yeah. Then a boy was born, he died. In the infancy.

INT: After so many girls?

SARAH: They even didn't name him.

INT: Oh. He died right away.

SARAH: Right. And then another boy, is Motel, he's alive, he's in New York. And then another boy, Herschel. And then another girl is Genia, and then another girl is Devorah. Devorah was born after they threw the bombs, in 1939, after the bombs throwing. And then, oh, I skipped three died, dead ones. This I skipped. This was after Herschel was a girl, and then after Genia was another little boy.

INT: And they died of what? Do you know?

SARAH: Infancy.

INT: Diseases that you get when you're a little kid.

SARAH: Yeah, yeah.

INT: Do you remember that, what that was like, when the babies would die? That's four babies.

SARAH: I remember this. See, in Europe, my mother had her children in the house. In Europe, they didn't went to the hospital. So I was home. And I remember, when she delivered the baby, they carried out the baby to the grave. So I saw.

INT: But the others lived a little bit before they died?

SARAH: A little bit, yeah, but still they were like...

INT: They weren't named yet?

SARAH: A couple was named, but I don't remember the names. I have written down somewhere, if you want to know the names. But I have it written down.

INT: That must have been very hard for your mother.

SARAH: Very hard, yeah. So to the war we were nine.

INT: Okay, could you describe, what did your father do for a living, what did your mother do, and what was your economic level growing up? Were you poor, were you not poor, were you comfortable?

SARAH: Well, my parents had a store, a grocery, delicatessen store. When he got married, my grandfather wanted to be a shochet, because he didn't want him to have a store. A shochet is nicer, it's more respectful to the family. But he did, was a shochet. That's what I heard, he was telling me. But he didn't like it. He didn't want to be a shochet. He grew up in business. His father was in business. So he wanted to be a businessman. So he opened up a business. And my mother helped him out in the business. She was **always** with him in the business. Even when she delivered babies. And a week later she went to the store. But we had a maid.

INT: With all those kids at home? How did she do that?

SARAH: We had a maid in the house. We did have a maid. She was...

INT: What are your parents' names?

SARAH: My father is Yankel. Yankel.

INT: Yaakov?

SARAH: Yeah, Yaakov. And my mother's is Matl. M-a-t-l. Matl.

INT: So she helped him.

SARAH: She helped him, yeah. Every day she was in store. And we had a maid in the house. She cooked and she watched the children. But we still have to help out in the house. With the maid. For example...

INT: Was the maid Jewish or not Jewish? I'm just curious.

SARAH: Jewish. Jewish. No, they wouldn't take a non-Jewish girl.

INT: Because of the cooking and all.

SARAH: The cooking and everything. So everybody who could help out with the maid, we always had our share what to do. For example, me, I was a little girl. In Europe was not a diaper service. I washed the diapers.

INT: That's a lot of diapers to wash! (laughs)

SARAH: Yeah. (laughs) I have to wash the diapers. And I volunteered myself, because my mother asked us, what are you going to help for the maid? So everybody said, I want to do this, this, this, and I said, alright, I soaked the diapers overnight, and in the morning, I washed them. But in Europe we didn't have a washing machine. We have a...thing.

INT: Board.

SARAH: Yeah, board. So I washed the diapers.

INT: Why did you volunteer to do that?

SARAH: Because I wanted to do fast. I liked to play with my friends. And I don't want to stay in the house and watch the children.

INT: This is a quick job. You can just get it over with.

SARAH: This is quick, yeah.

INT: Not too pleasant, but quick.

SARAH: Not too pleasant, but quick.

INT: So everybody helped out.

SARAH: Everybody helped out, yeah. So one time, the maid, one of our child's fell down under the bed. Baby. So she couldn't get her out. So she used to send me, I should run to the store and get my mother. It was not far.

INT: Where did the baby fall?

SARAH: She fell out, I don't know if maybe she was climbing or something, under, and nobody could get her. So I was running to my mother's store. She came and she helped her out. Anything she needs help, my mother should tell her, so she sent me. Because I was very fast.

INT: So your mother wasn't far away, and you were like the messenger, if there was an emergency.

SARAH: I was like the messenger, yeah. And the family was a big family. Everybody was in the same city. There was a lot of children.

INT: Cousins.

SARAH: Cousins, a lot of children.

INT: How many siblings did your mother have? Do you know?

SARAH: Well, she had brothers and sisters, so they had also like a lot of children.

INT: And they all lived in the same town.

SARAH: The same. Nobody moved out.

INT: How about your father, same thing?

SARAH: My father, no. My father came from a different city. The city named Zamosc. He came from a different city. So his family was there. It was also a family. It came to a holiday, so everybody tried to send a child over the holiday to spend with the family.

INT: That's nice. So did you ever go there to his parents?

SARAH: Yeah, to Zamosc, yeah, I used to go.

INT: So what were his parents like?

SARAH: Well, I'm named after my grandmother, so I never knew her, and my grandfather, so...

INT: What did he do, the grandfather?

SARAH: He was also in business, like my father. A businessman. He was a wholesaler.

INT: You described your mother's father as giving a lot of tzedakah. An open house. And how would you describe your father's father?

SARAH: My father's father, he was more busy. He didn't have time. He gave tzedakah, but he didn't have like an open house like my, this grandfather has. My mother's father.

INT: But he was religious also?

SARAH: Very religious. Oh, yeah. Everybody was religious.

INT: They had peyos, do you remember?

SARAH: Yeah, peyos, and a silk coat, you know ...

INT: Long black coat.

SARAH: Yeah, when they went to synagogue, sure.

INT: Did they wear shtreimels, too?

SARAH: My grandfather, not my father. My grandfather. And my mother was wearing a sheitel. All the time a sheitel. Everybody who got married, the hair was cut off, and they put...

INT: Did they shave their heads, or...

SARAH: They shaved the **whole** head. They didn't leave **anything**, and they put on a sheitel right, you know.

INT: So they were very religious.

SARAH: Very religious.

INT: Could you describe your sisters and your brothers, and what they were like, their personalities?

SARAH: Well, everybody was young. Just my oldest sister, like I said, she was married, had a little child. She's killed. She got killed and my other sister, Mala, is killed. Well, everybody was young, we went to school, went to Hebrew school, and to the war, I was myself still young. So we all went to school. We observed Saturday where everybody went to shul, and came back from shul and celebrated together, like lunch time at the table, and everything was together. And it's not like one eats this time and one ate the other time. Everybody has to be together.

INT: What was Shabbos like, for instance, in your family?

SARAH: Shabbos, when my father, let him rest in peace, when he came home, everybody has to be at the table. Like for the younger kids...

INT: Friday night, or...

SARAH: Friday night the same thing. Like the younger kids they liked to play outside. In the meantime when my father was in synagogue. But we all knew that when my father comes home, we have to be at the table. And he always gave us a Jewish paper to read. We should know about the news, we should know about everything. So he always gave somebody to read a sentence, and when he comes back, everybody has to tell him the write-up, what the sentence, what's going on.

INT: He would test you.

SARAH: Yeah, he tested me. The whole week he didn't have time. He was busy in store. So at that time Shabbos and Friday night, he talked to us, and he gave us to read things, and he had to explain what he was reading, and that's how he was going on with his family.

INT: Did he ask you questions about the Parshah?

SARAH: Yeah, he asked questions, but most he asked the boys this. The girls he had to say something, different things. But he always wanted us to know, and to know what's going on, and to know...

INT: That's interesting. He wanted you to know what's going on in the outside world.

SARAH: Right. Right.

(END TAPE ONE, SIDE ONE)

(TAPE ONE, SIDE TWO)

INT: So you were saying your father expected different things from the girls that you should know. Not necessarily you should know things about the Parshah, the boys should know that. But that **all** of you should know what's going on in the world.

SARAH: But we were hearing, we heard at the table, when the boys had questions, and their answers. So we knew, we heard.

INT: So what kind of school did you go to?

SARAH: I went to Bais Yaakov.

INT: Oh, so you went to a religious school.

SARAH: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

INT: You didn't go to public school.

SARAH: I went.

INT: So explain...

SARAH: I went to public, too. Like half a day here, and half a day in the other school.

INT: So how did that work?

SARAH: And then beside this, a Hebrew teacher came into the house, and my father wanted us to know Hebrew. I was a little girl, so he came into the house, and we were like four girls at the table.

INT: Learning Hebrew language.

SARAH: Yeah.

INT: But in the morning you would go to Bais Yaakov, and then in the afternoon you'd go to public school, is that how it went?

SARAH: Yeah. Yeah.

INT: Oh. Did you come home for lunch, and then you went?

SARAH: No, we ate lunch in school.

INT: So could you tell me what a day would be like going to school? What time you went to school, how long you stayed there in Bais Yaakov?

SARAH: We had to be in school like 9:00 in the morning. Till 2:00.

INT: In Bais Yaakov.

SARAH: Yeah. And then we came back and we went to the Polish school. And we learned the language, and the writing.

INT: How many hours?

SARAH: Like, three, four hours, too.

INT: Oh, my gosh, so you didn't get home till like 6:00.

SARAH: Yeah, yeah.

INT: Wow.

SARAH: Because my father want us to know. And my mother, they want us to know, to be educated.

INT: Was it a law that you had to go to Polish school, too?

SARAH: It was not a law, no. It was not a law. A lot of people, my brothers didn't went to Polish school.

INT: They went to yeshiva.

SARAH: Only to this, yeah, to a yeshiva.

INT: I see. But the girls went to the Polish school. So tell me what you learned in the Polish school.

SARAH: Well, I learned like the ABC when I started, and then like first grade, second grade, and fourth grade, third, fourth grade. I think in fifth grade they found out that I'm very good in math. And I was older. So I skipped a grade, I did. And then this was like before the war, as I said before, they wanted me to go to a very good bookkeeping school, because I was very good in this, and I was accepted. Not everybody could be accepted to this. As a matter of fact, they had a meeting, they called my mother, that they want to talk to her. If it's alright, they should send me away to a different city. Because this school was not in our city. I have to go to a different city. And I wanted to go, because I was anxious to learn. So they signed me up, and my mother gave her signature, that starting September, '39, 1939, I'm going to start.

INT: Just when the Germans invaded Poland.

SARAH: Then the Germans came in, and they bombed our city, and the war started, so I lost my education.

INT: So you went to this Polish school every day, also. Did you have to go on Shabbos to school?

SARAH: No, no Shabbos. Not at all.

INT: Now could you walk to both these schools from where you lived?

SARAH: Well, the Polish school, I have to have a ride. It was not close. This was like out of the city a little. The Hebrew school was in the city. So I walked.

INT: And what did you learn in the Hebrew school? What did they teach you there?

SARAH: I learned, I still was young, so I learned the davening, like from siddur. And then when I came to synagogue, so I knew what's going on. That's what my father wanted a girl should know what's going on in synagogue. And writing. And sometimes write a Yiddish letter. You know, we had books. We had to buy books, special books that we should learn from the book, too, how to write a letter to a mother, if you're away from home, or to a sister or brother if you're away from home. To family, to cousins if you have family.

INT: In Yiddish.

SARAH: In Yiddish. Yeah. So we learned this.

INT: So they didn't teach you Hebrew in Bais Yaakov. That's why your father had a tutor come in?

SARAH: Yiddish. This was Yiddish.

INT: I see. Everything was in Yiddish.

SARAH: A man came in in the house, a teacher, a Hebrew teacher. He came to the house with this, yeah.

INT: Now, when you went to the Polish school, did you understand Polish when you first went there? Did you know what they were talking about?

SARAH: Yeah, I did know. Because we had a store, and I heard customers came in, and the children catch right away the language, so my mother spoke to them in Polish, too, so I was familiar with the Polish language.

INT: I see. So your parents both knew Polish.

SARAH: Yeah, they know Polish.

INT: And now, do you know Polish? Can you understand Polish?

SARAH: Oh, yeah. I write and read and talk Polish, yeah. Yeah, I still know. Because I went to school. So I remember.

INT: All those years. Okay. Could you describe for me a little bit, what your father was like. Just describe him for me. Tell me what his personality was like. And...

SARAH: My father, first he was a very handsome looking. I have his picture.

INT: Do you have pictures? I'd like to see them.

SARAH: Yeah, he was very handsome and nice, and pleasant. If you look at him you knew right away. You can right away judge the way he looked. His look, that he was a very fine quality person. And he was religious, and he was good-natured. He was learned, very learned in Talmud and Torah. He knew all that stuff.

INT: Do you remember him sitting and learning?

SARAH: Yes. Oh, yeah. He was, as a matter of fact, when Morton was a little older, when he came to visit me, he was in New York here. My father was in New York. Because from Siberia...

INT: He survived.

SARAH: He survived. So when my father came to visit, he was two weeks in my house at the time when he came to me. I want him to stay a little longer. Sure, the grandchildren liked the grandfather, so my father used to take Morton, when he was a little boy, with the Chumash, and practice and teach him. So he always liked his grandchildren should learn with him a little bit.

INT: So he was easygoing.

SARAH: He was easygoing, yeah. He was very nice. And he was a charitable person. But he didn't have time to do things.

INT: He was at the store.

SARAH: He was at the store.

INT: He didn't work on Shabbos, though.

SARAH: No. No, no, no way. No.

INT: But the store dealt with non-Jews, too. Non-Jews came in also.

SARAH: Non-Jews, and a lot of anti-Semites. The Polish people used to be our customers. And they, right before the war, they gave my father a lot of tsuris.

INT: Okay, we're going to get to that, the anti-Semitism. But you describe him as being a very fine person, because he came from...

SARAH: He came from a fine family.

INT: And easygoing. Did he have a temper, he didn't have...

SARAH: Sometimes he did, yeah. Because the pressure. You know, pressure, having so many children, keine hora, and running a business, and he have in his mind a lot of things, to take care of a lot of things. So he did have a lot of pressure sometimes. Yeah. Sometimes he was a little bit upset. You know. So everybody is. But in general he was a very fine, good-natured person.

INT: Did he show affection to you, to you girls and the boys? Was he affectionate?

SARAH: Yeah. He liked his children. He did. As a matter of fact, as I said before, he want us to sit at the table together, and eat together, and...

INT: And spend time with you.

SARAH: Weekdays it was not such a togetherness because the business. But Friday night...

INT: Yeah, what time did he come home? When would he come home from work?

SARAH: He came home like 7:00 in the evening. They closed the business. And we ate earlier, because you know.

INT: Yeah, sure. You were little kids.

SARAH: But Friday night and Saturday, and the Jewish holiday, always together.

INT: So he would spend time with you.

SARAH: Yeah.

INT: Could you describe your mother for me, the same, how would you describe her, her personality?

SARAH: My mother was a **very, very** good-natured person. You won't find many like her. Nowhere. She really was a tzedekes. For example, when she was in the business, I was a little girl, and I used to stay a little bit. I want to stay with my mother a little bit, so I was watching her. And she was busy. We had a very busy store. Always customers. So when it came Thursday, people, in Europe, they baked themselves from the scratch, they cooked for Shabbos, everything for themselves. It's not like here. You go out, you buy, everything's ready made. In Europe, a baleboste has to bake and cook from the scratch.

So people came to our store to shop for Shabbos. So my mother knew already who's poor, who can't afford it, who can't even make Shabbos. They have no money. So in Europe the women came to the store shopping with an apron. Always an apron. That's why they have a pocket, to put in the money. And any woman came up, she knew who's poor, so she put flour, a bag of flour, and a bag of peas, and a bag of eggs, and sugar and prunes, and anything she needs for Shabbos, from her store. So she said, "Put in your apron." She didn't have a...

INT: In the pocket?

SARAH: No, not in the pocket. Like...

INT: Hold it like this? [fold up bottom of apron to hold the goods].

SARAH: Hold it. And she puts in everything in her (apron) and she said, "Go home, make Shabbos. Don't pay me."

INT: That's beautiful.

SARAH: That's what she did.

INT: Do you think she got that from her father? He was always keeping his house open for everybody?

SARAH: Yeah. Yeah. She got this from her parents.

INT: That's a beautiful story.

SARAH: Because my grandfather, it was an open house, I didn't see it nowhere, what I saw there.

INT: So she was a very kind, charitable person.

SARAH: And also I saw she gave charity, money, also I saw. I was watching her. She always gave. Gave, gave, gave. As a matter of fact, when we were in Siberia, we didn't have **ourselves** what to eat. So she knew people were starving, and are going to die from hunger, she went first to buy something for **them**, then she bought for her children. She made sure somebody else had it first. That's the way she was.

INT: Unbelievable.

SARAH: Yeah.

INT: How was she as a mother? How would you describe her as a mother?

SARAH: As a mother she was a very devoted mother. She loved her children. And she missed her children in Siberia when we were sent away. She cried. She wanted her children so much. For example, when they was bombing our city, so our house got burnt right away. And she was standing outside the store, when I was running to the store after they bombed the city, I was running to the store. I want to go to my parents, because I was a little girl, and I grabbed two little children with me, and I run. I came there. And she was standing like this [wringing her hands] "Oy, my children, my children. Where are they?" And we saw people are dead already, kids on the floor, on the ground, from the bombs, so she saw me coming, she said, "Oy, thank G-d I see you and the two little ones. Where's the rest of my children?" She cried, and it was terrible. I know that she was very...

INT: She loved you a lot.

SARAH: Oh, she loved her children terrible, yeah.

INT: But she had to work in the store?

SARAH: She has to help out, because my father, he couldn't run a business by himself. In Europe, always the husband and the wife...

INT: They worked together.

SARAH: They worked together all the time. And if they had more children, they had a maid.

INT: Would you say that it was a struggle for your parents to get food on the table for you, or do you think that they were pretty comfortable?

SARAH: They were comfortable because we had a store. Everything was in the store. Food was no problem. So anything we need, she brought home, and the maid.

INT: And she could afford to pay a maid.

SARAH: Yeah, yeah.

INT: And you lived in a house?

SARAH: We lived in our own house. As a matter of fact, we had, somebody was living, we had a big house, so he gave out one section, like two rooms to a widow with two kids. They lived in our house. Not together. It was a little apartment. So they lived in our place. We were comfortable. We were not poor. I wouldn't say rich. Because we were a big family, and you eat a lot. The expenses. But we were very comfortable because we had a business. Grocery and delicatessen, everything was in the store.

INT: Is there any particular sister or brother that you were close with?

SARAH: Yeah. I was close with one of the sisters, the one that got killed. Her name was Mala. I was **very** close with her.

INT: Which one was she? The second?

SARAH: She was the third, I was the fourth.

INT: How many years difference was there between you?

SARAH: Two years. My mother had every two years or every year and a half a child. So only two years.

INT: So you and Mala were the closest.

SARAH: The closest, yeah.

INT: What was she like?

SARAH: She, I liked her, the way she, she was like me, like myself. So we got along very good.

INT: Well, describe yourself. What were you like?

SARAH: I was very easy-going. Like she asked me something, I did it for her. I asked her something, she did it for me. She never says no, I never says no. And if it's schoolwork, or if I want to ask her something, even if she was in the middle of doing something, she left and she helped me. I mean, very easy, giving in everything, she was right away to help me. And I was...

INT: And the other sisters weren't like that?

SARAH: The other sisters were also like this, also. But if my other sisters, they was playing outside -- we all were young kids -- so if I walked up, and I said something, "Oh, I have to finish playing." Something like that.

INT: But she would drop everything.

SARAH: She would drop everything, she would do it for me.

INT: So you had some kind of keshet with her.

SARAH: Yeah, all the time. We were all the time like one person.

INT: Any other siblings you could describe for me? Your brothers?

SARAH: Well, they all were good kids, very good kids. And everybody had things to do, what they have to do, and learn what they have to learn. And we never fight. Everybody got along with each other. Keine hore, nine children, we got along. My mother taught them to be close to each other, to not to holler at each other. Be nice and kind, and to help. When she was in store, she always talked to us, "You have to, when you come back from school, you put away your things from school, and if you want to eat something, eat something, and if your sister asks you something, or your brother, help them, and watch the babies." You know, we had little ones, too." And you have to help for the maid, too, if she needs you." All this so everything should go smooth.

INT: I see. So your mother was teaching you how to be with one another, and to share and to help with the work.

SARAH: To share, to help, oh yeah.

INT: But do you think you had too much work, or too much responsibility?

SARAH: No, no. Everybody, because everybody chipped in, and we tried to make the best, and everything was nice. Nobody complained. When my parents came home from store, they always says, "Any complaints?" (laughter)

INT: Were there ever any?

SARAH: No. We tried, because we were afraid of our father a little bit.

INT: Oh, okay.

SARAH: He said, "I have a whip. I have a whip, if you're not..."

INT: Did he ever use it?

SARAH: Sometimes he did, yeah, because you have to teach the children. So anybody who did something wrong, he made a correction with the whip. (laughs)

INT: Okay. So you didn't want that to happen.

SARAH: No, we didn't want that to happen.

INT: So he was the disciplinarian.

SARAH: Oh, yeah, he was. My mother was a very soft, my mother was very soft. She never tried to do something, like hit a child, never. Just by talking.

INT: She was just teaching you by talking.

SARAH: Teaching, yeah. Just by talking.

INT: Were you a lot afraid of your father, or how would you describe...

SARAH: No, we were not afraid. We just tried not it should happen something that he should have to use that whip. (laughs) But we were not afraid. He was very good with that. Because that's normal.

INT: He didn't get angry a lot.

SARAH: No, no. Sometimes, yeah. It's normal. But he was good. In a minute, he forgot. You know.

INT: So could you describe for me your parents' marriage? How did you see their relationship when you were a kid?

SARAH: My parents' marriage, well, I don't remember the marriage. After I was born.

INT: How they acted with one another.

SARAH: They got along nicely. They were like, as I said before, cousins.

INT: Were they close in age?

SARAH: Yeah. My mother was sixteen years when she was married. **Sixteen!** And my father was eighteen.

INT: They were kids.

SARAH: Kids. Yeah. That's the way it was at that time. They were young. My mother couldn't have children for four years. Then she start to have so many, keine here.

INT: Then she had no problem.

SARAH: No problem. She used to go to rabbis, to big rabbis for a bracha. That's what I heard. She was worried, then she had blessings from big rabbis, and she start to be pregnant, and had children. But they got along nicely. She knows what to do in the store, and she knew how to help him, and he knew how to help her, and they got along very nicely.

INT: Was it an arranged marriage, or a shidduch?

SARAH: Yeah, in Europe, you had to have a shadchan. No, like...

INT: You don't fall in love.

SARAH: No. No, no, with a shadchan. In Europe the parents has to match first. For example, if a girl doesn't come from a balebatishe home, and the boy is, or the opposite way, the boy is not and the girl is, can't be a shidduch like that. Has to be the same generation, like balebatishe people. For example, my family, it was no tailor and no shoemaker. You know what I mean?

INT: Oh, I see. You had to marry from rabbis?

SARAH: Has to be the same, yeah. Otherwise, it's no shidduch. The shadchan...

INT: Why was that? They thought you wouldn't get along if you married a tailor?

SARAH: No, it was not respectable. It was not enough respect to marry off a daughter to a tailor, or to a shoemaker. To marry off a daughter, has to be a rabbis' son, or a shochet's son, or a talmud chacham himself, a yeshiva bocher. You know, himself.

INT: Someone with learning.

SARAH: With learning, yeah.

INT: And that's what your parents expected you...

SARAH: Yeah.

INT: Okay. So that was an arranged marriage. Do you ever remember any arguments between them? How do you think they handled disagreements?

SARAH: Well, they talked over between themselves. I mean, I didn't hear all the time, if they didn't have disagreements, I don't know, because I never heard like I always saw they got along nicely.

INT: You never heard arguing.

SARAH: I never, no. I never saw this.

INT: Were they affectionate with each other?

SARAH: Well, religious people are not, they do it privately. You know, love or this stuff.

INT: So because they were religious you didn't see a lot of affection.

SARAH: Because they're religious. Yeah. You don't see affection.

INT: But that doesn't mean that there wasn't affection there.

SARAH: Right. Even me and my first husband. He was a brilliant scholar. He didn't show, my children should see. He was very religious, I was religious. So the same thing.

INT: Could you describe what the town was like? Did the Jews live in one section and the non-Jews lived in a different section, or did you all live together?

SARAH: Well, in my city, where I remember, where we used to live, we lived in a religious section. Like five, six blocks away, I saw already people who were, as I said, not a shochet and not a rabbi, five, six blocks away. I saw already non-Jewish people was living there. But not in our section. They wouldn't want to have no goyim.

INT: What about non-religious Jews? Were there any non-religious Jews in the town? Or everybody was religious?

SARAH: Everybody was religious, yeah.

INT: As religious as your family was?

SARAH: No, not as religious, I wouldn't say that. But whoever has a store, has to be closed before candle lighting. Even, he was not so religious. But the store has to be closed. The religious people, the rabbi wouldn't allow to be a store, from the city, the big rabbi, he wouldn't allow a Jewish store should be open Shabbos.

INT: Okay. So there was social pressure.

SARAH: Was a pressure, yes. A man was going around and checking.

INT: Oh, make sure.

SARAH: They called him a gabbai. He was going around and checking if every store is closed. For example, if somebody was a little late for closing, he closed his store, but he had customers, he wanted to finish up with his customers, he went into the store, he said, "Close that door. It's Shabbos." And he has to close the store.

INT: So you had like a watchman there.

SARAH: Yeah. That's what it was in Europe.

INT: So you lived in the very religious section of the town.

SARAH: Yeah.

INT: And then it got a little bit mixed between Jews and non-Jews living together?

SARAH: Yeah.

INT: And then it was the non-Jews on the outside of the town?

SARAH: Yeah. The outside of the town was more, like the suburbs.

INT: They lived in farms, or something?

SARAH: Yeah. They have gardens, they have fields. They were already not Jewish. Because Jewish people didn't live there. Only goyim.

INT: So the Jews lived in the town itself.

SARAH: Yeah. In the town.

INT: But you'd run into Poles all the time because of the store, right? So you would have contact with the non-Jews.

SARAH: Yeah. We had customers, a lot of non-Jewish customers. As a matter of fact, when they bombed, as I said before, the city, our house was burned, my parents didn't have where to go to sleep over. The whole city, every house was burned. No place to go. So my parents had customers, a lot of customers from out of the city. So we went to one family, a non-Jewish family, and they allowed us to be overnight.

INT: I see. So what were the relationships like between the Jews and the non-Jews? How did you get along?

SARAH: Well, everybody tried to get along with the non-Jewish people, but some of the non-Jewish people you could see, the grownups could see, I was a little girl, so I don't remember so good about the anti-Semite stuff. So my mother and my father, let them rest in peace, they used to talk that they had sometimes trouble from non-Jewish people giving them trouble in the store.

INT: Do you remember any of those stories, what they would tell you?

SARAH: For example, one time, I remember, I was even in the store. I saw. A man came to shop, a non-Jewish man and a woman. Husband and wife. And they came to shop, and when he comes to pay, he gave, he didn't gave a fifty dollar bill, but he said he gave a fifty dollar bill. This was a twenty dollar bill. And my mother gave change from a twenty dollar bill. But it was a lucky thing. She didn't have, it was early in the morning. She didn't have change so early from a twenty dollar. So she went next door to change the twenty dollar bill. And the next door neighbor, also had a store, and she changed from him, and she came back, she gave him change from twenty dollars. I remember this, exactly.

So the man, the non-Jewish customer said, "I gave you a fifty dollar bill. You're giving me only from twenty dollars." She said, "You gave me a twenty." No. "You saw I went to the next door exchanging?" "I saw. I thought you went to exchange the fifty dollar bill." So he said, "Come with me to that store, and he's going to look at the drawer, and you'll see, if he have a fifty dollar bill, then it's yours. If he doesn't so that means that it was only a twenty dollar bill." So he went with him to the store. My mother went to the store, and he opened up the drawer, the next door businessman, and he looked, he said, "I don't have any fifty dollar bill here." So he said, "Well, I don't know what you did. I gave you a fifty dollar bill. If you're not going to give me change from fifty dollars," he made trouble, the man, you know. "You're going to be in trouble." My mother got afraid. Then my father came to the store, and he saw, he was screaming, that non-Jewish. Loud. So people was standing already listening what's going on here. So my father came and he said, "What's going on here?" He didn't know. He asked my mother. He said, "Look what are you doing to me, you're giving me trouble." "I went next door, he gave me a twenty dollar, I didn't have change, he changed me a twenty dollar bill. He wants change from fifty dollars, otherwise he's going to give me trouble." And he was really a mean, mean non-Jewish person. So my father said, "I have money with me. Give him change from fifty dollars and let him go. But don't sell him anything next time." So in the meantime, it was a problem. So my father made to lose money, because he would make trouble.

INT: But what kind of trouble would he have made?

SARAH: Who knows? He said he's going to make trouble. Who knows? Maybe he would kill her, maybe he would kill my father, maybe he would kill one child of hers. You never know.

INT: They were really afraid.

SARAH: Yeah, they were afraid.

INT: Did these kinds of things happen in your town?

SARAH: Yeah, happened.

INT: Like what?

SARAH: It happened, you heard sometimes by other people happened similar things like this in other stores. And they had problems. They did all over a little bit problems, the non-Jewish anti-Semiten. So it was really problems.

INT: Were there ever any pogroms that your parents had lived through?

SARAH: They lived through the Second World War pogroms.

INT: First World War.

SARAH: The First World War. I'm sorry.

INT: There were pogroms then?

SARAH: Yeah, they remember this.

INT: So that's why they were afraid.

SARAH: They were afraid, yeah. So they even said, "I went through a First World War, and I know what we went through, and we have to make the best we can, not to be hurt and have problems."

INT: So he gave him thirty dollars.

SARAH: Yeah he gave him, because otherwise maybe he would knock out the windows in our house in the middle of the night.

INT: Or worse.

SARAH: Who knows? But people knew that some of them...

INT: You don't mess around with the Poles.

SARAH: No. People knew already, if you have a little problem, you have to do it. Otherwise, they were looking for this.

INT: And this was before Hitler had come to power?

SARAH: Before Hitler, yeah. Before Hitler.

INT: There was anti-Semitism.

SARAH: They was talking already that something is starting. Because we saw closer to the war people have too many problems from Polish people, from goyim. Because before the war they make problems, a lot of problems.

INT: Do you remember anything as a child, aside from this incident with your parents in the store, do you remember any times, when you went to school with the Polish kids, in the Polish school, did they pick on you because you were Jewish?

SARAH: Yeah, they did. Yeah. They call names. They called names, they threw stones. Or if it was a rainy day, they have umbrellas, little Polish little kids. They grew up in a home like this. They heard parents talking, so they were mean, too. They hear this. So they used to hit children with umbrellas. And one child was bleeding from making a fight or something. It was very dangerous before the war.

INT: How did you deal with that? How did you handle that?

SARAH: It was not easy. It was not easy.

(END TAPE ONE, SIDE TWO)

(TAPE TWO, SIDE ONE)

INT: You're remembering now that it was really bad before the war. The anti-Semitism.

SARAH: Before the war, yeah.

INT: Could you tell me some of this?

SARAH: Before the war was very bad. For example, people were starting to be afraid to go at night, because we heard already, everybody heard that they start, the goyim, they start to be very mean. Some of them, not all of them. Some have been **very** good. I mean, we had customers in store, they tried to save our lives after the bombing, yeah. But some of them...

INT: So they weren't **all** anti-Semites.

SARAH: No, not **all**. No, no, no. Not everybody. Some of them. It was like a group.

INT: Do you think it had to do with their education level, the Poles? If they were more educated, they were less anti-Semitic, or...

SARAH: I don't think it has anything to do with education. They just didn't like Jewish people. They just hate us.

INT: Why do you think that is?

SARAH: I don't know. I don't know. I was young. I didn't understand. But what's going on very bad for the Jewish people. And they probably heard the Germans are going to start a war, so they start to help them. They helped a lot. So it was very scary.

INT: When you had a problem, when you were a kid, whether it was an anti-Semitic incident at school, or any kind of problem. You fell down, you hurt yourself, or anything, to whom would you go? Like if you were crying and you were upset, when you were a little child. Who would you run to?

SARAH: To my mother.

INT: To your mother, yeah?

SARAH: Sure.

INT: You'd go to the store, you'd run to the store?

SARAH: It was close, yeah. Sure. To my mother, always.

INT: And how would she be?

SARAH: Well, she was upset that I fell or I hurt myself or something. She tried to calm me down. And sometimes she would take me to a store, another store, the other side next door, and they used to have a nosh, you know. She bought me something.

INT: Buy you a little treat.

SARAH: Buy a little treat. And then I was better.

INT: Okay. So you would go to your mother usually.

SARAH: All the time.

INT: How about your sister Mala? Did you ever go to her?

SARAH: She was not home all the time. I would tell her if something happened she was near me. But if she was not near me, so I went.

INT: You'd go to Mom.

SARAH: It was not far. We lived very close from the house to the store.

INT: Could you tell me, do you remember what your earliest memory is as a child? Think back to your very earliest memory, when you were like the youngest that you can think of. Whether it was a dream, or something that happened to you when you were little. Anything, good or bad.

SARAH: (pause) Well, being grown up, as a young child, I used to be sick, all the sicknesses. The measles, the chicken pox, the mumps, all the sicknesses I went through when I went to school. And then the other kids in the family went through the same thing. The sicknesses. Was not easy. But I don't remember that I was suffering or something. I didn't suffer, because I come from a good family, and everybody was so close, and everybody tried to help. And I was a healthy child. Also my sisters and brothers were not sick kids, so it was not too much problem with sicknesses. And in school, like when I went to school, I could see my teacher was good to me, and the other school I went, my teacher was good to me. Because I was good student. So I didn't have no problems. As a matter of fact, I helped out with other kids, helping schoolwork. I liked to help out, and I did. So I didn't need no help from nobody. And I had enough food to eat, and my mother had clothes for the kids all the time, for Yom Tov and for Shabbos.

INT: It sounds like you had a pretty comfortable, happy childhood.

SARAH: Oh, yeah. That's why we were not used to suffer, at wartime was very hard. To have such a comfortable life, and here we went through so much.

INT: Is there any other things you'd like to put onto the tape, or put in this interview, about your childhood, anything else you'd like to say, that maybe I haven't asked you? Anything that you remember about your childhood, or...

SARAH: Well, that's what I said. That's what I said. That in my childhood I used to be devoted to my sisters and brothers, and I tried to help anything I could, and they did the same thing to me. And that's the way we were brought up. To be close, to listen, to help. And even to others. Not just in the family. Even in other families. Kids need anything, I was ready to help right away. I'm now the same way.

INT: So your mother taught you well, then.

SARAH: Yeah, yeah. I come from good parents, yeah. Good people. Very good people.

[Pause]

INT: This is a continuation of an interview with a survivor, Sarah Klein. It's December 14, 1994.

I just had a few questions from last time that I was thinking about. Since the last time we met. And I wanted to ask you, when your father would ask the girls to read a Yiddish paper, and talk about it around the Shabbos table, did you talk about politics at all?

SARAH: No. Never talked about politics. We talked about, he asked us to read the paper, about the news, what's going on in the city, or in the country. Or in schools. Or any kind of news. But no politics.

INT: And what about Zionism? Did you talk about Israel?

SARAH: No. He never talked about these things. He was a Hasidic Jewish person, and he was not, he didn't talk about politics. Never. Since I remember, he didn't.

INT: When you were a teenager, did you belong to any kind of Zionist youth group, or anything like that?

SARAH: Not Zionist. I did belong to Mizrachi, and Agudah. Very religious organizations, only.

INT: But did **they** talk about Israel, those groups?

SARAH: No. But we just got together and we talked about other things, but not politics. We were young. I mean, young people don't talk about politics. Just anything which fits for young, a young group of children. Because still, I was very young at that time. So we didn't understand even politics.

INT: Another question I had was, did your parents have friends that you remember, did they ever come to the house?

SARAH: Yeah, they did. They had a **lot** of friends. They were very busy. As I said before, we were, keine hora, a lot of children in the house, and business and every day was things to do, so they didn't have time for this. But Shabbos, like Saturday, after they came from synagogue, we ate, of course. We all sat at the table, and we talked about all kinds of discussions. And after this, like in an hour, or two hours later, people start to come to our house, neighbors, or even outside if it was a nice day. We had benches outside so neighbors came, and they're sitting down. And my mother was there, oleva shalom. And they always came out to spend time with neighbors and with friends. Only Shabbos. They didn't have time for this the whole week.

Sometimes the middle of the week maybe somebody came over, like my mother's sister, after she came home from store, and talked a little bit. Or maybe she went to them. Also I remember she used to go after dinner, and she said she likes to go to see her mother or her sister. Everybody lived not far away. So she used to go and visit not all the time. Maybe once a week, maybe twice a week, maybe once in two weeks. It depends, when she had just time. So she did it. She went to see her family. And they came...

INT: Did you go and play with the cousins at all?

SARAH: Yeah, we were always together. As a matter of fact, they used to eat in our house together, and I used to eat in their house together. Sometimes. But we were very close family in Europe. So we saw each other.

(Husband comes in)

HUSBAND: Welcome back.

INT: Thank you. Nice to see you.

SARAH: We saw each other often, I mean, it's no question, because we were not far from each other. And everybody was busy. Everybody went to school, like children went to school every day. It's only Shabbos and the Jewish holidays, we could see more often. And the weekdays, it was not easy. Everybody was busy. So everybody was tied up and everybody had things to do. So we couldn't afford to visit. Because the time was not too much time. Everybody had a big family in Europe. Not like here. They have here like one child, two, three children, that's all. Maybe four at the most. In Europe it was like ten, twelve, thirteen children in the house.

INT: Not too much time to do anything! (laughs)

SARAH: No! (laughs) They didn't have time.

INT: Okay. You had mentioned that your parents felt strongly that you should have an education. I mean, you went to both a Jewish religious day school, then you went to the Polish public school. Then you also, your father had the Hebrew tutor come to the house to teach the girls Hebrew. Was that coming from both your parents, that it was important for you to have an education?

SARAH: Both parents, yeah. Oh, they always wanted us to be educated. As a matter of fact, when I came to this country, and I know a lot of people in my age, and they don't know so much, I do. Because looks like my parents wanted us to know. Wanted us to learn. And that's why I know. Like I go to the synagogue, I know how to daven. I mean, I know everything what's going on for the services. Shabbos and the Jewish holidays. And I love it, because I was brought up that way.

INT: Do you know what the level of education of your father and mother was? Do you know what kind of schooling they got?

SARAH: Well, I know. I know a little bit. My father went to yeshiva when he was young. And he got married young, so...

INT: Oh, that's right. He was eighteen or something.

SARAH: He was like seventeen, eighteen. My mother was sixteen. So up to that age they went to school.

INT: Alright. I'd like to go on now to the war years, if that's okay, unless there's anything else you'd like to add. Okay. There's something you'd like to add about your grandfather?

SARAH: Yeah. I'd like to say, because my grandfather was such a...a very good-hearted person. And I can say that he was a remarkable individual who touched all mankind with his goodness. And everybody remembers him. I remember when he passed away, it's a true thing. I was a little girl. And every woman who was pregnant at that time, they named, if it was born a boy, they named after his name for their children. Because was an honor for them. And also, when his funeral was, I remember everybody closed their store. And everybody went to the funeral. He was a **very, very** highly, very loved and respected in the city.

INT: He did a lot of good for people.

SARAH: He did a lot of good. Yeah, yeah.

INT: Alright. Could you tell me how old you were and what happened when the war came to your town?

SARAH: This was in October, 1939. We knew already, even the grown-ups and the little ones were talking already, it's going to be a war, because it was in the papers sometimes, and the Germans, they made trouble already before the war in the city. When came to a market day, like Thursday was the biggest market day in our city. So they used to send Ukraine, you know the Ukrainian people, and the Polish people? The non-Jewish people? They used to teach them how to make trouble for the Jewish business people who have stores.

INT: What year was this? Was this before '39?

SARAH: This was before '39. That's why the people, that's why we knew that it's going to be a war. Because was very bad.

INT: Ukrainians lived near you?

SARAH: Not near. Not near. They lived like in the suburbs. But they came. They came. They have wagons and horses, and they came. They didn't have cars. They didn't have cars. They came with the horses and wagons. And they made trouble.

INT: What would they do?

SARAH: What they did. They, they wouldn't let customers to come to the store. People shouldn't buy, shouldn't, they should go to different places, not to Jewish stores. They told them to go to their own stores. And like, when they saw customers near the store, coming into the Jewish store, they told them quietly, "Don't buy here. I'll show you a place that's not so expensive." Like their own stores. And they used to make fights for any, and I was a little girl. I don't know exactly. I could see from far, I remember, was a gathering from people. It was a fight in a store between a Jewish owner from a store, and a Ukrainian man, a non-Jewish man. And he gave them trouble. The reason, what happened, I don't know exactly. But I remember it was an argument, and police came, and it was very bad. For nothing, they did it. I mean, just to make trouble. And this happened close to the war. Close. It was close to the war. These things happened **all** the time. Like maybe two months before the war, it was terrible.

So some people even left the city. They went to Israel. They knew what's going to be. They went to Israel. They went to the United States. And not everybody could do that. Whoever had a bigger family, they couldn't get them, get the families together and run away. So they stayed. But who was a small family, or single, they left.

INT: Was this talked about in your house, between your parents, and with the kids?

SARAH: Yeah. My father used to say, "Look. This one left." Like, he knew, he mentioned the name. And people are leaving. I remember across the street a girl went with me to the school across the street. And all of a sudden she said to me, "We're going to move to Israel." I said, "Why?" She said, "Because we have trouble, and the business. We have no peace here. All the anti-Semite people, they're giving us trouble, and it's going to be a war anyway." Because their parents was talking about it. So we better get together and leave before the war comes. So they left. I remember this.

INT: Did your father talk to you about it?

SARAH: He talked about what happened, what's going on. But he couldn't run away, because business and children, and families. I mean, we have a family from over 100 people right around us. In Europe, people didn't run away so fast from families. We want to be together. So that's why we stayed.

INT: And you were in high school by then, right? You must have been in high school.

SARAH: No. I have to enter high school at that time. That bookkeeping school.

INT: That was high school.

SARAH: This was high school, but this was a special school just for bookkeeping. So I'm supposed to go to this school, but I didn't, because the war came, and my education, I lost my education because of that.

INT: What town was that school in?

SARAH: This was in Lodz. That's a different city.

INT: So how old were you in 1939, when the war came?

SARAH: Sixteen years.

INT: Okay. Could you tell me what happened?

SARAH: Oh, what happened is, you mean the day?

INT: How it started, yeah.

SARAH: How it started. I remember, it was on a Thursday, the biggest market day in the week. It was always Thursday. People came from all over, shop and sell, and it was crowded that day. And the Germans probably picked that day. They can hit more people, you know, kill more people. And everybody's busy, so they didn't think, you know, that they have to think about hiding themselves. Because everybody was so busy.

And I remember when I came back from school, so in the house was my younger sister and younger brother. And I have to take care of them. So I went to the backyard and play with them. And the maid was in the house. We had a maid, because keine hora, nine children. I mean, it was thirteen, but four passed away. So I went outside with the two kids, young little kids, and playing with them with other kids, and other grown-ups were playing with their kids. So we was watching the kids. They were very small children. So all of a sudden, the children realized that a lot of little birds are coming up on the sky. This was airplanes, but you couldn't even recognize it's airplanes. The kids were so happy. They said, "Look, look, look! Little birds on the sky! Little birds!" Everybody looked up, and I myself looked up, and I didn't believe it's the airplanes, so tiny like birds. They looked up, and all of a sudden, they came down to the roofs, and we saw that it's airplanes already. And everybody said, 'Oh, no, it's airplanes,' and they start to bomb the city. Bombing like crazy. And our house was, the first bomb went into our house. Our house started to burn, and it was burnt, the whole house. The whole area, I mean, our house too.

So people start to run. We was running, so I took the two kids, and I was running to the store. I said, "I'm going to go to my mother, my parents." I came to the store, the store was open, wide open, and I didn't see a soul in that area. It was a big shopping center. Everybody was running away already, because they saw the same thing. So I didn't see my mother, I didn't see my father, and I cried, and while we was running, I saw dead

people laying already from the bombs, and children. We were stepping on them. And I thought: My goodness. Pretty soon maybe it's going to happen to us. But I run where the crowd was running. So everybody run to the cemetery. Because they didn't bomb the cemetery. Only the houses. So everybody was running in that direction. And I came there with the two kids.

When I came there, we was, it was daytime. We was laying there on the stones, hiding, you know, behind the stones, on the graves. Until it got dark. When it became dark, everybody wanted to go back home, and I want to go back to my parents, because I knew the house is not there anymore. So I tried to walk home, and from far I saw my mother standing outside. She was pregnant at that time, and she was doing like this (wringing her hands) with her hands, and crying. She said, "Oh, where are my children? **Where are my children?** I don't have no children. Where are they?" And I heard this screaming and crying. When I came closer, and she saw me and the two little kids, she was so happy. She said, "Oy. Thank G-d, I have you. I wish the rest of my children would come." And it took like two hours, it was really dark, the rest of the kids came. Everybody was on different...

INT: Everybody was okay.

SARAH: In a different direction.

INT: Where was your father?

SARAH: He was there, too. He was near her. But my mother, a mother is always crying right away. So then we stood all together, and the Germans we didn't see anymore. All the bombs, and the dead people, everything was left. Everything was **very** sad. The smoke, and the houses burned, and everybody is going, whoever was left, was living, was crying, didn't know where to go, and we didn't know where to go.

INT: All the houses, or most of the houses...

SARAH: **All** the houses got burned. They knocked down so many bombs. As a matter of fact, they was talking, I didn't see, but they was talking, they threw down lollipops with poison that the kids, if they see a lollipop, they would grab it and eat. They'd die. And that's what happened. I saw a lot of kids were laying dead. But I don't know if it's from the lollipops, or just from the bomb. But they said they threw lollipops special for kids, with poison, that they should, you know, pick up a lollipop and eat and die. And that will happen. So, and I wouldn't let my sister and brother pick up anything from the floor. I just was running with them, and that's it.

So alright, when we got together, my parents was thinking, "Where can we go?"

INT: Your house was just nothing left.

SARAH: Nothing. Nothing left. Everything. So my parents was thinking, we had a lot of customers. They bought from our store, and they didn't pay right away. They were poor, they didn't pay right away. They said "We'll pay later." So my parents always gave them with no money, and whenever the time came, they had money, they would bring to the store, and shop again. But at that time, they remember a customer, far away in the suburbs from us, that we could go to this family, non-Jewish family, and sleep over.

So we went. We walked over. It was not such a good walking distance, but we, nobody could take us. So we walked. And we came. They accepted us. They told us, "Come, we'll let you sleep over, and we're going to give you food, and don't worry, we'll take care of you." So we slept over. They were very good to us. They even said, "I remember you were good to us when we came to the store, anytime you said: 'You can buy anything you wanted, if you don't have money, you pay us later. Don't worry about it.'" So they did remember these things. So they let us sleep over.

And in the morning, my mother, let her rest in peace, said, she's going to go to the store. She didn't know that they loaded out the merchandise from the stores, the Germans. So in the morning, she wanted to go to the store. So I said to my mother, "I'll go with you. You're not going to go by yourself." She was pregnant, and I was afraid.

So I went with her, and we walked over, and came to the store. We came closer, we saw a **lot** of trucks, German trucks, near every store, loading out the merchandise from every store. Cleaning out. And when we came, our store was almost cleaned out, too. So my mother walked up to one of the Germans who was in our store, and said to him, "This is my store. Please, I have little children. Please, can I take something for my children?" She know already she can't take. She have to ask him first permission. "Can I have something? A little bit sugar, a little bit anything, just for my kids. They're hungry." So he raised his leg near her stomach like this, and he said, "If you're not going to leave this place, I'm going to kick you in your stomach, and you're going to lose the baby." And I saw this. I start to cry, and my mother start to cry, and I shlepped my mother away, and I said, "Please, Mother, let's go. They're going to kill us. Let's go." So we walked away. But she was so hysterical. She said, "My store. My merchandise, and he wants to kill me." So we walked away. We walked back. We were afraid even to walk in the street at that time, because you never know.

INT: German soldiers were all over?

SARAH: Yeah, all over. All over. But we walked. What can you do? We walked.

So we came back, and the people who, we stayed there, the people from the house, they said, "Don't worry. Your children will have something to eat. We'll give them." But my mother said, "I just went to bring you more stuff to the house, because I have merchandise in the store. I didn't know I won't be able to get it." We went, and she couldn't get anything. So we came back. And we stayed with them. And we stayed with them. And then we stayed for a long time, because at that time, right away, like in two, three days, the Germans went out from the city, the Russians came in.

INT: Why did the Russians come in? What happened?

SARAH: The Russians came in. Half Poland took over Russians, and half Poland took over Germans.

INT: And you were in the east side, right?

SARAH: Yeah. So somehow the Russians came in. So when the Russians came in, so they didn't stay long. They switched, you know, back and forth, back and forth. It was not such a long time. I mean, they didn't stay too long. They looked around and they left. And then they came back. That's what they did for a short time.

So when the Russians came, so we stayed longer. And then we heard the Germans coming back. When the Germans came back, so my father rented a horse and buggy with a non-Jewish man who owned it, and he told him he should take us to a city where the Russians are. We don't want to stay with the Germans, because they was killing constantly. So we went there.

INT: They were killing people in the town?

SARAH: In our city.

INT: They were.

SARAH: Yeah. Oh, yeah. They killed. Yeah. So we went and we came to, the name from the city is Rava-Ruska.

INT: Could you spell that?

SARAH: R-a-v-a, it's one word, and Ruska is R-u-s-k-a.

INT: Now where's that? In Poland, still?

SARAH: This is between Lwow and Tomaszow, Lubelski, where we were, our city. It's in between. The Russians were there. So we came to Rava-Ruska, and we stayed there for maybe three months.

INT: Where?

SARAH: In Rava-Ruska.

INT: But where did you stay?

SARAH: Well, my parents got an apartment.

INT: They had money, they still had money?

SARAH: They probably had a little bit money somewhere, I don't know. But I was young, I didn't ask. But then my father start to have a stand. I don't know how he did it. A stand, and he sold merchandise, like all kinds of merchandise, that he should make a couple dollars for the family. And my mother was pregnant at that time, and she was supposed to go to the hospital and deliver the baby. So was very hard. And here, he needs money. I mean, you know, the family, with the pregnant wife. It was very hard.

So we was there in Rava-Ruska, and then in one night, in one day, in one night, middle of the night, the Russians came to every door and asked whoever was running away from their city, like we run away. Other people running from the other cities. Everybody came to the Russian Zone, because it was more quiet. So they asked my parents, "If you want to be a citizen, a Russian citizen, we'll let you stay here. Because we're going to be here. And if you don't want to be a Russian citizen, we'll take you away a hundred miles from here. Because if you don't want to be Russian, so you have to leave."

INT: That was the choice they had.

SARAH: You had a choice. So my parents didn't want to be a Russian citizen. My parents said, "We're only going to stay here till the war stopped, and we'll go back home. Because we still have a store. I mean, no merchandise, but still something, you know. So my parents thought that we're going to go back. Nobody knew it's going to take five years, the war. They thought, you know, like after the war, whoever, it's a short time, you go back to our city. We used to our city. Everybody was born there and lived there, so they want to go back to home. But it didn't happen that way. They took us away. And they said a hundred miles, but this was not true. They took us away. We were on the train, on the cattle train. They put us in cattle train with no belongings, nothing. They put us in cattle trains, the Russians, and took us to Siberia.

INT: When was this?

(END TAPE TWO, SIDE ONE)

(TAPE TWO, SIDE TWO)

INT: Was this winter time, or...

SARAH: It was almost winter time, yeah.

INT: And your mother was still pregnant? Did she have the baby yet?

SARAH: Oh, I forgot. I forgot to tell you. She had the baby.

INT: In Rava-Ruska?

SARAH: In Lemberg, in Lwow. Yeah, I skipped that.

INT: So tell me what happened.

SARAH: I'm sorry I skipped that. Before we went to Russia, she had the baby in Lwow.

INT: In a hospital?

SARAH: In a hospital. She had an infant, going to Siberia with an infant. She had a baby, and right when she came home with the baby, they took us away to Siberia.

INT: Was it a boy or a girl?

SARAH: A girl. She's in New York. She's living. She's living.

INT: Oh, okay.

SARAH: Yeah, she's living. It's a miracle.

INT: Yeah.

SARAH: So when they took us to Siberia, we didn't know to Siberia. When we saw even they dropped us off, three months we were in the cattle trains. And everybody couldn't...

INT: Three **months**?

SARAH: Three months we traveled. Three months, yeah. From Rava-Ruska to Siberia.

INT: With a lot of other people?

SARAH: With a lot of other people. They didn't gave us to eat. They gave us a little bit, you know, like they stopped. They made stops. They gave us something, a little bit, just, everybody was hungry. It was not enough. So people was crying while we was in the cattle train, and knocking at the little window, was a little window, whoever is standing there in the window. And people were outside, like when we stopped at a station, we saw people. So people was screaming out: "Please throw in something, a loaf of bread, or an apple, or an orange, or anything. The kids are dying from hunger, and we are hungry. We have to feed the children. We don't have anything." So people did. They threw in. They threw in a loaf of bread, or a couple oranges.

INT: These people on the cattle trains, cattle cars, were they all Jewish people?

SARAH: Jewish people. All Jewish people. We, in our section was only Jewish people, in that ...

INT: Did any relatives go with you from the town?

SARAH: Well, only our family, but two of our sisters, one, the married one, Tema, I told you? She was not with us, and Mala was not with us.

INT: What happened to Tema?

SARAH: To Tema, she was married. I told you. She married a year before the war, and she was living in Lwow with her husband, had a child. So when the war broke out, she was in her city. We were in Tomaszow, Lubelski. And Mala went back. When we were in Rawa-Ruska, they were still there, she went back to our city to get the rest of the family. Like my mother's sister, and her family. They still was living. But they didn't left like we left. So she went to them, we should be together.

INT: Why was she chosen to go, do you know?

SARAH: She was a very smart girl. She could take care of a lot of things. Even in the business, when we had the business before the war? She was very smart. She was a very...she knew how to run business, too. She was young. She was two years older than me.

INT: But she was still very young.

SARAH: She was still young. But she was something. Like everybody was wondering. She was like, like a genius. So that's why she went back. And to get the rest of the family, that we should be together. We want to be together, you know, in Europe, the family want to be together. So my parents let her go. She went, with another cousin. And she went there, and soon as she went there, in a couple days later, the Germans wouldn't let nobody go back, you know, was...

INT: You couldn't leave the city.

SARAH: No, couldn't leave. She stayed with them. That's why she's killed. She was with them. (sighs)

So when my younger little sister was born, so she was in that cattle train, and my mother didn't have enough, she had to drink milk to give her, to breast-feeding. And she gave her the breast, but an empty breast. She gave her when she was crying. So the little, my little sister was fainting. Several times a day. From hunger. All she had to give her was an empty breast. She was fainting, nebbish. So somebody had a little bit water, or a little bit something, so they gave her just to quiet her down. But she didn't have nothing. She couldn't feed her. She didn't have nothing. So she brought to Siberia a little infant. So she went through a lot. We went through a lot till we came.

INT: Could you tell me what it was like in that cattle car? Did people talk to each other? How did they, how did you get through that?

SARAH: It was very hard.

INT: Did you know where you were going?

SARAH: We didn't know. That's the whole thing. They told us a hundred miles to save our lives from the Germans. But it was not true. They lied to us, the Russians. Because they didn't took us a hundred miles. They took us, who knows how many miles? I don't know why it took so long. Three months. It took very long. I don't know why. But we had stops. Stop, stop, stop, all the time.

INT: Were you able to get off?

SARAH: Yeah, we were able to get off a little, and then we went back. But people was standing, they didn't have a place to lay down. So we was standing and sleeping like this.

INT: For three months?

SARAH: Yeah, was suffering. Was suffering.

INT: Did you have warm enough clothing with you?

SARAH: They didn't let us take nothing, only what we can put on ourselves. No belongings at all. But my parents, they took something, because the little baby, they took a pillow, they took a blanket, you know, because a little baby. They let her take, because of the baby. Whoever didn't have a baby, they couldn't take nothing. So she took something. At the same time she took also like a couple sheets, you know, like a couple pillow cases, in a bag, she squeezed it, she said this is for the baby. She has to have it. They let her.

So when we came to Siberia, all we saw is a forest, and a big military barrack. No houses. And a lot of snow. Was winter already there. So when we came, everybody was crying. What are we going to do here? Nobody's used to such a life. No people, no houses, just a barracks. They let us down. They said, "Don't talk, just go in this place." So everybody was afraid. We didn't know what was going to be with us. So they let us down, like eight, nine families in one big room. And one little, it was not like a gas range like here. It was on fire, you know? You put wood, and burn.

INT: Right. Wood-burning stove.

SARAH: Yeah. So everybody was with little kids, and everybody was, so upset, and everybody was so depressed, and it was a terrible, terrible thing to go through. So they did theirs. They let us down, and they tell us, "This is your corner, and this is your corner." The families. Corners. Everybody had a corner, and that's it. And one bed was four, five people. Like a military bed. And the kids the same thing. The kids, and the five, six kids in a bed. That's the way we lived. So you couldn't do anything about it.

And somebody came to count us. They knew people are going to run away from this. Nobody wants to, like grown-ups, they don't want to live like this. So they count the people three times a day. And they said, if they're going to find somebody run away, he's going to be in jail, or they'll kill him. So everybody was afraid to run away. They was thinking to run away, but they didn't, because we were under control. Why they did it, we don't know.

So then we found out they need people to cut trees, and to make wood, and to ship over for the cities, they should have enough wood for the city to make warm in the house. To heat. So that's what they did with us. I had to cut trees, my sister had to cut trees, my father has to. They gave us a saw, and an ax, and we have to go to the forest for the whole day, and do this. Cut trees. So I used to go so deep in snow.

INT: Up to your waist.

SARAH: Up to my waist, yeah. And my sister, the same thing, my father, and we left the little kids with my poor mother, with no food, and a cold barrack, and we have to go to work. So we went every day to work. And they didn't pay us. They gave us just like three times a day a piece of bread, it was like glue, dark bread, and a little bit soup, and this we have to have for the whole day, like breakfast, lunch, dinner, that's it. And then, in a little while later, they gave out cards. They opened up a little store, and they gave us cards, because nobody had money. And with the cards you can go to the store and buy anything, take anything we wanted. But the cards were so little, I mean, you can pick up so little for the card, that it was not enough, either. But it was something more. So that's the way you lived.

So we was going on this way like this, and then, as I said before, my mother took with her a couple blankets, and a couple sheets. So I, me and my sister, you know the oldest, we went, we walked, we sneaked out from the house, because they counted people. Right after they counted people, me and my sister went to look to exchange the sheets, or a blanket, or a pillow case, for potatoes, or for carrots, or vegetables. Maybe they was selling frozen milk. You know? You never saw milk like in the bottles. Just always frozen in the market. They freeze the milk, and that's how they sell. It was very cold there.

INT: Yeah. Which sister was this that you went with?

SARAH: Etle. She is in New York. She is in New York now. So I went with her, deep snow. One time I walked with her and the snow, was a big hole, and the snow was covering the hole, and I didn't see it's a hole, so I got into this grave. It's like a hole, a grave. And I couldn't get out. I'm deep down. So my sister said, "Oy, my goodness!" Nobody's around us. We just wanted to go and get some potatoes from people who lived far away from that area, and we can bring home. And here I can't get out. And here the snow is so blowing, like you couldn't see anything. So, and I, the snow almost got me, you know, covered with, you know, myself.

INT: And there's nobody around.

SARAH: Nobody around, nobody around, no. So somehow, G-d helped me. I put my hands and she schlepped me, you know, and I tried with my legs also, a little. You know, I tried, fast, hard, I should get out. And it took her almost an hour. I got out. When I got out, we walk again. We went again and we make sure no holes. It's hard to judge even. (brief background noise)

INT: What was the hole from, do you know?

SARAH: I don't know. Maybe they cut a tree in that place, and the roots was taken out. Who knows? It was forest, you know.

INT: But you couldn't tell, because you were walking in the snow.

SARAH: No, you couldn't tell. Finally, finally we came. We saw from far, we saw little houses. Finally. So we knew we can go to them houses and ask if they have potatoes to exchange for this. They liked that. Some housewives liked that, because they were poor. They didn't have no sheets, no blankets. They had potatoes. They have gardens, so they have it for the winter. So they had a whole basement with beets and potatoes and carrots prepared for the winter. So if, like I came in, and my sister, and we told them that we would like to exchange. We're hungry. We have little kids at home. So they liked that. They liked to have a blanket, or a sheet, or a towel. And they gave us two buckets of potatoes. Or maybe sometimes a bucket potatoes, a bucket beets, or carrots. And this was a blessing. Because when we came home, my mother made a soup, vegetable soup, and this was good. So we tried to live that way.

INT: And you didn't get caught coming home. The Russians didn't catch you.

SARAH: No, no, no. We tried to come home in time. We left right after he count us. We have to do that, because otherwise, people died from hunger. If we wouldn't do that, we wouldn't come alive, home. We would die, too. Especially the little ones. So...

INT: What year was this?

SARAH: This was 1941. 1940 they took us. 1941 we started to look for how can we survive, you know.

INT: Were people dying at this point, from hunger?

SARAH: Yeah, oh yeah. From cold, from the cold weather, and from hunger. A **lot** of people didn't came back. But thank G-d, we came back, because I tried. We have something to give them, and they gave us food. So we tried to survive a little. But it was very bad. It was not easy.

One time, when I went to work, and my father and my sister, only three of us. The other ones were little, young. Nobody could do it. So my mother was with the kids. So one time we came home, and we saw my mother and the little kids are very sick. Laying, like unconscious. So my mother talked, but she was like in a shock. So we asked her what happened. She said what happened is, she didn't have no food for the kids. She didn't know what to do. So a neighbor from our people got somewhere white horseradish. So she gave it to her, and she said, you can put it, you bake the horseradish so the bitter stuff will come out, and give, and eat and give the kids to eat. At least they have something. So she did that. She did that, so everybody got sick from it. How can you eat horseradish alone? White horseradish? But they ate, they were hungry. So everybody was sick. So when we came back, we was, we had a doctor there, too. Whoever needs a doctor. So they gave us a doctor. So my father called the doctor right away. And everybody was throwing up. So we cried, and we didn't know what to do, but somehow they were rushed to the hospital, and they was in the hospital like more than a week, to pump out, you know, the horseradish from the stomach. And they got better. And this was also a blessing, because in the hospital they gave them a little food, they ate a little bit.

INT: They could get stronger.

SARAH: A little. They came to themselves. But they didn't take you to hospital, only if you're very sick. They never take you to the hospital.

INT: What about the baby?

SARAH: The baby was, somehow a neighbor, also went to get some food, from somewhere. Because everybody went to a different direction to ask for food to their people. It was not close, you had to walk far to get something. So somebody saw that here is a little baby, an infant. So she got some, she had a woman, we gave her milk, frozen. Frozen milk. So she brought the frozen milk to my mother, let her rest in peace, and she tried to keep, just for the baby. And she add water to it. A lot of water.

INT: To make it last.

SARAH: She should have more. And it was cold outside, so she was not afraid it's gonna get spoiled. So she kept the milk outside, on the snow, overnight. She covered it with snow, and every day she took in a little bit. She gave the baby. But the baby still fainted. A lot of times, she was fainting. I saw her eyes was, I didn't saw the black circles. Only white. She was fainting. But she's living. She has seven children. It's a miracle. It's a miracle.

INT: How were people getting through this, do you think? How did you help each other?

SARAH: I don't know. People died. A lot of people died. I don't know. We were lucky. I don't know how we got out from there alive. We always thought that we're not going to make it.

INT: But emotionally, I mean...

SARAH: Emotionally, it was very bad. Emotionally, everybody looked depressed, and crying, and worry. And how are we going to take this? Everybody talked. And we're never going to get out from here. What's going to be? We're all going to die here. That's the kind. Everybody had this in their mind.

INT: Were people giving up, do you think?

SARAH: Yeah, people wanted to die. Yeah.

INT: What about your family?

SARAH: My family, my mother was very, my father too. I mean, he kept on going to work. They want him to work, so he worked, and that's what he has to do the whole day. But it was very bad. He had to go to work, or otherwise they put you in jail. If you're not sick, you have to work. So my mother was very heart-broken. First of all, she was crying. She don't have the two children. Like, Tema and Mala, and her husband and the baby. And then her mother, and her sister, and the whole family, like I told you.

INT: And you didn't know where they were, or what happened to them.

SARAH: Nobody knew, and she kept on crying. What's going to be from this? Look, I'm here, and I don't know where they are. And I don't have my children. And she cried and cried and cried. She got sick. She became a very, stomach, a bad stomach from this. **Very** bad stomach. It was no choice. G-d gave a little strength, looks like, and we, but she died. She died as soon as we came back from Russia. Because she said, "I didn't find my two children, and I don't want to live." You know, the two, the other ones. And she died. 1946. We got out 1945, and she said she thought, she lived with the hope that she's going to find them somewhere in Europe, in Poland, but when we came, somebody told her, told my parents that my sisters all, both are dead.

One of my sisters, Mala, was hiding by a Polish customer. As I said, he shopped from us.

INT: The same one that took you in?

SARAH: No, a different one. A different one, yeah. And somebody who was at a neighbor's house, and he saw when she was hiding at this place, the Germans put out signs: "Whoever knows where a Jewish child or a Jewish person, grown-up, or younger, is hiding in a non-Jewish home, if they gonna tell us, you're going to have a big reward." So a little boy told that my sister is Jewish, and they killed her right on the ground when she was with the cows, you know, taking care of their cows. Outside with a little whip

she was holding. And she wearing an apron, and a scarf, like a little non-Jewish girl. But nobody knew she's Jewish, but this little boy said that he knows that she's Jewish, and they killed her.

INT: They shot her?

SARAH: They shot her. Right on the field. Right on the field. Standing with the cows.

INT: How many years was she hiding before that happened?

SARAH: She was hiding since 1940 till almost the end of the war. Almost 1945.

INT: She almost made it to the end of the war.

SARAH: She almost made it, yeah. Yeah. They shot her. And my older sister, somebody telled my parents, that she was in Lwow. They saw her running around with a little baby. She had a little baby. Running around hiding in hiding places, from one hiding place to another, because the Germans was looking also for Jews. And she was running to be saved, but it didn't help. They shot her. They found her and they shot her.

INT: And the baby?

SARAH: The baby, too.

INT: What about her husband, do you know?

SARAH: Her husband, they were not together. They took him to the army. They took him to the army. So she didn't know where he is.

INT: Did you ever find him?

SARAH: No, never, never. We don't know where he is. How he got dead. We don't know. But my sister was running around with the baby, and people saw. Crying and running around. They said her hair were not combed. They told us she looked so hysterical, just looking for a hiding place. And they shot her. That's what they told, somebody told us who was living through the war in Lwow. Somebody was living through, and they knew exactly where she was, and they saw her several times, and they knew what happened to her. So they told us both sisters. And the other family from my city, they were killed. (pause)

Well, we found out that she tried to hide herself with the baby, and it looks like she couldn't be saved. They killed her. So my mother, when we came back, my mother was crying that she found out that they're dead. So she cried and cried and she didn't want to eat, because she was missing them. And she lost her appetite. She lost her, you know, she didn't feel like to...

INT: She was very depressed.

SARAH: To live without them. And she knew she had more children, that she had to live for them, but she couldn't help it. She missed them so much. She was living with the hope, when we come back from Russia, she'll find them. But when we came back, she found out that they're dead. So that's why she took it very strongly, and then she got sick.

INT: Do you think that's what helped her get through Siberia? The holding on for her other children?

SARAH: Yeah, yeah. Looks like. Yeah, she was hoping that she's going to find her children. Not just her children, her mother was still living at that time, and her sisters and brothers, and their children, and the whole family. Everybody's dead.

INT: What happened to them, the ones who were in the town?

SARAH: They were killed from the Germans. As a matter of fact, when we came back, we found out that one of my uncles was a shochet. You know what shochet means. So we found out that the Germans found out that he was a shochet, and he always had to have his halaf in his pocket, you know, that knife you killed the chickens?

INT: Special knife, yeah.

SARAH: Special knife. He had it with him, because he thought, whoever keeps kosher, so he'll do a favor. When they buy a chicken, so he's going to do it for free the kosher way. So he always had that special knife with him. So the Germans find out. Nobody knows how they found out. But it looks like somebody went to the Germans and told that he have that special knife. So you know what they did to him? They took him, he had a beard, a nice beard. He was a very nice, handsome person. And they put, this was wintertime. They put him on a sled. This is true, because people saw them doing it. They put him on a sled, and they was, they gave him a ride around the city, in Tomaszuw, Lubelski, he still was there. Because they didn't run away. As I told you before, my sister wanted to get them, but she herself couldn't get out.

So they put him on a sled, and they took the special knife out from his pocket, and they said to him, "Now you're going to see how good is to kill a chicken. Now we're going to kill you with your own knife." So they start to cut pieces from him when he was alive. They cut pieces. (sighs) When we came back, somebody was there and told us. And my mother heard this, too, you know. And they cut pieces from him, and they told him, "See? Now you're going to feel this pain, how the chicken had pain." Until he died. They were shlepping him around and around to the whole city, shlepping him and cutting. Cut off one leg, one hand, another hand, another leg, anything from the body cut with his knife, till he died. That's what they did to him. And he...and then they cut off his beard, you know, his peyos.

INT: Was this your mother's brother?

SARAH: It's my mother's sister's husband. My mother's sister. It was a lovely sister. They were so close together. As I said, Saturday they used to come always together. Either she went to them, or they come to her. And he was **such a nice** man, such a handsome, a brilliant scholar. You have to know the law. He was a shochet. In Europe, in Europe you have to know, like an educated rabbi. He was very learned, but that's what they did to him. And we found out this, too. And to hear so much stories like this, I mean, how can a person, you don't live long. That's what happened to him.

INT: What was his name?

SARAH: Baruch. Horowitz. Baruch Horowitz. Yeah. And they have nine children.

INT: And what happened to all of them?

SARAH: Killed.

INT: They put them in a camp, or...

SARAH: They killed them. They were killed. We were in Siberia at that time, so we don't know. But they all were killed, and especially him, they wouldn't kill him. They want to kill him **this** way. Special him. The whole family was killed.

INT: When you were (controlling tears)...when you were in Siberia, how do you think you had the strength to get through that?

SARAH: I didn't have the strength. I had to go on, because they made us, I was a strong girl. I mean, we were strong kids, because we were not poor at home. We ate good, you know, we had good meals. So we had a little strength in our body.

So I remember one time when we went out on a cold, breezy, cold weather, to cut the trees. So my sister said to me, after awhile we was cutting, so she said to me, "I think you have frozen cheeks." She said to me. I said, "Frozen cheeks? How did you know?" She said, "Because I see it's white circles. Two white circles." She said, "Touch your cheek. If you feel it, then it's not frozen. If you don't feel, it's frozen." And I tried, and it was numb. I didn't feel. But I felt something is chipping, you know, and it got frozen, and it was chipping. But I thought it's cold outside (background noise) so that's what it is. She said, "Go in the side, and rub with snow. And rub, rub, rub so long, until the blood is going to come back, and the frozen is going to disappear." So I went in the side, and I was rubbing, rubbing, rubbing, rubbing.

And a man was watching all the people who was working, watching if people are working or just standing. So he saw from far that I'm not doing my work, I'm standing. He didn't know I'm rubbing my cheeks. He didn't saw me working. He comes over fast, and he gave me like a smash in my back, I don't remember where. Here in the back. He

said, "I'm watching you. You don't work," he said. "I'm going to put you in jail. I don't see you working." I said, "Officer, I have frozen cheeks. My sister told me that I have frozen cheeks. I have to rub with snow. That's what I'm doing. And she can't work without me. We have to saw together." You know that...

INT: One on each side.

SARAH: One on each side. She was standing watching, waiting for me. He said, "You both don't work." And he smacked me, and smacked her, too. So I show him, and he said, and I was rubbing, rubbing, I didn't know, I didn't feel, was deep, deep frozen, so I made two big holes. I rubbed off the skin and everything. And he said to me, "Oh, my goodness." He saw my face. He said, "Oh my goodness. You have two big holes. It's never going to heal. And you're never going to get married." What kind of talk is this? I said, "Do I ask for marriage?" He wanted to make me, you know, cry or make me...

INT: Make you upset.

SARAH: Make me upset. I said, "Take me to the hospital." I didn't feel that I have two holes, with my gloves, you know, and rubbing, rubbing.

INT: You were so numb, yeah.

SARAH: So he took me to the hospital, and I came to the hospital, and the doctor said to me, he also was such a mean person, to Jewish people. Even in Russia they were not so good to Jewish people.

(END TAPE TWO, SIDE TWO)

(TAPE THREE, SIDE ONE)

INT: Okay. So you were in the hospital. He took you to the hospital.

SARAH: He took me to the hospital. And the doctor said the same thing. "Well, you have two big holes. I'll give you a cream. You have to put on the cream three times a day, and don't go out. And I'm sorry I have to tell you, the holes never grew back. Gonna grow back. Because this is something that's too deep." I was, look like, lucky. And look. Nothing shows, right?

INT: Yeah.

SARAH: Yeah. Nothing shows. And he said, "You have to stay home, so long, it's just gonna heal. But you're going to have two holes. But it has to heal, because it's raw inside." You know the skin, and the blood and everything. So he gave me a cream, and thank G-d, I was the whole winter in the house. I couldn't go out. I mean, because the weather. And it grew back, and grew back nicely, so I came back for the last visit, because everything was almost, almost healed. So he said to me, "You know what? You

are one in a million. You were **lucky** that your face is back to normal." I said, "Thank G-d. G-d helped me."

INT: So you were able to stay for that winter in the house, in the barracks.

SARAH: Yeah, yeah. So, and my parents, the whole family, everybody who was there, went through a hell. I mean, it was not easy to pull through, to be in Siberia.

INT: Could you tell me some more stories about, anything else that you remember about that time?

SARAH: In Siberia? Yeah. Well, we were, at that time we were two years, when I had this.

INT: When that happened with your cheeks.

SARAH: But we were in Siberia **five** years. Not two years. So in 1942. This was from 1940 to 1942. We went through a hell, as I told you. How we lived, how poor, and nobody had food, and people died from hunger, from cold. And a lot of people run away. They didn't care what's going to happen to them. They didn't want to stay. And a lot of people they didn't have food when it was summertime, so they didn't have, so they went out to the forest to collect berries, or strawberries. They had places where you could find this. So they never came back, because the white bears ate them up. They never came back. I used to go myself with my little sister, but I went not so deep. Because I could see from far the white bears are going around.

INT: White bears?

SARAH: White bears, yeah. In Siberia, you see white bears.

INT: Oh. Like polar bears?

SARAH: Yeah. The white, the **bad** ones. The bad ones. So people went too deep, because over there was a lot of strawberries, and blueberries.

INT: Just growing wild.

SARAH: And mushrooms. Yeah. Because they want food. They were looking for food. So they went deeper. They went deeper, and the white bears saw somebody is there, so they run fast, and they ate them up. They didn't came back. I went right in the front, just a couple berries, a couple strawberries, and I went home. Because I was afraid. So some people got killed from the white bears.

INT: Weren't you afraid to just go at **all**? I mean, how did you get the courage to go at **all**?

SARAH: Well, we have to do it, because otherwise we're starving. We were starving. So I remember, we used to ask the people who a little further in there, we saw houses, we used to ask them, they should give us a little bit some cucumbers, or just to beg by them. You know. Some cucumbers, or some radishes, or some scallions. They gave. They gave us. We said we have nine children, and we have nothing to eat. And we didn't have anything more to give away. Then we went to beg. We didn't have anything. I mean, it was not enough, they didn't feed us good. They want us to die, looks like.

INT: Yeah, why didn't they feed you?

SARAH: I don't know.

INT: They didn't have the food at all?

SARAH: Maybe they didn't have it. Maybe they thought it's enough. But it was not enough. It was not enough. So people died, and a lot of people was buried in Siberia. They never came out. And I don't know, with us, G-d, I don't know, spared us. I don't know. We were lucky. But this was till 1942, what happened, we was cutting trees.

Then in 1942 they let us go free. They told us, they didn't have enough to keep us up, you know? Like, there were a lot of people. It was like a thousand...

INT: How many people was it?

SARAH: It was maybe more than a thousand people. They had to support us. Give us anything. So they kept us until they gave up, and they told us, "You can go free on your own." 1942. Ohh! It's another problem. You know.

INT: What time of the year was it then? Was it winter?

SARAH: No, it was not winter. It was not winter. It was not bad. So my parents decided that we should go to a city called Bijnsk.

INT: How do you spell that?

SARAH: Bijnsk, Altajski Kraj. That's the Russian. Bijnsk is B-i-j-n-s-k. Altajski Kraj is A-l-t-a-j-s-k-i. Altajski Kraj. Is K-r-a-j.

INT: Okay, so that Altajski Kraj is like a province?

SARAH: Like Pennsylvania. Like Pennsylvania. Bijnsk, Altajski Kraj. So we went there because we found out, my parents found out that in this city is a lot of Jews. Russian Jews. It's not over there was no Jews. Just living in a forest. So we wanted to go where Jews are. So we went. Was not easy. My father begged somebody, it was not close. It was far to go. So he asked somebody, I don't know who he hired, for money, for no money, I don't know. He gave us, he went, he took his wagon, and his horse.

They didn't have cars. And put us all in that wagon, and took us to Bijnsk. And he let us down. And then my parents said, "What are we going to do here? Where are we going to live? What are we going to do?" So he looked for work. He looked for work. Somehow he found work. He worked in a beet factory. They made from the white beets sugar.

INT: Sugar beets, yeah.

SARAH: Yeah, sugar beets. So he worked there. He worked there, so he found a little apartment, and we lived there. When we lived there, in a very, I remember where we lived. In a very high mountain, was houses. We couldn't find lower, and this is inexpensive. Like lower is more money. High, it was less money, because you have to climb. You have to climb. So he took there, and we went there, and we lived there. But the neighbors were not good. They were not Jewish neighbors. They were not good. Somehow they were not good. I don't know why. At night they knocked in the window, and they called in, "Jews." You know, like not good people. I don't know who they were. I was a young girl. I don't remember who was it. So my parents said, it's not good. We can't live here. And sometimes they heard a voice, "We're going to kill you. Move out." You know.

INT: Yeah. So it wasn't a Jewish neighborhood at all.

SARAH: Looks like. No. Looks like. Was a cheap, cheap, cheap people, you know.

INT: Lower class people.

SARAH: Lower class people. So it's not good again. So my father used to look for another place, and he asked people. Jewish people he asked, and somehow he found another apartment. So we went again. Again moving, all the time. Was not easy. So we stayed there till 1945. He was working. He had a little job. And I used to also do something. I could go to school, to Russian school, and learn Russian. A lot of girls did that. But I didn't, I couldn't, because I had to help watch the children. My mother was always sick. Watch the little kids, and take care of them.

INT: What was the matter with your mother? Stomach?

SARAH: Her stomach. Her stomach, and she had no strength, she didn't want to eat, she cried.

INT: She was very depressed.

SARAH: Very depressed. She lost her will of living, even. And we used to tell her, "You have more children." She said, "I can't help it. This is no life for me." She can't live like this. She couldn't pull through. And she didn't. As soon as we came back from, she got sick, she wind up in the hospital, and she died.

So we were there in Bijnsk until 1945. In 1945 was a very big struggle again. The expense, the money, you know. So me and my sister used to, they had a place where you buy things and you sell things, like a market. They call this Baracholke.

INT: Can you spell that?

SARAH: Here it's market. Over there is Baracholke. Baracholke is B-a-r-a-c-h-o-l-k-e.

INT: Okay. That's the Russian word for market.

SARAH: The Russian word for market. Baracholke. So we was thinking what to do. We found out from the baracholke, the market, and I see people are buying stuff and selling stuff. So me and my sister said, me and her, we talk it over, we said: Let's do this. Let's buy. And somebody comes to that market, and sell, like a piece of yard good, or some dishes, or has to be used clothes. Only used. New, it's forbidden. You can't. So we used to buy like somebody sold old shoes, or an old coat, and then we went to the other corner and right away we sell it. You're allowed to do that. Only used. So we did that. So we sold.

INT: This is you and Etle again, right?

SARAH: Me and Etle, yeah. And we made a little money, so my mother was so happy, let her rest in peace, and she was so happy that we make a little money. So she came always to the baracholke and ask us for money. Because we had little kids, and she couldn't buy anything in that market, like a little bit milk, frozen milk they sold. Apple, or yogurt, or anything, food, strawberries, for the children. So she took money, and I had my pocket money, so I didn't even count. I said, "Here, Mother, go, shop." So she went, instead of buying for her children first, she bought for poor people first. For their families. She shop for them first, and she came back, she asked for money again. I said, "Mother, I just gave you. I don't have any money. People don't buy so fast." So my sister had some money she sold on her side. So she gave. So I said, "Mother I just gave you. You didn't buy anything?" She said, "No, because the woman..." I knew the woman. She told me her name and everything. "She's dying for hunger. She have little kids. Her husband died." It's true, he died. "And they have nothing to eat. I have to make sure they have food in the house." So she bought from them, and then she came back to me for money to buy for her children. That's what she did.

INT: That's how she was. She was always giving.

SARAH: Yeah. Always giving. So I saw that she is like that, so I didn't say a word. I knew her from my city what she did. What she did from her store.

INT: So you didn't get mad at her.

SARAH: No. But here, I said, "We hardly have ourselves. And here, what she's doing." But I didn't say a word. I gave her. If I had, I gave her. So thank G-d, we tried to handle

this. We bought, we sold, and we made a little money, and we gave it to her, she should make sure the kids have food. That's why we survived. Maybe because of that. Because we did that.

INT: And your father was working in the beet factory.

SARAH: In the beet factory, yeah. So together, so we tried to manage. It was not so good, but it was a little better.

INT: It was better than Siberia.

SARAH: Yeah. Better than Siberia. So 1945, we were there till 1945. In 1945, the Russians told, it was in the paper, or they made an announcement, that anybody who is not a citizen, can go back home. Because the war stopped 1945. So everybody was happy. We **wanted** to go home. So they again gave us cattle trains, and they put us in cattle trains. A lot of Russians, especially married boys just to get out too, from there. Because they didn't like to live in Russia. Russia was not good. It was very bad all the time. So they used to marry Jewish boys. Even not Jewish girls, married Jewish boys, just to get out, and they came with us home together, just to escape from Russia.

So when we came home, I mean "home." They didn't took us home. They dropped us off in Szczecin (formerly Stettin). This is a German city. They dropped us off, again, no belongings, nothing. I mean again, we didn't have anything. Where we gonna live?

INT: Was it the same long trip, too? Did it take as long?

SARAH: No, it was shorter. Somehow it was shorter. Because it was a different city already. It was not over there, you know. Was shorter a little. But the whole way, when we was in the cattle train, my mother was sick. She had fever, she threw up, and she said, she don't feel good. She was sick. And all the time when the train stopped from our section a man was, when the train stopped, he announced if it's a doctor, is a doctor in the whole, in the cattle, in any cattle train. So somehow they found a doctor, and he came, and he examined her. He said to her, "Soon you come. You come to the place where they gonna take you. Go right away to the doctor. You are very sick." He told her right away. We was crying. You know, my mother is sick, and this and that. And we saw she is sick. So soon we came, right away. They took her to the hospital. She was **very** sick.

INT: What was wrong with her, do you know?

SARAH: (Sighs) She, her stomach was swollen, from going through all this, going with an infant to Siberia, and with little kids, and missing her other children, missing her family, and crying. So her stomach and her liver, and intestines, everything got swollen. Her stomach was like this (holds her arms out). Like a nine month pregnant woman. Like this. Because she was sick. She was, it got swollen. And she couldn't live like this. They operate on her. And the doctor said, he gonna give her medication. She was living after the operation three months. And she was in hospital three months.

INT: In this German town.

SARAH: This was in Szczecin. And she died.

INT: In the hospital?

SARAH: In the hospital. She died, oh! Was so terrible. I can't describe you how bad it was when we lost our mother. It was so bad. Me especially. I was so attached to her. And she loved me so much. When she passed away, when they made the funeral in Szczecin, when they digged the grave, I said, "I want to be buried with my mother in one grave." I said it, and I meant to do that, to be there. And as soon as they finish digging the grave, my leg was already first in the grave, and everybody said, "What are you doing? This is, your mother has to be buried." I said, "I said I want to be with my mother in one grave." So they got me back, and they said, I was short, and I was young, still. They said they wanted to just quiet me down, that I'm not allowed to be there. So they said, "Well, I'm sorry, little girls like you are not allowed even to **be** here at the funeral." So they took me away before they buried her. Because I was hysterical. They knew that I'm going to disturb the whole funeral. So they took me away. And I don't remember how they buried her, or how the funeral was, because they took me away. I don't know. They took me to a neighbor somewhere.

INT: But your other sisters and brothers were there?

SARAH: They were there, but I was so hysterical, that I don't know.

INT: Did you know she was going to die? Did anyone talk to you about it before it happened?

SARAH: No. The doctor said, so long as we, we can't get the medication. Was in Germany. Szczecin is Germany. So long as we going to get the medication, and so long as it's going to work on her, that's how long she's going to live. So she lived three months. But looks like that's it. She didn't, the medicine didn't help anymore.

INT: And she was depressed on top of that.

SARAH: She was depressed, and then we saw, and then, when they bandage her, you know, her body, because they made an operation on her. They tried to find out what's wrong. So it didn't heal. It didn't. The area didn't heal. The area was open till she died. And the doctor said, "If this not going to heal, she'll die." It didn't heal. I saw the area. And when they tried to change the bandages, you know, because it was wetting. You know, the area was wet. So they said that it's not going to heal, she can't live. And she died. Then everybody was. Oh!

INT: It was very hard for you.

SARAH: Oh! Oh, oh. Such a bad...(sighs). Was something nobody should go through. This is terrible. If I, if I had this in my mind sometimes, I just can't understand why she has to go so much through. She was in pain. Because it didn't heal. So she was in pain, and she was always saying, "Aah, aah, Oy, hurts, hurts, hurts. I have pains, I have pains, it hurts so much. At night it's even worse." She used to talk like this. And I was near her. I didn't step, I was sleeping in the hospital with her. I was near her all the time. I don't know, I was so attached to her. So...

INT: She was young when she died.

SARAH: She was 48 years old. Sure she was young.

INT: What about your father? How did he...

SARAH: My father didn't say a word. He was like in a shock. When she passed away, he couldn't talk. He was pale like the wall. And he looked like a different person. He couldn't talk. He couldn't say anything. And he was very, very depressed. Very unhappy. He was left with seven children. You know? It's not easy. My younger sister was only five years old.

INT: The one who was born before...

SARAH: Yeah. She was only five years old. And he didn't know what to do. He tried, but I don't know. Somehow we still alive after such a tragedy we went through.

So after this in Szczecin, they...they was talking that everybody who wants to leave this area has to register themselves, you know, like only the people who came. Wherever you want to go. You want to go to America, you want to go to Israel, you want to go to a different country?

INT: You were in Germany now, not in Poland.

SARAH: This is not Poland. Szczecin is not Poland.

INT: Okay, so wait a minute. Before you get to the register, when you came to this town in Germany, is that when you found, did you ever go back to Poland from Russia at all, to find out what happened to...

SARAH: My father went back. No, we were little kids. He went back because he wanted to see the store, and he wanted to see what, I mean, he was curious to see what's going on with his store. Maybe he can go back and have the store and somehow go back to live. But he went back. I forgot to tell you.

INT: And left you in Germany?

SARAH: Yeah. He left us alone.

INT: Is he the one who found out about your sisters?

SARAH: Yeah.

INT: When he was back in Poland?

SARAH: Yeah, yeah. He's the one that find out.

INT: And he came back and told your mother?

SARAH: He told us, yeah. So he went back to Poland, and he came back to the shopping center where we had the store. The store is still there. So he saw a Polish family owns our store. They had business in our store. So he went there, and he said, "You know, this is my store. I'm entitled to sell it. It's mine." So he said to him, "If you're not going to leave this place," he had in store a gun, a Polish family. "You see this gun? You're going to be killed if you're not going to leave this store." He got afraid. So...(noise of washing dishes in the background for awhile)

INT: And the Poles were killing Jews that were coming back.

SARAH: Oh, yeah, they still was keeping on killing. So he didn't know what to do, so he found out that if you apply, you know, like make an application that you're alive, and this is your store, and you're allowed to sell it, even the man said he's going to kill him, you know. But that's yours. So he tried to apply. He stayed like two, three days in our city. By somebody from our customers, I don't know by who, and he tried to apply there, in an office. And they found out it's his store, because the records are there. You know, the papers are there that this is his store, it's not a lie. So they said, "Yeah, you have a good point. It's your store, and you're entitled to sell it. But, not right now. Right now we...it's not the time, because we don't handle things like this. Maybe in a couple years." So he applied, but he never finished up, because they said in a couple years, then we went away, and we were not any more in Szczecin, so the non-Jew has our store. And I heard that this was in paper sometimes, that whoever have property in Poland, and somebody is alive, like me, or my sisters, you know, we can ask for it. But I wouldn't go back to Poland, to my city. I'm afraid. Because it's very bad to live there.

INT: You're afraid of the people there.

SARAH: Yeah, yeah. I wouldn't go back. They would kill me. I don't know.

INT: So you've never been back to Poland.

SARAH: I've never been back, my father went. I never went. He went back. And he said he wanted to sell the store. At first he thought before he left, that he might move back and live there. But it's a bloody earth, you know. It's dangerous to be there, he

found out. Even while he was there he found out that they kill people. The Poles. The Poles.

INT: In Kielce, or something, they had a pogrom.

SARAH: They have guns, they had guns even at that time. He showed my father a gun. And he said, "If you're not going to leave, you see this gun?" So that means I kill you. So he walked away. It was dangerous. So he didn't sold the store, and he went back to Szczecin. It was very bad, and then he came back to Szczecin. It was very bad in Szczecin, too. We heard killing every day. Some Germans, they special called in Jewish people, to tell them that they have gold to sell. You know, gold, good quality stuff, from the Jews. They robbed away, and they had it in the basement. Some of them lied, because they want to kill the Jewish people quietly. They told him, "I have in the basement so much good things for you. You can buy off, and you can make money from it." You know, people was dying to make a little money, because they didn't have anything.

INT: They didn't have anything.

SARAH: Right. So every day you heard that whoever went to their basement, never came back. They killed.

INT: This is in Germany. After the war.

SARAH: This was in Germany, after the war in Germany. Yeah. That's what they did, yeah. They kept on still killing. And in a quiet way, a hiding way. You know. Not open. So that's what happened. So that's why nobody wants to stay there. So when they said people can register themselves to leave wherever they want to go, so everybody did it. Not to stay there in the bloody earth, you know. So everybody left. So we registered ourselves, and it took time, like 19...194 (pause)...It's open?

INT: Yeah, 1940 something, or...

SARAH: No, when we come back for, I write it down here, when we returned from the cattle trains to Szczecin, it took two and a half months.

INT: That's almost as long as it took you to get to Siberia.

SARAH: Six months, yeah, six months less. We didn't know where to go. We were very fearful. People still was at that time killed. We have nothing. No money, no job, no food, no place where to live. We were told we can apply to emigrate to another country.

INT: Were you put in a DP camp? Was this a DP camp, this town?

SARAH: No, not Szczecin. Now, I'm coming to the DP camp. Now. So we registered. We're going to go. Leave Szczecin. So when my father, my mother passed away already, we didn't have her. So my father was left with nine children, and he registered him and us to leave. Whatever comes first. Israel or America. So we were not allowed to come to ...we were not allowed to go free, to move. Like we came to Munich, then we came to Neu Ulm. So we had to sneak in in a truck. Like they took us in a truck. They were special people who took care of things like this. That took us out from Germany to save our lives again. You know, they still were going on killing. So they took us on trucks, and they cover all of us with a big blanket, saying that they have other things. Merchandise, or kettles, or supplies for soldiers. But not people. So that's how we got to Munich first.

We came to Munich, to Germany. This was in 1946. My mother died 1946, and right after this we tried to run away from there. So we came to Munich.

In Munich they register us, and they said we can't stay there, we have to be shipped to a place where, we can stay, like in big barracks. You need big barracks. In Munich, they didn't have this. So they shipped us to New Ulm.

INT: How do you spell that?

SARAH: Neu Ulm. Where Einstein was born. N-e-w U-l-m. New Ulm, Germany. They prepared big barracks. This was in the American Zone, again. The Americans shipped in merchandise for the people. We were 2,000 people got together in this place, in New Ulm. Big houses. Also military was there. But it was different than Russia. Russia was like a barrack. And here was houses. Homes.

INT: Okay. So you had your own house, sort of.

SARAH: Yeah. It was different. So the American people sent in like medicine, clothing, food. For us. Because when we came, they had already food ready. So they opened up a kitchen. They open up a little store, not selling. Giving out. Clothing. They open a little section of medication. They had doctors there. And that's where we lived till 1947.

INT: So you were there about a year?

SARAH: '48. We lived there 1948. (noise stops) So...

INT: What did you do there?

SARAH: That's what I'm going to say. At that time, I was a little older already, and my father, let him rest in peace, they appointed him to take care of the clothing...

(END TAPE THREE, SIDE ONE)

(TAPE THREE, SIDE TWO)

SARAH: Two more people. Next time I'll show you the picture, giving out clothing for the people. Me, and a girlfriend, I have her picture, too. It's here.

INT: A girlfriend you met in the DP camp?

SARAH: Yeah. (goes to get picture, a photograph of Mrs. Klein and her friend when they were in the DP camp.)

INT: You have a picture from that time? (pause) What was her name, your friend?

SARAH: Sarah, too. We were like **sisters**.

INT: So you just met her there.

SARAH: I met her in Neu Ulm. In that camp. And we gave out food. We gave out breakfast. So while I was giving out breakfast, like three months, or four months later, we had a big line of people, 2,000 people came for the food. She gave out the bread, and the coffee, and I gave out the scrambled eggs, or we had omelets, or we had...the cooks prepared for breakfast. So we both were busy, and we had a line, a big line.

So one of, my first husband, let him rest in peace. He was in this line, and he liked me. Yeah. So he used to, he was living with another young man, and he said to the young man, that young man was from my city. From **my** city. I even didn't know.

INT: That's such a coincidence.

SARAH: Yeah. I even didn't know. He came from a different area. We were 2,000 people.

INT: Right.

SARAH: They came from different places.

INT: But this friend of his was from Tomaszów?

SARAH: Yeah, from my city. And my first husband said to him, "See, this girl, the one who gives out the omelets and the eggs. She's a beautiful girl. I would like to meet her." He said to him. So he said, "You want to meet her? Her father, they are from my city. I can talk to her father." Just like that.

INT: No problem, huh? (laughs)

SARAH: Yeah, no problem. (laughs) So he talked, so the other man talked to my father, and my father told me that there is somebody that comes for food, and he looks a very

bright, intelligent young man. He saw him. He introduced already to my father. He saw him. He was very handsome. And he said, "He would like to go out with you." I mean, not go out, it was not allowed to go out from that place, but just take a walk in camp. In camp. And I said, no. I don't want it, because I belonged right away I signed up for the Mizrahi. In that camp. And I was the head of the girls. I prepared the Oneg Shabbat stuff. You know. I was very...I was very active for these things. That's why I belong to places because I...

INT: Right. And you still do.

SARAH: Yeah, I still do. So one man, he was a shochet's son, a young man, he was a red head, with a red beard. A young man, and he was by the boys, and I was by the girls. You know, the leader, like leader.

INT: Group leader.

SARAH: Yeah, yeah. So this young man also wanted me to take out. And I said, "I'm not ready, because I just lost my mother." You know.

INT: Still in mourning.

SARAH: I'm mourning. You know. I just lost my mother, and it's no way. So this one said he'll wait, and this one said he'll wait. Looks like I was a nice-looking girl, who knows?

INT: I guess so. Yeah. (laughs)

(BREAK IN TAPE. APPROXIMATELY THREE MINUTES.)

SARAH: We talked, and then my father tells me, "You know who that young man is? You know he's a brilliant scholar." And he found out that he comes from a beautiful family just like us. "And he said that he sees you giving out food."

(BREAK IN TAPE, APPROXIMATELY ONE MINUTE)

INT: What was his name?

SARAH: Herman. Herman Klein. Reverend Herman Klein. We went out, and he was a beautiful talker. Even the children knows that he talked so beautiful, nicely. He was very educated. He was a Ben Torah. A Talmud Chacham. He was leading in synagogue, after services, he was leading, was long tables, and he was leading the people, teaching them the Talmud and the Torah, and everything, an hour after services. He was the main leader.

(SHORT BREAK IN TAPE)

INT: You wanted to wait.

SARAH: Because, I don't want to be, wind up with marriage before a year.

INT: You wanted to respect that year of mourning?

SARAH: Respect, yeah.

INT: I see.

SARAH: And he said he's going to wait. In the meantime he came to the house. He said he likes to talk to my father. For an excuse. He came to the house. In the meantime I was there, too, and I didn't have meetings every day, so he came almost every day to the house, and talked to my father, and I was there, and he told my father, and my father became to like him very much, and I liked the way he talked, too. You know. But I was not ready to marry, but I saw he's a nice, very nice person.

So somehow after a year, we became engaged.

(BREAK IN TAPE, APPROXIMATELY TWENTY SECONDS)

SARAH: Right. Because after a war, such a war, you don't find many nice left over people. You know what I mean. So he said that one is left for you.

INT: I see.

SARAH: And he belongs to our family.

INT: Your father felt he was right for you because he was from the same kind of background?

SARAH: Right, right.

INT: He was a Talmud Chacham.

SARAH: Yeah. So, and then in a short time, in three months later I got married.

INT: But did you fall in love with him, or was it...

SARAH: Yeah, he was a very pleasant, he was pleasant, he was nice. So we got married three months later. After engagement. I didn't want it so fast. And...

INT: You wanted to wait. You got engaged, and then you wanted to wait a little bit.

SARAH: I wanted to wait, sure.

INT: To make sure?

SARAH: Yeah. To make sure. And after I was, I got married, they gave him a job in the kitchen. He was the chief of the whole kitchen, the kosher kitchen. When they gave out food, like dinners for the people, and other stuff. So he had, they gave him right away a job.

INT: This is still in Neu Ulm?

SARAH: In Neu Ulm, yeah.

INT: Okay. Your father didn't leave to go back to his friends in Peking, or...

SARAH: No, no, no, he didn't left. He stayed there.

(Pause)

INT: This is a continuation of an interview with Sarah Klein. It's December 21, 1994.

Mrs. Klein, I just wanted to ask you, if you could think back to when you were in Siberia, and you could try to think of what your feelings were at that time, when you were going through all that you were going through, and any conversations you would have with yourself, or with G-d, or with your friends, or your family. And what your feelings and thoughts were, as best as you can remember.

SARAH: Well, I remember being in Siberia and going through such a hard life. As I was a young girl, and I know my parents were very, very nice people, and religious people, and they was not used to that kind of life. And I could see it. My mother used to cry all the time, and my father has to go to work and cut trees, and I have to go with my sister and cut trees every day, and one of the officers was counting us three times a day and we couldn't go no place, we have to just to stick to that barrack, and stick to that forest and cut trees. And we couldn't take this. It was a very bad life.

And also when I came home, we came home from work, from that forest, after a whole day, hardship work, and we came home, we found my mother and sister and brother laying sick after they ate that horseradish. They were hungry. They didn't have nothing to eat. So a woman offered them, all she had in the house was horseradish. She share with my mother to give something for the kids to eat. And she told her to put in the oven, and to bake a little bit the bitterness, which would go out. And then they can eat, it's going to be okay. Soft and nice. So they ate, and after they ate, they all was sick, they throwing up. And two of my younger sisters was swollen right away after they ate. And they were rushed to the hospital. And this life was going on every day. Every day was very hard to take.

So I was thinking sometimes that I don't want to live, I can't go on. Just me, I mean, I was thinking myself. I didn't want to talk to my mother this. But I was thinking that I

wish, I wish a car would run me over, or a train would run me over, or I would be killed, and I don't want to go on again with this life, because it was very hard. There was no food, and it was very cold, freezing weather, and we even didn't have water in the house. We have to melt snow. If my mother wanted to cook for us a little soup, she had to go out and take a bucket snow, and melt, and make water from it, and then cook the soup. We didn't have no water. So was very hard. Especially with having a little infant in the house, a little baby, she was born in 1940. And she didn't have no food for her. She gave her, she always, as I said before, she was breast-feeding her because there was no milk. And she herself didn't have milk enough to drink, to have to feed her with her breast. But when she start to cry, the little baby, she used to gave her the empty breast. And she didn't have no food from the breast, so she fainted, several times a day. I don't know how she's alive, and thank G-d, she is married and have her own seven children. And she's going on with her life. We thought she's going to die. I don't know. It's a miracle she was alive after so much suffering, and so much, not enough having food, and living through such a miserable life in Siberia. It was very bad. So I always was thinking.

And then I missed my sisters in Europe. When they was killed. We missed them, too. And we missed the whole family. And we didn't see no future. So we thought, we probably gonna, we all gonna die there anyway, because we can't go on longer with that kind of life. Till 1945, we heard that they're going to send us back, because they want us to be citizen. Russian citizens, and we didn't want to stay there, so we didn't want to be citizens, so they send us back.

INT: Was there anyone that you could talk to about your feelings then? Did you get close with any of your sisters, or did you talk to your mother, or your father? Brothers?

SARAH: My mother, I couldn't say to her my feelings, because she would be worried that I'm going around with bad feelings, and I'm not happy, and I'm depressed, so I didn't want to tell her. But I talked to one of my girlfriends. I still have her picture. She was together with us at the same place. So I used to talk to her about it.

INT: What was her name?

SARAH: Esther. She's still in Philadelphia. Yeah. She's still in Philadelphia.

INT: Did she live in the same barracks with you also?

SARAH: The same room, the same together, and she's still here, and she went through the same thing we went through. And she's here, and she also, we used to talk together, what's going to be with our future. I mean, everybody's, we're all going to die. Every day people died. Children died. We saw this. Every day what was going on. Dying people. And we thought with us going to happen the same thing. We didn't know how long it's gonna last, but we're not going to get out of here. We're all going to die here.

INT: So how did you keep going every day? What did you do to help yourself?

SARAH: We used to, as I said before, we used to go and ask people if, like I took something from the house, like a sheet, or a towel, or anything we had, and to exchange for a bucket. By the buckets they sold, a bucket potatoes, or a bucket carrots, or beets. Anything to eat. So we used to do that. We had to go miles till we find a house. Closer you couldn't see a home.

INT: How did you know where to go? Where the houses were?

SARAH: We just walked. We just walked, walked till we found a house, and then we brought home potatoes, and my mother used to make a soup. And frozen milk we brought home, so she used to melt this. And share with the whole family, like everybody should sit down and eat. So this was a big help to living longer. Otherwise...

INT: But your strength inside. Like how were you able to get up every morning, and go cut those trees, and come back and...

SARAH: Well, I was, I felt that I had to do it. Because I was, I was almost the oldest at that time. Because the rest of the sisters and brothers were younger than me. And my mother was crying every day, and she was not well already from going through. So I felt I have to do it, otherwise it's not good. Everybody's going to, if there's nothing in the house, they gave us in Siberia something, a little bit, like a piece of bread, if everybody, a slice bread, a small slice bread. And a little bit soup from a restaurant. They had a restaurant to give out to the people who lived there. But was not enough. So we need more food. And after this everybody was hungry, and nothing in the house. So I was forced from this. I said to my mother, I remember, let her rest in peace. I used to say, "Mother, I have to go and bring home something. Or else the little kids are hungry. They cry. They want to eat."

INT: So you felt a big responsibility.

SARAH: I felt a big responsibility. Right. I used to go with my sister sometimes, and sometimes myself, and sometimes with that girlfriend, she's still here. She lives in Philadelphia. We used to go together and bring home something for the families. And that's how we, looks like we survived.

INT: Did she have little sisters and brothers, too?

SARAH: She have two sisters in Israel. Her mother and father was there, too, but they're not living anymore. They died in Israel. But she had two sisters, and brother-in-laws, and you know, they have children. They have family. She goes from time to time to see them. But she lives here in Philadelphia.

INT: What about your father? Could you go to your father and talk to him about what was happening and how you were feeling?

SARAH: Well, I...I couldn't talk too much about it, also, because he was very, very depressed about the whole living there, and I couldn't, I couldn't tell him. We all knew that we had to stay here till they let us go different places. We couldn't go by ourselves. They brought us there and they watched us. And we had to stick to the place.

INT: They took you to the forest to cut the trees? They would like take you on trucks to the forest to cut the trees, or you would walk to the forest?

SARAH: No, we walked. We walked, we walked, yeah. We walked deep, in a deep snow, far, and the first time they showed us the area where we have to cut the trees, because one man was watching us. As I said before, when I got, had frozen cheeks, he was watching the people, he was there with us, to watch us. If we're walking, or if somebody's running away. They count all the time the people. They counted us, and we have to stick to the place. Till 1942. Then they told us that we can go wherever we wants to go. We can be free. So then we went on our own. And it was another problem. To go on our own, it's no money, no belongings, no food, what are we going to do now? So finally, my father, let him rest in peace, he found a job in a beet factory.

INT: In Bijnsk?

SARAH: In Bijnsk, yeah.

INT: So you felt you couldn't go to your father, or your mother, because they were both so depressed anyway.

SARAH: Yeah. I couldn't. No, I couldn't talk to my father. My father used to say all the time, I mean to people, to us, to the family, that we're never going to get out of here. We're all going to die. That's what he always ...

INT: He believed that.

SARAH: He believed that, yeah.

INT: So he wasn't giving you strength, really.

SARAH: No.

INT: He wasn't saying, like, "G-d will get us through this, or we'll be okay."

SARAH: No, no, no. He was not happy. He couldn't say something like this. He was very disappointed that they told us they're taking us a hundred miles away to save our lives, and here they took us to Siberia to stay for five years. So he didn't believe. He thought that who knows what else they're going to do to us.

INT: What about his faith in G-d? Did he lose that?

SARAH: Oh, **yeah**. He prayed every day, he davened. I mean, he was religious. Again, like every morning, they had to make a minyan, so they had to do it quietly, and somebody has to, in the house, in the side, in the room, ten people, and somebody has to be outside and watch, nobody should see that they're davening.

INT: Oh, they had to guard them.

SARAH: This was forbidden.

INT: What would happen if they caught you, do you know?

SARAH: They would put in jail, probably, but they never did, because somebody was watching. Somebody came up from far, and if somebody would see somebody's coming in this direction, they would just go back to everybody to his corner, and not daven. It was in the same barrack, you know. So they didn't have to go too far out from the room. They was in the building. So they made a minyan in the building.

INT: What about Etle? What was her personality like, and were you able to talk to her at all about your feelings?

SARAH: I did talk to her sometimes. As a matter of fact, she became a little blind at, when it became, from going through, from crying, from worrying, and from not having enough food, somehow she became sick on her eyes. Like when outside became a little dark, she was blind completely. They have a name for it, I forgot.

INT: Night blindness, or something?

SARAH: Yeah, something. They had a name for it, I forgot. Because she went to a doctor, and they said she had this sickness hit her, from going through. So she was blind for a **long** time. Maybe for almost two years. I mean, daytime she saw. But when came dark time, like for example, if she was outside, and it became dark, she didn't know how to get back home, so she was screaming that people should take her home. So she...

INT: Oh, boy. Well what was she like? Was she a strong person?

SARAH: No, she was not such a strong person. She was quiet, she was a quiet girl. She didn't talk too much. She was not a talker, too much. She just was going on with whatever has to be done, she did, and she didn't say anything.

INT: Was she depressed, too, do you think?

SARAH: Oh, yeah. She was depressed, too, sure. Everybody was depressed.

INT: So you couldn't really go to Etle either, because she wasn't so...

SARAH: Hm?

INT: You couldn't really go to Etle either, because she wasn't really so strong, either.

SARAH: No, no. I couldn't say anything to her. I used to talk with my girlfriend the most, the one that's here.

INT: Yeah. Esther.

SARAH: Esther. With her. But ...

INT: Was that helpful, do you think? Did that help you?

SARAH: It didn't help, because...she also didn't believe that we're going to get out of there, and she also was like lost with the whole situation. And we thought, who knows what's going to be next, and who knows if you're going to get out of there. And when we heard what's going on in Poland at that time, that people are getting killed, we heard, because...

INT: How did you find out?

SARAH: Somebody had somebody in Russia, in Russia, I don't know which city, not in Siberia. So somebody used to come and tell the other person what's going on there. So we thought instead of being there, so maybe it's better to be here.

INT: You knew that they were putting Jews in concentration camps?

SARAH: They killing. They killing everybody, yeah. And everybody, one told the other, so everybody knew already what's going on.

INT: Do you know what year that was that you started to find out?

SARAH: 1942, we found out. Not in the beginning. And one time, in an evening, I remember. On the sky, at night, was the sky was very red, red like fire. So people looked up, and they said, "This is a sign that our people are killed."

INT: I'm sorry, so go ahead.

SARAH: So when we looked up and we saw, "What's going on here? The sky is so red". So everybody start to cry, because we knew already that the killing's going on. So everybody cried and said, "Oy, my goodness, people are getting killed. People are getting killed. That's the sign of it." It never showed before, and never showed after, just one time. So red like blood.

INT: Why was the sky like that, do you know?

SARAH: It's a sign from this. That's what the righteous people who were there, the real talmudic people said. That's the sign. Yeah. (pause) That's the sign of killing people in Europe.

INT: So then you must have been worried about Mala and Tema.

SARAH: Oh, sure. My mother used to **cry** every **day**, she didn't want to eat, and she said, "My children, my children," all the time. "Where are they? Who knows where they are? And who knows whether I will see them? And who knows if I'll see my mother again." She had a mother still. And her sisters and brothers and children, a family from over 100 people. And who knows if I'll see them?" And she became sick from this. And we used to tell her, "Mother, we have more children. We are here. We need you. We want you. And please, you're going to get sick. And G-d forbid, we don't want you to die, because the way it's going on, you can't live so long." And she said, "No. I miss my children, and I miss my family."

[husband comes in]

"And I can't take it," she said. "I can't help it, and I can't take it."

INT: Even after you told her that, she still..

SARAH: Even we told her this, yeah.

INT: She was so depressed and so sad.

SARAH: She was so depressed, so unhappy. She gave up eating, she gave up everything. She lost herself.

INT: She really needed all her children. It's like, you told me that story when the bombs came on your city, and she was standing there, wanting all her children together.

SARAH: Yeah, yeah. She was looking for her kids, yeah. It was very sad.

INT: Was your father helpful to your mother? Did he comfort her at all?

SARAH: Yeah. He was helpful. But you know, they both were very upset. Very upset about it. So it was, sometimes they was talking between each other, before they took us to Siberia. They remind themselves, they ask us if they want to be citizens. I was a young girl. They asked my mother and father. Before they took us away. And they didn't agree to be citizens.

INT: They didn't want to.

SARAH: No. So they used to say, they used to talk in Siberia, between each other...

INT: That they should have done it.

SARAH: That they should have done it. See, that's, now we're here, and look what's going to be with us. At that time, they didn't heard they killing. So they were sorry that they didn't became citizens. Otherwise we would never be here.

INT: Right. But if they had become citizens, they would still be in Poland, and they would have gotten **really** killed, right?

SARAH: Yeah, yeah.

INT: They didn't know that yet.

SARAH: They didn't know that yet. So they used to be sorry for that. **Very** sorry. They said, "Look. We made a mistake, and we made a mistake." And they were worried about it.

INT: So I want to ask you again, how do you think...

(END TAPE THREE, SIDE TWO)

(TAPE FOUR, SIDE ONE)

INT: I was asking you how you think you got through it, and you said that G-d gave you strength.

SARAH: Yeah. I said, thank G-d. Looks like G-d gave us the strength, and it looks like we have to, G-d want us to be alive now, and we could tell others what we went through. It was really a very bad time to go through. And otherwise we couldn't live longer, or we would be dead. How would people know what people went through so much trouble during the war, in Siberia?

INT: So it's important for you to tell the story.

SARAH: It's important to tell, yeah. When I went to the Holocaust convention in '81, I used to leave a tape there, also what we went through. And when they had a Holocaust Convention in Philadelphia, a group of people, the teacher came up to me, and asked me also what I went through, and I should explain everything, all the details, the whole time, the war time, and they really appreciated me, that I told them what I went through. And they said they need this for the school, for the children in class.

INT: Did you go to Yad Vashem also, at some point, and left a tape in Yiddish at Yad Vashem?

SARAH: In Israel? I was there. Yeah, I was there, I saw.

INT: Did you leave a tape there?

SARAH: I left the tape there, yeah. I left the tape.

INT: Someone interviewed you, or you just talked into a tape?

SARAH: No, one leader, when we went with the group, and one leader, they did it with a leader. And he explained us. He talked to us, like this is, every picture and every sign from where it is and what it means. And he explained us that next we're going to see this, and next we're going to see something else. All the explanations he gave us. So we saw the whole thing.

INT: But when you talked into the tape, you told your story, at Yad Vashem, and you left your tape there?

SARAH: No. In Yad Vashem, I didn't tell my story there, no. I just gave them the tape. Also, I brought with me stones. They told us everybody can bring stones, and put down the name who we lost during the war, and they're going to build a cemetery, and make, and put them on the cemetery, to bury them, like make pretend that they are buried in Israel. The dead people. So I left...

INT: Put the name on.

SARAH: It was their name, before I left, I put in white stone, white blocks. I had with me like a dozen. I didn't have everybody, but I couldn't. But I took this with me, and I left this in Yad Vashem.

INT: What year was that?

SARAH: 1981.

INT: Okay. You had talked about your time in the DP camp, well, it wasn't a DP camp, you were in Szczecin, and then you left. And you went to Neu Ulm with your family, and that's where you met your husband.

SARAH: I didn't met in Szczecin.

INT: No, in Neu Ulm you met him.

SARAH: Yeah.

INT: And you were talking about getting engaged, how you finally did get engaged. And could you tell me a little bit about your feelings, and your thoughts after the war, when you were in Szczecin, and then when you were in Neu Ulm, before you got married? What were you thinking about, how did you feel about your life, now that

you'd lost your favorite sister, you lost your mother? You lost Tema. What did you think was going to be with your life? And how did you get through that time?

SARAH: Was a very hard life. And was not a pleasant life. And was a very unhappy life, because I just lost my mother at that time. In 1946.

(BREAK IN TAPE. APPROXIMATELY ONE MINUTE, THIRTY SECONDS)

SARAH: I married this one. So looks like meant to be with him.

INT: It was bashert?

SARAH: It was bashert, yeah. I believe in that. So...and right after I was married, so before I was married I used to give out food, as I told you, for the whole camp, 2,000 people. Me and my girlfriend.

INT: Right. Also Sarah.

SARAH: This one is not here. Sarah. But she is in Israel. And my first husband used to become a chef in the kitchen. And we worked, and was a little bit different life, like before that. You know, was a bigger family, and my father used to have somebody to talk to. You know.

INT: So he moved in with you after you got married?

SARAH: No, no. They gave us a room. They always gave a young married couple a little room, not together. And we were there till 19...1949. Then my father signed up for leaving. Everybody did. This was just a temporary place. We couldn't live there for long. We had to sign the, fill out papers, wherever you want to go, so then was a waiting list. Like everybody signed up papers, and then was a waiting list, everybody has to wait for when they are going to be called to the office that they can leave and go wherever they want to go. So we signed papers, and in the meantime my husband find out that he found an uncle and an aunt in Philadelphia. Through somebody. In camp. People was talking, you know, he found out, from his city somebody knew, from Czechoslovakia, he knew that he have an uncle and an aunt in Philadelphia. And he found out the address from. He didn't even know where they live. He knew he had somebody, but he didn't know where they live. So somebody gave him the address, and he was writing a letter, and they were very happy in Philadelphia, his family, that somebody is alive after such a war. They were happy, so they sent papers for him. Brought him over.

INT: I see.

SARAH: Yeah. They sent papers. And this took long, because we have to wait. Also was a waiting list.

INT: Let me just go back for a second. Your sister, Etle, she got married in Siberia?

SARAH: She got married in Siberia in 1945. Before we left.

INT: Who was the man she married? How did she meet him?

SARAH: He was in the same...

INT: Barrack?

SARAH: The same area there. He was in the same area, so they, and he lost his family. He was alone, with nobody.

INT: What happened to his family? Oh, he just got to Siberia by himself.

SARAH: He just got to Siberia by himself, because his family was killed, and he himself was caught at the border, Russian/German, before they took him to Siberia, and instead he wanted to go back to his city, they got him together with the people at night to Siberia. By himself.

INT: I see.

SARAH: So he was there alone. He was separated from everybody.

INT: And they were all killed in the war?

SARAH: They were all killed in the war, his whole family.

INT: Because you showed me earlier an amazing photograph of Etle's husband, and he was in the Belzec concentration camp, and they had gathered together...

SARAH: He was not in concentration camp.

INT: No, but he was there after the war with some friends.

SARAH: Yeah, after the war he went to look. Yeah, he went to look for family, he didn't find anybody.

INT: Right.

SARAH: So he found them people I showed you, and they told him, and they saw bones from killed people, skeletons and bones, so they got all the bones and skeletons together, and they shipped this to Israel to bury the bones and the skeletons.

INT: And the photograph has Etle's husband...

SARAH: This is Etle's husband, and my cousin's husband, and a doctor, he inspected the whole thing, if you can do that. If the bones and the skeletons don't have sicknesses, you know. Not to send over. They have to inspect this. So they had a doctor in the picture, and other two people from my city. They are five people. That got together as much as they could, and to ship over to Israel.

INT: And they're standing behind these skeletons that they gathered together, and underneath they say, they have the quote about Amalek and not to forget what Amalek did to you. It's a remarkable photograph.

SARAH: That's right, see? So...

INT: What was his name, Etle's husband?

SARAH: Meyer. Meyer Strassberg.

INT: Okay. And I wanted to ask you what Tema's baby's name was. Do you remember?

SARAH: I don't remember.

INT: Okay.

SARAH: No. Because he was born in a different city. And it was right the war, right there, and I don't remember. I know she had a little boy, and she was separated from us, and when the war came, we didn't see her, and she didn't see us, because we lost each other's tracks, because of the war, and then we found out that she was killed. And her husband was selected to the army, wartime.

INT: And you don't know what happened to him.

SARAH: And we don't know what happened to him. We heard what happened to her, that she for sure was killed with her baby. She was running from town to town with the baby to hide herself, but she couldn't make it. They killed her, with the baby.

INT: How were you able to mourn for your mother, your sister Mala, and Tema. How were you able to mourn for them? Did you have time to do that, or did you just have to keep going on with your life?

SARAH: Well, you're talking about a yahrzeit?

INT: Well, yeah. How do you...

SARAH: We keep the yahrzeit. We know, we picked a day, my mother's I know. When she passed away, so I keep the yahrzeit every year.

INT: But you don't know about your sisters'.

SARAH: My sisters, we heard approximately at the time, Mala, when she was, but we're keeping both together. Chamesh aser b'Shvat. That's the date we have.

INT: I see.

SARAH: This was like at that time.

INT: How did you come to that date?

SARAH: The man who told my parents approximately when this happened, when she was killed. So we kept this yahrzeit.

INT: For both of them.

SARAH: Yeah.

INT: I see.

SARAH: Both of them.

INT: Okay. When you met your husband, did the two of you talk about your experiences with each other, about what you had been through?

SARAH: He didn't tell me too much. He told me a little bit. He told to other people. I heard, but he didn't want to hurt me. He went through a **very**, very, very bad, he was in concentration camp. And he saw his father, how they put him in the oven, a whole transport people. Like they separate. They separate older separate, children separate, like younger girls, stronger people separately, because they wanted to have some people to work. For example, my first husband. They saw he's smart, and he can help them a lot. You know, they need people to help them. So that's why he was alive.

INT: What camp was he in, do you know?

SARAH: He told me. He was for four years in concentration camp. He told me names, I really forgot. This was in Czechoslovakia somewhere. It's not Poland. So that's why I'm not...

INT: He was from Czechoslovakia?

SARAH: He was from Czechoslovakia, yeah.

INT: Do you know where he was born?

SARAH: He was born in Czechoslovakia.

INT: But the town, do you know?

SARAH: Oh, I know. He was born in Volosk, the name is Volosk, and then he went to yeshivas in Orshova, a different name, he told me, and then he was in Munkatsh. So he, when he was young, he went to yeshivas, in different cities.

INT: So he was in one camp in Czechoslovakia for four years? One concentration camp?

SARAH: Not in one, not four years the whole time. I mean, he suffered four years. Because Czechoslovakia the war start later, from Poland.

INT: What happened with Czechoslovakia?

SARAH: Started later, like in 1940, or maybe '41. In Poland, was 1939.

INT: '39. Right away, yeah.

SARAH: Yeah. So they didn't have it so long like we had. So he told me, he told me a couple things. Like he saw, when the little babies, they tore them in half, like living kids, just two legs. They took the two legs from the little infant, and tear and throw and make a whole...you know a mountain, like a mountain. And then they put gasoline and burned. Living.

INT: He saw that?

SARAH: He saw this, yeah. He told me. He saw this. (sighs) And also he told me they used to chase them out daytime in the frozen, the frozen cold, cold freezing weather. Snowy, icy, cold freezing weather. Barefoot. Naked. And he used to tell me, he used to, if he would stand in one place, his leg would be frozen to the ground. So he used to hop. You know, hop with his legs. That's how he got not frozen. Some people got frozen to the ice, they tear off a leg. So he tried to do this, and that's why he was not frozen to the ground.

And also at night-time, they chased them in to sleep in a big, big, great, the Germans, in a big, great barrack, in Germany somewhere. And they told them to lay down on the floor. They put cold water on the floor, and wet, they should be cold, and on the wet floors they should sleep. And they have to do that, because in the middle were a couple soldiers with big German shepherds. And they told them: "If you're not going to lay down and sleep, you see this German shepherd? He's going to get you. And go with you around and around and around till you're going to die."

So they had to listen. They were hungry and cold. They couldn't, you know, lay. They had to move around. You know, they were very nervous. So they lay down, but some of them couldn't stay still, you know, be quiet and close their eyes and sleep. So he saw that they are restless, the people, and they couldn't sleep, so he start to use that German

shepherd, to start from the beginning, and he went in a row. The next and the next, and again the next, till you know, they died.

So he said he remembered, he was the sixth one from the corner. So he saw, he closed his eyes, he told me, to make pretend he sleeps, but he still couldn't even move around. But he tried to close his eyes, but he saw a little. He opened up a little bit, he saw what they're doing. So they said in German to the German shepherd, "Fang diesen." You know, Fang diesen, what it means? "Get this one." Get this one. The first one. They got the first one. And he saw they going around and around and around till he died. And they **want** to be dead. He said everybody said that that's it. We're not going to suffer anymore. So what can we do? (sighs) And when they came to the next, and the third, the fourth, the fifth, the sixth, he was the sixth. So he, before he told the dog to get the person, he said, "Close your eyes." "Macht zu de ogen." The eyes. So he saw, he heard, when he was near him already, with this German shepherd, so he closed his eyes, my husband. And he thought he's going to get him, and he's going to go around and around and around. He left him, he took the next one.

INT: Why?

SARAH: He doesn't understand. He said it was from, from, from heaven. He didn't know why he left him. He tried to lay still, not to move around. And not to be, because they wanted, people shouldn't move around. And he tried to do that. Maybe he said, he didn't, he was relaxed. Or he just, G-d wanted him to live. So he left him, and he took the next one, and the next one, and the next one, and some of them also were not picked to, the German shepherd should shlep them around and around and around till he died. And that's how he was alive.

But the next morning, he said, they had to go through again and again the other things, you know, suffering. So he said that it was very bad to go through this life in the concentration camp.

And then he told me other stories, like he was hiding sometimes, they was hitting the people, and they make them suffer, like people would say, "Just shoot me. Don't make me suffer. Just shoot me." So they used to say, "We don't want to waste a bullet. We want you to suffer. The bullet is more, more..."

INT: Worth more than you.

SARAH: Worth more than you. So you'd rather suffer, than we gonna waste a bullet." So they suffered. And one time, he told me also, when they was digging something, the Germans, and a group of people were outside suffering, and my husband used to see from far, they was digging, a train was sinking into the mud. A kind of mud. And the train couldn't, they couldn't get the train out. It was sinking. And he saw from far, so he said to one of the Germans, he said, "Let me out. I just want to show you how to take this train. I have a way." He said, "How did you know?" He said, "Just try it. You'll see. But just give me two sticks, long sticks, and I'm going to be on one side, and the other

one gonna be on the other side. And when I said, 'One, two, three,' you have to pull, and then when I say again, 'One, two, three,' I have to pull, and then little by little, I'm going to get out this train." And they did. When they saw he helped them a lot, and other things he said he helped, about digging and building, and all they need people to help them with this stuff. So he helped them a lot, and he have an idea. So he asked him, "How did you know these things?" He said, "Well, I didn't went to school for this, but I just figure out myself." So they said, "Well, because of this, we need you, and we're going to let you live." So he thinks because of that he's alive.

But he saw, he didn't tell me everything, I mean, all the time what was going on. Just a few things he told me.

INT: Did he tell you in the beginning, or over the years of your marriage?

SARAH: Not right in the beginning, no, no. Over the years, he told me.

INT: And he lost his whole family?

SARAH: He lost his whole family. He was the only one alive. He had seven or nine, I'm not sure, sisters and brothers. I have even their names written down, because before he passed away, he write down all his family's names.

INT: Maybe at some point we should put those on the tape.

SARAH: The names?

INT: Yeah.

SARAH: I have them in a book.

INT: When you have it, maybe next time we'll put them in.

SARAH: I have all the names. And he said one brother, one brother, he said, he found out before the war, is alive somewhere. Through somebody, you know. They changed the groups, through somebody. So he, somehow he met him. And he saw him, and he was very frozen cold, he said. He was about to die. And because my husband, they let him live, so they gave him a blanket, you know, they want him to live, because they needed him. They gave him a blanket, they gave him a pair of shoes to put on, not to be barefoot anymore. They gave him food more to eat, because they needed him, so they let him live.

So he took this brother, he found him, he was so happy, and he took off his blanket, because the other brother was like swollen from cold. So he wrapped around his body with his blanket, and he tried to help him, but it didn't help. He died. He passed away on his arms.

INT: And he finally found him after all that.

SARAH: Yeah. He found him, and he died anyway. Because he was frozen already. His body was already like three quarter dead. He couldn't do anything for him.

INT: What happened to all of his brothers and sisters, and his parents? Were they all in the same camp he was in?

SARAH: No, they separated. They didn't know from each other. They didn't know from each other. They were separated. They all was dead. I mean, they killed them. He had a married sister, and a brother-in-law with four kids. They all were killed.

INT: He was the only one.

SARAH: He's the only one, yeah.

INT: How do you think he handled that? Did he have nightmares when you were...

SARAH: Well, he didn't handle it so easy, because he was not so happy. Because he didn't have anybody. So he was...his life, he always says, he lost his roots, he don't know how he's going to live like this. If he would have only one living from the family, he would, he would enjoy his life. But then he said, thank G-d he got married. He was very happy with me, and then he had the two children, you know, so he was very happy. He loved his children. And he said that's all he have, and he tried to go on with his life. It was not easy. And that, he was not the only person. After such a war. I mean, a lot of people was left like this.

INT: But how do you think he was able to start again after everything he went through, and losing everybody?

SARAH: It was not easy. But he has to go on with his life. Like, for example, after the war, he went to his city, because they still have the father's home there. And he went home, and he went to that house, and that house, the family who lives there was not Jewish, you know. They took, they moved into their house, and they lived there. So he saw a family's living there, a non-Jewish family, with a big dog.

So he walked in, and he said he remembered that he used to have a yard good store before the war, with his brother in partners. So before the war, the war start, they start to, the yard goods, the merchandise, they was hiding between the non-Jewish people. Their customers, or something. And they said after the war they'll come back and they'll get it back, so they'll have their stuff. They couldn't leave the store with merchandise, when the war start. So he used to tell me this. That when he came back, he came into that house, in this house, he was hiding also merchandise in the wall. They was building something, like a hiding place, and they packed with a **lot** of merchandise on the...in a side somewhere in the wall. Was not visible, you know. You couldn't even tell there's something there. But he knew.

So when he came back, so he knocked on the door, and he said to let him in. He let him in. He knew him from before the war. He said, "You remember this is my house?" He said, "Yeah, sure I know." So he said, the man that was living there, "What do you want? Everybody's killed from your family. You can't find anybody. So they don't live here. What are you looking for?" And he knew, he knew probably that he have merchandise, he probably took out the merchandise. My husband couldn't know before he would walk over and look. So he said, "You know? Can you let me go to that area? I put away something there before I left the house." So he knew already that he doesn't want to give it to him. So he said, "If you're not going to leave this house..." he took an ax. "You see this ax? You're going to be killed."

INT: This is the same story they did to your father at the store.

SARAH: The same thing.

INT: The same thing.

SARAH: Yeah, yeah. An ax or a gun. I don't know what he had, yeah. If you gonna go, if you gonna go to this corner, that's what they did. After the war.

INT: This was in Czechoslovakia.

SARAH: Czechoslovakia, yeah.

INT: But I thought Czechoslovakia wasn't as bad as Poland.

SARAH: Well, he didn't want him to, he thought he's going to take the house away, or he's going to take the merchandise away. He probably got it out and he sold. Who knows what he did? He wouldn't let him look. So he said that if you're not going to leave, you'll be killed. So he walked out, and he went to the police. He went to the police, and he told them where the house is, and the man lives there, and how he talked to him. So you think the police were different? They said the same thing. "It's not going to help you anything. The war just stopped. We can't do anything now. We don't have a system now. And we have to wait."

INT: Come back in a couple years. That's what they told your father.

SARAH: Something like this. So he was afraid, and he didn't went further. But he, outside in a different place, he was hiding a gold chain. I still have it. He was holding a gold chain in a place outside, not in the house, somewhere near a Jewish family's house. Not the goyim, you know. And he went there, and he didn't say a word. He walked up, he was digging and digging and digging, he looked for it, and he found it. He put a chain. And I showed Morton. He knows about it. I said, "See, this is your father's chain." And I still have it.

INT: That's an amazing story.

SARAH: It's an amazing story, right?

INT: So he was depressed when you met him, would you say? He was depressed, or, what was he like when you met him?

SARAH: When I met him, no, he was a happy person. I mean, he always had a smile, and he always joked. And he was like a brilliant scholar. He used to learn Talmud, so he believed in G-d that this was from heaven.

INT: That he was saved?

SARAH: Yeah, that he was saved, so he tried, he tried not to show what's in his heart, you know. In his heart probably, he always had in mind, in his heart a big family and everybody. But he didn't talk too much. He didn't talk even, he even didn't talk to the children what he went through.

INT: He never told them?

SARAH: No. He said he doesn't want to upset them, because they're going to go around with nightmares. You know, when they were younger. When they were older, he'd probably say a little bit, and I also talked a little bit. Not like I'm talking to you, everything detail. But just, it was a war, and we went through, and it was suffering, and going through a bad time, and thank G-d we're alive, and all this stuff.

INT: But you never told them a lot of details about it?

SARAH: No, I didn't, because I didn't want they should worry that...

(END TAPE FOUR, SIDE ONE)

(TAPE FOUR, SIDE TWO)

INT: How old were the kids, when you would tell them about the war?

SARAH: I don't remember exactly. I didn't talk too much about it, because my husband told me all the time, "Don't talk about the war. And let's not talk about the war time, because they have to grow up and go to school, and learn, and go on with their life. And one day we'll tell them, but not yet. Not yet." So we never, I don't remember if he told them ever too much about it.

INT: Did the boys ever come to you and ask you questions?

SARAH: I don't remember this, either. If they would ask me, maybe I would say something. But I don't think they asked me.

INT: Okay.

SARAH: Yeah.

INT: Even today, like, as adults?

SARAH: As adults, they know. They know already. They read in the paper, I mean, they see what was going on, so they know what we went through.

INT: But they don't know what you personally went through, or your husband?

SARAH: No, no. I don't think so. Maybe I did, I have to ask Morton. (laughs) Maybe I did. I forget, you know. Maybe I forgot all about it.

INT: Okay. So let's go back to Neu Ulm a little bit. You married your husband, and he got a job as a chef in the kitchen, and also you said he was teaching in the synagogue after the services. And you had your own room, or little apartment or something. So you stayed there until '49. Did you have your son then? When did you...

SARAH: Yeah, in '47.

INT: Oh, in '47. So Morton was born in '47.

SARAH: Morton was born, yeah.

INT: And how was that? How was that?

SARAH: Well, he was born, my husband was very happy he have a son, and I was happy, too, I have a child. And he was a cute little boy, (laughs) everybody was coming to the carriage, I had a beautiful, nice little carriage, and I took a walk, everybody was stopping and look at him, and they said he looks like an angel. And he smiled all the time.

INT: For whom did you name him? Did you name him for anybody?

SARAH: I named him for his father and my mother. His father was Abraham, and my mother was Matl, so Matl. Morton. You know. Two names, from both sides. And...we were happy to have him. It was no question about it.

INT: Was your pregnancy okay, and the birth was okay, after everything you'd been through?

SARAH: Yeah, everything was fine, yeah. The pregnancy was fine. Everything was alright.

INT: How about your father? Was your father happy that you...

SARAH: Oh, yeah, yeah. Sure, sure. He was very happy. All the time when a child is born in the family, so everybody's happy. I wish I had more. I wish I had more. Because I was sick after my second son. So, oh, I always wanted to have more children.

INT: You couldn't have any more after this?

SARAH: I was sick, yeah. (soft voice) Couldn't have.

INT: So you stayed there after he was born until he was..two? Before you left for America?

SARAH: Oh, before I left? No. He was almost three. Yeah. 1950.

INT: Oh. 1950 you left.

SARAH: Yeah, 1947, 1950.

INT: Okay. And you got to America because you got papers from your husband's....

SARAH: Yeah, because we have papers, they send us papers, and...in 1949 they let us know that we can immigrate with our next. So we came to Bremen. This is also Germany. And as soon we came, in a week we had to leave on the ship. So Morton got sick. He had the measles, and we had to be delayed because of that. And we were very unhappy about it, because to live in Bremen was not easy. This was a little city that, it's just emigration city. Just when people leave. It was right near...

INT: Right. A big shipyard?

SARAH: Right. A big shipyard. So he became sick, I start to cry, and they took him to the hospital. He was **very** sick, then. He have pneumonia. And he was long in the hospital, like four weeks.

INT: Oh, boy.

SARAH: Yeah, he was very sick. And I used to, I cried every day, and I stayed with him every day. And I was very upset. And I mean, it was such a bad going through, because of that. But thank G-d, later, like in four weeks, we left. We left. We came...

INT: So as soon as he was better you were able to leave.

SARAH: As soon as he was better, he recuperate a little bit, and then they let us go. Under the doctor's permission. I mean, I couldn't do it all myself.

INT: Did you talk to your husband about where to go? Was there a choice between Israel, America, Canada?

SARAH: Yes. We did register Israel or United States. But then when he found out he have an uncle and an aunt, so he wanted to come here, to see his family.

INT: Did you feel strongly one way or the other?

SARAH: Well, we thought which one comes first. We wanted to go, which one comes first. But this came first. So unfortunately, his uncle and aunt died before we arrived.

INT: Oh, no.

SARAH: Both of them. In three months.

INT: What happened?

SARAH: He had a heart attack, and she had cancer. In three months. And this was a very, very upsetting thing. He couldn't, he couldn't take this. He said, he said, "I have..."

INT: That was the end of his family. That was all he had.

SARAH: Yeah, one daughter was alive. They had one daughter and one son. So they were single at that time. Not married. Young kids. So since his family, his uncle and aunt were not alive anymore, he was very upset, and he said he doesn't want to go. They have to take us over to their house when we came, but this way he didn't want to go. He said, if they're not here, he doesn't want to go to their daughter, because she was a young girl, and he doesn't want to, he didn't feel comfortable. He didn't want it. So the Jewish Family Service gave us a good start.

INT: You came to Philadelphia right away?

SARAH: We came, our papers was to Philadelphia. We came to New York first. The papers was to Philadelphia. So the Jewish Family, looked like somebody notified the Jewish Family Service, that we have to be picked up from the port, from the ship port. So they came from Philadelphia to pick us up. The Jewish Family Service gave us a start. But we didn't know the language. We didn't have family. We didn't have no belongings. We were very, it was very scary. We don't know nobody. And people talk English, we don't know what they're talking to us. Only who knew Jewish, we could talk. So it was very, very hard.

So the Jewish Family took us over. They brought us in Fourth and Jackson, downtown, was a big house. They was, the Jewish Family Service had rented this, or bought this house just for the newcomers. So they put us with three families, in one house. And everybody had a child. So we have to cook in one stove, and bake in one stove, and eat in one dining room. You know, just one house. Three families. And they allow us to

live only three months in this house. And you have to look for a job, and just, they wouldn't support us anymore. They...

INT: You didn't know English. Neither of you knew English.

SARAH: Who?

INT: Neither of you knew English.

SARAH: No. No English. And we have to start. They told us, "We're giving you to live for three months, and we're going to support you for three months," and they didn't give us enough anyway, because you know, when they give support, they don't give you enough.

INT: But wait a minute. What happened to the rest of your family? Did they all come over too?

SARAH: No. They were in Germany. They stayed in Germany. Because we came because of his family.

INT: Okay. But they did get out eventually.

SARAH: They got out a year later. They signed up, also. Everybody has to sign up, wherever they want to go. So their time was a year later. So they are in New York now. They came to New York. Also the HIAS.

So the HIAS told us that we are going you a lift, a place to live, we're going to support you for three months, and after three months, the end of three months, you have to go out and look for a place where to live, and a job for yourself. Otherwise, we're not going to support you. So it was very sad. Very, very something bad to go through. Because with a child, and my husband's religious. He's not going to work Shabbos and the Jewish holidays. He could find a job. He had a textile business in Europe. I mean, in Fourth Street, people begged him. You know Fourth Street, they have the textile business? They **begged** him to be a salesman there. But they want him to work Friday night and Saturday and the Jewish holidays. He didn't want it. So he didn't took the job. So it was very bad. So he couldn't find a job. So **I** found a job. **I** went out to work.

INT: Doing what?

SARAH: I worked in a factory, so I couldn't leave a little, he was a little boy, leave him. So they gave me home to sort stockings, in a stocking factory. Like they have short stockings and long stockings. Mixed. Boxes, mixed stockings. Like damaged stockings and good stockings, and I have to, in the middle of the night I was sitting and doing this.

INT: At your house. You could do it at home.

SARAH: At my house, yeah. I was working. And till he found a little job. He found a job as a Bar Mitzvah teacher, you know? And he was a clergyman in a synagogue. He was like a chazzan, he was davening, he was leaning Torah. You saw (in the picture) he was blowing shofar. But this was not in a good area. A very bad...

INT: Where were you living?

SARAH: The first job was in Fourth and Catherine Streets.

INT: Oh, okay. And were you living around there?

SARAH: Yeah.

INT: South Philadelphia.

SARAH: Yeah, South Philadelphia, they gave us to live. So we lived there. And before this we took rooms. We had to go out three months. He didn't find a job. So we took rooms by Rabbi Lipschitz. You heard about this rabbi? He's dead already, in Poplar Street. So we lived by him a year and a half. And **then** I found a job. He still didn't have a job.

INT: How were you surviving?

SARAH: Well, the Jewish Family Service realized that we still don't have a job, and he, because of his religion, so they still tried to support us. Till he find something. So we looked, we looked, but he couldn't find. Not because he couldn't find, he didn't want to work Shabbos and Yom Tov, so he, so I found a job, and then they gave us less. Till, till he have a full-time job. Also as a clergyman. And was not easy. And then like in 19...this is 1950. 1950, 1951 he found a job. 1953 Sammy was born, so we had two kids already. We used to live at Fifth and...was a synagogue at Fifth, South Philadelphia, Fifth Street in South Philadelphia somewhere. I forgot where. Not Catherine. It's not far from each other. So we used to live also in a synagogue. Sammy was born there, in Einstein Hospital. And it was again not so...the neighborhood changed, you know, and they didn't pay so good, you know. And it was not easy. And we had to look for something else. So we tried to look.

Then we moved to West Philadelphia, also in a synagogue. Was a little better. A nicer room to live, a nicer neighborhood, you know, was different. But still was not so easy. All them years. And little by little I learned English, how to talk, and how to read.

INT: From, how? How did you learn it?

SARAH: I didn't went to school. I never went. I didn't have time. I have two kids. I don't have time. So I tried to go to the library and take dictionaries, and look up, like Yiddish and English, or Polish and English, or, and then I bought papers every day. Then I took out books beside dictionaries. Books to read. And then when Morton start school,

I mean this was already, he was already five, six years. He was, that's right. He went to Beth Jacob School. And he didn't know English at that time.

INT: Oh, you were speaking Yiddish to him all the time.

SARAH: We talk Yiddish. So he didn't know English, so he didn't like the school because of that. So finally I have to be with him in school most of the time, because if I'm there, he stays. If I'm not there, he wants to go home. So...

INT: Because of the language.

SARAH: The language, yeah. The language. So the principal let me stay. Not all the time.

INT: Could you communicate with the teachers? Did they understand Yiddish, and they were able to...

SARAH: Yeah.

INT: Because it was a religious school.

SARAH: Yeah, I talked Yiddish with them. Until he grew up a little older and older, and then he talked English already, and I learned already from Morton, and I learned from his friends, and I learned from people, and every year was different with the language.

INT: So your children brought the language into the house.

SARAH: Yeah, yeah, yeah. So was not an easy life.

INT: How did your husband learn English?

SARAH: He learned also from people.

INT: But didn't take classes at night or anything?

SARAH: No. No. Also he looked up dictionary, he was reading the papers. Like me, at night he was sitting, looking, the children were sleeping, so we were sitting and practicing.

INT: It must have been very difficult.

SARAH: Oh, it was very difficult, yeah. So it was something to go through. And then I missed my family, you know. I didn't have nobody here. And everybody was in New York, already. I always wanted to move to New York.

INT: Could you visit them? Did you have...

SARAH: Yeah, they came to us, we went to them. Not too often, because it was very hard with two kids. And then I didn't know even how to go to New York. I didn't know, you know, it was hard for me. I didn't have a car. For years I didn't have a car, because we didn't have the money, to buy a car. Plain talk, because we hardly have to have for the other things. And later, later, years later, we tried to save up a couple dollars, and we bought a, we had a car later. Morton was driving a car already when he was older, like eighteen years old, we bought him a car. He used to take his friends to school. And then I was teaching Sammy how to drive a car. I mean, this is years later.

INT: Right. But in the beginning it was very hard.

SARAH: In the beginning it was **very**, very hard. It was not easy. It was not easy. My husband was sick a lot of times in the meantime. I was sick.

INT: What happened?

SARAH: He had an ulcer. And he had heart trouble. And he had diabetes. And he passed away, he had cancer in the lung.

And I was very upset. Life was not so easy when he was sick all the time. He was sick all the time.

INT: From what time?

SARAH: He was sick, from what time? When the kids were little. Like Morton must have be like ten years old, and Sammy was five years old.

INT: Oh. And he got really sick.

SARAH: Yeah. He was sick all the time. Yeah, he was in hospital a lot of times, and he was sick, and then in 1976 he passed away.

INT: How many years older than you was he?

SARAH: My husband?

INT: Yeah.

SARAH: I think ten, eleven years. Something like this. Yeah. He was older.

(Pause)

INT: This is a continuation of an interview with Sarah Klein. It's January 5th, 1995.

The last time we left off, Mrs. Klein, we were talking a little bit about your life in America when you first came here, and how difficult it was for you and your husband to settle here. You didn't know the language. You had to teach yourself the language. Your husband would not work on Shabbos, so it was very hard for him to find a job. And you finally had to go to work. You were working at night. And you talked about, a little bit about when your children were born. And I was wondering if you could tell me what support system you used then to help you cope with the difficulties of life in America. Was there someone you could go to to talk about it? Did you keep it all inside? Were you able to share it with your husband, or maybe did you meet some friends here, also survivors like yourself? Or what did you do? I mean, it was such a difficult time for you, and how did you...

SARAH: Yeah, it was very difficult, that's true. When we came here, so the Jewish Family Service took us over. They were a big help for us. In the meantime they gave us a place to live only for three months. In South Philadelphia. Fourth and Jackson. We lived with three families, but they told us we only gonna live three months there and we have to just to go on our own, and three months later. So, it was not easy. And in the meantime we had to go to the office. Their office was in Walnut Street. Fifteenth or Sixteenth, I don't remember. And we had to talk. Once a week we went to ask them questions, where to go and what to do, and they told us. They gave us a little bit advice about the job, finding a job, or where to live after we were getting out three months later.

So, was not easy, because as I said before, we didn't have the language, and my husband, let him rest in peace, he didn't work on Shabbos and the Jewish holidays, so he couldn't find a job so fast. So I took a job. But it was not easy for me, too, because I had to work on this job in the middle of the night to sort these nylon stockings from a factory.

INT: Did you have any friends that you could...

SARAH: Friends? We didn't have anybody. My husband only had one cousin, and...they wanted us to live with them, but we didn't want to live with them, so we want to be on our own. If his uncle and aunt would be alive, maybe we would stay with them.

INT: This is the uncle and aunt who died right before you got to America.

SARAH: They died before we came to this country, and this was also a very depressing time to go through. Because he never lived to see them. He never saw them before, because they left Europe years ago, before the war. And he didn't know even how they looked. He just find out he have family in Philadelphia, and they brought us over. They were happy to...have one of the family's left after such a, everybody was killed. So they were very happy. They sent papers for us. And we came, but we didn't see, we didn't live to see them. So it was very difficult.

When...after the three months we have to move out. We lived in Fourth and Jackson, and the Jewish Family Service took us over. And after this we have to move out, so we moved to an apartment, and the Jewish Family Service still supported us, because since

my husband, let him rest in peace, didn't find a job still, so they wouldn't let us just go like this. So they start to help, they still helped us. They send us in like, I don't remember how much, a little check, we should be able to pay the rent, and for food, not too much. Just a little bit. But we tried to stretch the money, you know, like to pay the expense. It was not easy, but we tried to manage.

And as I said before, he looked for a job all the time, he couldn't find, and in the meantime he became sick. And finally he find a job as a clergyman, in a synagogue. He was...ritual director in a synagogue. Because this way he can keep the Sabbath and the Jewish holidays. So this job he took was not so convenient. We had to live together with, like the synagogue was on the side, and we had to, the other side was just one room, to live, so we were three people. It was not easy.

So we have to look for another job. So he tried to look for another job. Well, he found another job. We moved very often. Because every job he found, the neighborhood changed all the time. So we have to move out. And then in 1953, we came in 1950. In 1953 my other son Samuel was born, G-d bless him. So I had a little baby, so we couldn't live in one room, so we have to move out, and we moved out, also to a synagogue. That's the kinds of jobs he only could have, because he couldn't, from Europe he was a businessman. He had a yard good store. And he was very good in the business. And he would find a job here, but only if he works Saturdays and Jewish holidays. So he didn't want to take this job. So he was, make up his mind that only that's the kind of job. He was teaching Bar Mitzvahs, and Bat Mitzvahs, and was leading services in the synagogue. And he was davening, and he was blowing shofar, all this stuff, the ritual things. So he stayed on this job, but he never maked a good living in this, because it was not easy. But we tried to manage.

INT: Were you still working, even with the little children?

SARAH: No, no, later, I didn't work, because since he got a job, so, and I had a baby. I couldn't work anymore. So he's the only one, the support of the family, and we tried to manage.

INT: But if you kept moving, from job to job, so then you must not have been able to make connections with people in the neighborhood.

SARAH: Yeah, we made connections right away, because people came twice a day to the synagogue, so we were very friendly people, and people liked us all over. Every place we came, we always made friends right away. But nobody could help us with a job. That's the kind of job he has to stay with, because it was not easy. So, we had friends, and we didn't ask anybody for help, because we didn't want it. We tried to manage, how much he had, and this was fine.

INT: But what about emotional help, I mean...

SARAH: Emotional, it was not a happy life. Because we went through, we moved very often, and then we have to make new friends, and know new people, and we have to adjust all the time a new life, and it was not easy, either. And then the moving was not an easy thing. To move from one place to another with two kids was not easy. So that's the way we lived. We couldn't help it.

INT: But where did you go for...support? You just depended on yourself? Not financial support, but I mean emotional support for yourself?

SARAH: Well, people came in sometimes. People from the synagogue talked to us, and told us, maybe you can do this, you know, about jobs. And my husband, let him rest in peace, he took a job one time, in a factory, cutting samples for furniture. He worked like four weeks. He came home, he said he's not going to work. Because after the war, his legs were not enough strong, and he had pains in his legs. And he have to stand and work, so he came home, and he said, "I can't do it." So he gave up the job. And then we start to look for another, again, connection with the synagogue, because he couldn't be on a job.

INT: Physically he was in pretty bad shape after the war.

SARAH: He was not a well person, to begin with. Because he went through a lot. He lost a whole family, and he was the only one left from the whole family. He missed everyone, and he always used to talk about it, to me, not to the children, because he didn't want to make them worry about it. And he told me that it's not good. If he would only have a brother or a sister, anybody, an uncle who he knows from Europe. He didn't have anybody. So he was not happy with his life. I mean, he was very happy when he had the two children. He said, "Oh, thank G-d, thank G-d, I have a family." And he always used to say, "Thank G-d I found such a nice wife." (laughs) He always used to say that, yeah, always. That's true. And then he was happy with the two children, and he really appreciated this. But still, when it came to a holiday, to a Friday night, Shabbos table, he always wished to have somebody in the family. He didn't have anybody.

INT: Did he ever go into any kind of therapy, or did you ever go into any therapy?

SARAH: No, no. He didn't need therapy. He just...he just was not happy that what happened to everybody after the Second World War, people find themselves like lost. No roots. No family. It's a very unpleasant life. But he was employed in the synagogue, so he was a little bit more busy. Talked to people, he...sometimes he told to, when he spoke to somebody, he told them what he went through during the war, so he was, it was not on his chest. So he felt a little better. But people didn't want to hear these things.

INT: That's what I wanted to ask you. What was the Jewish community like to the survivors?

SARAH: No. They didn't want to hear, because they said it's very depressing. Depressing, they didn't want to hear. So he knew already, so he didn't say anything anymore.

INT: But he must have, but you said he could find some people that he could talk to.

SARAH: He probably did. He didn't talk in front of me. I mean, he was a person, he liked to talk to people. He was very good in talking. Like, I always admired him. Whenever he was between people, he talked. He was very, he was talkative.

INT: Outgoing.

SARAH: Yeah. Yeah. He was very good in talking. But he was sometimes careful. He found out that people don't want to hear this, so he didn't talk about this. He talked other things, politics, or anything, but not in the paper, he was reading something.

INT: Weren't there other survivors in your community that you could talk to, or not?

SARAH: Not too many in this area, particular area where we used to live.

INT: Which area was that again? Not South Philadelphia, after South Philadelphia.

SARAH: After South Philadelphia was West Philadelphia. So was not too many newcomers living there. All American-born people. So he couldn't talk too much. And usually the newcomers lived in Strawberry Mansion, or in Logan. Some areas, but where we used to live, were not too many newcomers. And he didn't find to travel to them, or they should come to us, because he was busy.

INT: So there was no one to even speak Yiddish with. So he had to communicate in English with them?

SARAH: Well, they talk Yiddish, the people here. Yeah, they did.

INT: So you could find also people to speak Yiddish to?

SARAH: Yeah, I found people to talk Yiddish. But when I used...

(END TAPE FOUR, SIDE TWO)

(TAPE FIVE, SIDE ONE)

INT: Okay, you were telling me that you could find a few people who could speak Yiddish, and that might have been helpful for you. But did you have any, you really had no good friends that you could tell your heart to, or your feelings, or your depressions, or your anger, or whatever you were feeling?

SARAH: Well, we used to talk to people. I mean, everybody liked to help us. Whatever is possible. But we didn't too much told them, and we didn't ask too much, because we knew that to find a job, that's impossible, because of the Shabbos. Nobody's going to, they didn't have a job like this. So my husband didn't even ask anymore anybody, and he was looking for a job, that's a kind of job. He looked. And he always find a job to be a clergyman in synagogue, because he wants to observe the Jewish laws. And he always had a job like this. He didn't want to even exchange for different, because any other job he had to work on Shabbos.

So, but people, we had friends. We were friendly to them, they were friendly to us. We had people in the synagogue, so we didn't have to go out and look for friends, we had it right here in the place. And any time we moved out from any synagogue, we still, we were very remembered, and everybody called afterwards, and asked us how we're doing, and if we liked the new neighborhood, the new shul, synagogue. And everybody was friendly, even after we left. So that's the way we was going on with our lives.

INT: Now, were you able to talk with your husband from time to time about your war experiences, and he was able to speak with you about his?

SARAH: Well, we didn't talk too much. I mean, once I told him, and he told me, so he knew.

INT: That was it.

SARAH: That was it. We knew already. We didn't keep on talking. And it was not easy to talk about it, because to remind yourself the bad past, so it was not pleasant. So we didn't talk too much, no.

INT: Could you describe your marriage a little bit? What it was like with your husband? You had said that you married him mostly because your father wanted you to.

SARAH: Well, that's not the way, I **said** that, but I wouldn't marry him, if I wouldn't want it.

INT: If you hadn't wanted to, right.

SARAH: If I hadn't wanted it, it's true. But I saw that my father liked him very much, and he was a nice person, and he wanted to marry me, and otherwise he would leave the camp, he told us. If I don't marry him, so he have nothing to do in this camp. And my father told me that I should marry him, because I won't find another...young man like him, because he was very intelligent, and he was a scholar, and he was very likeable, and he was nice-looking also. And like they say in Yiddish, balebatish. So he didn't want to lose him, and he said that I shouldn't let him go, because he fits into our family. So then I was, he came in, and I spoke to him more and more, and I got to be, more to know him, so then I thought, maybe he's really for me and for our family.

INT: You felt comfortable with him, would you say?

SARAH: Yeah, yeah. I was comfortable with him. He was nice. At that time, he didn't have to go to work. He worked in camp, and I worked in camp, so we didn't need too much at that time. Whatever we had, so we were happy. And then, like my older son, G-d bless him, Morton, was born, so we had a family already, so everything went, like, we tried to go on with our lives. And everything was fine.

INT: Could you tell me if your belief in G-d changed at all from before the war, during the war, and then after the war? Did you, how did you deal with the question of, you know, where was G-d during the Holocaust?

SARAH: Well, I used to talk to my husband about these things. About where was G-d, what happened. He was complaining, his whole family is wiped off, and my family, and six millions. You know, everybody lost so many of their families. So we used to talk about it, why G-d let this go like this. And since he, my husband was a scholar, so he said that it is written in one of the talmudical books that this is supposed to happen. He knows. He had books, and he showed me. He showed me. I didn't understand translation. He knew. He showed me, "See this?" The page from one Talmud book. "That's written years, years ago, that something like this is gonna happen."

INT: But why?

SARAH: There's gonna be a war, and Jews are gonna be killed.

INT: So it was G-d's plan?

SARAH: Yeah.

INT: Is that how your husband saw it?

SARAH: It was from heaven, yeah. And we shouldn't have no, no complaints, because it's no answers. If G-d does something, it has to be that way.

INT: And how did **you** feel about that? That was **his** belief, but what about you?

SARAH: That's his, but I couldn't understand why G-d wants us to, that something like this should happen. But I was not happy about it, of course. I lost my two sisters. Lovely sisters. And I lost a brother-in-law and a little nephew, and grandparents, and uncles and I mean, a whole family of more than a hundred people. So I, and people, good people, I mean, they didn't do nothing harm to nobody. So why did they have to go through something like, one of my uncles was cut up in pieces while he was alive.

INT: Religious people and not religious...

SARAH: Religious. With his special knife. His own special...so I can't, I don't understand.

INT: So did you agree with your husband, that that must be G-d's plan?

SARAH: I didn't, but he said, "You should never, it's sad, but it's from G-d." He said that everything came from G-d. You can't go against this. He has His reasons. He had a reason. He had reasons. He said, because maybe the Jews are not enough religious, he said. He wants that the Jews should observe the holidays and be more religious, and He sees that they don't observe, so maybe that's why.

INT: Were you angry at G-d after the war?

SARAH: No. No.

INT: No?

SARAH: I can't, I'm not angry, because everything comes from Him. So how can I be against Him? I mean, whatever He does, He has a reason. Everything has to be a reason. So I can't be angry at Him. I mean, anything that happens to a person comes from heaven. That's what my husband always used to say. Nothing that is done by itself.

INT: Do you believe that?

SARAH: (sighs) Yeah, I believe, but I have questions. Always, like I lost my husband, you know, he left me with two young boys. This was very wrong. I mean, the way I was left. But He had a reason, what can I tell you?

INT: How old were the kids when your husband died?

SARAH: Morton was like maybe 27, and Sammy was 22. They were not married. Sammy just went to, was accepted to medical school, and Morton had a job in Washington. (pause)

INT: So how did you handle that when he died? How was that for you?

SARAH: It was very sad and bad. And very...it's a big change. It was a big change in life. And I...

INT: How old were you? You must have been in your...

SARAH: I was younger. Well, I was like 55, 56, probably. That's twenty years already. So it was not, it was very bad. I mean, my boys were not even married. And my younger son just got into medical school, and I thought that he won't be able to study. And who knows, you know, he lost his father. And Morton the same thing. So I was afraid that it's

going to be, something is going to pop up, like again problems, because you know, no father in the house.

INT: The boys were still at home with you?

SARAH: Yes. Sammy was accepted Temple Medical School, the same year, so he was home with me, yeah. And Morton was in Washington. But then Morton came back from Washington when Sammy was accepted to Boston, internship. So he left, so Morton came home, because he didn't want me to be alone. And I have very good sons. They're very good children. Really, they always cared about me, and they, it was, they wouldn't want to let me be by myself. So this was a big help. But I was worried about them, you know.

INT: Did you have to go to work at that point, or you...

SARAH: I was looking for a job just to, not to sit and think about my problems. I just...

INT: Just to be busy?

SARAH: To be busy. I was looking for a job. I went to all the department stores. I applied for a salesgirl's job. But they asked me which days I want to work, and I skipped the weekends, like Saturday, Friday night and Shabbos, and Jewish holidays, so they never called me back. They didn't want me, because they want me on weekends, also. The whole week, and the weekend. I didn't accept this, so they told me, they're not sure they're gonna call me, because of that. So I worked, I went to a bakery, and they accepted me. So I worked for twelve years. And this was a big help for me, because I was with people. And I...

INT: You like being with people?

SARAH: Yeah. Oh, yeah, yeah. Before that I used to take a job in a synagogue as a assistant nursery teacher. In Shaarei Shamayim. I used to live there. I used to substitute. They call me in whenever a teacher was sick. But I didn't have a job, but they knew that I can help out.

INT: Did you like working with children? Small children?

SARAH: Yeah, yeah, I was dancing with them, and singing with them, and it was nice. But since I lost my husband, let him rest in peace, so they wanted me to continue to do this for them, but I didn't want it, because I was unhappy. So, because I have to sing with them, and dance with them, I...

INT: You didn't feel like it.

SARAH: I didn't feel like to do that. So I didn't want to go back to teaching, so I went to the bakery.

INT: So you were depressed after your husband died.

SARAH: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

INT: For a long time.

SARAH: Oh, yeah. Oh, I used to cry. I used to cry, and I didn't want to cry in front of the children, so I used to have to run to the bathroom fast, and cry out a little, and then I came, they shouldn't see.

INT: Because you missed him so much?

SARAH: Well, sure I miss him a lot. Sure, sure I missed him, because he was a nice person, and he was missed in the house. I mean, after all, he never came back to the house, and this was very sad. To go through something like this.

INT: He had lung cancer?

SARAH: He had lung cancer, yeah. He had other things, but he died from, he had heart trouble.

INT: That's what he died from.

SARAH: Yeah. He died from lung cancer.

INT: Could you talk a little bit about becoming a mother, and what that meant for you after the war? Was it a conscious decision on your part to have children because of the war, or it was just a natural kind of a thing? Did you think that, I want to have children because I want to replace the Jews that were lost, or did you just have children because people had children, and that's...

SARAH: It's a combination of both. Because as I was married already, I want to have children. And I **love** children. I loved, I raised my children with, they were in my heart 24 hours a day. They still are in my heart. Even they married. I'm the kind of person I love children. Especially. I loved them. But I couldn't have more than two. I wanted to have more.

INT: Why?

SARAH: I was sick. So I'm thankful I have the children, and I liked them very much. And I raised them, I always watched them. Even they was outside with children playing, I was running to the window, to keep an eye that if they are alright.

INT: Were you afraid for them? Do you think you were afraid that something would happen to them?

SARAH: Yeah. I was always afraid. They might be hurt, or a car would run over, they would go in the street, or a fight with kids. I kept an eye **all** the time on them.

INT: Do you think that's because of the Holocaust? Do you think that's because of what you went through?

SARAH: No, no, no, it's because it's me. It's me.

INT: You would have been like that no matter what.

SARAH: No matter what. That's me. I'm the kind of person, I'm a devoted person. Not just to children. To others. I know myself. That's the way I am.

INT: So you were very protective with them. And they could come to you if they had a problem do you think?

SARAH: Any time. I wish they would come. They don't tell me too much now. I wish they would come.

INT: They're all grown up now.

SARAH: They're grown up, yes, I understand that, but I wish they would tell me more. But I'm not going to mix in in their lives, and I let them live their life, and they should be happy and healthy, so then I'm alright, too. But I don't ask too much questions now. If they tell me, fine. If they don't, so I don't ask.

INT: You don't interfere.

SARAH: No, I don't interfere, no.

INT: Could you tell me a little bit about how you and your husband disciplined the children? Was there any, how did you, if they misbehaved or whatever, how did you handle that?

SARAH: Well, my husband, first husband, let him rest in peace. He wanted the children should be more religious. And he was very strict about religion. And we didn't live in good neighborhoods, they should see religion. It was a very bad experience for them. For example, wherever we used to live, as I told you, just American people, they didn't raise their children in a religious way. And we wanted them, not just me, my husband was the one, who was strict. And they couldn't understand, especially Morton. He was the older one. He couldn't understand how come this one, this friend is Jewish, and the other one is Jewish, they don't have to go to synagogue. They're allowed to drive in the car. Their parents go wherever they want to go Shabbos. And he's the only one left Shabbos at home. And the Jewish holidays. So he couldn't understand.

INT: Was he going to Beth Jacob still at this time?

SARAH: He was going to Beth Jacob, but neighbors...

INT: For how many years did you send him there?

SARAH: He went, I don't think he was finished at Beth Jacob. Because it was a problem. Beth Jacob moved, and they had transportation was, it was a complication, something. I don't remember.

INT: So about what grade?

SARAH: I don't remember exactly. He went to a synagogue in Hebrew.

INT: After school Hebrew?

SARAH: I didn't understand. I made a mistake. I know. I should have understand better at that time.

INT: Understand what?

SARAH: That send him away to a yeshiva, or you know, to a more, away from home, they shouldn't see, we didn't have neighborhoods that they should learn from kids, from kids' parents. The kids' parents...

INT: Nobody was frum.

SARAH: Nobody was frum, and this was bad. And I didn't understand. So...

INT: So looking back you would have done that differently, maybe? You would have sent him to yeshiva?

SARAH: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. I did. I mean, I went for interviews to Yeshiva University with Morton and Sammy, and they passed the tests and everything. They were accepted. But somehow, I don't know what happened, they changed their minds or something, and we didn't encourage them so much. We thought they'll be alright. You know, with them schools, like the synagogue schools. This was wrong.

INT: It wasn't alright? They didn't stay religious, or what?

SARAH: Yeah, they stayed religious. They were good boys. But they didn't have friends, enough. Friends is important.

INT: Yeah. Your social group.

SARAH: And I didn't understand it. It's not just that I didn't understand. I didn't have a car. You know, you have a car, you drive here, there, so you're more convenient. But I didn't have a car at that time, so it was hard for me. And my husband was not well. I should take trains and buses and go with them. And you know, go and take them to school and come back, and leave him alone. So it was...

INT: So you were limited by the neighborhood that you were in, sort of. You were sort of stuck with the people that were there. They weren't religious, the kids weren't religious.

SARAH: Yeah. So it was not easy for me. I really was worried all the time about these things. That it's not right. But I couldn't help it. I mean, I didn't know so far that it's such a big mistake. Later I find out that I did make a mistake. That's why I always wanted to move to New York. Because my whole family's there, and everybody's religious. Their kids and everybody. But somehow my first husband, he went to look for a job. Several times. He didn't find a job there. He came back, he said he couldn't find a job. So we find, we was winding up to stay in Philadelphia. And they were raised in Philadelphia, in neighborhoods like this, so...

INT: It wasn't so easy.

SARAH: It was not so easy. But thank G-d, they're nice kids. They turned out good.

INT: Did you and your husband agree on that, that you both wanted them to be religious? That was something that you were both committed to?

SARAH: Oh, yeah, yeah, sure. He wants religion, I wanted religion.

INT: But how do you mean that he was strict about it? How would he...

SARAH: Well, he want to make sure that Morton, when he was already a teenager, when he went to Central High School, he want to make sure that he davens before he goes to school. You know, the tefillin, at the Bar Mitzvah. And every Shabbos he should be in shul with him. And all his friends was playing ball outside. You know.

INT: So how was Morton with that?

SARAH: He was not happy. And this is bad, too. It's very bad. That's why we wanted to move. Always, move, move, move, but we never moved, and in the meantime, life didn't went the way we wanted. With raising the kids.

INT: What about with Sammy? Was it the same thing with him?

SARAH: The same thing. Sure, the same thing. Sammy the same way.

INT: Also your husband wanted him to daven in the morning before he went to school?

SARAH: Yeah, sure.

INT: And Sammy wasn't happy about it either.

SARAH: No. Well, Sammy went away to college in Brandeis, so he was away from home already. So we couldn't control Sammy so much. But Morton was always home.

INT: I see.

SARAH: Because he went to Temple. He lived home. So for Morton was a little bit more difficult. Because his father was watching him about religion.

INT: Do you think being the older son had anything to do with that too? The oldest son? Do you think he was harder on him because he was the oldest son?

SARAH: No, no. He didn't make no different.

INT: He would have done the same thing with Sammy if Sammy was home?

SARAH: He would have done the same thing, yeah. Because it's his children. He want them to be as much religious, he could hold onto them.

INT: What about other kinds of discipline, not just having to do with religion, but when the kids would do something wrong? Who was the disciplinarian in the house? You or your husband, or both of you?

SARAH: Well, I never was strict to my children. That's for sure, they remember this. (laughs) And they remember their father, too, so...(laughs)

INT: So you were different.

SARAH: So I was different. I never hollered at them. He did. (laughs) You know. And I never mixed in with davening, like he did. And he always wanted him to stay in synagogue with him, and I felt that they had to play with kids, too. So I felt different.

INT: So you were more lenient than he was.

SARAH: I was more soft. I was more soft. I was always good to them. And not too strict, and I didn't holler, and I always gave them, you know, they should be comfortable money-wise. You know, everything. I was more...

INT: Sounds like you were a lot like your mother.

SARAH: Mm?

INT: It sounds like you were a lot like your mother was with you.

SARAH: Yeah, yeah, I was very good to them. He was also good, but religion, came out that he's a little bit, not the way they wanted. So...but he's still a father, you know. They should understand that he meant, you know. The main mistake was that if we would be in a different neighborhood, it wouldn't be so bad for them, and for my husband to see how they grow up. But in them neighborhood, he didn't see the way he wanted. So this was the big mistake.

INT: What happened when your father came, and everybody came over from Germany? When was that? What year was that, do you know, and how was that for you?

SARAH: Oh, my father came, they came to New York in 1951. A year later. They came to New York. But they came to New York, they stayed there, because the HIAS took them over, also. We came here, because his uncle...

INT: Who had died?

SARAH: Yeah. They brought us over, so we had to come here.

INT: But your father and your sisters and brothers, they didn't have anyone in New York. You didn't have any relatives in New York?

SARAH: No, no.

INT: The HIAS set them up there?

SARAH: They took them over, set them up there, yeah.

INT: I see. Where, in Brooklyn?

SARAH: In Brooklyn, yeah. And everybody was young, and nobody was married at that time, and now all my sisters are married already, and have children.

INT: Wait. One of your sisters got married, in Siberia, right? Etle, didn't she get married?

SARAH: Well, she was not with us. She was in Europe.

INT: Okay.

SARAH: After we came from Siberia, she was in a different, she went...

INT: Yeah, but she came to New York. Etle came to New York with her husband?

SARAH: No. No, she came to New York.

INT: What happened with her?

SARAH: She came to New York from Israel.

INT: Oh, what happened? She went to Israel?

SARAH: Well, from Lodz. You know, she used to live in Lodz with her husband?

INT: Oh, I didn't know that.

SARAH: I told you.

INT: Oh, I don't know if you told me that.

SARAH: Yeah. Right from Siberia, when we came to Szczecin.

INT: After the war, yeah.

SARAH: They went straight to Lodz, because he was living as a single boy there, and he knew people, and he used to have a little factory. Stockings, making stockings. And this place was special for this trade. So they lived there. And they lived several years, and they went to Israel from there.

INT: Why did they decide to go to Israel?

SARAH: They couldn't come to Germany. They couldn't come. They wanted to come with us, but it looks like they couldn't sign up for this, to come here. So they signed up to go to Israel.

INT: How many years did they live in Israel?

SARAH: They went like '55, and like twenty years ago.

INT: They were in Poland till 1955?

SARAH: 1955, yeah. In Lodz.

INT: Wasn't that very difficult to live there?

SARAH: It was difficult, but they stayed there, yeah.

INT: But there were no Jews there anymore, were there?

SARAH: Yeah, it's still Jews now. Yeah, it is, but..

INT: But the anti-Semitism was very bad.

SARAH: Everybody went away, yeah. But they couldn't. Looks like they signed up to go, and they couldn't...

INT: They couldn't get out till '55. Okay. Because this was the sister that you became close to in Siberia. No? You never really got close?

SARAH: Mala was..

INT: I know Mala was the one you were **very** close to, but...

SARAH: Oh, she was...

INT: But in Siberia you sort of hooked up with Etle a little bit, because Mala wasn't with you?

SARAH: Yeah, yeah, that's true, but she got married in 1945.

INT: Yeah, and that sort of was the end of the relationship?

SARAH: No, we still in good terms, I mean, she calls me, I call her, she comes here. Her son lives right there in the back from me. So she comes often here. And she comes here.

INT: Where does she live now, In New York?

SARAH: She's in Brooklyn.

INT: Now how many children did she have?

SARAH: She have a daughter, and a son. Her son lives here, and her daughter lives in Brooklyn.

INT: Were they both born in Israel?

SARAH: No. Her daughter was born in Russia. A year later she was married. And her son was in Israel. He's a sabra.

INT: And are her children religious?

SARAH: Oh, yeah. Everybody is so religious.

INT: Everybody in your family is?

SARAH: Everybody is strict religious. Everybody. In New York. Yeah. Because they lived in a ...

INT: It was easier there.

SARAH: Sure. You live in a religious neighborhood. For example, like this neighborhood now. It's so religious. If I would raise my children here, it's no problem. Because everybody goes to synagogue, so they know they have to go. But where I used to live, was different. Was very hard.

INT: You were like the only family.

SARAH: I was like the only family, yeah. Yeah.

INT: So when your family came from Germany to New York, were you able to go there a lot to visit them, or did they come down to you?

SARAH: They didn't come as often, and I didn't go there, because I have two kids, and I didn't know the language. Right in the beginning, I couldn't go nowhere. I didn't know the language. I didn't know how to get there. I didn't have a car. And when they came, the same thing. They were young children, and they went to school. And my mother was dead already. So my father, let him rest in peace, has to, he took a job or something. And then he opened up a little religious store. He was tied up to the business. But he came like once or twice a year to me.

INT: And what was that like for you?

SARAH: Oh, wonderful. It was very nice. Sure, it's no question. No, I was happy that he came.

INT: You told me that he used to sit with Morton and teach him Talmud.

SARAH: Yeah, when he came, he used to sit down and teach a little bit, learn a little bit with him. I don't know if Morton liked it.

INT: But your father did.

SARAH: Yeah, he wanted it, so.

INT: Did you have any special friends all through those years, when you were raising your family in America? Anybody that you became very close with?

SARAH: I have one girlfriend, still in Siberia, when we used to be together.

INT: What was her name again?

SARAH: Esther. She's here. I talk to her often. We see each other often. And I did made friends. I mean, I belong to so many organizations. I have friends, so it's no problem. Like now, I used to like to have a lot of friends, but not now anymore, because I'm not well anymore. And I'm older.

INT: You don't go out so much?

SARAH: I don't go out so much. I have to rest. But I could...

(END TAPE FIVE, SIDE ONE)

(TAPE FIVE, SIDE TWO)

INT: When you get together with Esther, do you talk about Siberia a lot, or not?

SARAH: We used to talk. But we don't talk anymore. No.

INT: Now you're just friends.

SARAH: We're just friends. We don't talk about it, no.

INT: I just had some kind of bigger questions, I guess. One of them was, the major one, I guess, is, how do you think you survived, and how do you think you survived the years in Siberia, and how do you think you have coped all these years in America, with all the difficulties that you had, with not knowing the language, with not having any money, with your husband's illness, and living in difficult neighborhoods, and all the very difficult things you went through. How do you think you were able to make a life, and raise two great kids? How did you do that?

SARAH: I tried. I tried my best. I always wanted to do the best I can. And it was not easy. And what happened with that war, so we couldn't help it. I'm still alive, looks like it's a miracle. Because going through such a thing what I went through, and others who went through, it's just a miracle. It's unbelievable. I think if, G-d forbid if I have to go through something like this again, I couldn't do it, the way I feel now. But I was young, and strong at that time. So I have enough strength to cope with it. But it was impossible. It was not easy, and it was a big struggle, and a lot to go through. And a lot of crying. And asking what's going to be next. And who knows, we can got through this, what we went through. And who knows what's going to be. And thank G-d. Look, it's fifty years. Looks like G-d gives the strength to everybody. And I tried to go on with my life in an honest way, in a good way, and devoted way, and I pulled it through.

INT: But where'd you get the strength from, do you know?

SARAH: I don't know. I don't know. Looks like when I was brought up with my parents, they was feeding me good, looks like. I ate good, and I had good nourishment, and I had the strength.

INT: But the inner strength, I was talking about more, I guess. To be able to put it behind you in a way...

SARAH: I understand. The nerves are not so good anymore the way they used to be. I mean, pressure, I can't take any more pressure now. You know, I can feel it. That you know, it's impossible to take something like this again. At that time, I was younger, so it looks like...

INT: Do you have a hard time now, when there are some stresses in your life?

SARAH: Yeah. When I have aggravation, or I have, I'm worried about something, I feel my body, I feel already I have to lay down and take an aspirin, or a Tylenol. I have to lay down. I never did this before.

INT: What would you do before?

SARAH: Nothing.

INT: Just keep on going.

SARAH: Just keep on going.

INT: But now it's harder to take.

SARAH: We didn't have no medication at that time.

INT: Did you used to get headaches or anything like that, when you were...

SARAH: Yeah, I used to have colds, headaches, you know. I'd get sick, and then I was better.

INT: What do you do with the memories, the bad memories that you have? Do they come to you from time to time and you put them away, or what do you do with them when they come back? Or don't they come to you that often? Now, these days.

SARAH: Well, I try not to think too much. Well, I miss my parents. That's for sure. I miss my sisters. I miss everybody that I remember. That's for sure. I always said, "Oh, I wish I had my mother. Or, I wish I had my father." He died here. In New York.

INT: How many years did he live in New York before he died?

SARAH: He died 15 years ago.

INT: So he lived a long life.

SARAH: Yeah. He was 84 when he passed away. As a matter of fact, I go to his grave, he's in New York. I go every year to visit his grave, and then I start to remind myself, you know, my sisters, my mother, and all the dead people. I made a prayer for everybody. And that's the way I'm supposed to do. You know, not to forget.

INT: Right. So you go there once a year to your father's kever, and then you also remember everybody.

SARAH: Yeah, yeah, I do. I do. Everybody. As a matter of fact, I made a lot of plaques on the New Americans monument. They have it on Byberry Road cemetery. So they have a big monument, and I put all the names, the dead people who perished. All the names are there. And they do it. They make once a year, they have a get-together, all the New Americans, the organization, and a rabbi comes, and a cantor comes, and speakers come, and they make "El mala," and they remember the dead people. Nothing is in the ground, because they perished. But a big monument is there with all the names. And I paid money for it.

INT: Does that make you feel good that they have that?

SARAH: Make me feel better, yeah, make me feel better that their names are remembered once a year, on a cemetery. Because that's where they belong. But I never know where they are. That's what I did, yeah.

INT: What about when you went to Yad Vashem in '81? What was that like? Could you talk about that a little bit?

SARAH: When I went to Yad Vashem, I wanted to go and see that museum, and they was talking about the Holocaust, what happened. The Israeli, you know, the Israel Premier, and the Israel President. And a lot of, I forgot the names already, it was in '81. I have tapes. I took with me a camera, and tapes. So I have all these pictures here. And we went to the Yad Vashem. I brought also a tape what I went through. And my first husband. For an hour I talked in. And I have one here, too.

INT: And you husband also talked in? Was he still alive?

SARAH: No, I talked in for him.

INT: I see. You told his story.

SARAH: Whatever he told me. He didn't tell me **everything**.

INT: You did that in Yiddish, right?

SARAH: In Yiddish, yeah. I talked, and I left one there.

INT: I see.

SARAH: And it was very sad. They talked all about the six millions who perished. And I went there because I didn't want to miss, I want to give honor for the dead people. This is, if you go to a place like this, you remember the dead people. If you don't go, then you feel guilty, that you didn't went to such a get together, to remember all the six million, including my family. And they said Kaddish, and they put glasses, you know, the yahrzeit glasses? Was a whole room. Everybody walked up to light a glass in memory of your family. And I walked up.

INT: That must have been beautiful.

SARAH: Yeah. And I have a picture of the glasses. I took a picture, I took the camera. So I feel good about it, that I didn't miss that, that I gave honor for the, in memory of the dead people.

INT: And you're going to try to go to the Washington Museum, also?

SARAH: And I'm going to try to go, yeah.

INT: Are you able to see films, like "Schindler's List," or anything like that?

SARAH: I didn't saw this, no. I skipped. I don't know why I skipped it, but it didn't came up for me to go and see. But I heard that people were fainting when they watched this, and I have heart trouble, so I was afraid.

INT: Not a good idea.

SARAH: But I watch on television. I see a lot of times.

INT: Oh, so you'll watch things on TV. You won't turn them off, you'll watch them.

SARAH: I see. Yeah. I don't turn off, I watch. I see what's going on. What was happening.

INT: Was that the first time you'd been to Israel, in '81?

SARAH: Yeah, the first time.

INT: So did you travel around a little bit?

SARAH: Yeah, but I was, we went with the New American Organization for two weeks. But I stayed another week extra, to see my cousins. I stayed another week.

INT: Now how are they related?

SARAH: My father's brother's son. And then my mother's family. My mother's brother's children. And then another family is there, in the family. So I visit them.

INT: What was it like to see them after all those years?

SARAH: Oh, it was very, very, nice. They were very happy to see me, and I stayed another week to see them. Because I couldn't leave Israel, I was in Israel for two weeks, and I shouldn't see my cousins? So I stayed on my own. I didn't went home with them, with the group. I went home with, you know.

INT: Where do they live, your cousins?

SARAH: In Haifa, and in Tel Aviv. And also, my first husband's cousin lives in Tel Aviv. At the same time I was there, that whole week, I made plaques in memory of my husband, first husband, let him rest in peace, in their synagogue. In Israel. And two plaques for my in-laws. My husband's, let him rest in peace, mother and father. So I have the pictures here. They have that, my husband's mother and father. When the yahrzeit comes, so his cousin lights the light. And he says Kaddish.

INT: Very nice.

SARAH: Yeah. That's what I did in Israel.

INT: So you've been married now, your second marriage, for twelve years?

SARAH: Twelve, it's gonna be twelve.

INT: So could you talk a little bit about how you met your second husband?

SARAH: How I met him? At the New Americans organization, he belonged. This was twelve years ago. And I belonged, too, but I didn't went to them. When I lost my first husband, I didn't feel like to go out from the house, for two years. I paid my dues, I didn't went **nowhere**. I was very, very upset.

So my friends told me, it's time already to get out. So they came for me, and I went. I went, so he was there. He was there. Looks like that he was looking for me before, because he looks like he (laughs) I had such a luck, to men, everybody wanted to marry me.

INT: (laughing) Yeah, they all wanted to marry you. How about that.

SARAH: I don't understand why.

INT: I do.

SARAH: Huh?

INT: I do. Sure, why not? (laughs)

SARAH: So, when I came to that organization get-together, Shabbos, a lot of people drive, you know, like Jewish people. You know it. But me and the other people, the strict religious, we come after the Havdoloh. You know. So we came late. Me and my friends, religious people. Their name is also Klein. Morton knows them. From the other neighborhood.

So we came, and he was sitting already. For him it was closer to the organization. I lived in 9800, near the Shaarei Shamayin Synagogue. And the get-together was not in this building. It was somewhere in the lower numbers. So he was sitting at the table with another friend, also a widower. And I don't know if he knew I'm coming or not. I don't know. The whole place was packed, and he was saving that table. Probably for me, because I don't know how he know I'm coming, but he just had a feeling.

So when I walked in, he looks up, he said, "I know you don't have no place where to sit. At my table is plenty of room. Sit at my table." (laughs) So I looked around, I didn't want it even, because, look, I'm so upset, you know, and I'm going to sit, in my mind was not this, you know. But I didn't have no choice. So we didn't have no room. So we sat, the other people sat. Let's sit down here, there's not room. No tables. So he sat. Alright. So we spent the whole evening with other people, and he, him with his friends was there. And after everything was finished, so everybody went home. I didn't went home with him. I went home with my friends. But, a week later, I have a phone call from one of my husband's cousin, I told you? The aunt's daughter? They are related a little to his first wife. I mean, her husband, not her, she's related to my husband. I told you last time. Cherry Hill. So she calls me up and she said that she thinks that I should go out with him. I said, "What do you mean? I should go out? I don't even want to talk about things like this. I don't want to see no men, I don't want to be remarried, and I have two single boys, and I'm not even **thinking** about things like this." She said, "Look, what you going to sit alone, you alone, he's alone?" (laughs) Just like that. I said, "I told you. No way." And I said no. No. So I didn't went.

Then again. She calls me again. "I'm inviting you for dinner. But he's invited too." I said, "What do you mean, he's invited too?" So I don't know how to drive to Cherry Hill. I drive a car, but I don't know, I never drove to Cherry Hill. So I don't know how to drive. "He'll pick you up." I said, "I'm not going to go with a man in a car. I'm religious." (laughter) You know. So she said, "It's nothing," she said, "He just help you to get to my house, that's all." So I said, "I'm not sure." I want to talk it over with my boys. They knew him.

INT: Oh, okay.

SARAH: They knew him. So I told him, next time, I didn't went this time, but next time, if my husband's cousin calls me, I should go, so Sammy said, "Go. Don't be alone. Go, go, go." Just like that. Because they saw I'm upset, and I cry, you know. And I

should go out. So the next time I went. He took me. So we spent there an evening, ate dinner. He took me home. But before they took me home, my cousin comes up to me, and she talks to me. "Look, Sarah. He's a very nice man. And I think you should go out. You don't have to sit home." I said, "I'm not planning to be re-married. I'm not going out with nobody. I don't want it." She said, "Look, this is wrong. You should go out." So again I spoke to Sammy and Morton. I said, "What shall I do?" Sammy was in Brandeis at that time, Morton was in Washington at that time. I was alone. So they told me, I should go out, I shouldn't be alone. So I went out. I didn't want to hurt **them**. You know, they were single. I couldn't do that, something like this.

So I don't know. Somehow, I went out for six months. And I said, "Well, I'm not going out anymore. Because it's not right. A religious woman should go out with a man for so long?" So he said, "I want you should accept a ring," he said to me." And he had it in the pocket already. This is the ring. And I really, it was a hard decision, believe me. So...

INT: Because you wanted to stay by yourself?

SARAH: Hm?

INT: You wanted to stay alone, do you think?

SARAH: Yeah, I want to stay alone until, at least till my children are married. They were not married at that time. So he put on that ring on me, and I came home, I said to them, to my children, "I can't get married before you're getting married." (pause) Maybe they want me to get married, because they don't want me to be alone. So maybe I should do that. So I made a decision. (BREAK IN TAPE, ABOUT THIRTY SECONDS)

INT: You got married twelve years ago. And your husband was a survivor, also, your second husband. He was also a survivor.

SARAH: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

INT: Do you know where was he born and...(phone interruption) where was he born and what was he...

SARAH: Who, my first husband?

INT: Your second husband.

SARAH: Oh, he was born in Czechoslovakia.

INT: And he went through, do you know anything, what happened to him during the war? Did he tell you?

SARAH: He went through, he told me, but he was in different places. (pause) He was in different places. So he was four years they took him to work, and he was in concentration camp, and I don't remember. Well, he didn't tell me so much like my first husband used to tell me. So he went through a lot. He lost family. He still has a brother and two sisters alive. So, but he went through. He was in concentration camp. He had a hard time there. He told me he used to jump out of trains. He used to jump out of trucks, and he used to hide himself, and he used to be in the cold weather freezing.

INT: He lost his wife and children, too.

SARAH: He had a wife and two children he lost.

INT: And then he married the sister?

SARAH: Then he married the sister.

INT: After the war, and had two boys. [and a daughter]

SARAH: Yeah, yeah.

INT: So you're his third wife.

(BREAK IN TAPE, APPROXIMATELY THIRTY SECONDS)

Now your husband had a stroke about four years ago.

SARAH: Yeah. He had a stroke.

INT: So that must be very difficult for you. Yeah, well, and for him, of course, but...it must be difficult for you.

SARAH: Sure, he doesn't help me too much now. He doesn't walk so good, and he doesn't hear so good. And he can't, I mean, I have to help him a lot. So it's not easy for me. But I have no choice. Well, he doesn't, I don't have to help him, like going to the bathroom, or to get him dressed. He does this.

INT: But he can't get in the car and drive you around and...

SARAH: No, he doesn't drive anymore. He used to drive. I do the driving.

INT: You do the shopping?

SARAH: I do the shopping. But I don't carry packages, because I have heart trouble. So he tries to help me with packages.

INT: Are you on heart medication now?

SARAH: Yeah.

INT: Have you had a heart attack?

SARAH: No. No heart attack. Just they took a catheterization, and they found out I had one artery is blocked 95%. So they cleaned this out with laser.

INT: Oh.

SARAH: This is like angioplasty.

INT: Angioplasty. I see. How long ago was that?

SARAH: Six months ago.

INT: Oh, boy. And you're on medication to keep it from being blocked up?

SARAH: Yes, for keeping it blocked up. It's not easy. I don't feel like I used to feel before.

INT: Sure. Do you, how do you feel about non-Jewish people? Do you feel that they're all anti-Semitic, or just some of them are? Or how do you feel about...

SARAH: It's all kind. I mean, not everybody's anti-Semitic. I remember even in Europe, in Poland, some of them were good, and some of them were anti-Semitic. Gave trouble to Jewish people. And I understand that that's the way it is. I don't hate the non-Jewish people. Because they are people. So it's not good to, to think bad things about them, because they have to live, too. But I know that some of them are doing a lot of harm for Jewish people. I know this, too. But them people are never going to change. So it's nothing to do about it.

INT: What about all Polish people, or all German people? Do you feel that the whole German group, and the whole Polish group are anti-Semitic?

SARAH: No, no, I wouldn't say that. Because I know, my cousin, one of my cousins in Israel is saved through a non-Jewish family. So that...

INT: There were some good.

SARAH: They were good, good people. He was only seven years old, and they took him in.

INT: And Mala was being taken care of.

SARAH: And she was taken care. So how can I say that everybody's like this? It's a lot of good people.

INT: So you're able to separate out the good people and the bad people.

SARAH: Yeah. I would say that it's mixed, like some of them are good, and some of them are bad. Like they say, in the water, there's all kind of fish. That's the same thing.

INT: Would you say you're trusting of people in general? You trust them, or you're suspicious of people, when you first meet them. Would you say that you're a more trusting person, or you're careful with people?

SARAH: Well, I learned. I learned from my experience that it's not good to trust, and it's not good to believe, because people don't, sometimes they don't say the truth. I'm, for example, wouldn't lie, or wouldn't do harm to nobody. If everybody would be like this, I could trust. But unfortunately.

INT: That's not your experience.

SARAH: The experience I went through, unfortunately, it's not like that. People are different. So through them people, I'm starting not to trust. Because, you know, you're getting afraid. So sometimes, you're afraid, you have to be careful to who you talk. Today. I mean, not years ago.

INT: Would you say that you're an optimistic person, or a pessimistic person? You're hopeful about the future, or you think that something bad could happen? How do you look at life?

SARAH: I learned that it could be good. You're not allowed to lose your hope. They said in German, "mut verloren, alles verloren." Then it's not good already. You have to always think, G-d will help. It's gonna be good. And this keeps you going.

INT: And that's what you do.

SARAH: That's what I do. That's what I do, yeah.

INT: Could you talk a little bit about your sons and their marriages, and their children, and what they do? I don't think we really talked about, your oldest son is now very prominent in the country, because he's the president of the Zionist Organization of America, and he has brought it back from being sort of a dying organization, back out to the forefront. And he's very active politically in, with Israel and with anti-Semitism in this country, and he's a very vocal person. He's in the paper a lot. Now, could you talk a little bit about him, what does he do for a living, and his wife, and I believe he has a daughter. Could you talk about that a little bit?

SARAH: Well, I don't know too much. I know he's married to a nice, I like my daughter-in-law, and she's a very pleasant girl, and a good girl. And my son, of course, there's no question, I love him. I mean, he's always in my heart, right here. (laughs) Both of them. And the daughter also, nice, too. Compared, I hear, what's going on with daughter-in-laws today. So I'm blessed. Good girls. His daughter's a good girl. My younger son has a nice, two, beautiful, nice, bright children. And I'm very proud of them, and I'm so happy that I have a family, a nice family, thank G-d, and very respectful people. Everybody tells me, "How did you do **that**?" People ask me.

INT: It's something to be proud of.

SARAH: I'm proud. They say, "How did you do that?" I said, "G-d helped me." I believe in G-d. I always said, Everything's from G-d. He helped me, thank G-d, and they're people, that they're loved by everyone. They are good to the whole world. Both my sons. Good people.

INT: What does Morton do for a living? What's his job?

SARAH: I think he's a stockbroker.

INT: And his wife?

SARAH: He's an economist. You know, he went to school, economics, statistics, math. He's in this field. And my younger son is a doctor, a gastro-enterologist. So he has a job in St. Louis. He used to live in Texas. He moved.

INT: And are both your sons religious?

SARAH: Well, I think Morton, G-d bless him, he's a little bit more religious than the younger one, because he, because of his profession, and he was away from home since eighteen years old. So I couldn't control too much. And he didn't live in neighborhoods, like, as I said, you have to live in neighborhoods. Now, Morton lives in a nice neighborhood, so he can keep up. And in heart, he's more religious, I think so. And he does observe. And my younger son, I know his house is kosher. Both my sons keep kosher homes. But outside, I'm not sure if he's the same like my older son Morton, G-d bless him.

INT: But they both married Jewish women, and they're raising their children...

SARAH: Yeah, Jewish women. (interruption) Nice, religious people.

INT: Are you, how do you feel about the fact that your son Morton is so involved with, he's so politically active, and he's so out there, you know, with Jewish causes, and fighting for, you know, for Israel and fighting against people like Farrakhan. How do you feel about that? Do you worry about him?

SARAH: I'm, very proud of him. I know he's smart, and he's a doer, and he's involved, and he helps a lot, since he started, he did a lot of good.

(END TAPE FIVE, SIDE TWO)

(TAPE SIX, SIDE ONE)

INT: Okay, I just have a few more questions to finish up, and one of them is, are you able to enjoy your life, do you think? Are there times when you can have fun, and what do you do for fun? Are you able to be happy and enjoy life? When you're with people?

SARAH: Well, (sighs) it's not easy to enjoy life, when the family was broken already. Like I lost my first husband, let him rest in peace. It's not the same family like it used to be. It's not so easy. It's not an easy step. So it's not the same enjoyment. Alright, I lived, thank G-d. I appreciate that, you know, I'm alive, and thank G-d, I'm not so well, but I'm still okay. But I don't think that I have the mood to be too happy. I'm happy with my children. I mean, I'm happy with him, too, my second. But he's sick, and he had a stroke two times already, so how can I enjoy life?

INT: It's a different life.

SARAH: It's a different life. So I can't enjoy anymore, even if I want it. I can't, he's not able to do a lot of things. I mean, to go out and have good times. So this is taking away already.

INT: And you don't go out on your own anymore, because you said that...

SARAH: He said that he doesn't want to stay alone, and be there by himself, and it's not easy for me. So that's the way I have to live. From day to day.

INT: What about your sisters and brothers in New York? Do you still keep in contact with them?

SARAH: Yeah, I keep in contact with them. They have families, and they're busy. And some of, one of my sisters is happier, and one is not so happy. You know, everybody has their luck. Not everybody has the same life. They tried to go on with their children and grandchildren, and keep up, do the best they can, and that's the way they live.

INT: About how often are you in contact with them, would you say?

SARAH: Oh, on the telephone I'm more...

INT: Oh, yeah, you talk to them a lot?

SARAH: Oh, yeah, yeah, but we don't see each other too much. Only when they have a simcha, we go. And otherwise, I don't go too much. One of my sisters comes here often, because...

INT: Which one?

SARAH: Etle. Because her son lives not far from here. So she comes here, she comes there. So we see each other. And my younger sister came to see me when I was sick, after I had my angioplasty. She came to see me, with my brother, and my brother-in-law.

INT: The little baby sister? The one who was born in...

SARAH: The baby sister. Devorah. Devorah. They came to see me. And the other, Chajka, came to see me. When I was sick. And we see each other only on simchas.

INT: Would you say you're close?

SARAH: We are close, we are close family. Yeah. We talk. We know what's going on. I mean, we always, if they have something to say, they call me. Even something, news comes up, they tell me, so I know what's going on. But to travel, and to make visits, we don't do it too often.

INT: Has it been hard for you all these years that your family lives in New York, and you're down here?

SARAH: Yeah. I always wanted to move. Yeah. I always missed my family. But now, it's already...I was stronger, and I want to be together, and be together often. But now, I don't, I'm used to that already. It's too many years. So, that's, so I had to make the best here.

INT: How do you think that the Holocaust has affected you in your life, would you say?

SARAH: A lot. A lot. I lost my education. It affected a lot, my life. Not just my life, my whole family. Because when I was ready to go to school, to finish my education, I had to go through a war. And I lost my education. And everything is a big change in life because of that. So you know, it's a lot missing in my life. It was no life that five years, I mean, and after the war, again, we have to travel, we didn't stay in one place, we had to, till we came here and to start a new life, we struggled a lot.

INT: You've had a lot of struggle in your life.

SARAH: A lot of struggle, yeah. So that's why. I'm wondering, G-d gives me the strength to go through so much I went through.

INT: Do you think that's where you get the strength from? From G-d?

SARAH: Yeah. I believe in that. Yeah.

INT: Is there anything else you'd like to add to this interview, that we, anything we haven't talked about, or anything you'd like to say?

SARAH: Well, all I can say is that I'm glad that you came to interview me. And I appreciate very much your...doing this interview with me. That I can share this with my children. I can, G-d forbid, something happen to me, till now, they didn't know so much that they will know now. They're going to have a tape, and a write-up about it.

INT: Because you've never been able to tell them, so this way...

SARAH: I didn't want to sit down and tell them my worries, because they were busy. I mean, they went to school, they have to finish their education, and then they got married. I mean, they also struggled. Kids today, they struggle. They have a lot to go through, too. Even, it's not a war, you know. So I never had time to sit down and tell them what I went through. But this way, I'm very glad that I could share my wartime I went through, that they should know about it, too. And my grandchildren should know about it. So I'm glad.

INT: It's very important what you did.

SARAH: It's very important what I did, yeah. I believe in that. Some people, they don't want to do that. I spoke to some people. They don't want it, they don't want that they should know, and they should, maybe they gonna worry about it, you know, what their parents went through. But I think they should know. The whole world should know what we went through.

INT: Everyone should know, not just ...

SARAH: Everyone should know, so that's why I can tell you. And I really appreciate, I thank **you** very much, G-d bless you.

INT: Well, I wanted to thank you very much, and it was a privilege meeting you and getting to talk to you, and getting to know you.

SARAH: Thank you. Thank you.

(END OF INTERVIEW)