

**INTERVIEW WITH CHARLES SCHERZ**

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## INTERVIEW WITH CHARLES SCHERZ

**INTERVIEWER:** So I'll ask you a few questions, and then you'll tell me. My name is Norman Garfield, and I'm interviewing Chaim Scherz, on January 11. (1994)

Okay. So, what is your age?

**CHARLES SCHERZ:** My age is 78.

**INT:** 78.

**CHARLES:** Born 1916.

**INT:** And where were you born?

**CHARLES:** In Kopyczynce, Ukraine.

**INT:** Okay. Kopyczynce. How would you spell it? Say in here, how you would spell it.

**CHARLES:** I would rather...

**INT:** All right, go ahead. Just write on here. (Pause while he writes the name.)

**CHARLES:** Near...

**INT:** Yeah, near. The closest city?

**CHARLES:** Shortkopf, or Tarnopol.

**INT:** Okay.

**CHARLES:** Like, for instance, (?) in Shortkopf.

**INT:** All right, Shortkopf. Let me spell this out, and then we'll know. K-o-p-y-c-s-y...

**CHARLES:** C-z...

**INT:** C-z-y-n-c-e.

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** Okay. And what part of Poland was this?

**CHARLES:** Tarnopol, Ukraine.

**INT:** Tarnopol! Oh! Tarnopol. Okay. Ukraine.

**CHARLES:** Ukraine.

**INT:** The **Polish** Ukraine.

**CHARLES:** The Polish Ukraine, yeah.

**INT:** The Polish Ukraine, okay.

**CHARLES:** Tarnopol was in the state.

**INT:** Geberner.

**CHARLES:** No. Like here Pittsburgh.

**INT:** Like Pittsburgh, okay. Okay. You're married how many years?

**CHARLES:** I married in 1941. 53 years.

**INT:** Zay gezunt. Keine hore. 53 years. All right, level of education. How much education in Poland?

**CHARLES:** High school.

**INT:** High school. And your wife?

**CHARLES:** Same thing.

**INT:** Same thing. And you worked in America as a what? What did you do when you came here?

**CHARLES:** First I worked in a supermarket. And then I had my own business. I had a restaurant in New York. Kosher delicatessen.

**INT:** All right, and your wife worked with you?

**CHARLES:** Worked with me.

**INT:** All right. And you'd say middle class?

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** Yeah, all right. And one child.

**CHARLES:** One child.

**INT:** And how old? COSSE is forty...

**CHARLES:** Now she's 43, 44, she was born in 1948.

**INT:** Okay. You belong to the Lower Merion shul?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, sure.

**INT:** And you have any other organizations? Any Holocaust organizations, or any kind of...

**CHARLES:** No. Getting there. I haven't got a car. I don't drive. So it's very hard to get to the meetings. I used to belong to Labor Zionist organization in New York. Zionism zu hause. Labor Zionist.

**INT:** I see. Okay. Now, what I'm going to ask you about now is before the war, okay? Before the war. So when you think about before the war, you had the Mame and the Tate...

**CHARLES:** Tate.

**INT:** Mother and a father. And what else?

**CHARLES:** And six, three sisters and three brothers.

**INT:** And where were you in that? Were you in the middle, or the oldest?

**CHARLES:** I was the youngest.

**INT:** You were the youngest.

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** How old was the oldest?

**CHARLES:** The oldest was, from my time? He was 22 years older than I am.

**INT:** 22 years older than that? What are their names? Can you say their names?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, surely. Mendel, Samuel, Willi, and the sisters were Gena and Dora and Sabina.

**INT:** And they all lived home?

**CHARLES:** They all married. No, they all married with children. I wasn't there, see, (pause, tape shuts off for a second) ...this is a small city, Kopyczyne. And I graduate from the public school. They didn't know what to do. I had to go to a Gymnasium. The Gymnasium wasn't in our city at that time. I had a brother, he was twenty years older than I am. He was a established man. He had a drugstore, his own drugstore. So he took me to him, and I went there to live, to the school, and I became there a druggist.

**INT:** You went through school to learn how to be a druggist?

**CHARLES:** I went to a special school. You know, this is not a druggist as a pharmacist. I couldn't get in. But in Poland, there were two kinds. There was a drugstore with a pharmacy, and a drugstore like here. But in Poland you couldn't buy an aspirin, only in a drugstore, or in a "drugaria." This was a drugstore with prescriptions, and a drugstore with a pharmacist. And I made a course, and I learned to be a druggist, and I had license for that. To know the type of prescription, but I couldn't go into a pharmacy. A Jew couldn't go in. To be special, special, with money. But I worked together in the pharmacy with my brother.

**INT:** He owned the pharmacy?

**CHARLES:** He owned the pharmacy.

**INT:** I see. But tell me about growing up. About living in the house when you were little. What do you remember? What was the house like? What did the Tate do?

**CHARLES:** My Tate was a businessman.

**INT:** What kind of business did he have?

**CHARLES:** He had tvia. You know tvia?

**INT:** No.

**CHARLES:** He bought from the goyim, he bought, how do they call it, tvia?

**INT:** Produce?

**CHARLES:** Produce. Not produce, fresh, produce, to make bread.

**INT:** Wheat.

**CHARLES:** Wheat, and all kinds, whatever goes with it.

**INT:** So he bought that from the goyim.

**CHARLES:** From the goyim, then he sold it to another (?), and they send it to Germany all over the world. Agriculture.

**INT:** So you had a house.

**CHARLES:** We had a house, surely, had a house.

**INT:** With a lot of rooms in it?

**CHARLES:** And then inside we had, when somebody builds a house, he needs cement and other things, he sold it. He had a corporation with four partners, and this was a monopoly in Kopyczyne.

**INT:** Yeah?

**CHARLES:** Nobody could get in there, because there were four partners, and they built a church, they built a this, they had to come to us.

**INT:** He sounds like he was a rich man.

**CHARLES:** When he was younger. But when I came to the world, he was already, when we graduate public school, he was already over sixty years. Poland, not like here, they got Social Security, this and that. No such a...

**INT:** But he kept working? He was working when you were young?

**CHARLES:** He was working already shwachel (weaker, not as strong).

**INT:** I see. I see.

**CHARLES:** But he had a partner in the business. The younger people came, and...

**INT:** What was his name?

**CHARLES:** His name was Lazar.

**INT:** And the Mame?

**CHARLES:** The Mame's Adela.

**INT:** Adela. Do you remember a bubbe and zayde? Or you were too young.

**CHARLES:** No, the zayde was a chazzan in stadt.

**INT:** Did you ever know him, the zayde?

**CHARLES:** No, I was already, four, five years and he passed away.

**INT:** He was a chazzan.

**CHARLES:** He was a (?).

**INT:** And the bubbe?

**CHARLES:** The bubbe (Yiddish -- Grandmother wasn't alive already).

**INT:** I see. And on the Mame's side?

**CHARLES:** This was from the Mame's side. The Tate's side, is gewehen, the Tate (Yiddish -- and the Tate was already dead).

**INT:** Yeah! What was she like?

**CHARLES:** She was maybe like a hundred years old. I remember she died. She died, he was sitting shiva, so I took over the business. I was a young child.

**INT:** Do you remember the funeral? Do you remember the levaye?

**CHARLES:** Surely, there wasn't such a funeral like here.

**INT:** What kind of funeral? What was it like?

**CHARLES:** In the house, they did the (Yiddish -- tahara, and then they brought the body to the cemetery.)

**INT:** I see. Right from the house.

**CHARLES:** From the house. And my father died on Yom Kippur.

**INT:** Your father.

**CHARLES:** With the Germans. (Yiddish -- He was going to hide) He was a very strong man.

**INT:** I see. So when you were growing up, how many of these brothers and sisters lived in the house?

**CHARLES:** In the house, one sister lived.

**INT:** Just one sister? And how older was she than you? How much older?

**CHARLES:** She was a few years older. About three, four years older. I was living in the house, and then when I went away, she was alone. And all the children were married. One sister got married to the Rabbi Hagger, one man, Mottel Hagger is in Monsey. He is one of the family. I don't know him, but she got into that. He was a famous rabbi. In Nabotov. Zablotov. He got killed right away.

**INT:** And you, what kind of schools were there? You could go to a cheder, or a Jewish school, or what? You went to a cheder and a Gymnasium? And a public school.

**CHARLES:** And a public school.

**INT:** Not just a Jewish school.

**CHARLES:** No, no, no.

**INT:** They didn't have just a Jewish school?

**CHARLES:** No, they didn't. In a cheder, they had a Jewish school.

**INT:** So tell me about that. What was that like? You went after you went to the public school, you went to the cheder.

**CHARLES:** Yeah. Afternoon.

**INT:** How many days? Every afternoon?

**CHARLES:** Every afternoon.

**INT:** What was the melamed like? What do you remember?

**CHARLES:** He was a alter Yid. (Yiddish -- he couldn't earn a living, so he became a melamed.)

**INT:** I see. Did he hit the kids?

**CHARLES:** Sometimes. Und gelernt Chumash und Rashi und Gemora.

**INT:** And the kids in the town were in there?

**CHARLES:** The kids in the town, yeah.

**INT:** I see. Was it in somebody's house, or a room, or...

**CHARLES:** No, in his room.

**INT:** In his room.



**CHARLES:** Yeah, we had a (Yiddish -- melamed that learned with little children. He taught the little kids. And then there was a Gemora melamed, a melamed who taught Gemora, and his name was Haskel.)

**INT:** So he taught you.

**CHARLES:** He taught me, sure.

**INT:** And you went there for how many years?

**CHARLES:** Oh, since I remember. When the cheder. Since five years.

**INT:** With the same person? Same melamed.

**CHARLES:** No, no. First there was this (Yiddish -- melamed for young children, that taught aleph bais. And then the other one started to teach Gemora).

**INT:** So you went to a different place, with a different melamed?

**CHARLES:** Different melamed, yeah.

**INT:** I see.

**CHARLES:** And he was learning Chumash and Rashi and Gemora and Posek, and (Yiddish -- and if you didn't know some things, he could give you a zetz, a slap. You had to know. And then we went with Tate, with our father, to shul. He had a shtreimel, and he had a beard.)

**INT:** I see. What did you speak? The bord und de shtreimel was him, was the melamed?

**CHARLES:** No. The Tate.

**INT:** Your Tate, your Tate. Was your Tate a shtikel Hasid, or...

**CHARLES:** (Yiddish -- a Choshatener Hasid, sure.)

**INT:** The rebbe? The rebbe was there in the town? Who was the rebbe?

**CHARLES:** It was a rebbe. A Kopyczyncer rebbe, a **famous** rebbe, but he, in 1916, when they started the milchamah, so he ran away to Vienna.

**INT:** Ah. And his Hasidim didn't follow him? They didn't go in?

**CHARLES:** No, they didn't go in.

**INT:** So he went alone. He wasn't a rebbe anymore! (laughs) He didn't have anybody to be a...

**CHARLES:** He was a rebbe, but he left, he was a rich man. He had a house, there was about thirty, thirty-five tenants. He had his own shul, and he had his own garden, like a mansion. A real mansion. I was playing there ball.

**INT:** So he left a mansion he rented out?

**CHARLES:** He left the mansion because there was the war started. 1941, in 1916. So he was afraid. But he escaped there, and later on he used to come every kever avos, you know, before Rosh Hashanah you go for kever avos. His father and his brother were dynasty. He was like a king, the rabbi. He was a rich man, and when he came, from my time he came, before Rosh Hashanah, he came for a couple months.

**INT:** So it was a big deal?

**CHARLES:** It was a big deal. We lived with him. My father went to him, and I went to him. He was a very famous man. The goyim used to come to him.

**INT:** Yeah? So he had a tisch, and the whole...

**CHARLES:** He had a tisch and a shul, and a grosse shul, (Yiddish -- his own synagogue).

**INT:** I see. And when he wasn't in the shul, who was...

**CHARLES:** The people davened there.

**INT:** But no rav.

**CHARLES:** No rav, no. A rav was only one. One rav was...

**INT:** In the town.

**CHARLES:** In the town. And we had about one, two, three, four synagogues, one big synagogue, oy, I'm sorry I didn't bring you, I had a picture from this.

**INT:** Of the shul? I'll see it the next time. I'd like to see it. How do you have a picture? Somebody took a picture?

**CHARLES:** I have a picture because I have a friend from my city in New York. He was younger than I. His time was already high school in Kopyczynce. So he had a friend, and they built all the people, because they threw it out, the Polacks, the Polish people from Kopyczynce in 1946. They had to leave Kopyczynce because the Russians took it

over. And they gave them for that, the Lignitz, Bratslav from Germany, what they took away. They gave them this, and they took this. They took all Ukraine, till (?) Samdonia (?). Was about Galicia. Half of Galicia they took it away, the Russian people, the Ukrainian. And...

**INT:** So the picture, how did you...

**CHARLES:** The picture, yeah, so there was a chazzan with a meshorrerim (male chorus) and with everything. And my father davened in a shul noch a Wishnitze Hasid shul, and noch again a bais hamedresh, and noch a gewehen de regele grosse shul. (Yiddish -- As soon as we finished the davening, we went to hear the chazzan.)

**INT:** In the grosse shul.

**CHARLES:** The grosse shul. The chazzan and the meshorrerim, goyim came, the distinguished goyim.

**INT:** He knew the chazzan.

**CHARLES:** They had a chazzan.

**INT:** Okay. You went all the time to the chazzan in the grosse shul?

**CHARLES:** No, only with the Tate. Hasidish.

**INT:** I see. Tate went every morning, put on tefillin, and...

**CHARLES:** Every morning, sure. Like Ricky.

**INT:** I see, I see. That's what he looked like. He had a beard and a shtreimel and...

**CHARLES:** Sure, a beard and a shtreimel. He was a businessman, he was a known man.

**INT:** And the family stayed in the town? All these brothers and sisters stayed in the town, or some went away?

**CHARLES:** My sisters?

**INT:** Yeah, and your brothers?

**CHARLES:** No, one sister lived in Zablotov, and one brother, when I was with my brother, he lived in that city where, you know Korn? In that city? He's the only one that he knows me from before the war. Korn.

**INT:** Korn.

**CHARLES:** In that city.

**INT:** So they spread out. They didn't stay in the city, town. People spread out.

**CHARLES:** No. And one man, the oldest brother lived in Potbylozysk(?), near Tarnopol.

**INT:** I see. Now did your father have brothers, schwesters? Did they live around there? And your mother, did she have bruder and schwesters?

**CHARLES:** She had schwester. I have one schwester.

**INT:** Where?

**CHARLES:** In the same city.

**INT:** In the same city.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, nobody survived from there. One man, he's in Israel. He was in Russia. They took him to the army, so he survived.

**INT:** Okay. But she had one sister in the town. And the Tate.

**CHARLES:** One sister in the town. One sister and a brother.

**INT:** And the Tate?

**CHARLES:** The Tate didn't have nobody. He had one brother he was in Lemberg. He was a very wealthy man.

**INT:** You knew him? You saw him once in a while?

**CHARLES:** Sure, I used to come to Lemberg like you go to New York.

**INT:** I see. He was a Hasid, too?

**CHARLES:** He wasn't a Hasid. He was a rich man. He had a house, his own house in Lemberg, and he had tenants, and he lived from that. He had three daughters and two sons. All the three daughters had doctors for husbands, because he was a rich man, so he bought them.

**INT:** He made sure they had a...

**CHARLES:** They had a parnosseh, yeah. And I knew them, I had to go there for vacation there, for about a month, they used to keep me there. And then nobody survived.

**INT:** Nobody survived.

**CHARLES:** Yeah. Only the house.

**INT:** The house. The way you were raised, the way you were raised, now I don't know, you tell me. It sounds like the Mame and Tate were older already.

**CHARLES:** Older, already, sure.

**INT:** Older already. Would you say you were on your own, mostly, or you were...

**CHARLES:** No, when I was finished...

**INT:** When you were a kleiner kind, what was it like? Did they have koach to deal with you, or you did your own, you ran around and did your...

**CHARLES:** No, they had koach at that time. My mother was younger, ten years, than the father. It was a very religious house. **Very** religious. **Strictly** religious.

**INT:** What do you remember about Shabbas?

**CHARLES:** Shabbas was we go to shul, and then we davened, we came home, we had a good dinner. And then (Yiddish -- about Mincha we went to daven, and then we had shalos seudos, and then we talked, and people came. In that shul came the finest people. Honest people), known people. (Yiddish -- The schochet would daven there).

**INT:** In the town. The butcher and...

**CHARLES:** No, the butcher (Yiddish -- didn't come there to daven. The butcher wasn't such a yichus. There it was Hasidim. The people who came there were people who could daven. People who could leyen. Almost by heart they knew how to leyen. Avromche (?) I remember still how he used to daven. He would come to daven when it came to Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur for **free**, not for money.

**INT:** Not a professional.

**CHARLES:** Not a professional chazzan. (Yiddish -- people you'd go to if you needed some advice, or if there was some conflict. And you might need to go to a Bais Din, Jewish court.)

**INT:** I see.

**CHARLES:** (Yiddish) Bais Din.

**INT:** Bais Din. In the town. They had a Bais Din.

**CHARLES:** The Bais Din, sure.

**INT:** So the Mame raised you, or you were more on your own, or the Mame raised you?

**CHARLES:** The Mame raised me. Then I had a sister, the older sister had a business. She was in business. My father gave her a business and (?).

**INT:** But when you remember being little, it was peaceful in the house? It was quiet, it was shain?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, sure. Surely, shain. Shabbas ich gewehen...

**INT:** But it was just you and the sister that were left there.

**CHARLES:** Yes, the sister, the Tate, the Mame. (Yiddish -- and there was a brother, also, before he got married.)

**INT:** Before he got married.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, before he got married.

**INT:** He was there, too.

**CHARLES:** Yes, he was there, too. (Yiddish -- When my brother was there, so my father could do bigger business. But then, when he left, so my father's business became a little weaker. But he always made a living.)

**INT:** He made a living.

**CHARLES:** He made a living.

**INT:** What do you remember about the Tate? He had a temper, he was strong, he was soft?

**CHARLES:** No, he was a very nice, good man. Good man, but a strong man. (Yiddish -- He wasn't afraid of anyone. People liked him a lot. One goy saved me.) I'll come to it. (Yiddish -- The goy says, "Who are you?" I met him. This was a time when I was ready to commit suicide, together with my wife. It was a day like today. It was a day when...the water reached to my soul, i.e. I couldn't take it anymore. It was enough. There was no possibility of going on. I had decided I had to kill myself. And this goy arrived and asked, "Who are you, and who is your father?" And I said, "Lazar." And he said, "Lazar? You're Lazar's son?")

**INT:** He was afraid of him.

**CHARLES:** No, he wasn't afraid of him. (Yiddish -- He wanted to save me. The man said to him, "Come, I'm going to a doctor. I'll take you along with me. He'll be able to help you." I met him in the middle of this forest. I didn't know where I was. I wanted to kill myself. And because he knew that I was Lazar's son, he said, "Come with me." So this goy said, "Come with me, let's go to this doctor." And I knew, I knew this doctor very well. It was near a place where my wife was from. But there was a police station there. But this man took me there and said to me, "Don't even think about committing suicide. G-d help you if you do that." And brought me there. I had with me some whiskey, and the goy said, "Just hold yourself. Stay strong, because soon, soon, any minute, they're coming," meaning the Russians were coming. This was the end of February.) In March they came. (Yiddish -- He said to me, "I don't want to know where you're going. We have to act as if we don't know each other. I'm going to turn around, and you turn around, and just keep walking.")

**INT:** How did he know your father?

**CHARLES:** Because he handled, because he did business. Everybody who did business had his people.

**INT:** This was a goy?

**CHARLES:** (Yiddish -- Everybody knew him. When there was a pogrom, he would know to run to the forest.)

**INT:** So people knew your father....

**CHARLES:** Very well.

**INT:** The goyim knew him.

**CHARLES:** The goyim, surely.

**INT:** Everybody knew him.

**CHARLES:** My father, (Yiddish) Everybody knew him.

**INT:** But he was a strong man.

**CHARLES:** A strong man.

**INT:** Physically strong?

**CHARLES:** Physically strong. He was a strong man and a eiliche man. (Yiddish)

**INT:** Yeah, he had pride.

**CHARLES:** Pride, yeah.

**INT:** And how did they run the house? Who did what in the house? How did they make decisions in the house? What did the Mame do, what did the Tate do?

**CHARLES:** Mame (Yiddish -- cooked and baked and she took care of the children. And the Tate was a businessman).

**INT:** I see. So he made the more important decisions?

**CHARLES:** Naturally.

**INT:** About money, he handled the money...

**CHARLES:** He handled the money...

**INT:** What's going to be...

**CHARLES:** Yeah, what's going to be.

**INT:** I see. So what age did you start school?

**CHARLES:** Seven years.

**INT:** Seven years. And before that?

**CHARLES:** Before that, I gewehen to cheder already. Before that.

**INT:** The cheder?

**CHARLES:** The cheder, sure.

**INT:** Before you started the public school?

**CHARLES:** Surely.

**INT:** Full time? The whole day?

**CHARLES:** The whole day, surely.

**INT:** Was that a pleasant experience, do you remember?



**CHARLES:** (Yiddish -- a shtiebele, and the rebbe had a tisch, and we learned. He wasn't a great pedagogue, not a great teacher. He talked. We talked, we read.)

**INT:** Was he nice to the kids?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, he was nice, surely.

**INT:** He didn't hit the little kids?

**CHARLES:** (Yiddish -- Sometimes, if there was someone who was a wise guy, yeah, he'd give him. He had this little stick, and he'd give a hit. Yeah, sometimes.)

**INT:** I see. And after seven years you went to the public school.

**CHARLES:** No, after seven, I went to the public school.

**INT:** Were there goyim in the public school?

**CHARLES:** Surely, we were about....

**INT:** How did they get along, the Yidden and the...

**CHARLES:** Not too bad.

**INT:** They wore kippot?

**CHARLES:** No!

**INT:** The Jews, in the public school.

**CHARLES:** No, no. You couldn't wear it.

**INT:** You couldn't?

**CHARLES:** No.

**INT:** Did the Tate say it's all right to go without?

**CHARLES:** (Yiddish -- he didn't have a choice.)

**INT:** I see, there was no alternative.

**CHARLES:** No alternative, no. Either you go, either you don't go. You don't go you...

**INT:** Was there anybody in the town that didn't go? That wouldn't go with the goyim?

**CHARLES:** No, everybody. They **had** to go. It was compulsory.

**INT:** You had to go.

**CHARLES:** You had to go to school.

**INT:** And what language...

**CHARLES:** Polish.

**INT:** Polish. So you understood....

**CHARLES:** Polish and Ukrainian.

**INT:** You understood those languages? Not from your, did your father speak those languages?

**CHARLES:** Surely, he had to do business there. He had to speak Polish.

**INT:** Your mother spoke those languages?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, very bad. Not good.

**INT:** Because she didn't have to deal with them.

**CHARLES:** Deal with them, yeah.

**INT:** And you were in your house, kleiner, and you only knew Yiddish.

**CHARLES:** I only knew Yiddish, but I started to go to school, so I started to learn.

**INT:** You had to learn the language.

**CHARLES:** You had to learn the language.

**INT:** What kind of subjects did they give you?

**CHARLES:** Like here.

**INT:** The same thing. English and math....

**CHARLES:** English and math, Polish and math and algebra and physics and...

**INT:** Did you get along with the other kids?

**CHARLES:** Oh, yeah. We got along. They used to go sometimes a piece of ham, they used to go, you know, put it in my mouth.

**INT:** The goyim.

**CHARLES:** The goyim. But in general. You see, the director, one teacher, a main teacher, he later became director, my father had rented there for him for the business. So we knew him very well. So he knew me very well, he used to treat me good because my father was his tenant. He was a rich man.

**INT:** So he singled you out, he knew you better than...

**CHARLES:** Yeah, he knew me better than the other ones. He tried...

**INT:** He took care of you.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, took care.

**INT:** You were a good student in school, or average?

**CHARLES:** Average, we went into the Polish schools, it was like we got into a strange language. Polish was a strange language to us. But we learned. Better than goyim. The goyim didn't know nothing, they came from the villages. The city shaygetz, he knew already, because he was...

**INT:** Did they get into fights with the Jews?

**CHARLES:** Sometimes.

**INT:** And you had to be strong?

**CHARLES:** You had to be strong, sometimes. My brother used to help me.

**INT:** I see. You looked up to your brother?

**CHARLES:** Oh, yeah, sure.

**INT:** All of them.

**CHARLES:** All of them.

**INT:** All the brothers.

**CHARLES:** They already mentschen. When they came over...

**INT:** Were they Hasidish, like your Tate, your brothers?

**CHARLES:** No, the druggist, was not Hasidish.

**INT:** Frum?

**CHARLES:** No, no.

**INT:** Not so frum.

**CHARLES:** The other man, the plain man, he was a businessman, a big businessman. He used to send a loan to Germany to friends' merchandise.

**INT:** He was frum?

**CHARLES:** He was...he went to school. Yeah, he was frum.

**INT:** The second brother.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, the old brother.

**INT:** And there was a third brother.

**CHARLES:** The third brother was the same thing like I was in the house. But he got married already, fine family.

**INT:** I see, and the sisters married frum people?

**CHARLES:** No, nobody was so frum.

**INT:** Not like the Tate.

**CHARLES:** No, the older sister, she married to her rabbi's house, so she was very frum.

**INT:** Do you know how your father reacted to that, to see his children not like he was, not Hasidish, not...

**CHARLES:** No, but he didn't know about it. Sometimes we had to go on Shabbat to play ball, he didn't know about it. He went to sleep. So we sneaked out and we went to play. Then three, four o'clock I go home to go to shul for Mincha.

**INT:** What was changing in the town, different from him? I mean it wasn't the selbe derech that he had. Was he raised in that town, your father?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, surely, he was raised in the town.

**INT:** And he was raised by a Tate who was a Hasid?

**CHARLES:** Was a Hasid, yeah.

**INT:** So what happened? What happened to the next generation there already? What was going on there?

**CHARLES:** He got like here, we got already, we were not so frum like our father.

**INT:** Why? Because you went to, your Tate never went to a school like that. Maybe it was the school?

**CHARLES:** Maybe, I don't know. The modern people got very modern without a hat, they used to go. I didn't go without a hat. But some other people used to go without the hat. And the younger people were already, they were (Yiddish -- it started to go down a bit. Downhill a bit.)

**INT:** How about on Shabbas in the town, though? Were there people that were mechalel Shabbas?

**CHARLES:** Very few people, very few.

**INT:** Not so many.

**CHARLES:** Very few. A barber, there was a barber he was mechalel Shabbas, he kept open the store.

**INT:** Yeah?

**CHARLES:** Yeah. But the rabbi (Yiddish -- called him once and talked to him about the fact that he was keeping open the store. But it didn't help at all.)

**INT:** I see, he did.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, he did. Because he was afraid, if he wouldn't do it, they used to come on Shabbat to take a haircut. If he wouldn't do it, they going to bring some other goy from another city.

**INT:** He would do it to the goyim, the Jews wouldn't come to him.

**CHARLES:** No, no, only to the goyim. A Jew wouldn't go. But he was afraid. If he'll keep the store open on Saturday, so they going to bring another barber, a goy from Lemberg, from Tarnopol, from who knows?

**INT:** What did the kids talk about when you were in Gymnasium? Did they talk about getting out of there? Forget the war, but just...

**CHARLES:** Yeah, we were afraid something terrible, because...

**INT:** Why?

**CHARLES:** A Jew couldn't get a job. Not a policeman, not a office, a post office man, not, nothing. Not in the city hall. A Jew couldn't get a job. So he had to do business. Either go to school, to school, they didn't let him in. Some people they were rich people, they had to go to for a doctor business, so they had to go to Italy, or to Czechoslovakia. There they let in Jewish people.

**INT:** So the kids thought already about going, getting out of there, leaving Poland?

**CHARLES:** We had organizations, Zionist organizations.

**INT:** To go to Israel.

**CHARLES:** To go to Israel, yeah.

**INT:** And you in your own mind, when you were in high school...

**CHARLES:** Yeah, I wanted to go to Israel.

**INT:** Yeah?

**CHARLES:** Make aliyah. Later, the brother didn't let me, because I finished high school. He said, "I'll give you a trade, and you'll be very good. I'll learn you for the drugstore."

**INT:** I see. So you would rather be a druggist and have a parnosseh, than go run where you don't know what's going to be.

**CHARLES:** You don't know where it is.

**INT:** I see, but kids talked about going out of there. They were schwach there.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, and they went out.

**INT:** They went out. Where did they go?

**CHARLES:** To Israel on the black [illegal] aliyah.

**INT:** This was in the thirties, the early thirties? '31, '33, '34?

**CHARLES:** '33 Hitler came to power. 1933. And then it started to be very bad already in Poland, too. So we had organizatzia, I used to belong to the Betar from the beginning,

and a lot of people left. Rich people. Because you needed money to go there. So they went to Israel.

**INT:** What did your Tate say about going to Israel?

**CHARLES:** No, they didn't believe it.

**INT:** That you shouldn't go.

**CHARLES:** We shouldn't go.

**INT:** Why?

**CHARLES:** Because you don't (Yiddish -- it's treif there. Boys and girls together. You go to kibbutz.) The kibbutz is very bad.

**INT:** So he didn't think about going.

**CHARLES:** No, he was already, they couldn't imagine what could happen to them, because they are natives for a few hundred years live in the city.

**INT:** In that same town.

**CHARLES:** In the same town. So they felt themselves, they didn't feel themselves that they were strangers there.

**INT:** Your father had goyishe friends?

**CHARLES:** No, friends they didn't have. It's only for business. In the city, didn't live no goyim, only Jews.

**INT:** Only Jews lived in the city.

**CHARLES:** The goy was, the policeman was a goy, and the city hall they had only goyim. So they lived not in the city, around. But the city was 100 percent Jewish. We had an eruv, we didn't even know. (Yiddish -- All my life I thought you're allowed to carry to shul on Shabbas, because we had an eruv. Was an eruv made from the (?), because if the goyim would have known there was an eruv, they would have torn down.)

**INT:** I see. They didn't know.

**CHARLES:** No, they didn't know, but they made from the telephone slips, from the telephone wires, around like this. It was paid off, naturally, but nobody knew about it. Because if a goy would know that there is an eruv, what they would do with it.

**INT:** So goyim never came to your town to visit? I mean to your house.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, they came.

**INT:** But only for business.

**CHARLES:** Only for business.

**INT:** I see.

**CHARLES:** Visits we didn't have from the goyim.

(END TAPE ONE, SIDE ONE)

(TAPE ONE, SIDE TWO)

**CHARLES:** ...smelled to there, and let me go in there.

**INT:** Betar.

**CHARLES:** Hashomer Hatzair.

**INT:** Oh, Hashomer Hatzair. It wasn't religious -- at **all**.

**CHARLES:** Surely!

**INT:** It was Communism, Socialism.

**CHARLES:** Socialist. Socialist is not Communist. A big difference.

**INT:** Big difference, okay.

**CHARLES:** And then the Gordonya [Zionist youth organization] was also left. But Betar was a better class.

**INT:** Was it religious, Betar?

**CHARLES:** It wasn't special religious, but it wasn't not religious.

**INT:** I see. Were there other organizations you could have joined that were more Jewish?

**CHARLES:** No, this is it.

**INT:** Those were the ones in the town.

**CHARLES:** Yeah.



**INT:** Or join nothing.

**CHARLES:** Or join nothing.

**INT:** Did a lot of kids...

**CHARLES:** There was Mizrachi, it was religious, but this already was too elderly people. The youngsters, they didn't have a youth organization. And this was a youth organization, we had it very good. We came after the davening, we had a good meal and we went into the Betar. There we sang, we this, with that, lectures.

**INT:** And learn Hebrew?

**CHARLES:** Learn Hebrew. Some people they knew better. The guys was already college, high school, and they came back, so they taught Hebrew in there. We knew Herzl's biography, and Jabotinsky's biography and all kinds of big shots. We knew the biography. They taught us. For free. And we sing there. We spend there very pleasantly.

**INT:** And the idea was one day...

**CHARLES:** To go to Israel.

**INT:** To go to Israel.

**CHARLES:** Because we thought there is no future there. Because till 19...

**INT:** Even in a Jewish town you saw no future.

**CHARLES:** Surely. Because what mean a Jewish town? Jews lived there, and the business was in the Jews' hands, but you could be a clerk there. So how many clerks you need there? And then what you got paid? A clerk got paid 15, till 20 zlotys a month. A month. For fifteen zlotys you could buy a pair of shoes.

**INT:** I see. Could anybody become, you couldn't become a doctor or a lawyer? There were Jewish doctors.

**CHARLES:** There were Jewish doctors, only Jewish doctors. Not only. First of all, in 1920, Poland start to exist, and the Polish people, they were anti-Semitic. And when my brother became a pharmacist to **Austria**, because we were occupied from Austria. And other doctors, not from Poland. Later on, they couldn't take it away already, when he has already a diploma. So they didn't take it away. But to start it, you have to be very rich. There was a numerals, I think there was one percent or two, on a hundred people. So one man could go in, a Jew. He had it bad there, they used to beat him up, it was terrible, they didn't want him.

**INT:** I see. And dry goods you couldn't make a living.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, from dry goods, this was the only living. This, or this, or this. Everything was in the Jewish, all the business, it was in the Jewish hands. The Polish people, they don't (Yiddish -- they just sell chazzer [pork]. That's what they can sell.) When they open even a store, they couldn't manage. And he, his wife works, and he didn't come there the hours, the to do business.

**INT:** There were Poles that had businesses?

**CHARLES:** They had a (?), they had a Polish business with an organization, the (?), but how come everything is supposed to be to the Jews. But they didn't exist too much.

**INT:** They couldn't compete.

**CHARLES:** They couldn't compete with the Jews. The Jews sometimes sold without profit, used to take them in, to be in competition with them, to show them, see, you go there. And he likes better, he came to a Jew. Came before the...take down the bread, like in July, and they didn't have money, so he came over, and said, "Give me ten zlotys, and a hundred zlotys," and he knew already whom to give, and then when they got the new merchandise from the field, they brought it back. Not **money**, merchandise. And a goy didn't do this. There he was short five cents, it costs a dollar, no deal. And by Jewish people, it was ten cents short, ah, he gave me back. Some people brought back, and some people didn't, but he....

**INT:** Yeah. The Poles came and bought from the Jews?

**CHARLES:** They didn't have no choice. Later on, from my time, they start already, take a look at our Saturday, we cannot buy it for nothing.

**INT:** They were amazed the goyim, that they couldn't buy on Shabbas?

**CHARLES:** They couldn't buy, they were amazed, so they started to build their own. But it didn't work out good. We had all the business, from A to Z. The goy brought only to the normal days, the business days, he brought, fruit, vegetables, they brought. And they didn't have, they had to bring to the Jewish people, because only the Jew bought it. Another goy didn't buy it because they had their own. Those people who didn't have their own, when they work for somebody, they got paid no money, they got merchandise. They worked for the potatoes, so you got potatoes. You got this, you got beans, peas. You got it.

**INT:** When you were going to be the pharmacist, you were going to deal with Jews mostly.

**CHARLES:** No, the pharmacy deals with goyim.

**INT:** With goyim, too.

**CHARLES:** Yeah. In our city was one goy, a pharmacist, and one Jew a pharmacist.

**INT:** They each had a different store.

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** So the goyim went to the goy, and the Jews went...

**CHARLES:** No, the goyim went into a Jew, they liked better the Jew, the Jews talked to him better.

**INT:** So the goy didn't do as good a business.

**CHARLES:** He did also good. They did for Jewish also.

**INT:** I see. And what about paying taxes to the government? How did that work?

**CHARLES:** Oh, the Jewish people, they pay the taxes, all the taxes.

**INT:** They paid the taxes. And the goy?

**CHARLES:** The goy paid very little.

**INT:** Because he didn't do...

**CHARLES:** First of all, he didn't have business. And if you have business, you got wages. And if you got wages, you don't pay taxes.

**INT:** I see. The tax collector was a Jew, or a goy?

**CHARLES:** The tax collector was no Jew, was a goy.

**INT:** All the people in the government were goyim.

**CHARLES:** Were goyim. Because you saw the police in the Jewish hands. Because he came in for something, "I'll pay you," so he gave it to him.

**INT:** The police.

**CHARLES:** The police. So he gave it to him for free. When a Jew called a police, or something happened, the goy is a stealer, he went right away to help.

**INT:** Did you get a sense you lived in fear there? Like my zayde used to talk about Russia, always waiting for a pogrom to happen. Did you have that kind of fear?

**CHARLES:** No, no, no. I wasn't afraid to take the 12:00 to go home. Like from here to my house.

**INT:** You weren't afraid of goyim.

**CHARLES:** No.

**INT:** Did they ever have pogroms in that town?

**CHARLES:** No.

**INT:** Never. Your zayde didn't have them?

**CHARLES:** No, this was Austria. Till 1920 was Austria, and Austria didn't make pogroms. Just the opposite. The Jewish people, he liked to deal, peasants liked to deal with the Jewish people, because they were smarter. I had one uncle, he was in the city hall, because he was a invalid. So he got this job. And everything was in Jewish hands.

**INT:** So when you dealt with the goyim, it was even up. You didn't feel **inferior** to goyim. **Afraid** of goyim.

**CHARLES:** No! No, we're not afraid. We were not...

**INT:** Their strength, and they're going to get you on the street, or they had gangs...

**CHARLES:** No, we were not afraid. We had a house for instance, we had a house in the center city. And the house was closed. We were poor, we would open. Because we were not afraid. Like here. My father, my brother especial, a young man, when he was shorted merchandise, we had horses, so he took the two horses, and he went to Shortkopf, which was a bigger city, he went to about five kilometers of wood, on both sides a big wood, he was alone, and wasn't afraid. And my, Dinah's father, he had a big store. So we were short, he had to go into the center city. So he took a big goy with strong horses, and he put in merchandise there for about a couple thousand dollars. A Yid mit bord and peyos went to the woods, it was the same woods. He wasn't afraid.

**INT:** Let me ask you, I'm trying to figure out. You survived.

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** And the question is, that we're trying to find out, why.

**CHARLES:** Why.

**INT:** And we're going to get to that, later on. But, what's different about you, do you think, than your brothers and sisters, or other children? When you think back...

**CHARLES:** When I think back...

**INT:** Do you have your Tate in you? The Mame in you?

**CHARLES:** I don't believe it when I survived. **How** did I survive? We didn't know about it. Nobody could, for money you couldn't survive. And I was the youngest, and I didn't even know even the neighborhood too much, because when I got married, I lived in the same city with my wife. So how did we survive? I don't know myself. Because it was a chesber Elokim. Do you know sometimes why it's so...?

**INT:** But I'm trying to think where your koach came from. Is it the Tate's koach? When you see, in your eineklach, "Ah, this one's like me." Is there anything you can see, or COSSE's like you, or somebody's like you?

**CHARLES:** COSSE's like me.

**INT:** Who is like you?

**CHARLES:** COSSE.

**INT:** COSSE's like you. What, describe.

**CHARLES:** Arbeitsam [a worker, industrious, energetic]. She goes, she knows the way to go, she knows the way to travel, she not afraid this, she not afraid that.

**INT:** You were different like that, do you think?

**CHARLES:** I was also like this.

**INT:** Different than the brothers?

**CHARLES:** No! The brother, the pharmacist came back, when he was mobilized, he was a officer in the Polish army. As a pharmacist, he became a officer. And then they went together to Rumania. So he would have survived. So he went into (?) the granetz, it was the border city. He went into the drugstore. Usually you go in because he had friends there. He made a friend there. He said, "Samuel, where are you going? To the Rumania? You see Poland is ours. Come over." He took the uniform, and he put it in the fire and give him a suit, "There, you're a free man."

**INT:** He's a Rumanian.

**CHARLES:** He was not a Rumanian, he was still Poland, on the border of Rumania. And he didn't go, he came back to Shortkopf. He worked there before he got married.

But my wife is from Shortkopf, and he got already a job. And then from Kopyczynce, the druggist was a friend of his. They went together to school. So he heard that my brother is in Shortkopf, so he called me up. So I went there to buy something, because I knew already a cousin of mine worked in the store. So I went in there, I say, "Listen, where is your brother?" So I told him he's in Shortkopf. "Do me a favor. I'll pay you for cost of carfare. Go to Shortkopf and bring him back. I want to talk to him." And I went, his name was Brokorsz (?), he wants to see you very badly. So he came home. He said, "Listen Samuel, take over the drugstore. I'm afraid to be there, because the Russians were there," and he was a Polack, so he was afraid they shouldn't take him any minute to Siberia. "I want to run away. Take the drugstore. No money. You don't have to give me nothing. You're working. Whatever you make, you'll make." He, was like this. He left the job there and he came over here and he took it. And he was for the two and a half years, whatever it was there, he had it very good.

**INT:** So he was a strong person like you, too?

**CHARLES:** He was a strong...

**INT:** He wasn't afraid.

**CHARLES:** He wasn't afraid, because he remembered the Germans before the war. He said, "How can they be so mean? This is not true, this is propaganda. Don't believe it."

**INT:** Right, because he knew them from before.

**CHARLES:** He knew them from before. My father was an officer, somebody in the army. With the horses. He was a strong man. He said it cannot be they should just take and they kill. Nobody could believe it.

**INT:** Right, but as a kid, were you different than the other kids? Is there any ways you were different than the other kids?

**CHARLES:** No, we were all a strong family.

**INT:** How about compared to other families?

**CHARLES:** To other families, were all kinds of families. Poor, very poor people.

**INT:** Yeah. But did you feel yourself stronger than other people?

**CHARLES:** I feel stronger, yeah, because first of all I was living in the center of the city, in the best business section. And I had a sister there. If she would have come to America, she would be a millionaire.

**INT:** Why?

**CHARLES:** Because she was so fayik [talented]. You know (?) fayik?

**INT:** No.

**CHARLES:** Handy.

**INT:** Handy.

**CHARLES:** In business. A business lady. She would have gotten a shop over here no matter what. She would have gone into business. And if you go into business, and you know what to do, so...

**INT:** So your family was a higher class.

**CHARLES:** Not a higher class.

**INT:** From the others, it sounds like.

**CHARLES:** It was a religious family. My father was a strong man and a businessman.

**INT:** A strong man and a businessman. You knew that as a young child.

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** You knew you got a Tate who's a strong man and a businessman.

**CHARLES:** I had a brother who was very strong.

**INT:** You had pride in them?

**CHARLES:** Positively. Lazar Scherz (Yiddish -- was a)...in the First World War, when he wanted to attack, and people escaped, they ran away, they were afraid. So he was already loaded horses with a wagon full of merchandise and he went away. So he came the head of the family, of the city, (?), intelligent man, so he said, "Reb Lazar, (Yiddish -- what are you doing? Where are you going? Maybe you should leave your merchandise here. Maybe the Polacks will attack. Maybe there will be a pogrom, and we'll need people who can help, who might need something." He convinced Reb Lazar to stay. He changed his mind, and he stayed.) My Tate was a strong man. (Yiddish)

**INT:** He stayed.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, this I'm talking about 1916, '17. The war started and he stayed.

**INT:** I see. Do you ever remember crying as a little kid?

**CHARLES:** As a kid?

**INT:** Yeah, can you remember, think back?

**CHARLES:** No, I don't. My Tate, my father beat me up sometimes when I didn't come into shul.

**INT:** Yeah? What, he gave you a patsch in tuches?

**CHARLES:** (Yiddish -- He would say, "Where were you?")

**INT:** Yeah?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, sure. He'd give a few slaps.

**INT:** With his hand?

**CHARLES:** With his hand, (Yiddish -- Yeah, with his hand, sometimes with a strap.)

**INT:** Only because you didn't come into shul.

**CHARLES:** Only because I didn't come.

**INT:** Not anything in the house.

**CHARLES:** No. Otherwise I didn't do no wrong things.

**INT:** I see. And with the Mame?

**CHARLES:** The Mame never. She loved me very much. I was the mezinik (youngest child). We were seven children. I was the youngest.

**INT:** So she didn't, she wouldn't give you a patsch in the tuches or anywhere else.

**CHARLES:** No. I was a good kid, I mean, I listened...

**INT:** How did they discipline? Do you remember what the rules were like that they had? The Tate and the Mame? Was it strong, you had to...

**CHARLES:** No, they didn't...

**INT:** Do you remember it in the house, what it was like?

**CHARLES:** There was a man in the house, surely, he knew everything. He was a handyman.

**INT:** The Tate.



**CHARLES:** Yeah. I'm also like him.

**INT:** You can fix things.

**CHARLES:** I can fix things, everything. And he could fix everything.

**INT:** Did you know you were handy, even as a kid?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, as a kid I knew...

**INT:** How? Did you fix things?

**CHARLES:** I fixed things, and I made myself this, and whatever I needed.

**INT:** Did you fix for other people?

**CHARLES:** No, no, for myself.

**INT:** Just for yourself.

**CHARLES:** For the house.

**INT:** What kind of things did you have as a kid? Did you have the same things as everybody else, or different? Like maybe a bicycle that nobody else had, or...

**CHARLES:** No, I didn't have a bicycle.

**INT:** Or you had spending money, or a penknife, or things like that?

**CHARLES:** I always had spending money because I was, my sister had a business. She wanted something to do, so she had to give me something, I should go bring something.

**INT:** Did you have more money than other kids in your pocket?

**CHARLES:** No, we didn't need money.

**INT:** Did you dress better than the other kids?

**CHARLES:** Just like other kids, no.

**INT:** No different.

**CHARLES:** No different.

**INT:** Did you dress like a Polack, or like a Yid?

**CHARLES:** Like a Yid.

**INT:** How was that different? You didn't wear long gabardines or anything?

**CHARLES:** They took caps at that time, pumpkes, like this.

**INT:** Yeah. You wore that.

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** Most Jews wore that?

**CHARLES:** Surely. I wasn't outstanding from the other kids.

**INT:** But the goyim didn't wear that.

**CHARLES:** The goyim wore too this, but poorer. The goyim were poorer.

**INT:** Than the Jews.

**CHARLES:** Than the Jews, yeah.

**INT:** And of the Jews in the town, you would be near the higher, medium income, or in the middle, but not on the bottom?

**CHARLES:** It was a businessman.

**INT:** And who would be higher than a businessman? Who would macht more gelt wie a businessman?

**CHARLES:** (?)

**INT:** Who?

**CHARLES:** Nobody.

**INT:** Nobody?

**CHARLES:** A business. A business.

**INT:** So he made...

**CHARLES:** (Yiddish -- they used to say by us), they used to say, that we didn't have registers. But what they used to say was (Yiddish -- wherever there's an open drawer, then there's money. I.e., once you're in business, there's always money, because you have

this register drawer where you can always take if you need.) It's a different story. You need money, you go and you take it. There's always money there. If it's profit, or not profit, there is money there.

**INT:** There's always money there.

**CHARLES:** There's always money there. Like a register.

**INT:** You could take it when you want it?

**CHARLES:** No.

**INT:** But the parents could take it.

**CHARLES:** The parents.

**INT:** So food you always had on Shabbas -- you had a chicken and fleish and...

**CHARLES:** Shabbas, there's a chicken, fleish, yeah.

**INT:** And the Mame gebachen whatever, knishes and....

**CHARLES:** Mame gebachen, already in the wintertime on Thursday they stood all night almost and baked potatonik and kichele.

**INT:** Was your father the type that hugged you and kissed you, or was he more...

**CHARLES:** Oh, yeah, sure.

**INT:** He did that?

**CHARLES:** Sure.

**INT:** And the Mame, too?

**CHARLES:** The Mame, ah!

**INT:** A lot.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, a lot.

**INT:** Yeah, but when the Tate...

**CHARLES:** It was the Mame's idea to send me to the brother. To go to the brother.

**INT:** So you would stay in the town, or just...

**CHARLES:** No, I should go to learn, to...

**INT:** With the pharmacy.

**CHARLES:** With the pharmacy. He knew, the pharmacy was already there, his wife was from Shortkopf, from the neighbor city...

**INT:** And you listened to the Mame?

**CHARLES:** Oh, yeah.

**INT:** You didn't have your own idea, to go to Eretz Yisrael, to leave, to...

**CHARLES:** No, I was very young in that time.

**INT:** How old?

**CHARLES:** Fourteen years.

**INT:** Fourteen.

**CHARLES:** After bar mitzvah.

**INT:** What was the bar mitzvah like?

**CHARLES:** Not like here.

**INT:** What was it like?

**CHARLES:** I went to shul. I learned the Haftorah, and I, they brought a bottle of whisky, and a kichelech, a cake, and tetzelech. This was the bar mitzvah.

**INT:** And there was a rav there?

**CHARLES:** Not always was a rav. There was one rav. So he davened in Bais Hamedresh.

**INT:** Yeah, but you didn't daven in the Bais Hamedresh.

**CHARLES:** No, Bais Hamedresh was already, but he davened in the Bais Hamedresh. And there was, my uncle was a chazzan, the Mame's schwester's man was the chazzan there. And on Shabbas Hagadol or Shabbas Shuvah he came to our shul and macht a speech, a drosh, on Shabbas Hagadol. And (Yiddish -- there was a lot there for him to learn, a lot there for him to talk about) because those people that were there, members, they knew better than it.

**INT:** Yeah?

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** Because they learned. A lot of people learned in the town, they went to shiurim.

**CHARLES:** Sure, surely.

**INT:** But the older people were different than the younger people.

**CHARLES:** Very different. The generation gap was not, more than here.

**INT:** Yeah? Why?

**CHARLES:** Because my father was already a beard and I didn't.

**INT:** So most of the kids didn't have beards.

**CHARLES:** No. Very seldom was a man like Ricky.

**INT:** Very seldom.

**CHARLES:** Shochet. When the father was a shochet there. A few were like that.

**INT:** How about the rabbi's children? Did you ever know them?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, I knew them. He had the one son. He was a plain man.

**INT:** A plain person.

**CHARLES:** A plain person, yeah.

**INT:** Religious?

**CHARLES:** Not too religious. He was religious, but he couldn't be no religious there.

**INT:** Not in the town. Can I get you a glass of water or something?

(Pause)

**CHARLES:** Polish girl.

**INT:** To you?

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** So you talked to her in Polish?

**CHARLES:** Polish.

**INT:** What part of...

**CHARLES:** She's not from our, eastern Poland, but far from us.

**INT:** Yeah. So we were talking about generation gaps. And you said it's a big generation gap.

**CHARLES:** Big.

**INT:** The children spoke Yiddish, too, though. It wasn't like they spoke...

**CHARLES:** Just because the children speak...

**INT:** But religion was the main thing.

**CHARLES:** The religion was the main thing.

**INT:** How do you think, when you thought about Gott in Himmel, how did you think about it, you think, different than the Tate?

**CHARLES:** I don't know. When I was in the house, I thought entire different. But when I went to school, was already also entire different. We got more modern.

**INT:** In the school.

**CHARLES:** In the school. Was a Polish school.

**INT:** But you went to the cheder too.

**CHARLES:** But at that time when I went to the brother to high school, I didn't go already to cheder.

**INT:** Oh, you stopped.

**CHARLES:** I stopped cheder.

**INT:** After the bar mitzvah?

**CHARLES:** After the bar mitzvah, I went another year, and then I stopped.

**INT:** Was there anybody in the town who went to yeshivas after instead of the...

**CHARLES:** A few people, a few people. I had a cousin, and he was the chazzan in the Bais Hamedresh. He went to yeshiva in Warsaw, and another kid went to yeshiva. Not the father send them, but the city send them. We had like autonomy in Poland. We had our own Kultursgemeinde, our own city.

**INT:** When you say "we" you mean the city.

**CHARLES:** The city. Not the city, the Jewish people.

**INT:** The Jewish people.

**CHARLES:** Yeah. We had a Gemilus Chesed, a Gemilus Chesed, for poor people used to go take a loan without interest. Take a loan, say a hundred dollar, two hundred dollar, they should be able to make business, and then they had to give it back. And we had to pay taxes. Except (i.e. not only to) the government, (but also) to the Jewish community.

**INT:** To the Jewish community, to support the rav...

**CHARLES:** And the Jewish community, they support the rav.

**INT:** And make the mikveh, whatever.

**CHARLES:** Mikveh, we had to go to the bath, Turkish bath, we had in the city, and to kill the chickens we had a shochet, we used to pay for that. The Kultursgemeinde, they used to give wages.

**INT:** So the way the kids were going there, when the Tate gestorben there later on, those kids may not have been as frum as...

**CHARLES:** (Yiddish -- They were in big trouble.)

**INT:** Yeah, it would have been.

**CHARLES:** Would have been. They didn't, maybe they worked as a clerk. As a clerk you made as much as nothing, almost. They had 50 zlotys, they make like half a dollar. You could buy very little. But food was very cheap.

**INT:** But religion wise, the next generation would have been much different, it sounds like.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, much different. Much different.

**INT:** Was there any of the boys, the teenagers, going with Polish maidlach? Was there any kind of business like that at all?

**CHARLES:** Very few. But we had in our city, we had a few, two, three girls, they married goyim.

**INT:** Girls that married goyim.

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** There was a shande, or it was becoming...

**CHARLES:** It was a shande. It was a shande.

**INT:** It was. The parents...

**CHARLES:** The parents, they didn't ask the parents.

**INT:** They just did. Did they stay in the town?

**CHARLES:** They stayed in the town, yeah. We had a letter carrier. He was a very good man, a Polish man, but he was very friendly to Jews. He married a Jewish girl. And he knew everybody. When I wrote a letter to my parents, I wrote: "Lazar Scherz, Kopyczynce." That's all I needed. I didn't need a address. He knew already.

**INT:** He lived right in the town?

**CHARLES:** He lived right in the town. For the German people, when the Germans came, so it wasn't allowed to have a Jewish girl, but nobody...

**INT:** Said it.

**CHARLES:** Said it. And he had a daughter. They came to visit, because one man from the family survived. Not with me, but I know him very well. We got together, a few people survived from our city maybe we had ten people, we used to come to each other, in New York. So he brought this to there, so she became Jewish. She is Jewish anyway, because her mother is Jewish, but Lubavitcher took her in. She married a Hasid with peyos. And he came to the wedding.

**INT:** No kidding. Now, when they got married, they stayed, a rav didn't marry them, obviously. It must have been a golech or somebody.

**CHARLES:** No, not a golech, was a civil.

**INT:** Civil. But they lived there amongst the people.

**CHARLES:** But they lived there among the people.

**INT:** Nobody, nobody (Yiddish). They let him alone.



**CHARLES:** Because he was a very good man. For the Germans, when the Germans occupied, he was very helpful. The Jewish Judenrat bought him a car, and he used to, whenever they took men, the people, and we didn't know where they're taken, he was riding after them, and he found out. Because the first pogrom was Chol Hamoed Sukkos in our city, in 1942. They took a few hundred people, I saw everything in my eyes. Because I had a bunker. You know, a bunker. In the city, and I took a little hole, a pinhole, and I saw, it was just in the bazaar, so was a lot of people there. So they took him, and he was riding after them, and they took them away, because in the beginning they were afraid to kill them on the premises, because they didn't know how the Polish people, the Ukrainian people would react to kill Jewish people. Yesterday they were friends and business associates; today they killed them. So he was riding after them. And they took them to Lemberg, to Lvov, and they took them to a wood, and they killed them there. And he brought the yediah, he was a good man.

**INT:** A good man. So they accepted him in the town.

**CHARLES:** And they accepted him in the town.

**INT:** Do you remember being afraid of anything as a kid?

**CHARLES:** No.

**INT:** Anybody?

**CHARLES:** Anybody.

**INT:** Nobody.

**CHARLES:** Nobody.

**INT:** You weren't afraid of anybody.

**CHARLES:** Not anybody. Because I had my father, I had a brother, he was also a strong man.

**INT:** And you thought you could do anything with your hands? Build anything?

**CHARLES:** I can do everything, yeah.

**INT:** You could build anything? Furniture, or fix something in the house.

**CHARLES:** Fix something, I'm not a carpenter, but fix something, a hammer, and...

**INT:** You had plumbing in the house, indoor plumbing in the house in Poland?

**CHARLES:** Wasn't such a thing like plumbing. Wasn't like a....

**INT:** Hot water and...

**CHARLES:** No, not hot water. But we had like here to the street, to pump the water.

**INT:** Oh, you pumped the water.

**CHARLES:** Pumped the water.

**INT:** And to make it hot you had to boil it.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, to boil it with wood. A stove.

**INT:** What was the best holiday you remember, of the Jewish holidays? Was it Pesach?

**CHARLES:** Pesach was a very nice holiday.

**INT:** They came, the children came to the, your brothers and sisters came to the Tate?

**CHARLES:** No, they didn't come. They were far away, very far.

**INT:** So it was you again, the sister, the brother came.

**CHARLES:** And then I have Seder until about 12:00 or longer, the doors were open, we were not afraid.

**INT:** The Tate made the Seder.

**CHARLES:** Made the Seder. Was kal tuv there and the Seder, everything was made with their own hands. They didn't have like here, to go in to buy, like Torah Academy, a store with everything.

**INT:** The Mame had to make everything.

**CHARLES:** To make everything.

**INT:** The matzahs?

**CHARLES:** The matzahs, right after Purim they started to make matzahs. Was a man, an untenemer [someone who took it upon himself to do this, a businessman, an entrepreneur], and he made matzahs. I mean, he hired people, women, and they made matzahs.

**INT:** Now I want to ask you, not when the war came, but the beginning. Just the beginning, to talk about, did you know what was going on? In other words, did you read in the paper that there's, yemach shemo, a Hitler?

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** Did you think that Hitler was far away, and he'll never come here? When, what did you think, when Hitler came, when you read in the newspaper, tell me what you thought. 1933.

**CHARLES:** 1933 was quiet, till 1939.

**INT:** 1939 you didn't think about Nazis and Hitler, and gor nicht.

**CHARLES:** Gor nicht. We heard in 1939, the beginning when Hitler gave ultimatum to Poland.

**INT:** Right. Now before that already, there was Czechoslovakia was already split up, and all that. Didn't...it didn't bother you.

**CHARLES:** No, the first thing was Poland.

**INT:** No, but they gave away, they had Munich, and they split up Czechoslovakia, and they gave...

**CHARLES:** They took Sudetenland, they took a piece.

**INT:** Took a piece, so that already didn't bother you.

**CHARLES:** That already didn't bother us.

**INT:** How about what they were doing to Jews? What Hitler was doing to Jews in the thirties?

**CHARLES:** We couldn't believe it. We didn't know.

**INT:** Either one. Which one is it? Either you didn't believe it, or you didn't know?

**CHARLES:** We didn't know, and we didn't believe it.

**INT:** But you heard about it.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, but in 1938, Hitler sent all the Polish people...

(END TAPE ONE, SIDE TWO)

(TAPE TWO, SIDE ONE)

**INT:** Perfect. All right. So we said...

**CHARLES:** You want 1939?

**INT:** Let me find out, between 1933 and 1939, what you were thinking about there?

**CHARLES:** No, we were afraid we have...

**INT:** Did you read the newspapers?

**CHARLES:** We were afraid about what, we are black vulcans [clouds] are coming to us, over us. And that's all. We didn't know what exactly what to do there.

**INT:** Did the Betar say it's time to get out? I know Jabotinsky came to Europe. What were they saying?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, they were saying, all the time, that it's time to get out. Jabotinsky said, because he is from Russia, Jabotinsky, so he knew when there are going to be pogroms.

**INT:** Did he come to the town? Did anybody...

**CHARLES:** No, in Shortkopf, came to the town. He came to Shortkopf.

**INT:** And what did he say?

**CHARLES:** He said we have to go out.

**INT:** And what year did he tell you that?

**CHARLES:** Between 1939...

**INT:** In 1939. But between '33 and '39?

**CHARLES:** Maybe even before, also. We wanted to go, but we didn't go. We couldn't go. We had to go on a black aliyah. And a black aliyah it costs at that time you needed two thousand zlotys. That's like \$2,000. It was very hard to get it. Only the rich people could.

**INT:** Your father couldn't get that kind of money together?

**CHARLES:** He wouldn't let me go. And I wasn't at home. I was with the brother. In 1933 I came to the brother. And I was there all the time.

**INT:** But you lived home.

**CHARLES:** No, I lived there because he was about a few hundred kilometers from our house.

**INT:** Ah, so who did you live with?

**CHARLES:** With my brother.

**INT:** Just with the brother.

**CHARLES:** Yeah. I had it very good, because he was a rich man. A pharmacist in Europe...

**INT:** So how about if you said to him, "Let's go. What are we staying here for?"

**CHARLES:** He was a pharmacist, he didn't want to go. He had it very good. He couldn't believe it.

**INT:** He said nothing's going to happen.

**CHARLES:** Nothing's going to happen. And then, what to do, he has already two children, a wife.

**INT:** And how about you, what did you say? During those years, '35, '36...

**CHARLES:** I was at school.

**INT:** '37, '38.

**CHARLES:** '37 I was at school, and then I started to work with him. He needed me.

**INT:** In what year?

**CHARLES:** In '37.

**INT:** In '37, okay. But when you read the papers, about Yidden in Germany...

**CHARLES:** No, it was very bad. It was very bad.

**INT:** They threw them out from the jobs, and they threw the Polish out of Germany. Some of the Polisher came to your town back, or no?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, not to our town, but we knew about it.

**INT:** And they told you what was going on there.

**CHARLES:** It was going on there bad too.

**INT:** In Germany.

**CHARLES:** They wouldn't believe they going to do this to the German Jews. Only to the Polish Jews. And they know it's bad, but first of all, when the Polish government says we are strong, we are not afraid of it. And he gave ultimatum to Poland, he should give him back Gdansk. You know, and so the Polish people, he wouldn't give, not he is asking us, the Polish, rich migleche was at that time. So he said, we wouldn't give it to him the (?) but he asked for us, because this was very important for Poland. This was the entrance to the ocean. Without this, we didn't have a ocean. And it was very important. So we said, we even, we wouldn't give it to him.

**INT:** You wouldn't give him a piece of clothes, even.

**CHARLES:** A piece of clothes, we didn't give him a **button**.

**INT:** A button, yeah.

**CHARLES:** We wouldn't give it to him. We not afraid of him. They didn't know nothing was doing in Germany. They had, maybe the whole government had maybe ten planes. And they used to parade the place in the city, we are strong, we are not afraid of them.

**INT:** Did you believe it?

**CHARLES:** We believe it.

**INT:** The Poles, they had horses. The Deutschen had tanks, and they had horses.

**CHARLES:** But they didn't say we have horse. The Polish officer used to go in the army to march, to make a parade, they were outstanding. They had tanks also. We thought that they are not afraid. They didn't know what to do next door. And when they started the war in 1939, in the first of September, in eight days, they were already in our town.

**INT:** What did you do during the eight days? Where, what, do you remember when you heard war broke out?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, surely!

**INT:** It was the first of September.

**CHARLES:** The first of September.

**INT:** Do you remember?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, I remember.

**INT:** Tell me about it. What was it like?

**CHARLES:** We had, the first thing, we had a bomb fall not far from us. And we went to a course before the war, in 1939, how to behave to manage with this, with that.

**INT:** So they thought there **might** be war.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, we knew there might be war.

**INT:** You knew there might be war with the Germans.

**CHARLES:** My brother went to Cracow, for the special course, and then I went there.

**INT:** Did you worry about being drafted into the army?

**CHARLES:** Positively. I was worried. And they, the bomb, we had already prepared merchandise, that would have been worth thousands and thousands, hundreds of thousand dollars. Cause my brother remembered the First World War, how there was a shortage of everything. So he prepared whatever he had a penny, he bought merchandise. And we went through the first help, in case of a bomb for this or that, for atom, no not that, but the gas.

**INT:** Direct hit. All right, gas.

**CHARLES:** Gas, we were worried. We were all...

**INT:** You got masks?

**CHARLES:** And we got masks, we were prepared for that, what to do. Me and my brother.

**INT:** Where were you when war broke out that September the first?

**CHARLES:** In Dembrova(?), the same city where I come.

**INT:** And how did you hear about it? This is where you were the pharmacist. And how did you hear about it? Do you remember how you heard about it?

**CHARLES:** We had a radio, a radio.

**INT:** And what did it say?

**CHARLES:** That the war broke out.

**INT:** And the Germans have invaded.

**CHARLES:** Have invaded. It was already a few days before. Was already in Tarnov, a big city from us. Was already, somebody put a bomb in the train station. And then we thought, I was, and my wife, and my brother was right away drafted.

**INT:** Now did you know about the Russians and the Germans making a treaty?

**CHARLES:** No.

**INT:** When did you find out about that?

**CHARLES:** We found out a few days after the war. Not after the war, during the war.

**INT:** And you were in the Russian side, or the German side?

**CHARLES:** I was in the German side. And the week, Friday, started the war, and the second Friday, they were in my city. I saw the first, I was the drugstore was here, and they came from, first three soldiers came.

**INT:** Let's stop here.

**CHARLES:** No, a few, a few. And I was watching him, and one man, in the left tank, the Germans went, was a Polish officer on the tank. He was a spy. Volksdeutsche. We had a lot of Volksdeutsche. Originally they were Deutschen, they lived in Poland, and they drafted them right away.

**INT:** The Germans drafted them.

**CHARLES:** The Germans drafted them, and they were already on the German tanks. And right away, about a half an hour, they occupied the whole city. They saw the Germans, the Polish people left already, the army left already, they occupied the whole city. And all people came to there and thousands of soldiers, Germans.

**INT:** How far were you from the German border?

**CHARLES:** We were far. But took them eight days to come. They didn't fight, they just march.

**INT:** The Poles didn't fight.

**CHARLES:** They fought, but...

**INT:** You have horses against tanks and airplanes.



**CHARLES:** Against tanks and airplanes. What could they fight? How could they fight? They braved themselves and they kissed themselves, the officers. And I was there. And I became, right away I got a card to be drafted. To go then and there. But the date was there, so they were already the Germans there. So I went out to the city.

**INT:** What were you going to do with that draft? What were you going to do? You were going to go in the Polish army?

**CHARLES:** No, if I didn't go, because...

**INT:** No, but what **were** you going to do?

**CHARLES:** I would have gone, surely.

**INT:** You **would** have gone.

**CHARLES:** Right. My brother went to the Polish army.

**INT:** How long was he in the Polish army?

**CHARLES:** He was marching from the city a few days.

**INT:** He was fighting in the battle?

**CHARLES:** No, there was no battle. He was in the back. First of all, he was a pharmacist, and then he came to the border of Rumania, so he went into a friend, and he gave him there.

**INT:** Oh! And that was the end. I see, okay.

**CHARLES:** And this was a very bad thing. Because if he would have gone with the Polish army, he would have come to England. He would have survived.

**INT:** Yeah, who would know? The Polish army ran away to England, yeah?

**CHARLES:** To England. But they all survived. They didn't kill at that time Polish people. Polish people didn't kill Jews at that time. So he would have been in England.

**INT:** Yeah, yeah. The Germans came into the town.

**CHARLES:** And the Germans came into the town. So I was in the pharmacy by myself, because the wife, we bought a horse, and she and two children, they lended us, the boy was already about twelve, thirteen years, so he was riding, she should escape to the hometown, to Shortkopf.

**INT:** Which is further inland?

**CHARLES:** It was about two hundred, three hundred kilometers.

**INT:** So he started off in the horse, with the wagon. The son.

**CHARLES:** With the wagon, they started off, and they went away.

**INT:** The whole, the mishpacha went.

**CHARLES:** The mishpacha yeah. Three people.

**INT:** Three people. Was a Mame and two children.

**CHARLES:** Mame and two children, a girl with a boy.

**INT:** How old were they?

**CHARLES:** The girl was twelve years, and he was about thirteen, fourteen.

**INT:** Do you remember their names?

**CHARLES:** Surely.

**INT:** Tell me what their names were.

**CHARLES:** One was Renee.

**INT:** Renee? What kind of Yiddishe name is Renee?

**CHARLES:** Renia. Polish name. They already called her Renee, and he was Marek. He was Moische. He named him from Zayden, but he was Marek.

**INT:** So they already had Polish names already.

**CHARLES:** Surely.

**INT:** But your Tate didn't have a Polish name.

**CHARLES:** The Tate was Samuel.

**INT:** That was a Polish name?

**CHARLES:** Shmuel, Shmuel.

**INT:** So they already had a goyishe name and they dealt with the goyim.

**CHARLES:** Goyishe name.

**INT:** Okay. So they went in the wagon away and left you. You didn't want to go.

**CHARLES:** I didn't want to go.

**INT:** Why?

**CHARLES:** Because it was a fortune there. You know, my brother's fortune. I cannot leave there. I know what he prepared. He told me, I asked him, "What are you buying so much?" He said, "You don't know what is doing here during a war. Everything is gold."

**INT:** So you thought maybe you'd sell it to the Germans, you didn't know who you going to sell it to.

**CHARLES:** No, I didn't know what they're going to kill Jews like this, people. And I'm a quiet guy, okay, they put me to work. And I was, and later they went in, an officer came into the drugstore, and he told me, he asked me the questions, he put in...

**INT:** What language did he talk to you?

**CHARLES:** German.

**INT:** And you understood the German.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, yeah sure.

**INT:** How did you understand the German?

**CHARLES:** I learned it in school.

**INT:** So you knew Polish, Ukrainian, and German, and Yiddish.

**CHARLES:** And Yiddish.

**INT:** And a bissel Ivrit.

**CHARLES:** Ivrit I forgot. I learned a little, but I forgot it. So he asked me that, I told him, "This is my brother's drugstore," so he told me, "You open the store, sell whatever you can, and the money you put away, and we'll come every day to take the money." And I did that. Later on, was a doctor living in the same building. His wife, he was also drafted to the army, and his wife was friends of my brother and my sister-in-law, and she bought also a horse, and they went also. She got bombed with the horse, and the horse got killed, and she came back with her daughter. She came back with her daughter, they didn't have a house, they rented a house, so I told her, "You know what? You come into

me and you help me to work, and you'll get plenty whatever you have, whatever I have, you have, you'll cook, and we'll manage somehow to eat. What to eat." So and I opened the store and I was there about say, two weeks. They came all the soldiers, they came, they didn't pay nothing. Whatever they wanted they took.

**INT:** The pharmacy, from the pharmacy. From the medicines.

**CHARLES:** Medicines, yeah. And we had a lot of wine. My brother had prepared a lot of wine, fesser wine, because (?) was making wine. At that time, some of it. And they asked for wine, and I gave it to him. Later after two weeks, they brought a goyishe pharmacist, in his competition, so he told him that I am not a pharmacist, his brother's store, and they came over there, and they took the I should resign. So I gave him freiwillig, [voluntarily] what I wanted to give to go away. And they gave me ten marks. Ten marks, and a document, I should sign it, and I signed it, and they gave me a card, I should be able to go home.

**INT:** To give up the pharmacy, though?

**CHARLES:** Give up the pharmacy, they gave me ten marks, and I signed a document, and I gave them freiwillig. You know what that means? Voluntarily. I gave out the pharmacy volunteer, because this is not mine, it belongs to my brother.

**INT:** You gave the pharmacy away?

**CHARLES:** Yeah. They told me to sign a document.

**INT:** Giving the pharmacy away.

**CHARLES:** It doesn't belong to me, to the Germans.

**INT:** Okay. I want to ask you a couple of questions. When you said that the Germans are going to come and take some money, you mean to tell me you actually gave them, it was up to you how much you were going to leave them?

**CHARLES:** Naturally I didn't give him all.

**INT:** So you gave him a little, and you took for yourself.

**CHARLES:** I took a little, and I put it away there. Naturally I didn't give him all.

**INT:** Okay. Now. When they came and told you to get rid of the pharmacy, what were you thinking about? This is all your brother's money, and the store?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, but if I give it to them, it belongs to them, not to me.

**INT:** What do you mean, it belongs to them?

**CHARLES:** They occupied it. They didn't ask questions. They could have killed me.

**INT:** So you were afraid for your life?

**CHARLES:** Naturally.

**INT:** You didn't see anybody killed yet, did you?

**CHARLES:** No, I didn't see any.

**INT:** So what, they threatened you?

**CHARLES:** Naturally!

**INT:** What did they tell you? "This is what you're going to do"?

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** "You're going to give us the pharmacy."

**CHARLES:** "Give us the pharmacy."

**INT:** They're not going to give you any money?

**CHARLES:** First of all, they took me to their office there, to the jail. They didn't put me, if I would have said no, they would have put me to jail right away.

**INT:** I see, but it was a Deutsch that came, not a Polish.

**CHARLES:** Naturally a Deutsch, a Deutsch.

**INT:** An officer.

**CHARLES:** An officer.

**INT:** And he says, "We want the pharmacy."

**CHARLES:** We want the pharmacy, yeah.

**INT:** So you didn't fight with them at all.

**CHARLES:** No!

**INT:** You said, "You can have the pharmacy."

**CHARLES:** They can have the pharmacy. A document, I signed it, they gave me ten mark and they gave me I should be able to go home.

**INT:** To go home. And the ten marks they gave you? What for? How much was that worth?

**CHARLES:** Nothing. You couldn't buy nothing.

**INT:** For all the inventory and for everything, ten marks.

**CHARLES:** Surely.

**INT:** Plus the money you had, from whatever you had on you.

**CHARLES:** This I had in my pocket.

**INT:** In your pocket you had some gelt.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, the woman from the doctor's wife, I gave it to her everything. I should be able to live together, to eat. We had to buy something.

**INT:** Right.

**CHARLES:** And then they gave me a card I should be able to go home. And I went home. I took my bike, I took whatever I could there, fur coats, and everything, I went to the second city, to friends of my brother.

**INT:** On a bicycle.

**CHARLES:** On a bicycle, another friend from that city lended me, and we loaded a big bike with merchandise, and I went to the city. And I gave it to the family.

**INT:** Now, were you ahead of the Germans when you went to the city? The Germans had not been on that road yet?

**CHARLES:** No, they been on the road, but they...

**INT:** The Germans were all around, even in the city you were going to?

**CHARLES:** Surely!

**INT:** But nobody bothered you when they saw you on the bicycle, they didn't say...

**CHARLES:** No, no, no.

**INT:** Were there Germans on the road that you passed by?

**CHARLES:** They were not on the road, they were in the city, they took already people.

**INT:** So you went on the road, they weren't there.

**CHARLES:** They weren't there.

**INT:** (?)

**CHARLES:** And I came to the Polish city, to the station, to buy a ticket to go to Lemberg, to Lvov, so he took a, he said, "You a Zhid, you a Yid. How can you go? We don't sell to Jewish people."

**INT:** The Pole's telling you.

**CHARLES:** The Pole's telling me. "No, no, you cannot go." So I went anyway, without a ticket. I was waiting at night, it was bei nacht, I went into the train, I didn't have nothing with me, only...

**INT:** What did you do with the merchandise?

**CHARLES:** The merchandise I gave it to a friend, to my brother's friend, to give it to, they should put it away.

**INT:** Yeah, and the bicycle and the merchandise.

**CHARLES:** And the bicycle and everything.

**INT:** And then went on the train.

**CHARLES:** And I went on the train at night without a ticket. I get a few dollars, a few marks, I'll pay it. Although he didn't want to sell it to me. And I went to the border of Poland and Germany. This was a big...river. And the train I met another boy. And he came from another city, also there. So we got together, where are we going, we going to Lemberg, to the Russians.

**INT:** Wait a minute, you weren't going to your parents?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, but I have to go to Lemberg, and then we go to the parents, another hundred, a few hundred kilometers. Kopyczynce and Lemberg is far away. So I went to there, and I see the Germans are patrolling. I was afraid, because I haven't got nothing, I saw the Polish people didn't acknowledge what I have. So we went into a bush, and we stood there all day, till between night, say between six o'clock was that time. And this was the fifteenth of November.

**INT:** 1939.

**CHARLES:** 1939. So we said, we'll go and then we'll jump, when the soldier went running to the other, when he came over here, we saw him, he didn't see us, but we saw him. And then when he went to the other, when he was already on the other end, we jump into the water. It was the fifteenth of November.

**INT:** How did you know how to swim?

**CHARLES:** I knew how to swim from before.

**INT:** You learned how to swim?

**CHARLES:** Sure. In the house.

**INT:** And you had good strength, good coach?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, surely. I was twenty, twenty-one years old. So I jumped into the water with that guy, and they started...

**INT:** How high a jump?

**CHARLES:** Not jump, to the water.

**INT:** Right into the water off the ground.

**CHARLES:** Off the ground.

**INT:** Go ahead. How far across was the land?

**CHARLES:** Right there, by our city there was the water. The bush was nearby.

**INT:** And how far did you have to swim? Did you have to swim in the water or walk in the water?

**CHARLES:** To swim.

**INT:** How wide was it?

**CHARLES:** I don't remember how wide it was.

**INT:** You knew you could swim it.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, I knew I could swim it, but I didn't know where, how far.

**INT:** You could see the other side.



**CHARLES:** Yeah. I saw, but that's all. I don't know. It was a strange neighborhood. I never was there, the first time. He started to shoot, dat-dat-dat, till the half of the water. And I came to the half of the river, he start to shoot, and the other Russian people say: "Devai! Devai!"

**INT:** They saw you on the other side.

**CHARLES:** They saw me.

**INT:** Even in, this was in nighttime?

**CHARLES:** This was in nighttime. They made from the.

**INT:** From the flashlights. Spotlights. They saw you on the other side.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, they saw me that I am escaping from there. So they were not prepare me. So they were not afraid of me. They come over there, they put me to jail, right away, I was wet and everything. Then they ask me questions. So I told them, I am born in Kopyczynce, and I was working with the Germans in Dembrova, and I escaped to there. And being there, they took it over, and this was in the fifteenth of November, so I listened to radio. And I saw in Koypczynce and Lemberg, the Russian people are, they're dancing, and the people are happy. The Jewish people they didn't kill nobody.

**INT:** Now there's Russians there?

**CHARLES:** Russians there.

**INT:** So the Germans occupied the west...

**CHARLES:** The west, and they the east.

**INT:** And you were now in the east with the Russians.

**CHARLES:** Yeah. When I was there in the west at night I listened to radio. And I heard what is doing there.

**INT:** Right. But your Tate is in the east now with the Russians.

**CHARLES:** In the east with the Russians. So why should I be there? I have to go home.

**INT:** Right. Did you tell them that you were a Jew when you got out of the water?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, surely.

**INT:** You didn't have to hide that you were a Jew.

**CHARLES:** No! My G-d, any day...

**INT:** Were Jewish people there already?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, surely, and there I met a lot of people from Dembrova, they escaped before. And I met, and they took me, and I was the first one, and...

**INT:** Okay, what happened to the woman with the two kinder? Who went with the horse and wagon?

**CHARLES:** Nu, she got killed. She was there, I left her.

**INT:** You don't know what happened to her.

**CHARLES:** No. They got killed for sure. I met her husband in Lemberg. Because I knew him, the doctor, and I told him, "Your wife is," so they bought a horse, but they came back, and they lived...

**INT:** But your brother's wife...

**CHARLES:** No, no, this was the doctor's wife.

**INT:** Doctor's wife. Your brother's wife?

**CHARLES:** My brother's wife was in Kopyczynce. But she came home.

**INT:** She made it. She got home.

**CHARLES:** She made it. She got home because...

**INT:** That's what I mean, she got home.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, she got home, yeah, with the children. And I came I was there too, and I was with my uncle in Lemberg and I was visiting them, and my parents didn't know where I am, all this time. And my mother was going around, and ask the brother, the pharmacist, "Where was, what did you do to Chaim?" "I don't know, I went to the army there." And then I went there, and I went to Lemberg, I was a day or two, and I met all the friends what I got from Dembrova, they escaped before, and I met a dentist there, he opened a store there, and I came home, by train, they gave me a free card, and I came to Kopyczynce and the whole city is out, and my parents, and...I get (Yiddish -- It's a big thing, a great event, that Chaim is here. And for my mother, it was as if a stone was removed from her heart.) And then I started to live there.

**INT:** And the Tate was there?

**CHARLES:** The Tate was there.

**INT:** And the sisters?

**CHARLES:** Sisters was there. The other brother was in Polvolosyck.

**INT:** Okay, but everybody was safe.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, and the brother, the pharmacist was, I didn't know where **he** is. He told me he is already in Shortkopf, and he's working in the aptek, he worked in the pharmacy.

**INT:** He asked you what happened to the goods? What happened to the store?

**CHARLES:** He asked him, so I told him, surely.

**INT:** So he said, "It's lucky you're alive."

**CHARLES:** Nu, what he going to say?

**INT:** What's he going to say.

**CHARLES:** What he going to say? What can I do?

**INT:** And he's working already.

**CHARLES:** I couldn't sell it anyway, and I couldn't take it with me.

**INT:** Right, right.

**CHARLES:** I went to visit him there, and he was very happy, that I survived. And then I got a job there, and I married.

**INT:** Okay, well, you'll tell me about that. But meanwhile, what did you think was going on over there? Was it shlecht, or what? Did the Germans scare you or not?

**CHARLES:** Naturally they scared me, but not that bad like it was later.

**INT:** You didn't know yet what's going to be.

**CHARLES:** Then they came in at night, I wasn't afraid of them. They came at night, they want this, they want that, every soldier gets something else.

**INT:** They were nice. They didn't say "Jew" or anything?

**CHARLES:** No, no, no, no Jew.

**INT:** No Jew business.

**CHARLES:** No Jew business.

**INT:** How about in the town, they didn't say anything Jew in the town, that you heard, that you saw.

**CHARLES:** No, no I didn't hear. I met a friend. I went to a friend's house when I was already in the pharmacy. I went to a friend's house, I met him in Israel. Later on. I didn't know where he is, but somebody told me that he survived. So I looked in Israel, when I went to Israel, and I looked 1972. And I looked up there. His name was Schindler. So he became Shindel in Israel.

**INT:** How did you know it was Shindel?

**CHARLES:** I don't know. I didn't know. They told me, they say, Schindler is alive. I met a friend from Dombrova. But after ten years being in New York, so I met a friend, and he recognized me, I didn't recognize him. On the street. "Chamek? Chamek Scherz?" "Yeah, that's me." This is a Polish name. "Who are you?" (Yiddish – "I know you from Dombrova." I felt strange, but I started to ask who's alive, who's not alive, and that's when I found out that Schindler, that my friend Leibek Schindler is alive.) Schindler, my friend, Leibek Schindler, "Your friend is alive and he's in Israel." I came to Israel, I don't see Schindler, I see...

**INT:** Did you know what city he was in?

**CHARLES:** No, but I came to Tel Aviv, to COSSE's, Eli's parents. They didn't know about it, and he lived not far from there. So I went there and it's Schindler. He's a dentist. At that time he wasn't a dentist. He was just a friend we went together to school. So I called him up.

**INT:** How did you know he was Schindler?

**CHARLES:** I didn't know nothing.

**INT:** So how did you call him up?

**CHARLES:** I called him up the name Schindler. What can I lose, I'll try it out. So I said, "Leibek?" -- his name was Leibek -- "Leibek Schindler?" He said, "Yes, Chamek?"

**INT:** He knew your voice after all those years!

**CHARLES:** Yeah. "Chamek?" (Yiddish – Oh yes, and I said, "Oh, boy.") "How did you find me?" "I don't know, I just saw in the telephone book, Schindel, and you were Schindler," so he told me the story of how it was Schindler. He was in concentration camp with his brother, his brother was a doctor. But he was a doctor, then he studied in

Italy, then he came back in 1937, he couldn't be a doctor, because he has to notification went through, and they didn't let him. So his father was a rich man.

**INT:** Yeah. So he made it through?

**CHARLES:** No, he made it through. He was in concentration camp. He was in concentration camp, that lager fuhrer, was Schindler, the same name. So the lager fuhrer changed the name Schindler. He said, "Your name cannot be Schindler. My name is Schindler."

**INT:** The goyishe name.

**CHARLES:** The goyishe name. So he changed it to Shindel, and that way it remained.

**INT:** I see, so the people were on that side, and you escaped to this side, to the other side, and it was sholem there.

**CHARLES:** Sholem there.

**INT:** And the Russian army was there, they came?

**CHARLES:** The Russian army they treated very good.

**INT:** They treated everybody good.

**CHARLES:** It depends. They were Communists, they clean out first the city. They, the stores had to be open, and sell from the same price. And today for the same price, not like here, it's like giving away for nothing. And my wife's father had a big store. So they told him, to have to open the store, you sell it. No money. But when they come in, they came into a store, shoes, how much is it. Say at that time it was fifty zlotys, so he went there, he said seventy zlotys. Two dollars more, profit. How many pair do you have? Eight pairs. Give me all. So they cleaned out the city in no time. Until two, three days there was nothing left to sell. Because they send it right away home. They didn't take the measurements. Any shoe is good. If you haven't got a smaller shoe, so you take a larger shoe. And for them it was for nothing.

**INT:** Why? Where did they get the zlotys to buy?

**CHARLES:** They had ruble. A zloty and a ruble became the same thing. They say, in Russia, was a pair of shoes two hundred, three hundred rubles, and over here bought it for fifty or seventy. It was like for nothing. They bought ten pairs and they sent it away home.

**INT:** I see. So there was no goods around.

**CHARLES:** For the business people. But the Jewish people, a lot of youngsters, they didn't have no jobs, and no future, and by then, right away, they had a future. The post office, the Jewish people they took them to the post office. So those people, the rich people, they became poor, because they took away the merchandise almost for nothing. And the people they couldn't get jobs before, so they got a job. So the businessman, became this and this and that. I also told you the man, he had a mill. So he became a delivery, and if he was short two or three rolls, so he got five years in jail for that.

**INT:** Tell me at this stage, how long were you there before you met your wife?

**CHARLES:** I was there a year.

**INT:** A year. And during the year's time you worked?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, I worked.

**INT:** You made money while you worked?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, I made a living.

**INT:** And you lived back with the Mame and Tate?

**CHARLES:** With the Mame and Tate, yeah.

**INT:** And you were back in the hometown.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, and I got a job in the city where my wife come from. Next door, about ten kilometers. I had a job there.

**INT:** And you knew her from before, or you didn't know her from before? Where did you meet her?

**CHARLES:** I didn't know, no. I went there to the city, and there was, I went in there because we are related, because my mother's brother married her father's sister. They (?), I knew her, I didn't know her, but I knew the family. My father knew her father, and we were related.

**INT:** And they were living already, the parents. And she was living home with the parents.

**CHARLES:** She was living home with the parents, and I was living with my parents, and I got a job there, so we started to...

**INT:** You had an apartment there?

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

(END TAPE TWO, SIDE ONE)

(TAPE TWO, SIDE TWO)

**INT:** So you were living in an apartment, and your wife was living home with the parents.

**CHARLES:** With the parents, yeah.

**INT:** And you were working.

**CHARLES:** She didn't, her mother died already. She was, 1935, and she was living with her father, and with her brother, she had a brother, and then she had a brother in Kopyczynce, my city. For instance, he was a college graduate man. High education, very intelligent man, he couldn't get a job by Poland. And the father was a rich man, so he gave him, he got married, and he gave him money to live on. But he couldn't get a job. When the Soviets came, he got right away a big job.

**INT:** Why?

**CHARLES:** He was the manager of the post office.

**INT:** Why did they give him a big job?

**CHARLES:** Because he was like a privileged man, because he couldn't get a job before. From the Polish people. So they gave him, because he was an intelligent man. He could do everything, but in Poland, he couldn't...

**INT:** And what was your wife doing?

**CHARLES:** My wife was at home.

**INT:** Just at home? She didn't work, in...

**CHARLES:** What mean she didn't work? She had a household to keep.

**INT:** For who was living there?

**CHARLES:** The father, and a brother.

**INT:** The father and a brother. So she cooked.

**CHARLES:** She cooked? No, they had a maid.

**INT:** Now. In that town, I was asking you about Shabbas. You were Shomer Shabbas even when you lived alone? The Tate wasn't around, nobody was around, you could do whatever you want to do? What did you do when you were alone?

**CHARLES:** No, I had to work on Saturday. There wasn't such a thing as Saturday off.

**INT:** Oh, you had to work on Saturday. Because the Russians made you...

**CHARLES:** The Russians made the workers...

**INT:** How did it feel the first Saturday you had to work?

**CHARLES:** I worked all my life Saturday.

**INT:** All your life Saturday.

**CHARLES:** When I worked with my brother.

**INT:** Your brother opened on Shabbas. (Yiddish -- Your Tate didn't know.)

**CHARLES:** (Yiddish -- He knew, but he didn't mix in.)

**INT:** I see, I see.

**CHARLES:** My brother, when he opened the drugstore, because he opened it, there was a new drugstore there, because in Poland they had a certain amount of people. They had one drugstore, a certain amount of people, they had two drugstores. This city, when he was looking for a business, so he was looking for a business, so he opened the store there.

**INT:** And on Shabbas he opened up. In the town where the father lived, nobody opened on Shabbas, you told me.

**CHARLES:** The doctor was open, and the barbers were open.

**INT:** Oh, but the drugstore was open.

**CHARLES:** The drugstore was open, it wasn't a Jew.

**INT:** Oh, it wasn't a Jew. A Jew **wouldn't** open up a pharmacy.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, he would open. He had to be open. The first Yom Kippur, when my brother had the pharmacy, he was closed. Yom Kippur he was closed. So after Yom Kippur he had a letter from the...pharmacy...

**INT:** Board.



**CHARLES:** Board. Wrote him a letter. What he did.

**INT:** That he closed. He shouldn't have closed.

**CHARLES:** He shouldn't have closed.

**INT:** I see.

**CHARLES:** Once more, no more pharmacy.

**INT:** I see. Did the rabbi, was it mesiras nefesh to open the pharmacy on Shabbas? Was it because you were saving lives? Did the rabbis say this is okay?

**CHARLES:** The rabbi didn't say nothing. All the pharmacies are open.

**INT:** So it wasn't a shande.

**CHARLES:** It wasn't a shande.

**INT:** Okay. But you couldn't go to shul.

**CHARLES:** No!

**INT:** How about on Friday night?

**CHARLES:** Friday night we davened at home. We didn't go to shul.

**INT:** But they lit candles, and they had a meal?

**CHARLES:** Yes, they had a meal, a Shabbas meal.

**INT:** Friday night had a Shabbas meal.

**CHARLES:** My brother knew very good to daven. Because he was brought up. He was older from me. So his zayde was a chazzan, a big chazzan, a good one. So he was always with the chazzan. So he used to daven nicely. But he was, before Pesach, the rabbi called him in. And he told him, during the Pesach whatever he got a shaalah, I'll send it over to you. Because I don't know how to send the pharmacy.

**INT:** Is it chometz or not chometz, you'll tell me what it is.

**CHARLES:** You tell me, I'll send the patient to the...

**INT:** Okay, so working on Shabbas wasn't a...big shande or anything.

**CHARLES:** No, it wasn't. It wasn't a shande in the store.

**INT:** Okay, it wasn't a shande.

**CHARLES:** No lately, in the last few years, they opened already, when a Saturday fell on the first of the month, then the goyim, see by us, everybody gets paid out once a month, the first of the month. They got paid out on Shabbas, the Jewish people they gave it on credit, they had to collect the money.

**INT:** And when it was on Shabbas?

**CHARLES:** Even when it was on Shabbas.

**INT:** All the stores opened up.

**CHARLES:** Not all.

**INT:** A lot of stores.

**CHARLES:** A lot of stores.

**INT:** It wasn't a shande?

**CHARLES:** It wasn't a shande. He wasn't, davening, but the son opened the store.

**INT:** I see. Took the money in.

**CHARLES:** Took the money in.

**INT:** Okay.

**CHARLES:** Because otherwise if he wouldn't take a Monday, the Sunday's closed, Monday he wouldn't have the money already.

**INT:** Because he would shicker it away?

**CHARLES:** He would shicker it away, and this and that, he would have excuse...

**INT:** Your Tate would never open a store on Shabbas.

**CHARLES:** No, my Tate wouldn't open a store. My wife's Tate wouldn't have, didn't open the store on Shabbas.

**INT:** Right. This was the next generation already.

**CHARLES:** This was already the next generation, yeah.

**INT:** All right, okay. So the wife, you saw her the first time, do you remember when you saw her? Your wife?

**CHARLES:** Sure I remember.

**INT:** What was it like? Where did you see her?

**CHARLES:** I went to her house.

**INT:** And there she was.

**CHARLES:** And there she was.

**INT:** So how long did you...

**CHARLES:** I went to her house because we had a...aunt, my aunt was her aunt. My uncle and her uncle.

**INT:** So you went to the house, and you met her.

**CHARLES:** I met her.

**INT:** Okay. And how long...

**CHARLES:** And she knew who I am. She knew the whole family, but not me.

**INT:** Not you. So how long did it take to get married?

**CHARLES:** It took about until 1941.

**INT:** How long?

**CHARLES:** It was 1940. A year.

**INT:** A year. Okay. It was before the war broke out, that you got married.

**CHARLES:** Before it broke out a week or two weeks.

**INT:** With the Germans coming into Russia.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, the war broke out the fifteenth, the twenty-second of June, and we married the fifteenth of June.

**INT:** I see. Now. During that time, were you now zufrieden from war? You didn't think there was going to be any more war?

**CHARLES:** No, we said this was it. This Poland...

**INT:** And that's it. No more war. The Germans will stop there, and that's it.

**CHARLES:** And we were not...

**INT:** They'll never fight the Russians.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, we did, but they make a deal, they made a agreement.

**INT:** Right, they split up. So you never worried...

**CHARLES:** No, the Russians used to send merchandise to Germany, and they met Molotov with Ribbentrop...

**INT:** Yeah, so you never worried anymore about war.

**CHARLES:** No, because they wouldn't accept Russia, they made an agreement, and that's all. They had already war over in Africa they were, but we were not afraid.

**INT:** And you were making a living in the pharmacy.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, we were making a living there.

**INT:** All right, okay. And the religious life, the frumer life...

**CHARLES:** The religious life didn't bother me so much. You know how it is, how on Saturday everybody worked.

**INT:** **Everybody** worked.

**CHARLES:** Everybody worked.

**INT:** On Shabbas.

**CHARLES:** On Shabbas.

**INT:** The Yidden all worked...

**CHARLES:** The Yidden...

**INT:** With the beards didn't work?

**CHARLES:** They didn't work, but the...

**INT:** The kinder worked.

**CHARLES:** The kinder worked.

**INT:** I see, all right. But there was still kosher food in the town? Nobody was eating treif.

**CHARLES:** No, no, no. Kosher food was.

**INT:** And there were shuls.

**CHARLES:** Shuls, you could daven.

**INT:** And Shabbas people were in the shuls?

**CHARLES:** In the shul, yeah, they didn't stop the shul.

**INT:** They didn't stop the shuls. The Russians let the shuls go. And on Yom Tovim? What was it like on Yom Tovim? Yom Kippur, Rosh Hashanah, Pesach, Simchas Torah, Sukkos? People had sukkahs?

**CHARLES:** Not everybody. But we had sukkahs built in. On our house was built in a sukkah. Was built in the foyer, was a sukkah. We had a cover with tin, and we put a wire, open like this, and we ate.

**INT:** So on all the Yom Tovim, though, it was Yom Tovim. You knew in the town when it was Yom Tovim.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, it was gewehen set. I remember, I spoke with a neighbor, he still has a son in Israel. The whole family, he got killed also. The whole family...And a son Chaim (Yiddish -- tried to explain to me that he believes that Hitler and Stalin are the same thing. That Hitler kills the guf and Stalin the neshama.)

**INT:** Yeah, and the neshama, and Stalin kills the neshama.

**CHARLES:** And Stalin killed the neshama.

**INT:** Yeah. So what did Stalin do to the neshama? Why? Make people open up on Shabbas? Why did he say that? What did he see?

**CHARLES:** He say that because there was no Jewishness. They were afraid they going to close up the shuls.

**INT:** Oh, but they didn't so far.

**CHARLES:** They didn't so far, but they were afraid.

**INT:** The shochet, you had meat...

**CHARLES:** We had a shochet, we had fleish.

**INT:** All right. And you got along with the goyim all right there in the town?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, the goyim, they were afraid. It was just the opposite. The Jew was more important.

**INT:** Why?

**CHARLES:** Because they said the Soviet people like better Jews than goyim.

**INT:** Yeah?

**CHARLES:** Ukraine, they were very much afraid. Because the rich goyim they took away to Siberia.

**INT:** But the Jews they didn't.

**CHARLES:** How many Jews were so rich? In our city, we didn't have such a rich there. There were a few rich people. It was very sad in the city. One man, they caught with five kilo sugar. So he got about twenty years, twenty-five years. But they took him to the train, into the city. People should see it. Three soldiers with the buttons like this.

**INT:** To show that he did this bad thing.

**CHARLES:** To show that he did a bad thing and took him to the train. And we saw this, so we said, "Oh, for five kilogram, sugar? And for a few rolls?" To take him, and they used to the biggest...

**INT:** Ganav.

**CHARLES:** Ganav.

**INT:** So your father wasn't doing business anymore.

**CHARLES:** No! He stopped completely. We had only what we sold. We sold the furniture, we sold the this.

**INT:** And you lived off of that. But you were still in the same house.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, still in the same house. They didn't throw out.

**INT:** They let you stay in the big house, because later on, they didn't let people stay in big houses.

**CHARLES:** Later on, but this was the beginning.

**INT:** This was the beginning.

**CHARLES:** This was the beginning.

**INT:** Okay. Let's stop here, and we'll do some other things next time.

(END TAPE TWO, SIDE TWO)

(TAPE THREE, SIDE ONE)

**INT:** (Pause) When we finished talking last time, it was 1939, and you had come from the west...

**CHARLES:** To the east.

**INT:** ...after the Germans invaded, to the east, and came back to your hometown. And there you lived back with the Mame and the Tate, your mother and father, and you got a job working in a pharmacy.

**CHARLES:** Pharmacy, yeah.

**INT:** And this went on from 1939...

**CHARLES:** Till '41.

**INT:** Okay. Now in the meantime, you told me, you got married.

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** What was the date? When did you get married?

**CHARLES:** June 15, 1941.

**INT:** Okay, June 15, 1941. Okay. What was the wedding like?

**CHARLES:** It was a quiet wedding. The rav, no, not the rav, my father gave chuppah and kiddishin. And that's all.

**INT:** Why? Why wasn't it? You had family, your brothers came, your sisters came.

**CHARLES:** I know. But there was no life. They were afraid of the Russian peoples.

**INT:** Explain to me. What do you mean?

**CHARLES:** It was a very quiet wedding. She, my wife, lost her mother. She had a sister. Their father was a very broken man, and they got, the Soviets took out everything from there, because they were rich people. They had a big store. And they told her, they said, they should everything sell it out, at normal prices. So, no time. In two, three days, they liquidated the whole store. Because when they came in, for them to buy this, and to take it for nothing, it was the same bag. And they bought, the prices in Russia, was a pair of shoes two, three hundred dollars, in zlotys, and they came over here, they bought it for 12 zlotys. So if they have ten pair of shoes...they sent it home.

**INT:** The Russians did all this.

**CHARLES:** The Russians did all this. So no time. Whatever, they took away a few items. He put it to go here, to save it. And then he became a poor man, a (Yiddish -- he didn't have anything. We shouldn't know from such things.)

**INT:** Did they take his house?

**CHARLES:** No, they didn't take it, the Russians didn't. The Germans took it.

**INT:** But right now, the Russians are just there.

**CHARLES:** Right now the Russians.

**INT:** Right now the Russians. So let me understand. Your wife's mother died of natural causes, not from the Russians.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, natural causes, yeah.

**INT:** But that, he got upset from this.

**CHARLES:** He got upset, he was a religious man, with a this and a that, it was no life, to say so.

**INT:** Without the wife.

**CHARLES:** Without the wife. And then the brother was drafted to the army.

**INT:** By the Russians.

**CHARLES:** By the Russians. And one son lived far away. Lived in **my** city. He had a good (?), because from the Polish people, they couldn't get a job. He was a highly educated man. He graduated from Warsaw from the biggest theological seminar. But he couldn't get a job from the Polish. He could be a teacher of religion. So the Polish people, they have schools, all the schools, they had to have a teacher of religion. And a galach. But one man was there till he died.



**INT:** I see. Let me understand. This is a Jewish man who could teach religion?

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** What did that mean? He didn't teach **Yiddishkeit**.

**CHARLES:** Yiddishkeit.

**INT:** Oh, Yiddishkeit.

**CHARLES:** Theological seminar.

**INT:** He was a rabbi?

**CHARLES:** He wasn't a **rabbi**, but he was a theological...

**INT:** So he knew Gemora, he knew philosophy...

**CHARLES:** He knew Gemora, he knew philosophy.

**INT:** So what kind of school in Poland would hire him? In a gymnasium or a yeshiva, or what?

**CHARLES:** A yeshiva could hire him but a yeshiva wasn't there. In a Polish school he could teach **everything**.

**INT:** I see. A Polish school, but he wouldn't teach it to goyim, he's not going to teach the **goyim** about Yiddishkeit?

**CHARLES:** No, he wouldn't teach the **goyim**, but he could have teach all the modern literature and everything. But they didn't **hire** Jewish people. Only special for the purpose of religion. So was already a man. A cousin of his.

**INT:** I see.

**CHARLES:** Was a religious man. A cousin of Dinah, my wife, was a religious man there. But one man was there about twenty, thirty years, then he passed away, so he got a job.

**INT:** So in a gymnasium, was one Jewish man who taught.

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** And how many hours, you had a man like this in the gymnasium when you went?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, yeah, sure.

**INT:** So what did he teach you?

**CHARLES:** From the Bible. Religion.

**INT:** Chumash.

**CHARLES:** Not Chumash, especially. Jewish history.

**INT:** Oh, Jewish history. Not Gemora.

**CHARLES:** Not Gemora.

**INT:** Not Mishna.

**CHARLES:** Not Mishna.

**INT:** Not Navi.

**CHARLES:** Not Navi.

**INT:** Not Chumash with Rashi.

**CHARLES:** No, in the Polish language. This we knew from the cheder, we didn't have to go there. But literature, Jewish literature. So he taught us.

**INT:** I see. Yiddish literature.

**CHARLES:** Yiddish literature, yeah. He taught us.

**INT:** Bialik?

**CHARLES:** Bialik, or this, all this.

**INT:** Ahad Ha Am.

**CHARLES:** Ahad Ha Am. Yeah.

**INT:** That kind.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, that kind.

**INT:** Anything about modern Hebrew, or Hebrew?

**CHARLES:** No, not Hebrew.

**INT:** Yiddish.

**CHARLES:** Yiddish.

**INT:** Yiddish literature.

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** Okay.

**CHARLES:** Yiddish literature. In the Polish language.

**INT:** In the Polish language. And Polish literature. Did you learn about Polish...

**CHARLES:** No, he didn't.

**INT:** Not **him**. Oh, he taught you in the language Polish?

**CHARLES:** Polish, yeah, surely.

**INT:** And when you learned Bialik and other...

**CHARLES:** Polish language.

**INT:** In the Polish language.

**CHARLES:** Positively.

**INT:** I see.

**CHARLES:** But we had very, very little that much, from our, a week, one hour, two hours, that all. It was either one teacher in all the school, and it was a course, not a course, separate, ladies and men.

**INT:** Separate learning the Jewish stuff.

**CHARLES:** Separate. **Everything** was.

**INT:** Oh, everything. In the gymnasias was separate.

**CHARLES:** Gymnasias was already, but in the public school. He was the teacher. In the gymnasias we had another teacher.

**INT:** I see.

**CHARLES:** In the Polish language. Like here they teach. Here they teach in the yeshivas English. But by us, people didn't know Polish like here. A rabbi wouldn't dare to come out with a sermon in the shul in Polish.

**INT:** The drasha he would say in Yiddish.

**CHARLES:** Yiddish. Only Yiddish.

**INT:** So this son was taken away by the Russians to be in the army.

**CHARLES:** To be in the army, yeah.

**INT:** And the wife had died.

**CHARLES:** And the wife died before the war. But he was very heart-broken.

**INT:** And left him with your wife, just one daughter?

**CHARLES:** With my wife, one daughter, that's all. And their son, he got married. He got married, he married also a rich girl, so he could exist.

**INT:** This is another son, the son that...

**CHARLES:** No, no the...

**INT:** This is the one who went...

**CHARLES:** The one who went in the post office was a Kopyczyncer.

**INT:** There was how many sons?

**CHARLES:** Two.

**INT:** One went in the Russian army, one worked in the post office.

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** Okay. Lived and was married.

**CHARLES:** He went first, from Poland he went to college.

**INT:** And he couldn't get...

**CHARLES:** After this he couldn't get a job.

**INT:** So he wound up in the post office.

**CHARLES:** No, he wound up in nothing. No job, no nothing.

**INT:** No job, no nothing.

**CHARLES:** No nothing.

**INT:** So what happened to him?

**CHARLES:** So when the Russians came, he got a job in the post office. He was the head manager. But from Poland he couldn't get no job at all. And that's why the Jewish people, they were leftists.

**INT:** Yeah. Yeah. Because the Russians, they looked to the Russians to do better parnosseh.

**CHARLES:** The Russians first of all, even for Stalin, for our time, there was no such a thing like Jew, not Jew. Everything was even. He was (an enemy of the Jews), but we didn't know about it. Officially somebody calls, if a goy, told me, "You Zhid," it was a Russian on the Ivrei, Ivrei, you know, is a better name to say so. And (if) he called "Zhid," he could get a year in jail.

**INT:** So the goyim knew this.

**CHARLES:** They knew this.

**INT:** So people didn't say.

**CHARLES:** People didn't say, they say "Ivrei."

**INT:** I see. This is when the Russians came, the Poles even didn't say anymore...

**CHARLES:** No, anymore.

**INT:** No more Zhid, no more business. Because they could get in trouble with the...

**CHARLES:** They could get in trouble. They were afraid, surely.

**INT:** So he was working in the post office, and he was married.

**CHARLES:** He was married.

**INT:** Okay. Did your wife want a big wedding?

**CHARLES:** No! We didn't talk about weddings at that time. We went shluggen everybody. Because we knew Hitler's killing on the other side. People, the Russian

people are killing the neshama, they took away, you couldn't go, you went, the youth was afraid to go to synagogue already, by the Russians. They became all Communists. They could get a job.

**INT:** So if you were a Communist you got a job.

**CHARLES:** You got a job.

**INT:** If you weren't a Communist?

**CHARLES:** If you are a rich man, a rich boy, you **couldn't** get a job.

**INT:** And you couldn't stay in the business anymore.

**CHARLES:** You couldn't stay in the business anymore.

**INT:** Because...

**CHARLES:** Because there was no business. Every store was closed. They sold out from the few days the first two, three weeks. It's hard for American people to understand it. For two, three weeks, was open, and they sold out everything. There was no out, liquidation of capitalism. And then if they caught you with something, I told you they caught somebody a friend of mine with five kilograms of sugar, because somebody stole and he sold it to him, and he sold it to other people. So they got five years for that.

**INT:** I see. So how did they get goods and food, if they didn't have stores in the town?

**CHARLES:** The government organized stores. There was one store in the city. Stoljenia (?) they called it. A general store. And they had everything there. But you had to stay in a line for two days to get something.

**INT:** I see. So private businesses, they were no more.

**CHARLES:** No more.

**INT:** How about the pharmacy you worked in?

**CHARLES:** There was a private. It was a government, also. They took it over right away.

**INT:** So you worked in a government pharmacy.

**CHARLES:** Sure. In the government. Everything was government.

**INT:** I see. Now how about the cheder, and the Jewish schools that went on before?

**CHARLES:** At that time, I don't know, there was no cheder.

**INT:** They closed them?

**CHARLES:** They didn't close them, but they were afraid to go, by themselves they were afraid. There was no cheder.

**INT:** And the rav? What happened to him, or the rebbeim?

**CHARLES:** The rav was auf tsuris. I don't know.

**INT:** And the shul? Nobody went, on Shabbas, what was it like?

**CHARLES:** On Shabbas, the religious people with the shtreimel, they went.

**INT:** The older people.

**CHARLES:** The elderly people.

**INT:** And the younger people?

**CHARLES:** The younger people didn't go.

**INT:** Yeah, okay.

**CHARLES:** They were afraid, they shouldn't...No, on Saturday, there was no work, Saturday and Sunday they didn't work. Because it was only five days. Not because of Shabbas, because of five days.

**INT:** That was the Russian derech?

**CHARLES:** That was the Russian derech, yeah.

**INT:** Five days.

**CHARLES:** Five days.

**INT:** Okay. Did the Poles go to church on Sunday, too, or they were afraid, also?

**CHARLES:** They were afraid, they went, but they were afraid, too.

**INT:** So what was, who was at the chassene? Do you remember where it was, and who was there?

**CHARLES:** It was at my house.

**INT:** In your house.

**CHARLES:** My house was not even, a rav, there was a man there. My father gave chuppah and kiddishin. The rav was afraid to go out in the street. (Yiddish -- They brought some whisky and we drank, and that was the chassene. We said that if the war will end and we will survive the war, then, then we'll have a wedding.)

**INT:** Oh, that's what they said?

**CHARLES:** That's what they said.

**INT:** I see.

**CHARLES:** Because her father was a rich man.

**INT:** Yeah.

**CHARLES:** He had a big business. He had money. But they got right away poor, because they took it away. Whatever he stole, to say, he stole for himself, and put away a little bit merchandise, they put from the goyim, they shouldn't find it, so he had it.

**INT:** That's what he did. He hid it.

**CHARLES:** He hid it. A few...

**INT:** And he had some money hidden.

**CHARLES:** Money. He didn't have money. They had it in the bank.

**INT:** They had it in the bank.

**CHARLES:** They had it in the banks, and the bank right away closed up, they took away all the money. Everybody became right away, but some people they had gold, they had silver, they had this, they had that. They didn't have it. He was an elderly man, he couldn't believe it, he didn't believe it.

**INT:** I see. So it was a time of nervousness?

**CHARLES:** Surely!

**INT:** Everybody was nervous.

**CHARLES:** Everybody was nervous, especially for the elderly people. The business people. All the businesses got stuffed up.

**INT:** They were afraid of the Germans, too, or the Germans were on the other side?



**CHARLES:** The Germans were on the other side already. They didn't know the Germans. It was '41.

**INT:** But **this** time, you didn't have to worry about Germans?

**CHARLES:** No.

**INT:** You never thought....

**CHARLES:** No.

**INT:** That the Germans were going to come.

**CHARLES:** No, we never thought, because they got an agreement. They signed a pact. No aggression pact. Molotov and Ribbentrop was at that time.

**INT:** So did you think it was better with the Russians there than the way it was before with the Poland? What did you think?

**CHARLES:** It was better, for some people it was better. For some people at first. The business people it was bad always. I remember there was one businessman. He had a big store. I mean, the Soviet came. So he was afraid. So he became right away a Communist. So he said he was in the center of the city. He had a speech. He delivered a speech, who he is. His father was a balegulah, and his zayde was a balegulah. So I remember, I came over I said, (Yiddish -- I didn't know that this Moshe had such a pedigree. In Poland, everything is about who you come from, and where your roots are, and this man had been a) businessman, like here, say, a Korngold. (Yiddish -- But he talked about his whole family being these kinds of people. Wagon drivers. Workers.) And he got a job also. In the government store.

**INT:** Why did he get a job if he was a businessman? With yichus?

**CHARLES:** Not yichus, just the opposite. A goyishe yichus. (Yiddish -- But here he claimed he came from people who were wagon drivers and blacksmiths and that he had always assumed that he was a big businessman, but given that if you were a businessman, you were unlikely to get a job, and you might even be punished for that, this man proclaimed his background as being one of workers. And that these kinds of people would be given better jobs now by the Russians.)

**INT:** Oh! Okay. So he was a Communist.

**CHARLES:** He was a Communist to say so. He wasn't, but he said he did.

**INT:** He said, "I'm a Communist," so they gave him a job.

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** Okay.

**CHARLES:** And there was one man, a shoemaker. Another shoemaker. He made elegant shoes. He was a wealthy man, because he made the ladies' shoes, the fancy shoes, what they see for ladies, he could make it. But he was a Communist. So later on, the Soviets came, he became a big shot.

**INT:** Were the people from the Russians who came to be the administrators, were they Yidden, or were they...

**CHARLES:** Some Yidden...

**INT:** Who came from Russia.

**CHARLES:** Who came from Russia, some not Yidden.

**INT:** I see. Could you deal with them? Could you talk to them?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, some people were nice people.

**INT:** They talked Yiddish.

**CHARLES:** I remember in our house, in my wife's house, was a maid. All the Yidden would want a (?), even if the mother was alive, because they were business people, they needed, they were well-to-do people. So they went by the Russians came to further down. He was a big shot. That man. A Jewish man (Yiddish -- came and saw that the maid was cleaning the shoes). So he came down, and he said, (Yiddish -- "For G-d's sakes, get rid of this maid. Don't have her here. Because both you will be sent to Siberia, and she will be punished, because here everybody's supposed to be the same.") Nobody is a maid.

**INT:** And if the Russians find out, they'll send you to Siberia.

**CHARLES:** Because if they find out...

**INT:** This is what he told her.

**CHARLES:** He told her, "Take her away." (Yiddish -- And then the man went away and they took care of it.) A nice man, a Jewish man. And they sent her away.

**INT:** After you got married, you moved where? Where did you move with your wife?

**CHARLES:** To her father's house. To his house.

**INT:** Into the father's house.

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** Because he still had a big house.

**CHARLES:** Till now. Till now. They didn't take that away. The house is still there.

**INT:** The house is still...

**CHARLES:** Still there. I have a picture of it. A goy sent a picture.

**INT:** Yeah?

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** So you stayed in the house. And you were in the house with the wife, and the Tate was in the house. Okay. And you worked in the pharmacy store.

**CHARLES:** No, at that time I didn't work already, because, nobody, Soviet, I worked...

**INT:** You worked in the pharmacy. All right. So what happened until the Germans came? **Until** the Germans came.

**CHARLES:** Till the Germans came, I had it very good.

**INT:** You worked, the Russians paid you.

**CHARLES:** I worked, the Russians paid me, and I had privileges, all kinds. For instance, was not available wood. A winter like this, we didn't have no wood. In Kopyczynce, the second city. And I got, I had protection there. I got three cubic meter wood. The best wood there is. So I came there to the (?), I said, he said, "How much wood you need?" I said, "I need three, three meters." Cubic meter. So they gave me three meters. So I took for myself, for my father, for myself, for my father-in-law, and then the two meters, I sent to Kopyczynce. I hired a goy, and I sent it to Kopyczynce, to my father and to my brother. The pharmacist. He couldn't get it. So the whole city came together. (Yiddish -- The people asked my father, Reb Lazar, "Where did you get that from?") And you cannot available. No question for money, because there were rich people. (Yiddish -- My father said [proudly], "My son sent it to me.") And they had wood.

**INT:** And you knew somebody in another town. That's how you did it? From being a pharmacist.

**CHARLES:** In my town. In my town I had a man. He was sick, and I gave him medication, and he liked it very much.

**INT:** I see. What did you think the future was going to be, during that time, with your wife? What did you think it was going to be?

**CHARLES:** We figured the Russian people, they go and beat the Germans. We knew they going to beat them. Because the German people they were elegant people, and they had beautiful uniforms, they had nice boots, leather boots.

**INT:** Where did you ever see Germans? Oh, when you saw them coming into the town.

**CHARLES:** Yeah. Some came in. I said, "They'll go to Russia, they'll come further, they'll brechen kopf." This is what happened. When they went, when they got into, this is 1941, in June, they went till the winter. They went, and they went, and they went, and they went and they went. Till they came to Stalingrad, and to Moscow, and there, when the freezing weather started to come in, they were dead. And the Russian people, they sent from **Siberia** the army. With their (?)..

**INT:** Let me go back. Let me go back. You were married, a young person. What was the future going to be? You thought that the Germans would, if they would come in, the Russians would beat them back, and you would stay there. In other words, what did you think about life in the town? You were going to stay there, tell me...

**CHARLES:** Life in town, because England gave war to Germany, and the Russians got allies with the American people, with England, so we figured that the Germans wouldn't win, they'll lose their hat. They cannot fight the whole world.

**INT:** And how did you see life for you?

**CHARLES:** Life I figure will be back to Poland. Then I have a Shushan Purim.

**INT:** As a pharmacist.

**CHARLES:** As a druggist.

**INT:** A druggist.

**CHARLES:** Yeah. Without prescription. Because I knew how to make everything. We used to make, by us as a pharmacist, it was an institution. Not like here. Here you have to know how to count the pills, and that's all. To know the pills. Colors, and this. By Europe they had to make this. Was no such thing like here, the pharmaceutical factories.

**INT:** You got to make it yourself.

**CHARLES:** You got to make it yourself.

**INT:** Measure it.

**CHARLES:** Measures and make it and this and that.

**INT:** Okay. So you were living with a wife...

**CHARLES:** With a wife.

**INT:** Comfortably...

**CHARLES:** Comfortably, yeah.

**INT:** And the Tate, her father was in that house.

**CHARLES:** In that house.

**INT:** And your father and mother were over in the other house, and you were working.

**CHARLES:** And we were working.

**INT:** All right, now what happened?

**CHARLES:** And then in 1941, the 15th of June. We married the 15th of June, and the 22nd of 1941, the German started the war.

**INT:** Yes.

**CHARLES:** And the Russians escaped.

**INT:** Now. Tell me when you first heard that the Germans were coming. Where were you when it happened?

**CHARLES:** I were in the (?), yeah.

**INT:** Do you remember where you were? Somebody came and told you?

**CHARLES:** Surely.

**INT:** How did you know it happened? You heard gunshots? How did you know the Germans...

**CHARLES:** We had paper, we had radio, we had everything.

**INT:** So on the paper and the radio, it said the Germans have attacked.

**CHARLES:** Sure. The Germans have attacked.

**INT:** And they're coming.

**CHARLES:** And they're coming and within a week they were in our city.

**INT:** What did you do between that week?

**CHARLES:** Nothing.

**INT:** Why?

**CHARLES:** I was still in the pharmacy, but I was afraid to go out, because the Ukrainians, they were waiting with the hope the Germans should come. They were watching their watch.

**INT:** Who was?

**CHARLES:** The Ukrainian people.

**INT:** Where did they come from? Where did the Ukrainians come from?

**CHARLES:** I was in the Ukraine.

**INT:** Oh.

**CHARLES:** Part of Poland was Ukraine, and they were very much against Poland, and against Soviets.

**INT:** Yeah, because they wanted their own...

**CHARLES:** They wanted their own country, and they think the Germans promised, they said they promised they would make Ukraine separate. So they were waiting, so I was there and...

**INT:** So what were the Jews thinking?

**CHARLES:** The Jews were thinking very bad. They were afraid. But they were not so much afraid of the Germans. Because first of all, in the paper they didn't write so much, and they remember, we were Poland, our part of Poland, from the occupied from Austria for about a hundred, a hundred fifty years. So we are the Hungarian, Galicia they called us. We had the Hasidism there, and the German people, the Austrian people were very **good** to the Jewish people. I remember came in the head of the cohorts. He said, -- Yafim -- they called him there. "Come to the kolkhoz and take horses and go to Russia." With my wife, I wanted to go. So I called up my brother. "I'll come over to you with the wagon of horses, I'll pick the best horses, and we'll be able to go." He said, "Don't you dare to do it. Sit where you are sitting." Because he was studying by the Austrians. He

became a pharmacist when the Austrian government was ruling then. So they couldn't **believe** it. They gonna send innocent people and children, they gonna kill just like this.

**INT:** Never thought that.

**CHARLES:** Never thought that. The German **people** didn't think. We lived, my wife had a house on the main street, where all the army, you came back, they went through this house. So my brother, her brother, he was in Kopyczynce, was staying by him a German officer. A big officer. Very big. I don't remember the name, but a very big shot. So he gave him a letter. He should give it to, you'll pass by, you'll ask somebody, Schecter, he'll know, and he came over and he gave a letter. So we offered him fruit, from the beginning we didn't know this, he was sitting down, we gave him something to eat. And he said. "Physischer varnichtung kommt nicht de flage." To kill people, physically, it would never be. They were going to take you to work, and we'll see what is going to be. Nobody believed in it. The **Germans** didn't believe in it. Except the SS. The Wehrmacht. I'm talking now about the army. **They** couldn't believe it.

**INT:** Yeah. So now let's go back. So all of a sudden, the Germans came to the town. In the meantime, you weren't going to run away, and the other Jews weren't going to run away.

**CHARLES:** Some people run away.

**INT:** Some people ran away.

**CHARLES:** The **Communists** ran away. See, I wasn't a Communist. And they all the goyim knew that I am not a Communist. So they used to help me.

**INT:** So the Communists ran away. A lot of young people?

**CHARLES:** Young people ran away.

**INT:** And where did they run to?

**CHARLES:** Into Russia. A lot have remained there, and lot got killed with the bombs, and a lot came back. And those people that came back, they got killed right away.

**INT:** Okay. All right. Now the Germans came to the town. Do you remember when the Germans came to the town?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, sure.

**INT:** What were you doing when the Germans came to the town?

**CHARLES:** Nothing. I was sitting in the house. They came over. We gave them whatever they wanted.

**INT:** This is now not...

**CHARLES:** But we were lucky people. You see, our special, because we were sitting on the main track, it was the railroad was there. The Russians bombed the bridges, then in Russia. So this railroad couldn't go further to Russia. If the Russian people escaped and they took away whatever they could from Poland and from Ukraine, and they sent it to Russia. Meantime, the train stopped, and the Germans came. But till the Germans came, the goyim, they opened the railroads, and they were there, kal tuv. Some people, they have sugar, and flour, and cloth, and everything, whatever they robbed that they've put away from Poland to Russia, they had it, the goyim. So they were very busy to rob the railroads. To take away. So they let us. Otherwise we would have been killed. Because in other cities, in other villages, when there were not such a thing, they killed the Jewish people. For instance, my schwegerin, Dina's brother's wife, had a father, he was a very rich man. The first thing the goyim came, they knew then, they took him, they put him in a water was there, and they killed him. They shot them. All of them.

**INT:** But let me understand, when the Germans came to the town, did you hear shooting and everything, or they just came in in tanks, or they came in in cars?

**CHARLES:** They came in tanks all kinds of...

**INT:** Tanks came in. Did you hear shooting before?

**CHARLES:** Surely. Was bombs...

**INT:** The Russians were fighting.

**CHARLES:** Sure.

**INT:** So you were sitting in the house with your...

**CHARLES:** Sitting with my wife and that's all.

**INT:** With your wife and her father.

**CHARLES:** And father, yeah.

**INT:** And you were worried about the parents? Your own parents?

**CHARLES:** I knew the parents are not far from there, a few kilometers.

**INT:** Okay, and you're waiting, and the German tanks, they came in, whatever.

**CHARLES:** They came in. They didn't kill right away.



**INT:** Well, tell me what happened when they came in.

**CHARLES:** They came in, they wanted something, they come in, they take it, they ask to give it to them. My wife had a diamond ring. The one man came in and said, "Nice ring. Give it to me." She said, zebeiten. "It's not such a big deal. I just got married." "If you wouldn't give it to me, I'll take out the rifle and cut off the finger with it."

**INT:** He just walked into your house and...

**CHARLES:** Just walked in like this.

**INT:** The German officer.

**CHARLES:** A German officer.

**INT:** Banged on the door, came in the house and said, "I want the ring."

**CHARLES:** No, I saw, I didn't know whether she had the ring. But we saw she gave him something. He saw the ring.

**INT:** Oh, he wanted some food or something.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, something wanted, but he saw the ring, "Oh, a beautiful ring. Give it to me." So she didn't want to give it to him. So he says, "I'll take out a knife and I'll cut off the finger." So she gave it.

**INT:** I see. And what's the day like for you at this time, when the Germans first came?

**CHARLES:** The day was, the day was...

**INT:** You woke up, what did you do? You sat in the house?

**CHARLES:** Nothing, nothing, we're davening, and we're begging to G-d he should help. Sooner they should get a mapule, the Germans.

**INT:** Did you have food?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, food we had.

**INT:** How?

**CHARLES:** We had...

**INT:** You had saved up.

**CHARLES:** We had prepared, and we had goyim brought us. A goy brought me sugar what they robbed there. The goyim, they brought me this, they brought me that. They brought good.

**INT:** The goyim were good.

**CHARLES:** The goyim were **also** good from the beginning, yeah.

**INT:** The Ukrainians were good, even though they liked these Germans?

**CHARLES:** They liked the Germans, but for us, everything from the beginning, from the beginning they were still good. They didn't know for themselves what was going to be. They were also in the dark.

**INT:** And relations with the goyim were okay.

**CHARLES:** The relations with the goyim was okay.

**INT:** In that town.

**CHARLES:** In that town.

**INT:** They didn't have pogroms there.

**CHARLES:** They didn't have pogroms there, yeah.

**INT:** So history was okay.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, because they had Kopyczynce, all land, the goyim got in forces.

**INT:** So everything was all right.

**CHARLES:** It was all right.

**INT:** So the Germans now took over the town.

**CHARLES:** Took over the town, they made a government, a Ukrainian government.

**INT:** A Ukrainian government.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, not a government.

**INT:** Run by Ukrainians? It was run by Ukrainians? By the Polish Ukrainians?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, by the Polish Ukrainians.

**INT:** They did all the things. The electric and the water. I mean, whatever needed to be done.

**CHARLES:** Needed to be done, they did it, yeah.

**INT:** But the Germans were at the back...

**CHARLES:** There we were a little while in our house. And then came in the head of the city hall. And he said, "We need a house. You have to move in there." There was an empty house someplace.

(END TAPE THREE, SIDE ONE)

(TAPE THREE, SIDE TWO)

**CHARLES:** ...goy what he came home. I still remember.

**INT:** The goy came, not a German.

**CHARLES:** No, the goy. The goy came out.

**INT:** And he said you have to move.

**CHARLES:** He said, "You have to move out because we need, we have to make a police station," because this was a...

**INT:** Big house.

**CHARLES:** Good house. They gave us a house some place there.

**INT:** With the furniture? You left the furniture?

**CHARLES:** Whatever we could, we could take it. Not too much.

**INT:** Meanwhile your father and mother were still okay.

**CHARLES:** Still okay there. And my brother was okay. My brother was in Kopyczynce still in the drugstore.

**INT:** And your wife...oh, he was still working in the drugstore?

**CHARLES:** He was still working. But they needed a drugstore.

**INT:** So the Germans let him work.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, let him work. A little while only.

**INT:** Okay, and her brother worked in the post office, too?

**CHARLES:** No, he didn't work in it.

**INT:** What happened to him?

**CHARLES:** He was also in Kopyczynce. He was sitting with the wife and that's all.

**INT:** Oh, he was sitting with the wife.

**CHARLES:** With the wife.

**INT:** Okay. All right, so did people go to shul more when the Germans were there?

**CHARLES:** The elderly people went to shul.

**INT:** Like before.

**CHARLES:** Like before.

**INT:** No different.

**CHARLES:** No different. The big shul was already. This was closed, afraid, but they went to shul.

**INT:** Okay. Now, how about kosher meat and food? Was that a problem during then?

**CHARLES:** Yeah. We had a shochet.

**INT:** Still.

**CHARLES:** Still. We brought the shochet, the butcher, went to the village, and he bought a cow, a, and he cut it, and they had kosher.

**INT:** So you had food.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, we had food.

**INT:** Kosher food.

**CHARLES:** From the beginning. Kosher food, yeah.

**INT:** Okay. When did, when did things start to change with the Germans?

**CHARLES:** They started to change, this was in June, before the holidays. After the holidays.

**INT:** After the holidays. Do you remember the holidays that year? What were the holidays like that year?

**CHARLES:** We didn't have such a, the shul we didn't go.

**INT:** Why?

**CHARLES:** Because we were afraid to go to the shul. It was on the front there, so we had somebody's house.

**INT:** You were afraid of the Germans.

**CHARLES:** The Germans, the Ukrainians, but we went to a private house, and my father-in-law davened. He was a very learned man. I still remember the way he davened. With a full heart. And the goyim were quiet. They let him daven. They didn't say nothing. They could have come in and killed him. But they didn't do it. Because he was known there. He helped people. When they built that church, he gave money. When they needed something he gave to them, like he gave to the Jewish institutions. Like he gave from the goyim, because he made a living from the goyim.

**INT:** I see. So he davened with a full house.

**CHARLES:** He davened with a full house, it wasn't such a full house, there wasn't too many people, but he davened.

**INT:** I see, there wasn't so many people.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, I still...

**INT:** This was Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

**CHARLES:** Yeah. Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

**INT:** Were most of the people in hausen davening?

**CHARLES:** Yeah. Everybody was there davening.

**INT:** In different...

**CHARLES:** In different parts, yeah.

**INT:** I see, and you had a meal, you had a Shabbas, you had a Yom Tov meal?

**CHARLES:** We had a Yom Tov meal. It wasn't too much Yomtovdik, but we still had it.

**INT:** And what did people talk about? What did you talk about?

**CHARLES:** One man, I still remember, a neighbor, a very learned man, the Russians, I went together with him to shul, he davens in the same shul as my father, so he was a very learned man. Ze zenen beide gleich. They're both the same. Hitler kills the guf. And Stalin kills the neshama. Because he had a son. He was also in that college with my brother-in-law. And he was already a free man. He didn't go to shul.

**INT:** The Russians did this.

**CHARLES:** No, he got a job.

**INT:** How did they know the Germans were killing people?

**CHARLES:** Who?

**INT:** When he said they killed the guf. How did they know the Germans are going to kill them? How did you know?

**CHARLES:** Because we heard about it. We didn't know **exactly**. We **didn't** know. Because see my brother didn't want to run away. Because he said he couldn't believe it. My father was an officer in the Austrian army. So he couldn't believe it.

**INT:** That's why I asked you, how somebody...

**CHARLES:** So they didn't believe it.

**INT:** They didn't believe it.

**CHARLES:** But some people believe it, later on. They got a paper, this and that.

**INT:** Yeah. You knew what was going on in Germany with the German Jews? Or just with the Polish Jews at this time? What did the newspapers...

**CHARLES:** The newspaper, we didn't have already, but we knew already it was not so good, but we couldn't believe it there's going to be such a, something like **this**. They're going to take children, just take to a crematorium, and kill them, and burn them. This nobody could **believe** it.

**INT:** What happened now after the Yom Tovim?

**CHARLES:** After the Yom Tovim...

**INT:** 1941.

**CHARLES:** They chased us out. We were living already there, not in our house, and then they said and they came (?) from the Germans and no Jews should be there.

**INT:** No Jews should be in the town.

**CHARLES:** No Jews should be in the town, a little town, yeah. So we had to go to Kopyczynce to my hometown. So we went there.

**INT:** You went there, and your wife?

**CHARLES:** Me, my wife, and the father.

**INT:** And how about your parents?

**CHARLES:** My parents, yeah, I went to my parents' house. And my wife went, they rented a room there, she went with her father, and the brother lived there, and the brother, I remember sent goyim with the horses to take us. And then when we packed, and we had to go to Kopyczynce, with the goy, then and I went, I worked hard and I lost my documents. And I didn't have a piece of document. Money, what I had, I accumulate a little bit, and this and that, and I lost it. I came to Kopyczynce and I cannot find it. I cannot go back to look for it. I lost it some place, who knows where? So I met a friend, he was like a neighbor, across the street from me. He was a rich man, a rich boy, he said, "Oh, what shall I do now? I could have gone to the Judenrat." So he told me so. "Listen, Chaim. (Yiddish -- I'm your good friend.)" You understand a little Jewish?

**INT:** Yeah.

**CHARLES:** "(Yiddish -- I'm your good friend) and I'll give you advice, some advice. Go in to your father's house, and go on the attic, and forget about it. Don't go to the Judenrat. Sit there." **And this saved my life.** This advice.

**INT:** Saved your life.

**CHARLES:** Saved my life. Because all the registered, the Germans came from Shotkopf (sp?) a few also, they take them after they came to the Judenrat, they made a Judenrat, and they came, "Today, I need 200 people to the camp, to the lager. Tomorrow I need 500 people." And when they needed, was a snow, they sent people to the snow to clean, and I wasn't registered there. So they didn't come for me. I was sitting there. While I was sitting there in the house, on the attic, I figure, somebody going to take a look, they going to see me. So I made bunkers, because I am handy. I started to make bunkers, hiding places, and this saved my life. And in that boydem -- they call it in Jewish a boydem -- I lived through **twelve pogroms**. We were sitting there.

Okay, I was registered, when you go to work, the people they got about 200 gram bread. So I didn't get it. But my wife brought me. And the house a little bit, we had furniture we sold. The goy didn't have also nothing. He couldn't buy nothing. He needed a small thing, who had the business before. They put it away, they saved it. When they needed for instance, even a needle, they couldn't have no place. Small things, but you needed badly, so they came to the Jews. Separately they were not allowed to go, and was a handle. But no money. Just gave me. When they went to take a few kilogram flour. So she brought to say to my father, he gave her a chair. He gave her a piece of this, he gave her a piece of whatever he had in the house, he sold it. Exchanged. And that's the way we lived.

**INT:** Why did they want you to go from one town to the other town? Back to your hometown?

**CHARLES:** They wanted to concentrate the people. They knew already. They were planned from the big shots, the Germans, they were very punctual people. They shouldn't have to run around to look for them. Later on they sent from (different place names) from Bluzhnov, they sent all to Kopycynce.

**INT:** Oh, so they were sending people to that town, to your hometown?

**CHARLES:** Later on when they made a pogrom...

**INT:** When you left the town, when you left the town, what were the goyim like, were they happy to see you go or were they...

**CHARLES:** They were happy.

**INT:** Or were they going to take over the houses, or what...

**CHARLES:** They took over the house already before, even.

**INT:** Even before.

**CHARLES:** But there was a, they didn't know what they going to do with us, the goyim.

**INT:** They didn't try to help stop or anything.

**CHARLES:** No, no.

**INT:** They said, "Okay, you're going to go and that's it."

**CHARLES:** Yeah. I had the right to remain there. They went to the city, to the Schortkof, and they asked the pharmacy, and the doctor, there was a doctor there, he should remain. So they gave the allowance, he should remain. I didn't want to stay. My father-in-law couldn't stay. My wife maybe with me, but I was afraid to be there.



Because I have in Kopyczynce my brother, my father, and a bigger city, more people, so I wanted to...

**INT:** So you went.

**CHARLES:** Yeah. But the Judenrat **knew** that I am staying there, so they didn't bother me.

**INT:** They thought you were back in...right now. Who was in the Judenrat? When you came to your old town, there was a Judenrat established?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, were established a Judenrat.

**INT:** The Germans established a Judenrat.

**CHARLES:** A Judenrat, yeah.

**INT:** Did you know all the people in the Judenrat?

**CHARLES:** All the people.

**INT:** You knew all of them.

**CHARLES:** All of them. One man was, (sighs) what can I say, a very intelligent man. He was the **main man** in the city. Whenever we had to make an appeal, a money appeal, for Keren Kayemet, for this, that...

**INT:** A religious man?

**CHARLES:** No. But he was a big talker, intelligent man, and he had a wife. He couldn't make a living. He couldn't make a big living. He was an intellectual man. So we all, I mean all the Jewish people picked him for the Judenrat.

**INT:** Oh, so the people picked...

**CHARLES:** The people picked him, yeah.

**INT:** Okay. So you picked him to run the Judenrat.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, and the Germans accepted him, because he was an intelligent man, and he knew a perfect German, he spoke perfect German, because he was from Austria, the education from Austria, and he became the Judenrat, and then they made, a cops, police...

**INT:** Jewish police.

**CHARLES:** Jewish police, and we had about 30, 40 people there in the Judenrat.

**INT:** I see. Now did the people look upon them as landsleit that they could talk to, or they were afraid...

**CHARLES:** No, they couldn't talk to them. They became son of a bitches.

**INT:** Yeah!

**CHARLES:** Yeah. Some people came, and they became...the main thing, the ruler, he was such a fine man, he became a son of a bitch, too. He had very good there. He was like a king. No German had the right, because he was, and it was written: "Judenrat Elteste." The elteste Judenrat. No German could shoot him, just like this. Other Jew, me, they can take off the gun and shoot. Not him.

**INT:** I see. Did all Jews wear a star, now?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, all Jews.

**INT:** So, when you came to the town, you listened to what the neighbor told you, and you didn't go to the Judenrat to register?

**CHARLES:** Nothing.

**INT:** But your father had to register.

**CHARLES:** My father was registered.

**INT:** And your, the mechutonim was registered.

**CHARLES:** Yeah. Everybody was registered.

**INT:** Everybody was registered.

**CHARLES:** My wife was registered, she went to work.

**INT:** She was registered. Everybody registered but you.

**CHARLES:** But me.

**INT:** Did you know that they thought you were back in the other town?

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** How did you know that?

**CHARLES:** They told me, he told me. I used to meet some people, very few people they used to know.

**INT:** But nobody saw you.

**CHARLES:** Nobody saw me.

**INT:** Hardly anybody saw you.

**CHARLES:** **Nobody** saw me. I was in the boydem all day long.

**INT:** Okay, so you went up to the attic.

**CHARLES:** To the attic, and I was there.

**INT:** And you stayed there.

**CHARLES:** Yeah. I was sleeping in the house, and I was going upstairs, up and down, up and down. The doors are always closed. If somebody knocked on the door, a neighbor, even, I was upstairs. They didn't see me. Because they would have been **jealous**. And they were jealous because...

**INT:** How were you so klug to understand to do something like that?

**CHARLES:** He told me.

**INT:** The neighbor told you. How did he know?

**CHARLES:** Because he was in that city. He saw what is doing. They take every day people to work. They took already a few people to the camp. And they knew that I haven't got a big money now. Nobody had the money to buy. Some people they had very much a lot of gold and dollar, and this and that.

**INT:** What happened to him, to the neighbor? Who told you?

**CHARLES:** He lived through. He died very young. I mean, his brother, he was in Montreal.

**INT:** What was his name?

**CHARLES:** Weissglass.

**INT:** Weissglass. Okay. He came to America?

**CHARLES:** He came to America?

**INT:** You saw him in America?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, I saw him, sure. I praised him. I told him, "Thanks to you I'm alive." (laughs)

**INT:** So you stayed in the attic how long?

**CHARLES:** I stayed from 19...say from 1941, the Germans was already, 1942, from '42 till...

**INT:** The beginning of '42...

**CHARLES:** The beginning of '42 till the beginning, till '42, till the end of '42.

**INT:** The summer of '42. Were you scared there? Did you ever have Germans come in the house?

**CHARLES:** No, Germans didn't come in. Only the Judenrat came in. They took my sister, I had a sister, they took her to work. They beat, once they came to my father, and they asked him, "Where is your son?" They didn't know about it.

**INT:** Your parents didn't know.

**CHARLES:** No. My wife and my father. I mean, the Germans didn't know that I am hiding.

**INT:** No, but did your parents know?

**CHARLES:** Surely. It was their house.

**INT:** Oh, it was in your parents' house. Did your father-in-law know?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, surely.

**INT:** How about all your brothers and sisters?

**CHARLES:** They knew about it.

**INT:** They knew about it.

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** And how about Dinah's brothers and sisters?

**CHARLES:** She didn't have nobody. One brother knew.

**INT:** And he knew. And that's all.

**CHARLES:** And that's all.

**INT:** The neighbors?

**CHARLES:** The neighbors didn't know.

**INT:** Okay. So I was asking who came to the house. The Judenrat used to come in the house?

**CHARLES:** The Judenrat. They came into the house. This is the way it went. But I made already, being there, I made a bunker. A hiding place. When I saw somebody's in the house, I went in to the bunker. This was in 1942. Yom Kippur. My father got beaten up a couple days before. And then on Yom Kippur, we davened, it was already closed everything, no shul, but we davened by ourselves. (Yiddish -- We cried and) my father read...

**INT:** With a minyan or without a minyan?

**CHARLES:** No, what minyan? There was no minyan. They were afraid to be a minyan. So my father went to prepare for Yom Kippur. Iz er gefallen. Gefallen. On Yom Kippur he passed away, died.

**INT:** He had a heart attack, or what?

**CHARLES:** Most probably. A shreck, the pharmacist he came into us. Noch Yom Kippur, (Yiddish -- after Yom Kippur, that's when he was buried. But people were jealous of him.) They were jealous of him because he died. I was jealous myself. Died and that's it. The shreck, we knew already there was already a pogrom there, a pogrom there, a pogrom, they used to call this "Aktion." They used to surrender the city. It was a special Rolekommander they used to call this. They used to surround the city early in the morning, say about 5:00, 6:00 in the morning. They started to shoot, and to organize they take it. And the Jewish people, the Judenrat, our people used to dig holes, a day before, and they used to take them there, take them naked, and they shoot him.

**INT:** But so far, so far at this time, in 1942, you're hiding and the Germans are not doing that. Are there goyim in the town with you? In this town? In your hometown?

**CHARLES:** There were a lot of goyim, but they didn't know about it.

**INT:** They didn't know about it. How were they living? Do you know how they're living? Are they getting schlepped out on detail to work and to do...

**CHARLES:** No, no. They lived, they didn't have where to buy nothing. But they had a bazaar, and they used to bring merchandise.

**INT:** Work, so, it wasn't much change from before?

**CHARLES:** It was a change. They didn't, they were not allowed to come into a Jewish house. But they came anyway. Because they needed, the Germans were not steady there. So when my father died on Yom Kippur, they brought him to Kever Yisroel, on Chol Hamoed Sukkos, was the first pogrom. In our city. The first one. So what was on the first one? They surrounded the, we lived over here and over here was the bazaar, a **big** empty place, and the goyim used to bring merchandise there, and pushcarts, and this and that, and this was the way they used to do business. So there was a pogrom, but they didn't **kill** on the premises. They just put all the people together.

**INT:** Well, how did it happen? At 5:00 in the morning, what happened? They woke you up, they banged on the door, how did you know?

**CHARLES:** They knock at the door.

**INT:** The Germans knock at the door.

**CHARLES:** The Germans knock at the door. "Is the Juden in there!" There was a big tumult, and they're drunk already, and they took the people what was there.

**INT:** They dragged them out of the house.

**CHARLES:** They dragged them out.

**INT:** They came in and dragged them out.

**CHARLES:** Out of the house, and they put them all in the middle in the center of the city.

**INT:** Now this is every Jew, or just women, children...

**CHARLES:** Women, children, everybody.

**INT:** Everybody.

**CHARLES:** Everybody. Me, they couldn't take, because I was hiding. And I made a little for my mother was already there. My father didn't live already. My wife used to come. Was living with the father not far away. The father, her father tried once, the bunker, he said, "I cannot do it." But he was an elderly man. He couldn't breathe already. He said, "You going to take me, and all of you will get killed, because I cannot breathe. I'll remain in my house. Whatever it happened, it happened." And my wife came. She knocked on the door, and she took her there.

**INT:** Now at 5:00 in the morning, when all the sudden you heard the shreieing, your wife ran up into the bunker.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, into my bunker, yeah.

**INT:** Who else came out?

**CHARLES:** My mother.

**INT:** Your mother ran up to the bunker.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, she was upstairs. And my sister.

**INT:** Was up there.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, and I made a bunker for them, and for my (?), with my wife.

**INT:** And the father was downstairs.

**CHARLES:** Her father was no longer alive.

**INT:** Was no longer alive. How about her father?

**CHARLES:** Her father didn't want to come. Because he...

**INT:** So he stayed downstairs in the house.

**CHARLES:** No, not in my house.

**INT:** In the other house.

**CHARLES:** In their house.

**INT:** Okay.

**CHARLES:** And he got killed there. But not the first day.

**INT:** So what happened the first time? Did they come in your house? Did they bang on the door? But nobody was in there.

**CHARLES:** Nobody was in there. They opened the door, nobody was in there, they went out. They figured we are taken already, from before. There wasn't one soldier, there was about a few with the goyim. **Then** the goyim helped.

**INT:** The first one the goyim helped.

**CHARLES:** The first one the goyim helped.

**INT:** They showed where the Jews lived.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, they showed them the Jews, and the Judenrat helped.

**INT:** The Judenrat helped.

**CHARLES:** The yiddishe policemen.

**INT:** Yeah?

**CHARLES:** Yeah. One policeman came to my house, and they went out, and they couldn't find nobody. So they took out a pistol then. "You tell me where they are, because I'm going to kill you." Because he didn't know.

**INT:** The Jewish policeman did this?

**CHARLES:** Nit that, the German policeman.

**INT:** Did it to the Jewish policeman.

**CHARLES:** But he didn't know. He survived. I reminded him, because we were friendly later on. Now he lives in Florida, in California, he was living in New York. I said, "Do you remember the time?" He said, "Yeah, you were there?" He couldn't believe it himself.

**INT:** You heard it.

**CHARLES:** I heard it, because, you know, I was in the dark. In the dark a little bit a pinhole. So you saw everything. I saw the policeman like I see you now. But we were in the dark, and there was light. So I saw it. So they picked up all the, about at that time, about 300, 400 people. At that time. They were afraid to kill them on the premises. They figured the goyim wouldn't be happy. But they made a mistake. The goyim would be happy. So they sent them to Lemberg.

**INT:** The three, four hundred people. Everybody in the town?

**CHARLES:** Everybody. Not everybody. People got hiding and this, and escaped, we knew it before that there's going to be, if not today, tomorrow, they were hiding in the woods and this and that, but all they caught, at that time I lost two nephews. Two nephews, yeah. One was old about four years, and one about five years. Five, five and a half years.

**INT:** How did you know what's going on? You're hiding up there, the people are out in the town.



**CHARLES:** But I could...

**INT:** You could see what was going on?

**CHARLES:** I could see what was going on.

**INT:** Outside.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, outside.

**INT:** What did you see?

**CHARLES:** I saw the people standing there.

**INT:** And what did the Germans do?

**CHARLES:** Nu, they put them together.

**INT:** Yeah, and then what did they do?

**CHARLES:** And then they took them away, put them in the trains.

**INT:** They put them in trains.

**CHARLES:** In trains. Later on, it was about a half a kilometer away.

**INT:** How long did they wait until the trains came?

**CHARLES:** Until they picked all the Jewish people. They figured, this is it. No more. And they put them, and the train, they put in, you know what mean, kallach, calcium, in the old days they used to white the houses.

**INT:** I don't know what it is.

**CHARLES:** You don't know what it is. This is like a calcium powder. They put it, this should be against the disinfection. This was a terrible thing. They put it in the wagons. It was the freight wagons, not human freight, and they put them in, they were like cattle. And they were standing there, the Orthodox, and this and that.

**INT:** And they stuck them into the...

**CHARLES:** They stuck them into there, and they send them to Lemberg.

**INT:** Okay, now the Judenrat didn't go.

**CHARLES:** No, no, the Judenrat helped with all this.

**INT:** The Judenrat helped the Germans do this?

**CHARLES:** Helped the Germans, surely. The cops, they had to do it. Because they were beating.

**INT:** So they were there and helped them get into the...

**CHARLES:** Helped them get into the...

**INT:** Were they hitting the people, or just telling them get in...

**CHARLES:** To get in, and the hit and the this...

**INT:** What did they tell them where they're going?

**CHARLES:** They didn't tell them.

**INT:** They just said go in.

**CHARLES:** So we didn't know. Even the Judenrat didn't know where they going to take them. The Judenrat didn't know the thing. So we had a letter carrier. His name was Kurash (sp?). He was like a Judenfreund. For instance, when I wrote a letter to Kopyczynce, I wrote, "Lazar Scherz, Kopyczynce." It was enough. The city only.

**INT:** Is he the one who married the Jewish...

**CHARLES:** He was the one who married the Jewish. The Judenrat bought him an auto, and he used to go after this, he should find out what happened to the people, where they going to take them. And he found out. They took them to Lemberg, and there they put them in the woods, in the woods they had some electric wire, bridge electric, they went there, and they got killed. Electric.

**INT:** Electrical. They killed them.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, they killed them there.

**INT:** They pushed them against the wires? Or what happened?

**CHARLES:** They didn't push them. They went out. They made a wire like this, they went in there, they got burned.

**INT:** Oh, they got burned.

**CHARLES:** Electric. It takes a minute. And then boom.

**INT:** So everybody in the town was killed immediately after they got off the train?

**CHARLES:** Yeah. There.

**INT:** And they finished them. Now.

**CHARLES:** There was a camp, a lager. Janowska. This was something terrible. Terrible. We had one man from our city, and he went there, he followed them. So he used to write to get a mother, father didn't live already, so he wrote, "Mame (Yiddish -- Beg G-d that I should die already.)" Was terrible things. Was experiments. How to kill. How to do this. Was a terrible thing. It was in the Janowska Lager.

**INT:** Yeah, but let me see how we get to that. Now you're up there. All the Jews have left. You're there with your wife and the Mame.

**CHARLES:** And they saw where the goyim helped people, so next time they didn't do it anymore. Why should they take the trains, and so much work? They didn't have time. They had to do other things. So first they dig holes in the city, in the Bais Olam.

**INT:** Okay. But explain to me. You're now looking out and you see the Jews have left. And you don't know where they went. What did you do? Do you remember that day, what you did afterwards?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, sure.

**INT:** What did you do afterwards?

**CHARLES:** At night we go down, we see quiet.

**INT:** And how long, and then what?

**CHARLES:** One thing with the German people. They were so pinklach. That if somebody brought them, for instance a Jew, and they got them already away, the goyim they found a Jew in the woods, they brought him to the Germans. Too late. (?) They worked until 5:00 or 6:00 and that's it.

**INT:** So the Germans didn't do anymore. They were done.

**CHARLES:** They were done.

**INT:** Where did they live, the Germans? In the town somewhere?

**CHARLES:** They didn't live. They lived in Shortkopf. This was about 15 kilometer.

**INT:** Oh, so they used to come from Shortkopf.

**CHARLES:** They used to come special for pogrom. There was a special people, about 50, 60, they were called "Rollkommander." Whenever they had to make a pogrom, they had to take two tomorrow and another city and another city. We were three and a half million people.

**INT:** In Poland.

**CHARLES:** There's no such a thing as taking all that. They took 400. They got about 1200 remain. They were hiding, like me and the other people. I wasn't the only one.

**INT:** So they went away at night.

**CHARLES:** They went away.

**INT:** Now you come down, but you're now afraid of the goyim.

**CHARLES:** No, the goyim didn't bother too much. Because they were not allowed to do it.

**INT:** Well, what, you weren't afraid someone would see you in the house?

**CHARLES:** Yes. I went down, it started again, the same thing. The Judenrat came, the Judenrat, and they started again.

**INT:** And they started again.

**CHARLES:** This is what happened **twelve times**. Like this.

**INT:** Twelve times the Germans came, they made an Aktion, they ran up to the attic, your wife and your mother went up to the attic.

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** Closed the door, and the Germans missed you. Now the Judenrat knew you were there.

**CHARLES:** No, they didn't know that.

**INT:** They knew your wife was there.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, they knew.

**INT:** Why didn't they, but they didn't tell the Germans your wife was there or your mother-in-law was there?

**CHARLES:** No, they didn't ask them, they didn't tell them. They didn't know.

**INT:** How about the goyim?

**CHARLES:** First of all the Judenrat didn't know. Maybe they took us already.

**INT:** They didn't see your...

**CHARLES:** See, they see three, four hundred people they don't know exactly who is there. They were a little bit heartbroken, too. Don't think some of them, they were not heartbroken. They didn't help them like the Ukrainian people helped them, with the heart. They helped them because they were afraid of their life. If you would say something, a word, or even, the Judenrat...The elteste of the Germans would kill him. It even happened something like this.

**INT:** What happened?

**CHARLES:** One man, they asked him something. He says, "No, I cannot do so." Took out a gun. I heard this also. And I knew the man very well. One son survived. He killed him in the Judenrat. The Judenrat were the elteste over the Yidden. But not by the Germans. By the Germans they still was a Jude.

**INT:** Yeah. Did the Judenrat's family live through the selections?

**CHARLES:** No, nobody lived.

**INT:** The Judenrat's family didn't?

**CHARLES:** No, nobody survived, because in the end...

**INT:** The twelfth one, what happened on the twelfth one, the last one? When you said there were twelve.

**CHARLES:** The last one. It wasn't so, to say the twelfth one, I'll tell you...

**INT:** Tell me from each one.

**CHARLES:** I'll tell you from each one. So the Judenrat at the end, before the end, he went to the woods to hide. So the goyim killed him. One man from our city, a goy that I know very well, he saw, he was even a murderer. I mean he was a very tough guy. He was in America or Canada. He took money and he made business there. So he saved, not he saved, during the pogroms, he hold a lot of people, a few people. Because he was a tough guy.

**INT:** He was a Gentile.

**CHARLES:** A Gentile, yeah, Ukrainian. But he wanted to make money.

**INT:** And the Jews gave him money?

**CHARLES:** They gave him money.

**INT:** And he helped them.

**CHARLES:** He helped them to save them. He made a bunker and he saved them. He saved them for a day and he got 200 dollars in money, gold, this, whatever they had. So he said if he lived through the war, I'll take care of him.

**INT:** What did he mean?

**CHARLES:** I mean he'll go to the government, who is going to be there, the Russian government and tell them that he killed a lot of Jewish people. He didn't kill, because he helped the Germans.

**INT:** Oh, he's going to show...

**CHARLES:** He's going to show who helped the Germans.

**INT:** Who helped, other goyim, you mean, who helped the goyim.

**CHARLES:** The Soviets, he figured the Soviets are going to come back.

**INT:** Who's he going to point out?

**CHARLES:** On the Jewish people.

**INT:** Oh, the Jewish people who helped the Germans.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, surely.

**INT:** The Judenrat.

**CHARLES:** The Judenrat.

**INT:** I see.

**CHARLES:** But he didn't come to that, because nobody survived from them. Two people survived. They were there, so the Russians caught them and they got twenty-five years. But they survived the twenty-five years.

**INT:** Okay, so the Judenrat is living from each Aktion to the next.

**CHARLES:** To the next.

**INT:** They're staying.

**CHARLES:** That's what.

**INT:** Meanwhile, when the Germans come, do they find people to round up? How many? They took 350 the first time. How many were left in the hausen that they dragged out?

**CHARLES:** They don't know. They don't know and they don't know. They came, "I need another people." And later on a couple months, they made another pogrom.

**INT:** And they got people.

**CHARLES:** And they got people.

**INT:** How many? Twenty, fifteen?

**CHARLES:** No twenty. They got always a few hundred, because they got people...

(END TAPE THREE, SIDE TWO)

(TAPE FOUR, SIDE ONE)

**INT:** What were you thinking about during these pogroms? You were up there in the attic. It's day, night, are you worried, are you nervous?

**CHARLES:** Takeh, you were all nervous, takeh, you were all nervous.

**INT:** What were you thinking about?

**CHARLES:** I was thinking about efshar, efshar wet Gott helfen, I didn't know, I didn't have the slightest idea will we survive. My wife's brother, they're from Kopyczynce, with his wife, he had a place where to survive. So he didn't have children for five years he got married. And then when Hitler came, she got pregnant.

**INT:** And what happened?

**CHARLES:** What happened, she got into a hospital, for a lot of money, you weren't allowed to go in, and she gave birth to a child, and she came home to her (?), the second day. At that time, it was already a last pogrom. We wouldn't jump. We'll come to it. I'll tell you what happened, later. But he had a, he had a place, the chief of the police, the Ukrainian, was a friend of theirs. And he knew that she had a lot of money, she were a rich girl, and her father was also a rich man, so he tried to save them. So they had a place

there. So whenever there was a pogrom, they used to go to this chief of the police. He used to kill people. And she was there.

**INT:** She probably gave him money?

**CHARLES:** For the future.

**INT:** For the future.

**CHARLES:** Because she didn't have at that time money, but he knew that she's a very...

**INT:** Did they survive?

**CHARLES:** Who did survive?

**INT:** Did they survive?

**CHARLES:** **She** survived. The brother didn't.

**INT:** And the child?

**CHARLES:** The child, no.

**INT:** No. When you were with your mother-in-law, and your wife, in the attic...

**CHARLES:** Nicht a mother (in-law), she wasn't alive already. With my mother.

**INT:** Your mother.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, my mother.

**INT:** Your mother.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, my mother and two sisters.

**INT:** The mother, two sisters, and your wife.

**CHARLES:** One sister well, she came, I made a bunker for them, and I made a bunker for myself. I made a bunker for them, they have to be covered, and I covered it in a hurry, they couldn't recognize, and for myself I made like a ceiling, we went down like to a ceiling I lower ceiling and in between. It was a whole ceiling so once I got from the Germans, we couldn't fix it, it got a bit lower. Sink. So I straightened out from the top, and I made the bunker there.

**INT:** You had hammer and nails?



**CHARLES:** I had hammer and nails.

**INT:** You didn't worry about people hearing you klupping the vunt?

**CHARLES:** Nobody there, it was a house. And I didn't klup so. The kunts, you know what I mean? The kunts, was to make it so nobody should know about it. Because people made buried bunkers, tremendous...but if people know about it, even the man who made it, he knew about it. So they made a bunker where they could go in there five, six people. But cannot go in ten people. They knew about it. They came there, and they couldn't go in there. So when they caught them, the Germans, they said, "Where is the bunker?" And they told them.

**INT:** This happened?

**CHARLES:** This happened. A lot of times. I know people, one man, killed his own son, was a child. And the child was crying. So, what are you doing going make it for (Yiddish -- make it bad for everyone.) So he (Yiddish -- suffocated him. He choked him, the child.)

**INT:** How old was the boy?

**CHARLES:** The boy was about, I don't know, two, three, four years.

**INT:** How do you know that happened?

**CHARLES:** I know about it, because I knew the man. He survived.

**INT:** And he did it to his own, to the...

**CHARLES:** He did it to his own...

**INT:** In the bunker.

**CHARLES:** And the mothers did it. The people, they said, look, (Yiddish -- for such a child we should all perish? So they did it.) So they did it. That's what the Germans brought out of the people.

**INT:** Yeah, terrible. Terrible.

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** What did you talk about with the mother? With the, to leave...what were the breirah?

**CHARLES:** There was no breirah. Ein breirah.

**INT:** You didn't talk about different alternatives, what to do?

**CHARLES:** What to do, you had to kill yourself. I had poison to kill myself.

**INT:** Where did you get it, from the pharmacy?

**CHARLES:** From the pharmacy. I had morphine, but I could have been a rich man. With morphine, you could take that time...

**INT:** Why a rich man from morphine?

**CHARLES:** I mean, a rich man. They, everybody wanted to have it.

**INT:** Why?

**CHARLES:** To **kill** themselves! When they get into the German people, they knew they going to kill you.

**INT:** Everybody knew **now**, after the first few Aktions.

**CHARLES:** They're finished, we're finished, we're finished.

**INT:** You knew it was going to be no good.

**CHARLES:** It's going to be no good.

**INT:** Because somebody came back from Lemberg?

**CHARLES:** Nobody came back.

**INT:** But somebody knew about Lemberg.

**CHARLES:** They knew about it. The goy said...

**INT:** The post office.

**CHARLES:** The post office, yeah.

**INT:** And he told everybody.

**CHARLES:** So. And my brother says, he says, "It's no use to live, kinder, children, because America knows about it, and England knows about it, and the whole world knows about it, and they don't do nothing." What did they do? They didn't bomb.

**INT:** They didn't do anything.

**CHARLES:** We used to pray to G-d maybe a bomb is going to fall. Okay, we get killed, but for them, too. Nobody killed. So he said, my brother, no world.

**INT:** So you knew if they took you away, finished.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, finished, yeah.

**INT:** Okay. So what did you talk about?

**CHARLES:** But they didn't take me away.

**INT:** No.

**CHARLES:** No, they didn't catch me.

**INT:** No. But what did you talk about there, with your wife and your sisters?

**CHARLES:** (Yiddish -- We cried, and we cried and we prayed to G-d) and that's all. So this were ten pogroms like this. One, after one day, the same thing. This was, to say so, about the tenth pogrom. It was already before the end, there were already no Jews, hardly, they started, it was three days, it never happened. Because we went out from the boydem, and we saw, we didn't know, it was quiet. They still shooting, they still hear, so my sister came out to her window. She took a look out. So she saw then a goya, (Yiddish -- and saw that the female goya recognized her and she saw how they're going to the policeman.)

**INT:** Oy.

**CHARLES:** (Yiddish -- The sister says, "Oh my G-d, now we are lost. Now we're finished. They've recognized us," and we saw how this woman turned around went to the police to tell on them. And so we all rushed back into the bunker to hide ourselves, and then they realized that we had left) a thermos we forgot, with warm water. We forgot.

**INT:** You left outside.

**CHARLES:** We left outside. And in about five minutes, there was the same guy that she sold to him, and then another policeman.

**INT:** Judenrat.

**CHARLES:** No, this was not a Judenrat. A kapo, a policeman, a goyish Ukrainian. There was a police station, Ukrainian people. Managed by the Deutschen. And one was a German. They went, they called him up, he should come, and a Polack was there. A Volksdeutsch. Because he spoke Polish. They are here. And I'm already, farmacht sich in the bunker, and they looked around, they looked around and there was a thermos, and

they said, (Yiddish -- Oh, damn it, look, there's a thermos. They were just here, and they must have just been here, and now they're gone.")

**INT:** He said they **weren't** here?

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** Why did he say they weren't here, if he saw a thermos?

**CHARLES:** No, they were **here**.

**INT:** Oh, they **were** here.

**CHARLES:** They **were** here. Yeah. They just left over here. And they looked down, they couldn't find it. And they stepped on us. But it was like this, they had to, I made it even with nails, like this, and they picked themselves up, they would hit a nail in the head. But they didn't do it, and they couldn't find it. And they said one said, in Polish, "We must put a fire. We must burn the house, because they're here. They couldn't go away." But this was in the center city. Said, if they get the house, there would be no, so they couldn't do it. But we were afraid.

**INT:** So did you think, now, so they left.

**CHARLES:** They left, and they went down, they looked and they looked and they looked, maybe a half an hour. Nothing. They escaped. Maybe they're here, but we have to put in a fire. But even if a fire, varbrent weren, so, we'll burn, and that's all.

**INT:** So did you think now you have to get out of there?

**CHARLES:** No, I didn't go out. Where I go out?

**INT:** Because now they knew that you were in the house, or around the house, or they could come back.

**CHARLES:** They could come back, but I didn't go out. Where would I go out? I didn't have where to go. We haven't got no breirah.

**INT:** Okay, so you stayed there anyhow.

**CHARLES:** Anyhow, and it was three days like this.

**INT:** Okay. You mentioned at the beginning, they took the people to Lemberg. They took them out.

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** And then you said, that once they saw how the goyim were, they then could kill them there.

**CHARLES:** They killed them on the premises.

**INT:** Did they kill them there?

**CHARLES:** Sure.

**INT:** Did you see them kill them?

**CHARLES:** On the premises, sure.

**INT:** What did they do? How did they do it?

**CHARLES:** They used to take a day before, or a week before, we shouldn't know exactly, they took out a few people to work, and they brought them to the cemetery, and there they made three big holes. This was every time another one. I saw, I went there, I came always there. So they made the holes, empty holes, deep, I don't know how deep, I didn't measure it. And that's all.

**INT:** Where did you see this?

**CHARLES:** I didn't see it. I knew they go there.

**INT:** You knew that they did it.

**CHARLES:** They did it. I talked (to) friends, and this and that.

**INT:** Okay, okay. So they went and dug these holes.

**CHARLES:** And dug the holes. And then when they make a pogrom, they took them there, with guns like this, and they lay down, they shoot them.

**INT:** Did you hear the noise?

**CHARLES:** Surely I heard.

**INT:** You heard them...

**CHARLES:** **Positively.** I heard the noise and I said, and then they stopped it, that's all. They all fell down like this.

**INT:** And then the shooting stopped.

**CHARLES:** The shooting stopped. And then they covered it with earth and that's all. Two girls, two girls, they were college girls, this was nephews of that man that he told me go on this (Yiddish) (?). They survived. They were there. Their father was a rich man. They had this to sell, and they went, they were caught there, and they got hit. But you see, when they hit like this, you get just like this, and you fall down anyway, far shreck, they fell down on the top already, and then at night when they covered it, naked they came out, and they went to goyim. They had places where to go, and they survived. Two girls like this. One is in Israel and one is in Montreal.

**INT:** Did you see them after the war?

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** So they told you?

**CHARLES:** I knew it.

**INT:** They make them undress right out there, but they walked out and they undressed by the loch there, they got undressed, yeah?

**CHARLES:** No, they got undressed there, surely.

**INT:** Yeah, right there.

**CHARLES:** There, and they stood with the guns like this, and they shoot them.

**INT:** When they got them out of the houses into the center by the bazaar, where the bazaar was, did they try to run away any of the people? Or was it...

**CHARLES:** They couldn't run away, they gonna shoot them right away. My brother got shot like this. The pharmacist.

**INT:** What happened?

**CHARLES:** He was escaped. They caught him and he escaped, and he got shot. He wanted to be shot, not to go there.

**INT:** Your brother wasn't in the bunker with you.

**CHARLES:** No, no. He had a wife and two children. He lived separate. He had a place where to go. He had goyim and friends, that he went to school with there.

**INT:** And what happened to him? How did they finally find him?

**CHARLES:** There was a pogrom. They didn't find him. He run away. Somebody told me, a man that survived, that he saw it, he saw him right away at that time. He said, "It was on this place your brother was shot."

**INT:** And the wife and the children?

**CHARLES:** And the wife, they took it. The one girl, beautiful girl, she survived somehow, then she went...

**INT:** What happened to the Judenrat, finally?

**CHARLES:** I will come to it.

**INT:** So the pogroms are happening.

**CHARLES:** Are happening. This was happening every few months. And this was in 19...and then later on...

**INT:** '42.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, in '42, the end of '42, they liquidated the houses. They made a ghetto. So my house, where the parents was, so I had to leave the house. They made a ghetto, say in one street, very close, and they had to live there. So when they had made a ghetto, and I haven't got no bunker, no nothing.

**INT:** You have to leave.

**CHARLES:** I have to leave my house. So me and my wife, and then they organized, there was already after the twelfth, no, before that I wanted to tell you this, but the last pogrom was on a Sunday. Then when my brother-in-law, when my sister-in-law was in the hospital, they gave birth to a baby. And the father, the brother, my wife's brother, had to go to the policeman. So was on a Sunday. On a Sunday nobody was, **never** was around. It was the first time and the last time. So she was in the hospital. And he was with their mother. With this mother-in-law. And he lived in another place, and he made a bunker, but he got varmusht and suddenly it's 12:00 and a pogrom starts. I had it good because I saw the shooting, I went bum to the bunkers, and that's all. He had to run. Say from here to there. So he got caught. And he had a brother-in-law, his wife's sister's boyfriend, then with his kallah he went there to his bunker, and their family survived, and he got caught. He got caught, it was on a Sunday, and Monday was the execution.

So he didn't survive. And she gave birth to the baby. And she came home to my wife's sister-in-law, and the small baby. Naturally they cried. The father was killed already. The father (Yiddish -- paid, he had some gold, and he paid) they shouldn't take him, they should kill him right away. He figured, they going to kill him on the way, they going to bring him to kever Yisroel. Because he didn't know then that his son doesn't live anymore. His son was also caught. He didn't know that. So they killed him on the

premises. We got, from the Judenrat later on, they told me. They were friendly, I had friends there. So...so my sister-in-law didn't want to go, she didn't want to leave the baby, so my wife pulled her. "Come, what you going to do? You going to save the baby? You cannot save the baby." He said, "They gonna kill you with the baby, and that's all." And she don't, she took her, and they came in, they took the baby with the legs (?) to the (?), to the place. They didn't even...

**INT:** How old was the baby?

**CHARLES:** Three days, four days.

**INT:** Four days.

**CHARLES:** And she survived. After the pogrom, she went to that cop, the policeman, he was an (?) from the police. And he saved her. Not all the time. Not all the time. And there was already Juden(rein), and then, yeah, they made a ghetto. I didn't want to go to the ghetto. Because I knew to the ghetto I haven't got where to put it, it won't get built anyway, so they made a lager. They made three camps. In Kopyczynce a camp, in Luski (sp?) was a camp, there was a camp over here in Choroskov (sp?). Was a camp. Three camps. Kopyczynce and over here a ghetto. The ghetto was very few people. The elderly people. My mother went to the ghetto.

**INT:** How did you decide now? You're sitting in the bunker deciding? How did you decide who's going to do what?

**CHARLES:** When they throw us out, when we had to leave the house, I was already not hiding. It's no use to hide there. When I came into the Judenrat, "Where you were? Where you been?" (Yiddish -- Everybody greeted me and was so surprised to find me alive. "Where were you? Where were you?" they said.)

**INT:** You weren't afraid to let them know you were alive?

**CHARLES:** Look, I was already to the end. I didn't have no choice. When they took me out from my house, I had to leave the house, (Yiddish -- they had to see me) they have to see me. I have to go either to a ghetto, so I went to the camp. With my wife, with one camp, my two sisters, they still were alive, because they lived through all the pogroms in the house, and they went to this camp, to Choroskov camp...

**INT:** Another camp.

**CHARLES:** Another camp.

**INT:** Why didn't they go with you and your wife to the same camp?

**CHARLES:** She figured she had acquaintances there. Goyim she used to do business with her. She wanted to go there.



**INT:** But you mean, there are going to be goyim in the camps, too?

**CHARLES:** No, no, goyim, there, she can go out for a piece of bread. She figured this way. Because I went to a camp when nobody knew about it. I went there. And one of the camp, and that man that went when they say he wrote a letter to the KGB, he went to this camp to Kopyczynce. He and his father.

**INT:** Okay. And you had a mother yet.

**CHARLES:** I had a mother, she went to the ghetto.

**INT:** She stayed in the ghetto.

**CHARLES:** This was about the beginning of...

**INT:** '43?

**CHARLES:** '43. June. Yeah, '43. This was in June. We started the camp in June.

**INT:** Now what did you think was going to happen to your mother in the ghetto?

**CHARLES:** They going to get killed.

**INT:** You thought that.

**CHARLES:** Sure. Positively. And I'm going to get to the camp already. So we went to the labor camp.

**INT:** What did you think was going to happen to you in the labor camp?

**CHARLES:** We're going to get killed in the end. So listen. So this was June, the beginning of June. So we figure, meantime, they needed us very badly, because they had to pick all the grains, and they had to pay the Polish people, the Ukrainian, people, they had to pay (?), they had to give it to the Germans, and there's nobody to take out the...they didn't have no workers. So we figured, till the end of summer we don't be alive. Because they needed us very badly. So that's what we talked about. And after this, meantime after we'll be redeemed, the Russians then went forward, you see?

**INT:** '43 already...

**CHARLES:** They had already their mapula.

**INT:** Stalingrad they were coming.

**CHARLES:** We saw that they had a mapula. That's why they started so fast with the Jewish people to kill them all. When we were shown the papers in the (?), two armies, Germans, got into the Russian gefangenschaft, so we knew already that this is true. They'll finish them out.

**INT:** Let me ask you again. In '42 when you had the morphine, did you ever come close to taking it?

**CHARLES:** Positively.

**INT:** Tell me.

**CHARLES:** My wife begged me I shouldn't take it while we were there.

**INT:** She didn't want to take it with you?

**CHARLES:** I didn't have enough for two people.

**INT:** Just for you. Just for one person.

**CHARLES:** I don't know how it was going to be, two people are going to get to (?). She begged me.

**INT:** She said to you.

**CHARLES:** She begged me, don't do it. What am I going to do?

**INT:** You said you were going to do it?

**CHARLES:** Sometimes. (crying)

**INT:** You said to her, "I can't stand anymore. This is it."

**CHARLES:** Yeah. Can't stand it anymore.

**INT:** But **she** was strong.

**CHARLES:** She was strong. "Don't do it. Don't do it."

**INT:** She was strong.

**CHARLES:** She was, she got killed, she wanted to take it also, but I didn't have it.

**INT:** So you wouldn't give it to her. You would never give it to her.

**CHARLES:** No, she wouldn't do it. She wouldn't leave me alone, also. Since I would never give it to her.

**INT:** But she was stronger.

**CHARLES:** She was...

**INT:** In that way. She would never take it if you would give it to her?

**CHARLES:** I don't think so. No. She would be afraid of G-d.

**INT:** To do such a thing.

**CHARLES:** Yeah. (crying) Where He was, the G-d?

**INT:** But she was afraid. Still she was a religious person.

**CHARLES:** My mother was such a religious person that you cannot imagine. We haven't got such a thing in this (?) (crying)

**INT:** Yeah, and doing that kind of thing, you just couldn't do it. It was against G-d to...

**CHAIM:** Couldn't do it. Against G-d, schon. Where was G-d? Where was G-d? I would take it. Where was G-d? And she begged me and begged me and begged me, and I couldn't do it. And then on the end, I didn't have it already, because I lost it. I'll come to it. And at that camp, this was in June, we started in camp.

**INT:** The Judenrat was still there.

**CHARLES:** The Judenrat was still there.

**INT:** They didn't kill them in the Aktions.

**CHARLES:** Not. Not. They figure on the end, they going to kill them.

**INT:** But still not yet.

**CHARLES:** But they started. Some escaped, and some...And after this pogrom, the Judenrat left the Judenrat, they went to the woods. So the goyim killed them because he had money. Because he was, he was at that time, he had the best (?) .  
Physically.

**INT:** He ate...

**CHARLES:** He ate and he had money. Because, you see, they collected money from the Jewish people that they knew was rich, and whatever the Germans wanted, they gave

it to them. And the Jewish people, they had a lot at that time. The Germans said, "The Juden haben doch alles." They had everything. Whatever they wanted. They were rich people. Not all of them. Not all of them were poor, and not all of them were rich. But some of them. Business people.

**INT:** How about the police, the Jewish police, they had a lot of money, too, to get such a job?

**CHARLES:** You see, I'll tell you how they got the money. They didn't need too much, to pay for that job. Because when they, the Germans told me, we need to take a hundred people to the camp. They have to supply, what they killed in the camp the people, they had to supply different one. So when they caught you, for instance, or me, they caught, I had with me some gold a little, I said, "Let me go. Take it, let me go." So they did it. They took the money, and they let him go.

**INT:** Let him go, meant, they made a Jewish policeman out of him?

**CHARLES:** No, they let him go into this camp.

**INT:** They just let him go.

**CHARLES:** And they had him and they let him go. That's where they got the money a little bit.

**INT:** I see. The Judenrat got the money.

**CHARLES:** The Judenrat.

**INT:** Because the Judenrat had to go around and grab the Jews.

**CHARLES:** The cops alone, they caught some people, they were rich boys, too. They had with them, they gave them something. (?)

**INT:** I see. I see. But the Germans used the Jewish...

**CHARLES:** No, they didn't take the money.

**INT:** No, but the Germans used these Jewish police...

**CHARLES:** Yeah, police, to help them.

**INT:** To get the Jews.

**CHARLES:** To get the Jews. That's right, that's right. Because they figure, they going to save their lives from it. And meantime the Russians are going to come. Because we

heard, we had the papers. We had radios already, hidden. It wasn't allowed, but they had it. And they knew what the Russians are going on already.

**INT:** What did you think about people who became in the Jewish police? Would you have done such a thing?

**CHARLES:** No, not everybody did.

**INT:** Not everybody would do it.

**CHARLES:** My wife's brother, he could have gone.

**INT:** He didn't want to.

**CHARLES:** He didn't want to do it.

**INT:** Did most people look at it as a disgrace, a shande to do this?

**CHARLES:** A shande. A shande. Positively.

**INT:** Yeah.

**CHARLES:** Positively. Positively. We had, we had from (?), it was also with a few kilometers. So he was a Shechter was his name, like my wife's name. Shechter. He was a rabbi. He studied for the yeshiva. He was such a son of a bitch, you cannot imagine. This is how would you, a ganze Yiddishkeit. (Yiddish -- this man threw off of himself all of his Yiddishkeit. When he saw what was going on, he was no longer a G-d fearing person.) A son of a bitch.

**INT:** He survived?

**CHARLES:** No, no, very seldom.

**INT:** So now tell me, so you went to the camp. How did you say good-bye to your Mame, to go into the ghetto? What was that like?

**CHARLES:** (crying) She'll be killed any day. She was an older lady, seventy years. My father was eighty years and he died. She was seventy years. (pause)

In the camp we went to work. And we were some old, young boys, came to the camp. It was a few cops. So we told him, "Listen, you are going home to the camp. And don't think that you'll be the cop, or you gonna work for the Germans, because you going to get killed from us. You behave. I know you have to be a cop. Because they need cops. But you behave."

**INT:** Did you know who he was?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, surely.

**INT:** From the town.

**CHARLES:** From the town, surely. "And don't you dare to beat up somebody, and no matter what, don't you open hand on nobody, because you won't be alive." He was afraid, too. Because there were two cops, and there was about, I think, 200 people.

**INT:** Was he in the Jewish police, this guy, before?

**CHARLES:** Who?

**INT:** The cop. Was he in the Jewish police before?

**CHARLES:** Which cop?

**INT:** The Jewish one, who was in the...

**CHARLES:** Yeah, he was a (?) He was a cop.

**INT:** So he was already...

**CHARLES:** He was already a cop. So we told him, don't do it. So we worked there a month.

**INT:** How did you live, where did you sleep?

**CHARLES:** We slept in the, like the farmer's, like a big, there was straw there.

**INT:** You just lay down on the straw?

**CHARLES:** Lay down on the floor.

**INT:** And eating?

**CHARLES:** Eating they gave us food. A little bit.

**INT:** The Germans?

**CHARLES:** No, not the Germans. A Polack. He was the manager of the, how do you call this, like the...

**INT:** The work camp.

**CHARLES:** Say Johnson, President Johnson had a...

**INT:** A farm, a ranch.

**CHARLES:** A ranch. A big ranch.

**INT:** A big ranch.

**CHARLES:** A big ranch.

**INT:** And he owned it, the Polack? He didn't own it, the Pole?

**CHARLES:** No, he didn't own it. He was a manager from before. Was a graf, was a man, he didn't own it, but he was escape, I don't know where he was. First of all the Russian people took him away right away when they came. This was already...

**INT:** So he came back already.

**CHARLES:** The Russian people when they took away, they never came back.

**INT:** So this was somebody else. He didn't own this ranch, did he?

**CHARLES:** No, he was the manager there. He was a good man, the Pole. He gave us food. The 20th of July, I was laying here, my wife, here, my brother-in-law, he's in Israel, he died in Israel, he had a nephew, two nephews and his wife. He had a second wife from a wife, his sister. We lived together like this. Near me, over here, was a boy from the village. From Katschobinsa(?). This was Luski, not a kilometer or two from Katschobinsa. He was laying, sitting there. He had a brother from before the war. He was like a goy. He was no Jews, he was with the goyim, he went to the churches, nicht geshmat, nicht kein Yid. (He didn't convert, but he also didn't act like a Jew.) He was walking around without a, by the goyim, he was like a goy. The knew him as a goy. So he was in that city. It was a bigger city. So he saw at night, 12:00 at night, Gestapo is there. Gestapo is there. Must be something wrong. So his brother was laying in the camp with me. Together. So he came at night to the woods, and he came over to his brother, and he says, "Listen, I saw the German police. Something is wrong. Pick yourself up and go." So I said to my wife, "We have to go." He goes, I was going.

**INT:** Were there guards around?

**CHARLES:** What?

**INT:** Were there guards around the ranch?

**CHARLES:** No, no guards.

**INT:** You could have ran away whenever you wanted to.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, because it wasn't a camp, it was like a...

**INT:** You could have run away anytime you wanted to, but you never did run away?

**CHARLES:** Where to go? You didn't have where to go. We worked there, and we had food, and that's all.

**INT:** Even though eventually you knew the Germans were going to...

**CHARLES:** We worry at that time.

**INT:** But you worry then, okay. So what happened?

**CHARLES:** So meantime I put myself up in whatever I slept in and my wife, and we ran away. Jewish people coming over, (Yiddish -- they said to me, "Charles, what are you crazy?") Where you going? They needed us now. **Now**, they going to kill us? They won't kill us now, because next month they need us to take out the tvia (grain). They took us for that purpose. But (Yiddish -- what's sure is sure). I went, my brother-in-law saw that I'm going, so he went, too. Another few people.

**INT:** How did you decide to go like that? We decided...

**CHARLES:** We decided...

**INT:** Was it you, was it your wife? Who was the main one?

**CHARLES:** I was there. Because whatever, she didn't know too much. I saw he goes, so I want to go, too. If nothing would happen that time in the morning, I'll come back. I've got nothing to lose. This took the whole commercial took about five minutes. I went, my wife went, and then, he, Moshe, my brother-in-law he changed his mind and agreed to go with us. Said, well, he'll go, too. So we were laying already, we were in about a hundred yards. And we lay down, the three of us like this, and we lay down and we said, we'll see what is going to be. This took about five minutes already, we hear already machistes, schon (Yiddish -- here they are. The Germans have come, and they're shooting.) He had a wife, and two children. The one child have a flashlight (Yiddish -- and the bullet hit the light) blink the flashlight, so he got scared and ran away.

**INT:** He ran away.

**CHARLES:** Not he ran away.

**INT:** The kid, the child.

**CHARLES:** The child got lost.

**INT:** Got lost?



**CHARLES:** (Yiddish -- For fear, out of fear he went this way.) And he went this...

(END TAPE FOUR, SIDE ONE)

(TAPE FOUR, SIDE TWO)

**CHARLES:** He went away, and I went 100 yards, and I lay down, after me, another two people were running away. And I thought this was already the Germans. I went down and think, let me shoot in the back, I shouldn't see the faces. In the meantime it was the Jewish people. Both, they survived. These two people. He was living in the, he was a very wealthy man, and then he died. Passed away. He was much older than I am. And the brother-in-law also survived. And the kid went, he went this way, and the child went this way. The child went to the city, then I was there, they caught him, the Ukrainian caught him, and they killed him.

**INT:** How old a child?

**CHARLES:** He was about eleven, twelve years. They killed him.

**INT:** How far are you running now?

**CHARLES:** About a hundred yards.

**INT:** About a hundred yards.

**CHARLES:** I lay down, because during the day, it was already in the morning. And the Germans already, we hear boom, boom, boom, they killed everybody who didn't run away. It was me, and the two people, and the brother-in-law. And another few people, they let them know. My brother-in-law went to another city, to another there.

**INT:** So wait. Now you're there and you hear all the sheesen, all the killing...

**CHARLES:** And we stay at night, and we stay all day.

**INT:** Where were you, in some kind of...

**CHARLES:** We were laying in the woods.

**INT:** Just in the woods.

**CHARLES:** In the tvia, in the grain, was going something like this. Laying there.

**INT:** Laying there. Now what time of year is this?

**CHARLES:** This was in 194...

**INT:** '43.

**CHARLES:** Three. '43, yeah.

**INT:** '43. In the summertime.

**CHARLES:** In the summertime, in July.

**INT:** In July, so you could sleep.

**CHARLES:** I had my (?).

**INT:** So you slept that night.

**CHARLES:** Slept that night, there outside.

**INT:** And now you got up, and now it's daytime, you have to be careful.

**CHARLES:** We have to be careful, we have to go. So we went. While we went, the camp, so it wasn't so strict, there was no Germans there, only the Polack. So we went to a goy and we bought something, a piece of bread, this, that, then we got acquainted. We used to ask a Polish woman, in case of an emergency, "Can we come over to you?" She said yes.

**INT:** A long time ago you asked her this, or just now?

**CHARLES:** No, no. Just now. We didn't even know him before. And here comes the night, we lay all day long, because we saw already, what happened, and they killed everybody, and we go into this goy. She told us, they killed everybody.

**INT:** How do you know you could trust her?

**CHARLES:** We didn't know. But we haven't got no, ein breirah.

**INT:** Okay.

**CHARLES:** And she older, so she came there, and she gave us food, and we gave her a little bit money what we have, not money for the food. We saw she is a honest, G-d-fearing goy. She wouldn't do nothing wrong. We had...and we sent to our city, my wife wrote a letter to a friend where she gave merchandise to hide, so they brought a piece of this, a piece of that, so she brought us. She went to the bazaar, to Kopyczynce, she sold it and she gave her the money. And this is honest, or not honest, we didn't want to know, as long as she gives something. And we pay her with that money for food. Because she was a poor woman. (pause)

And...meantime it was already Judenrein. There was all over the pogrom, and was Judenrein, no more Jew can be seen there.

**INT:** In the camps and in the ghetto. Is that what you heard?

**CHARLES:** In the camp and the ghetto. Yeah, in the drei camp.

**INT:** Everybody is finished.

**CHARLES:** Everybody, yeah. So I know I haven't got already sisters, my two sisters. Later on I found out what happened to the sisters. From that camp nobody survived. One man, I asked him, and he had a friend from there. He wanted to go to see somebody. So they let him go. This man survived. But they survived there somebody, because they didn't have nobody there. If not a shaygetz, the yiddishe shaygetz, that he came and told his brother, I, we wouldn't have survived. Nothing, nobody. So we went to the goy, we went to the goy.

**INT:** Now who's there now? It's you and your wife and whom else?

**CHARLES:** Me and my wife.

**INT:** Just together.

**CHARLES:** Just together, and we don't know who survived.

**INT:** But going to the goy it's just you and the wife.

**CHARLES:** Me and my wife.

**INT:** And the other people you were with?

**CHARLES:** No, I didn't know.

**INT:** They went away.

**CHARLES:** I didn't know. My brother-in-law I found after the war.

**INT:** No, but your brother-in-law decided he didn't want to stay there with you and the wife.

**CHARLES:** We, was no question about it. He went this way and I went this way.

**INT:** You decided to do that, or just to run like this?

**CHARLES:** We ran like this. With pachad, shreck, he didn't want to go, so later on, he went on for two minutes, so he had already the Germans there. So we thought he got killed.

**INT:** I see.

**CHARLES:** We didn't know. After the war, when we were liberated, we found out that he's alive.

**INT:** Now who told you that everybody was killed off, again? All you are is with your wife and dealing with this woman.

**CHARLES:** But we heard, the woman told us.

**INT:** The woman told you. Did you believe her?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, positively. Because we heard it. We heard, about a hundred yards they scream loud. We heard everybody. We heard the shouting.

**INT:** Was it a shock to hear about your mother and the sisters?

**CHARLES:** I didn't know about my mother. My mother was in another city, in a ghetto.

**INT:** How about the sisters?

**CHARLES:** The sisters were in another ghetto.

**INT:** I see. So you didn't know about them yet.

**CHARLES:** Didn't know then. Nothing.

**INT:** Okay, okay. How long did this go on with this woman?

**CHARLES:** With this woman, so we went there, we got there, we stood there. She kepted us.

**INT:** In the house?

**CHARLES:** Yeah. In the meantime, the people that survived, because was Judenrein, they didn't have what to do with themselves, so they went to the Polish manager. He needed that people should work, because he was afraid of the Germans, too. Because he says, "You know what? You come back to work, and I'll give you food, and don't come into the inside. Outside I'll give you food."

**INT:** These are the few Jews that were left that the Germans didn't know about.

**CHARLES:** Few Jews, yeah.

**INT:** They came to this manager.

**CHARLES:** To the manager, and he was a good man. So he have it, during the day, they worked, I wasn't there, and they worked, and at night he gave them food.

**INT:** And the Germans didn't know about it.

**CHARLES:** Didn't know about it. Because they asked him for (?), to get these.

**INT:** Okay.

**CHARLES:** In the meantime I was there. This was till the fifteenth of November. The fifteenth of November.

**INT:** What did you do all day?

**CHARLES:** Sitting. My wife, she used to bring us paper, newspaper, we used to read this, that.

**INT:** Did you have money to pay her for the...

**CHARLES:** Yeah, she went to the...and she brought something.

**INT:** Did she have children that came?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, she had two children. And she had a father, an old father. He was all the time arguing with her: "What do you need the Jewish people there? Let them go, what do you care about them?" And she got rachmones on us. We told her, "Wait, if we will survive, you going to be very good."

**INT:** That's what you told her.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, and she knew.

**INT:** If the Germans would have caught **her**, though...

**CHARLES:** Ah! She would have been killed.

**INT:** She knew that.

**CHARLES:** She didn't know that.

**INT:** She didn't know that the Germans would...

**CHARLES:** No, she didn't know, it was a simple town, a simple place, it was a village, if they had, it was eleven houses. In the whole village was eleven houses.

**INT:** Oh.

**CHARLES:** So she didn't know about it.

**INT:** How about the neighbors, the neighbors didn't see what was going on?

**CHARLES:** They didn't see, they didn't know about it.

**INT:** They didn't know.

**CHARLES:** Yeah. So we were there till November. Meantime she used to go to (?), and take merchandise and sold it, take it for herself.

**INT:** How about eating fleish? Would your wife eat the fleish there?

**CHARLES:** We didn't eat, she didn't have fleish to give.

**INT:** So you ate what?

**CHARLES:** Beans and whatever she had. Kashe, oatmeal, this that. Whatever she cooked there. On Yom Kippur she was so good. One Yom Kippur we were there, she brought a special something for fast. We didn't eat on Yom Kippur. We knew already. She brought us paper. We knew it was Yom Kippur, we didn't eat. And she brought us, she made a special meal for vorfasten, and for auf zefasten. A good goya. And we wrote letters, letters, and she went there. She could have taken everything.

**INT:** She was a religious goy, too?

**CHARLES:** Most probably. So and the old man -- this is very important -- the old man used to say, "Take away the Jews." We were there until the 15th of November. The 15th of November, accumulate a lot of people in the camp again, because it was Judenrein. He was a freier Jew. So he went to the camp. Everybody heard there is a few Jewish people.

**INT:** Everybody heard there's a few Jewish people working in this farm.

**CHARLES:** In this farm, yeah. So they went there, the 15th of November, they surrounded the farm again, so the goyim let them know, the Germans, that the Jewish people are there, and they killed everybody, whatever they got there. Two people escaped. Two people from our city escaped at that time. And they were looking for them. And they were running, the goyim, saying, "Zhid, Zhide." (Yiddish -- So this

goya got frightened) the goya. The Polish goya, that we went there. And she told us to go.

**INT:** Because she heard about all this.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, in the middle of the pogrom. "You must go." Nu, what can you do? You cannot say no. Because she'll call in somebody. So we went out, we go out, and was how do they call this, straw.

**INT:** Yeah. Bundles of straw.

**CHARLES:** Bundles of straw. And we were running in a hurry, like this. Because they were screaming. So she thought they were looking for us. And they were looking for other people also. And I went, like this, and I made a hole, my wife went, and we closed up. (claps hands once) They're here. The Ukrainian people are here.

**INT:** You're now in a hole in the ground?

**CHARLES:** A hole in the ground.

**INT:** With dirt on top.

**CHARLES:** Nicht a dirt, in a stroh.

**INT:** Oh, with straw.

**CHARLES:** With straw. And we saw, my wife saw like this, and I put in a piece, a piece of iron, like this, and like this, and they asked the old man. And the old man was like a malach. He told them, "No, (Yiddish -- may I burn right here and now), if there is a Jew there."

**INT:** This is the same old man?

**CHARLES:** The same old man that he stays all the time there. (Yiddish -- When they heard an old man like this making such a statement, so they believed him. And they even tried to poke something like a sword, I guess, into the straw. Couldn't find anything.)

**INT:** Why did he do that?

**CHARLES:** I don't know. (laughs)

**INT:** Maybe he was afraid they'd kill him?

**CHARLES:** First of all he was afraid, and we stayed there so long. Otherwise how did we come over here? This is it. This is it. So we had to go. Judenrein, no more Jews, we don't know about the brother-in-law, we don't know nobody, nobody, if somebody

survived. The two people, they went through, if they survived, we didn't know nothing, we think we alone. My wife says, I have an aunt, and I don't know the neighborhood, because I wasn't there all the time.

**INT:** Yeah. Go ahead, so your wife.

**CHARLES:** So my wife knew in the heart of the village there, was a goy. We used to do business. Name is Kunyitsky (sp?).

**INT:** Yeah.

**CHARLES:** But I don't know how to go there. On the street we cannot go. We had to go to the woods, to the fields. So we asked the goy, how to go there. Not the name, we didn't name the name, there and there. So she told us, go like this.

**INT:** Meanwhile, it's November, and it's cold. How did you have clothes?

**CHARLES:** We didn't have clothes.

**INT:** Did you have a coat on, boots?

**CHARLES:** We had a little coat, yeah. From the stores. From the stores, this and this. (Yiddish -- it was ripped from the straw) So we go. We go to that Kunyitsky.

**INT:** How far was it?

**CHARLES:** This was about five, six, five kilometers, not far, but we didn't know how to go. We always said like this, like this, and then you take an inch, a little bit this way, so you're already there. But we went there.

**INT:** You had a watch, you had to be careful?

**CHARLES:** No, I didn't have a watch.

**INT:** No, you had to watch, to see.

**CHARLES:** No, what to see, nothing to see there.

**INT:** Germans were going to come.

**CHARLES:** No, Germans are not coming now.

**INT:** Germans weren't around there? Why?

**CHARLES:** This was a village. It was a village. It was out of the way. They came only to kill the people, and then they went away.



**INT:** And then they went away. Did you have to worry about the Poles?

**CHARLES:** About the goyim, the Ukrainian. He was a Polack, that Kunyitsky. About the Polish, about the Ukrainian. But the Polish, they were very, they were good there, because the Ukrainian used to beat them up, too, so they, so we went there to that Kunyitsky. We found it. All night we went, we walked all night. We came in the morning, he was there, and he said, "Okay, go upstairs." We were already...

**INT:** He gedenkt your wife?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, my wife, he gedenkt me, too. Because he used to come...

**INT:** He had a family there?

**CHARLES:** He had a family, a wife...

**INT:** And they were all zufrieden, too?

**CHARLES:** No, he didn't ask them. He says, "Go upstairs." So we went there. We went there. Then he comes at night, one day, two days, he doesn't give food. I said, "Mr. Kunyitsky, take a little bit of shulas, and potatoes and koch (Yiddish -- cook something. We have to eat something." "I know, but I myself don't really have food.") But whatever.

**INT:** He wanted money, or...

**CHARLES:** No, he didn't want money. He said, (Yiddish -- we told him we'd give him something afterwards.)

**INT:** Yeah.

**CHARLES:** (Yiddish -- He knew that) the father's a rich man. So we stood there a few days. But he gave us a little bit food, very little food, we were starving to death, we got swollen. And then at night, meantime, it was Judenrein. All the policemen, the chief of the police, got afraid to keep the Jews, so he had two sisters, my sister-in-law, his sister-in-law, and his sister, and he took them out in the field, and "gehts mit Gott." If the German people would see that he was holding a Jew, then he got killed right away.

**INT:** Right away. So he told them, go.

**CHARLES:** Told them go. So where they came? They came also to the same goy. Because they knew him. So we were already there, we didn't know about her, if she's alive, she didn't know about if we're alive, but we got already four people that were sitting. Four people sitting there. He, the goy knew them, too, very well. Because they had fields, and they surrounded, he rented from them. So she gave him ten mordenpole, this was at that time a (tremendous amount of money). He never had this. And she (?) it

was written up and I was the witness, and the war stopped. And he knew that this is true, because she has it, so he believed it, and he took it and he kept us. But food he didn't have, so he gave us a piece of bread like this, for four people.

**INT:** But he wasn't afraid of his life?

**CHARLES:** He didn't know.

**INT:** He didn't know.

**CHARLES:** He didn't know.

**INT:** And he thought after the war everything will be...

**CHARLES:** After the war everything will be straightened out. My wife is a rich girl, and she's a rich girl, she was **very** rich. She didn't live there already, because they moved away, but he knew her. That she was not, he knew that she gives ten more, at that time it was a fortune. He figure, he'll take it, he'll be a rich man. And he kept us a little bit, and then he told us to go. He comes in and he says, (Yiddish) (?). The Zhide.

**INT:** Who is this Polish lady?

**CHARLES:** From the camp.

**INT:** From before.

**CHARLES:** From before.

**INT:** You went back to her.

**CHARLES:** We went back to her.

**INT:** Who went? You and your wife?

**CHARLES:** Me and my wife.

**INT:** And the two sisters?

**CHARLES:** The two sisters, they went some place else.

**INT:** Okay, and she took you back.

**CHARLES:** No, just to give us a bread.

**INT:** Was the father there?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, just to give us a bread. We didn't go into the house.

**INT:** Just to get a bread.

**CHARLES:** Just to get a bread.

**INT:** Did you pay her?

**CHARLES:** No, I didn't have money, but she gave us, she baked us a bread, and she gave us. If we live through, we'll pay her back. And this was like this. When we went like this, this was already, November, December, freezing, and we didn't see a house. And later on we didn't go in already to the attic. We still were in the stable. She gave us a bread. When we took a voyage like this, it took us about two, three days.

**INT:** To go get the bread.

**CHARLES:** To go get the bread and to go back. Because during the day we didn't go.

**INT:** How much bread did she give you?

**CHARLES:** She had one loaf of bread.

**INT:** You brought it back, or you ate it as soon as she gave it to you?

**CHARLES:** No, we ate it. We had a piece, and we brought it back to him, because he didn't give you bread to eat. He didn't have it, he said. And he didn't have it. He was afraid to go buy, because if he buys, it means he has somebody.

**INT:** He didn't have a farm to...

**CHARLES:** He had a farm, but it wasn't enough. He had about ten....

**INT:** So the goyim would see if he bought.

**CHARLES:** Oh, he buys bread, he never bought it. So that means he has somebody. One got suspicious of the other one. And like this we were from November, till March.

**INT:** In the snow...

**CHARLES:** In the snow, we didn't see a house, and we went there, we went there. Then we went to, and this time, the goyim, the Ukrainians started to beat up the goyim. At night they used to put a fire on their house, and they were very, very enemies. Two enemies. So later on we came in January, February, was already we couldn't stay because the goy he was afraid to hold us, because he was, at night he took the cow and he went to the field again by himself, because with his children, he was afraid that the Ukrainian people shouldn't put a fire in his house. So we went on. She reminded herself,

she has a friend. She went together to school. They lived also on the top of this city. They used to have tobacco. Loose tobacco for sale, for the government, for the Polish government, and the government used to make it was a monopoly, they used to make tobacco to smoke. And we'll go there. We went there one night. It was, all night we walked. That night we walked there was a snow, a deep snow, and my wife fell into a, was a hole. Went in there. She begged me, "Let me away. You go by yourself, she knows you, too. And I'll die over here. This leben is nemes schon." But I didn't want her there, so I pulled her out. And we went. Barefoot we went into that friend of hers. And she went into the house. (Yiddish -- And she looked at her crucifix and felt as if people had come from the other side, the other world, when she saw us.) She was, but she took us in.

**INT:** Polish.

**CHARLES:** Polish, yeah. She was a friend, she used to come up to the house, she knows her very well.

**INT:** And she was there by herself, or with her husband?

**CHARLES:** With her father and mother.

**INT:** With a father and mother.

**CHARLES:** Yeah. And she gave us some clothes, make some clothes, some this and this, and warm stockings. It was barefoot.

**INT:** Were there Germans around the town?

**CHARLES:** No!

**INT:** No Germans.

**CHARLES:** And she gave her this, and she gave her that, and she gave us, she caught, she made a whole chicken for us. And we stood there, I said, Gottenyu. (Yiddish -- expression of gratitude.) It was very cold. But it was a dach (roof), and she gave us food, and she was very friendly to us. All day long. At night we begged her, maybe we gonna stay over here a few days. We haven't got where to go, and so on. She says, "Okay, I'll go ask my father and mother. I would gladly do it, but I'm afraid. To Ukrainians, see they go at night and they put fires on the houses, and they gonna see you, then they'll go, it was a terrible thing." We have to go. We cry and this and that, but nothing helped. We have to go. It was also a nes. We go back to the goy, to Kunyitsky, his name. So he told us, you know what happened this night? The friend, the Ukrainians came there, they put a fire, they all escaped. (Yiddish -- they barely escaped with their lives.)

**INT:** They burned the house down.

**CHARLES:** They burned the house.

**INT:** They just escaped alive.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, if we would be there...

**INT:** They would have killed you.

**CHARLES:** Not killed, (Yiddish -- we would have been burnt.) **Another** nes. But we went to another goy at that time, and we took silver versteck. She gave us. For twelve person. Big silver, a whole box of silver there, and we went there to that goya, and she took us out, and she gave it to her, and we brought it to the Kunyitskys.

**INT:** What were you doing with the silver?

**CHARLES:** We gave it to the goy. We gave the silver to the goy.

**INT:** How did you have silver?

**CHARLES:** We had it before the war. We gave it to hiding.

**INT:** Oh, so some goy hid it for you?

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** A goy hid it for you.

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** And when you came, the goy said, "Here it is." Gave it back.

**CHARLES:** She could have said...

**INT:** She could have said, "What silver?"

**CHARLES:** "Nu, what silver?" And she was in the post office. That far from our house, from Dinah's house. And there were the police. She would have said no, we will go away. She gave us food a little bit. She apologized, that she hasn't got. It was Christmas. She gave us food, she was apologizing she hasn't got. No leftovers. We starve to death. We took it and we went to the goy, we gave him another, the silver, so he kept us another week. And then another one. You come into the stables (Yiddish -- you see Jews, you have to go on, you have to keep moving. We decided we were going to go to the goy.)

**INT:** Which one?

**CHARLES:** To the goy, to the Polke, the one that gave bread. So you give him brot. Came up and (Yiddish -- asked them if we could buy some whisky, because they had a place where they made their own whisky.)

**INT:** In her house.

**CHARLES:** In the house. Yeah, a bottle like this. So she brought us, she gave us a bottle, so we tried to commit suicide. This was already February.

**INT:** Of '44.

**CHARLES:** Of '44. Fools frozen like this. Who knows? It was very cold. We didn't have no house, no...

**INT:** In the barns, you stayed in the barns.

**CHARLES:** Not in the barns, in the barns was good, because there was warm. We went into the cows, and it was warm, but they didn't let us into the barn, either. So we got, we wanted to commit suicide.

**INT:** You didn't want to live anymore.

**CHARLES:** No.

**INT:** You decided just like this?

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** Or you'd been talking about it.

**CHARLES:** No, we decided both of them, Dinah agreed that we want to commit suicide. How to commit suicide, we didn't have nothing yet.

**INT:** The morphine you didn't have anymore.

**CHARLES:** No, if I would have had it, maybe I wouldn't have listened. I would have taken it. Because at that time, I lost everything, on the fifteenth of November, when she chased us out, that fell out, I had something there, everything.

**INT:** So she gave you the bronfen, the bottle of bronfen?

**CHARLES:** We knew already, wintertime, when you get drunk, you fall asleep. The frost is there. There was minus celsius, minus twenty, minus fifteen, minus twenty-five. This was a regular temperature. Celsius. You know what I mean.

**INT:** Yeah.

**CHARLES:** Minus that. We going to freeze to death, to freeze to death, we have to be already in the front, because the dogs are going to find us, they're going to take parts from us, and they're going to bury us, and so the goyim will see two people, dead people, they going to bury this. So we were sitting like this, and we started to drink.

**INT:** Now your wife changed, because originally the morphine, or to kill yourself was no good.

**CHARLES:** No, she was crying I shouldn't do it, I should leave her alone. But now we wanted to do both. I'll drink a half a bottle of whisky, and she'll drink a half a bottle, and we're going to fall asleep. This I knew. This is the way the goyim used to freeze to death. Because they used to drink and they'd fall asleep. They going to freeze to death, and that's it. So we take it, we started to drink. We sitting over here on the front, a goy comes in. The horses also got scared, two people, so they jumped like this, and the goy goes down, they grabbed the horses, comes over to us. "Who are you? (Yiddish -- Wer bist du?) Who are you?"

[phone interruption]

**CHARLES:** (Yiddish -- "Who are you? Where are you from?" "From Kopycynze." "I know a lot of people from there. Who are you?" "Lazar's son." "Oh, you're Lazar's son? I knew Lazar. He was a well-to-do man, he had a business, he had a house.")

**INT:** Did you know he knew your father?

**CHARLES:** I didn't know, because I wasn't in the house. But he knew my father.

**INT:** But you didn't know?

**CHARLES:** No, I didn't know. (Yiddish -- I told them where I was coming from, the town, and where I had just been with this Kunyitsky, a cousin from my wife's house. "We don't know where we are, we're lost, we don't know where we're going, and we want to kill ourselves." The man says, "I'm sorry, I don't have any bread to give you. But I know your father. He talked about you. He talked about your brother. I know he was a pharmacist. Don't do it. Don't do it.")

**INT:** He knew what you were going to do?

**CHARLES:** Yeah. (Yiddish -- "The Russians are here. They're here. Just any minute they'll be here. They're as close as, close like New Jersey is close.")

**INT:** They're coming. The Russians are coming.

**CHARLES:** Coming. (Yiddish -- like as close as New Jersey. And this man said to us, "Don't do it. Don't do it. Come. Come up on my wagon, and I'll take you to this doctor." We were so mixed up already, because we had started to drink the whisky, we were so mixed up, we didn't know where we were going, but the man said to us, "Come, come. Any day you can expect the Russians to be here.")

**INT:** You felt better.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, it was better. (Yiddish -- I mean, if New Jersey...so they took us to this goy. And the goy having heard that the Russians were close by, he also changed his attitude a little bit. He spoke a little differently.)

**INT:** He took you in the wagon?

**CHARLES:** He took me in the wagon.

**INT:** And he took you back to his...

**CHARLES:** To that man, (Yiddish -- where we had to go.) But we had to go a little while to that goy. (Yiddish -- By ourselves we wouldn't have found it. But on the wagon we were able to get there.)

**INT:** He took you.

**CHARLES:** He took us.

**INT:** Now who's the goy you're going to now? You knew this goy you were going to?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, we were there.

**INT:** Oh, you were there.

**CHARLES:** He used to chase us out.

**INT:** Oh, yeah. Why was he going to take you back to him?

**CHARLES:** No, not to **him**, (Yiddish -- he was going to take us to this doctor that he knew. But he didn't want to know where we were going. He said he didn't really want to know where we were going, because if somebody would meet him, and he'd have to say, he was just going to take us and drop us off, turn around and leave.)

**INT:** Right. He didn't want to know.

**CHARLES:** (Yiddish -- Yes, that's right. And he was just going to take us there, and told us to just keep on hoping, holding on to our hopes.)



**INT:** "Hold on, hold on," he said.

**CHARLES:** And the February was very freezing, weather was terrible. In March they came.

**INT:** The Russians.

**CHARLES:** The Russians.

**INT:** Now what happened when he took you in the horse? Where did he take you to?

**CHARLES:** He took me to his doctor, where he went, because his wife is sick, I had gone to the doctor, and there, we went from there, we knew already where to go.

**INT:** To that man.

**CHARLES:** To that man. So we went there.

**INT:** And what did the man do, when you went there, to you?

**CHARLES:** He was already better, come around.

**INT:** He let you stay there?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, he let us stay there, because it was already...

**INT:** In the barn, or the...

**CHARLES:** Not in the barn, in the Stadole, where the straw is?

**INT:** So it was warm? It was warmer there?

**CHARLES:** Was no warm, warm wasn't, but we were sitting with straw. (Yiddish -- We covered ourselves.) And this is what happened, and then we stood already until February, March. In March the Soviets came.

**INT:** In March the Soviets came.

**CHARLES:** The 28th of March we were already liberated. We didn't know about it. He was already very good. The Germans (Yiddish -- ran away). The police (Yiddish -- weren't in our house anymore. They were running.) And so he melted, he got better, because he knew...

**INT:** The Pole, he knew that things were going to change.

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** And he fed you a little more?

**CHARLES:** He fed me a little more, then we came home, then we were, the Soviet people, they had gasoline, a special smell. Not like here, we have unleaded....

(END TAPE FOUR, SIDE TWO)

**INT:** This is April 9, 1994, and I'm talking with Mr. Charles Scherz, and we're up to the point of liberation, the post-war time. After the war. I remember you telling me that you were in hiding, and somebody came and said, "The Russians are here." Yeah? The Russians are on the outskirts.

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** Okay. And so you knew that meant that they were going to come, and that would be liberation.

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** Now. Where were the Germans? They had run away already?

**CHARLES:** They ran away. They were surrounded, about two, three hundred kilometers. They went like this, and we expected the Russians to come from the east, and meantime, they were already west.

**INT:** Oh, they were past the town already.

**CHARLES:** Yeah!

**INT:** They went past the town.

**CHARLES:** Past the town. They told us, Kopyczynce, my word, the town, the Germans are. They heard so, they didn't know that. But we went in that city where my bride lived. We went to that goy over here, across the street. Right across the street. We saw a house, was the polizei. The police were there. It's empty. The doors are open and they escaped already, the police. So we thought this is it. And the goy took us very nicely, very friendly.

**INT:** But let's go back to where you were when you got liberated. You were in that town when you got liberated.

**CHARLES:** In that town, in that town.

**INT:** The town where you were from.

**CHARLES:** Yeah. (?)

**INT:** Okay. And the goyim before the liberation came weren't so friendly, or they were, or what?

**CHARLES:** They were not so friendly, not at all. We didn't go to no friendly. We went to good friends for a piece of bread. Another one, right away, they call out the police.

**INT:** You were in hiding in that town.

**CHARLES:** In hiding in that town. Yeah. In hiding.

**INT:** With you and your wife.

**CHARLES:** With my and my wife.

**INT:** Okay. And the person you picked out to hide with was what? A friend that you knew from before?

**CHARLES:** From before.

**INT:** That you did business with, that your father did business with?

**CHARLES:** We were four people there. And what a sister-in-law of my wife, she was a rich girl. Very rich. And she had in that, not far from him, where he has the field, they had ten more field. This was a fortune. And she gave it to him, this. I was the witness. I signed it, my wife signed it. She signed it that she gives it over. And he knew this is true, because he knew that. He knew the parents. And that's why he kept us a little bit.

**INT:** Because she gave him the land.

**CHARLES:** She gave him the land. A big piece of land.

**INT:** And because of that he kept you.

**CHARLES:** A little bit, yeah.

**INT:** You and your wife and the sister-in-law.

**CHARLES:** Sister-in-law. Then she went away, because he used to chase us out once in a while. He comes in, he says, "Smells Zhide." Smells...

**INT:** From Jews here.

**CHARLES:** Jews, yeah. So he was afraid. And naturally we was very hungry. He didn't eat. He wasn't a rich goy, but he had about six, seven children. And he couldn't go

to the city to buy something, because this would be suspicious. So we made him, he should cook us the shulers, how do you call this, from the potatoes.

**INT:** Skins.

**CHARLES:** The skins from the potatoes. Not potatoes, the skins. So (he said), "I haven't got enough, and I cannot go buy it, because somebody will see that I'm buying this." He must have somebody. It was suspicious.

**INT:** So you stayed in the barn the whole time? Not even in the house.

**CHARLES:** No! From the house I didn't stay.

**INT:** And it was cold in there, and whatever it was?

**CHARLES:** Naturally it was cold.

**INT:** And there were animals in there, too?

**CHARLES:** A cow.

**INT:** The cow. And you were there with your wife, and the sister-in-law.

**CHARLES:** The sister-in-law in the attic.

**INT:** How did your sister-in-law survive this whole time?

**CHARLES:** She were hiding by a police chief. There were two sisters. And this was around Christmas. We were hiding by that goy. Without anything, because he knew me, and he knew the father of my wife.

**INT:** But the sister-in-law didn't give him anything yet.

**CHARLES:** No.

**INT:** So why was he, for what reason, then?

**CHARLES:** And then she stood till about Christmas, and the police chief, she worked there, as a goya, they looked both goyish, and then they came before Christmas, "I'm afraid to keep you anymore, because this is already Judenrein."

**INT:** No Jews are here anymore.

**CHARLES:** If they would catch a Jew in this house...

**INT:** Kill him. Kill them.

**CHARLES:** They would kill everybody. But him? A police chief. So he took, he was a nice man. He killed a lot of Jewish people himself. But to them, he had pity. So he took them to the fields in the wintertime, and then he said, "Go, with (?)," an expression, "Go with G-d." So he came also to that goy, because he knew that goy, he lived out of the city, out of the little shtetl. And she knew him also. So they went in, they let her go. They let her in. Like he let us in. He said, a few days, and then he told them, "You know what?" Kunyitsky was his name. "I'll give you, I'll lend what we have." Because this was close to (?), he's going to sign up a document, and this we use. Because they expected Poland to be again Poland. The Russians would take away this, they didn't think of it. So...

**INT:** But what I want to ask you, why did that goy let **you** in? You didn't have any field to give him.

**CHARLES:** No, but we told him after the war, we'll give to him. He knew that he was a rich man. Had a big store. Although they took away, but they knew that the Jewish people...

**INT:** Would have some money, and you would take care of him.

**CHARLES:** Would have money, would take care of him.

**INT:** So would you say that most of the goyim took care of Jews not because they had rachmones, or maybe, or because there was some kind of gelt involved, or money?

**CHARLES:** Sometimes gelt, but very few took (?). Very few. First of all, he was risking his life. He didn't know that much, himself, because he was a plain goy.

**INT:** That he was far out, and he was away, out of the town. He didn't know they would kill him.

**CHARLES:** They would catch us in, they would kill him. He didn't know that.

**INT:** Okay, all right. So when liberation came, did you believe it when they told you the Russians are...

**CHARLES:** Yeah, because I saw through the window that the house, was just opposite the house is empty, and this is the police there. So they escaped. Then we went from that goy...

**INT:** You were out in the field. So you heard the Russians...

**CHARLES:** Yeah, out in the field, and we went out. And first of all, he said, first of all we smelled already the Russians, benzene has a special smell. And then he said, "I don't know what is doing, and I'm afraid to keep you. Go away for a few days." So we went

out. We didn't know nothing. We went out, we heard, "Stop. Halt." This was already the Russian, the first line, but we didn't know. We thought maybe the (anti-Semitic groups), or the goyim, the Ukrainians. So we lay down. And then it was quiet down, we moved further. We moved to that goy. We did, because that goy that saved my life, the (?), that he knows my parents. So he said, "Any day they can come, because they're already..."

**INT:** The Russians can come any day.

**CHARLES:** Any day. So we went to that goya, she lived across the street from us. First of all, we saw when we came over here, over there to her, "Oh, very nice to see you. Very nice." Very friendly. So we thought something is doing already.

**INT:** Now you came back from the field to the town. You took a chance to come back?

**CHARLES:** No, this was close. It was maybe about half a kilometer. It wasn't very much.

**INT:** So you already had enough to know that the Russians were here, and the Germans were aus.

**CHARLES:** We didn't know that.

**INT:** But you came back and took a chance.

**CHARLES:** Took a chance to go. All the time we took a chance. Every second week he chased us out. It smells Jewish.

**INT:** So you took a chance to come into the town.

**CHARLES:** To the town, and we went into the...this was at night. This was everything at night. And we came into the goya, and the goya says, very friendly, "Come over," and she gave us water, we should wash ourselves, and she gave us some food, and we took a look from the window and see the police is already escaped. That means this is it. And after a while, this was on a Sunday afternoon, we saw the Russian army, another army, they all leftovers. They're invalids, they couldn't move with the army here. So we couldn't believe what is doing. Because we said, **this, they** chased away the **Germans?**

**INT:** Yeah. Couldn't be.

**CHARLES:** Couldn't be. And we stood there and we stood there, and we didn't have a radio there. But she came over every time to us, and said, "People say that the Russians are already in Kopyczynce," in my city. This was the, my wife's city. So we'll go there. Because we saw already the Russian army. I mean, the leftovers. So we, I went into my house, our house...

**INT:** Wait a minute, you left this little town, and you went to your town.

**CHARLES:** I went to my town.

**INT:** How far away was it?

**CHARLES:** This was ten kilometers.

**INT:** Ten kilometers. How did you go?

**CHARLES:** We stood on the sidewalk, and the goyim, the soldiers, took us out.

**INT:** They took you, with you and your wife, and your sister-in-law.

**CHARLES:** The sister-in-law was hiding before two, three weeks. He chased her out.

**INT:** He chased **her** out and let **you** stay? And she gave him the fields?

**CHARLES:** She wanted to go. She remind herself that she has a friend, and she went there. Also in the same city.

**INT:** How far away was this friend?

**CHARLES:** This was maybe a quarter of a kilometer.

**INT:** Did you tell her, "Why are you doing this?"

**CHARLES:** She says, I cannot stay already over here. I was, I wash myself, I'm very dirty, I'm going to Sdon, his name was (?) Sdon, he was a policeman, he used to be a policeman, a Polish policeman, and she knew them very good. She went there. But she went at night.

**INT:** So she got caught?

**CHARLES:** He didn't tell her. He didn't know she was Jewish.

**INT:** Oh, so what happened?

**CHARLES:** She went in to that goy. The goy took her very friendly, he took her outside, he gave her to wash out. She told us, "I was alive again. I was dirty. And didn't have water for weeks." So she couldn't stay over there. And meantime, we went in.

**INT:** So she was all right. You didn't **know** she was all right.

**CHARLES:** I didn't know. I didn't know where she was.

**INT:** And you went into your wife's town. And when you went to the wife's town, did you know if anybody was alive, or any of her mishpocha was alive?

**CHARLES:** Nobody, nobody. I didn't know nothing.

**INT:** Did you look?

**CHARLES:** There's nothing to look. There was nobody there.

**INT:** There was nobody there. But you didn't know whether they were alive or not, and yet, they could have been somewhere else.

**CHARLES:** Surely, we didn't know.

**INT:** But there were no Jews to ask.

**CHARLES:** No, we were afraid of the goyim, because there was a, like the Palestinians, like an Arafat.

**INT:** Terrorist.

**CHARLES:** Terrorism. They killed the Russian soldiers, too, and they killed Jewish people, too.

**INT:** But you didn't find any Yidden in the town.

**CHARLES:** No, no. There was no Yidden already a long time.

**INT:** All right, but you didn't know that. Did you know that?

**CHARLES:** I know that Judenrein, this was, when I went into hiding, from the camp, when they kill in the camp...

**INT:** You saw they took all the...

**CHARLES:** Saw that they took over, they declared Judenrein.

**INT:** The goyim were now friendlier than they were before, yeah, in your little town?

**CHARLES:** Oh, from that day.

**INT:** When you came back, then they were friendlier.

**CHARLES:** Friendlier.



**INT:** Okay, I want to ask you one other thing. Why did the police run away? They were Poles.

**CHARLES:** No, they were Ukrainian.

**INT:** Oh, they were Ukrainian.

**CHARLES:** It doesn't matter, because they were Polish citizens.

**INT:** Oh, but they were Ukrainian. So they thought that they were with the Germans.

**CHARLES:** They were with the Germans, yeah.

**INT:** So the Poles after the war would have...killed them.

**CHARLES:** They would have killed them. They were not afraid of, they were afraid of the Russians. They killed Polish, too.

**INT:** These Ukrainians lived in the town?

**CHARLES:** They lived in the town, they came, yeah, surely.

**INT:** But they made Ukrainians the police.

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** Why, instead of making Poles the police?

**CHARLES:** Because the Poles they were not friendly to them, because they took away their land. And the Ukrainians thought that they're going to give them the land. They expected from the Germans they are going to give them some independent Ukraine from Poland.

**INT:** Okay. Okay. I understand. So you went with your wife, with the Russians...

**CHARLES:** With the Russians to Kopyczynce.

**INT:** To Kopyczynce. What did you expect to find there? I mean, why did you go there? You had to go there.

**CHARLES:** Because I suppose some more Jew is, maybe somebody was alive.

**INT:** Maybe somebody was alive, okay.

**CHARLES:** And we went into that, because I was a child there, so I knew all the ways, so we didn't go with the roads, because we were afraid. We still were afraid, because we

saw already this is not the army. This is the Nukshleppers. So we went till two Soviets caught us, and they took us to the chief. He's a colonel, I don't know. They found two spies. (Crying) He took us, "Who are you? Are you Jewish people?" We looked terrible. "We are Jewish people. We look terrible. We were hiding, by goyim, and now we go, we are born in Kopyczynce." I saw, he started to cry. Most probably it was a Jew. He said, "You go to your city, and you go to your house, in case you'll find somebody living there, you'll come back to me, and I'll go chase them out for you." (crying)

**INT:** He was a Yid. You knew he was a Yid.

**CHARLES:** I imagine so, because a goy wouldn't cry.

**INT:** You didn't talk Yiddish.

**CHARLES:** No, the Russian people didn't know Yiddish. Especially when he was already a big shot. So we came over here, we found a few people. Ah, we embrace each other, we kissed each other, "How did you survive? Where were you?" There was some dentist survived there. He was a dentist there. He was a rich man. She was a doctor, a dentist, and he was a dentist. He was the only dentist in the city for thousands and thousands of goyim, so he had already, I assumed he survived. He was already two, three days, he came already two, three days, we didn't know about it. So he took us to his house, and we found already a few other people, and he gave us to eat, whatever he got, the goyim started to bring him, they didn't have, for four years, they didn't have a dentist. So everybody needs something this, something there, and then he kept us all there. And little by little, then we go out.

**INT:** How many Jews were there? In that person's house?

**CHARLES:** About ten, twelve Jews.

**INT:** Ten, twelve Jews. You knew them all, they were from the town.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, surely.

**INT:** How did, did they talk about how they survived?

**CHARLES:** We didn't have the time to talk about it. They was there, they was there, hiding.

**INT:** Nobody in the camps.

**CHARLES:** Nobody in the camps. No, there was no camp. They killed the camp. The twentieth of July was the last pogrom in all the camps around, and there was three camps. Oh, what can I...They killed in the ghetto. From July till March we didn't know. One

man survived, and he's in New York. Dinah and I are friends with him. He worked with the Jewish (?).

**INT:** From the lager he survived. From your town.

**CHARLES:** From the lager there. But he was a friend. With his father. And then when we saw them, they looked like meisim. Because they were in a hole. Pargruben. A goya gemacht, took her upstairs. So they looked **terrible**. Like a corpse are walking. And then we saw the dentist and another few people. And we got friendly. And then we stood there about two, three days. There is a pullback. Because the Soviets were surrounded and one unit got through.

**INT:** German.

**CHARLES:** Germans got through. And the Germans got scared. They thought the German army came back. So they escaped. But they told us, we stood in the middle of the tanks, it was a terrible thing. The cows, the meat, and the tanks, and they took down the telephones. It was a terrible thing at that time. We stood in the center of the city, and it took two days, two, three days and we were free, we got some vodka, and they told us, you buy, the first thing when you can get, and a goy wants to give you, take vodka. Because vodka, this is the best money.

**INT:** With the Russians?

**CHARLES:** With the Russians, yeah. If you go with vodka. We stood already, we stood on there, and the tanks are running, and we stood like this. This is a sign that I have vodka.

**INT:** Where did you have money to buy vodka?

**CHARLES:** I didn't have money. When we were escaped, when we saw our house was empty, then we went to our house, I went in there.

**INT:** No Poles were in there.

**CHARLES:** No, nobody was there.

**INT:** Nobody was there. So you went into the house.

**CHARLES:** I went into the house with my wife, because we got hidden there leather. From the store. They had a big store, my wife, and I was there, so I hid it myself. And I went, there was no leather, to the door, and I got upstairs, and nothing, nobody would touch it, so I went out and I opened, and I took out that little, whatever I put down, a little bit leather, in a sack. I put it in the sack. It wasn't long. It was 1941 till 1945. For three years was laying there. And I took the leather, and I said, the goyim will say that I took gold, a sack of gold. But I went there. And I had a little bit leather. And the goyim, they

saw I went to the goyim. Then I know, do you want to exchange this? So you need it? Surely they needed leather. They didn't have shoes for years. But I don't want money, I want vodka. So they went and they got some vodka, and they gave me a couple small bottles of vodka. And that's all I got left over.

**INT:** Now, when you went into the house, was the furniture there, was there jewelry there from your parents?

**CHARLES:** No, was nothing there.

**INT:** Did they take things out?

**CHARLES:** Surely, the police was already a long time there.

**INT:** Oh, the police were living there.

**CHARLES:** The station, the police station...

**INT:** Was in that house.

**CHARLES:** In that house. So we saw already that they took the chairs, they took the tables, they took everything. So I was young, and strong, and I climbed up, and I found it. This was my lifesaver.

**INT:** The leather.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, and he gave us food for nothing.

**INT:** The dentist.

**CHARLES:** The dentist, so we saw this, we came with this, they stopped the tank. They stopped the line, and we went, we didn't know where they go. But better than there. We cannot go back. For instance, in Shortkopf, was a bigger city, so a lot of people went out, and they got killed.

**INT:** By the Germans.

**CHARLES:** By the goyim.

**INT:** By the goyim.

**CHARLES:** Because the Germans came back, and they didn't believe it. And we escaped to another city, to was Choroskov (?).

**INT:** But now you're back in your city, you found the leather, you gave to the goyim for vodka, you had the vodka, and now the Russian troops are around. Now what happened?

**CHARLES:** Surrounded. So we went with the Russian troops. We went with the Russians say to Choroskov...

**INT:** Because you were afraid the Germans were coming back?

**CHARLES:** Surely we wouldn't stay.

**INT:** You went with the Russian troops. Did all the Jews go together, zusammen with the...

**CHARLES:** Yeah, ten Jews there were.

**INT:** The dentist went too?

**CHARLES:** The dentist went into hiding. He had a good place he was hiding. The goyim hold him good.

**INT:** But now, getting out of the town...

**CHARLES:** The dentist went back to the hiding place.

**INT:** Oh, he went back to the hiding place. He didn't leave.

**CHARLES:** He didn't leave because he was a good man. I knew that man that he hold him.

**INT:** Did you ask him to hold you, too?

**CHARLES:** No, they didn't have the room.

**INT:** But you didn't see any other goyim that you would have asked?

**CHARLES:** No, I wouldn't ask nobody.

**INT:** Even from your town.

**CHARLES:** No, I wouldn't ask nobody. Because we had it very bad. He had it good. Because he was a doctor survived, and he survived, and a few single people. Two people in New Jersey.

**INT:** In New Jersey. Okay, so what happened? You're with the Russians.

**CHARLES:** We're with the Russians, and we're going to Choroskov, to another city. Small city. Everything is small cities. Like over here, Bala Cynwyd, Bala. So we went with the Russians there. And there they said no, the Russians are going back. But we

couldn't go back. So we went by foot. My wife had already swollen foot, and the sister-in-law. Terrible feet.

**INT:** Where did you find the sister-in-law?

**CHARLES:** This sister-in-law, I told you she moved away from us, I told you the goy took her away. She went to work.

**INT:** Yeah. So where did you meet her?

**CHARLES:** In the same city.

**INT:** Oh. Did you know she was going to be there?

**CHARLES:** I didn't know. I know she left there. She told us that she goes to this, and later we ask because we saw the goy, he says, "Yeah, she went to Kopyczynce." So we went together. And we saw in Choroskov. And then was, we stood a few days. We went out, the goyim, when you show the Russian soldiers a little bit of vodka, they had magazines, and whatever, they give you everything that you want. What do you want, bread? Naturally we didn't ask for the treif, at that time. (laughing) So we had already a little bit food. And then we went back to Kopyczynce, that was also about ten kilometers. But my wife couldn't go, couldn't walk. I had to carry her.

**INT:** Oy vey. You couldn't get the Russians? You couldn't go with anybody?

**CHARLES:** There was no Russians, and I want to go with my city, and this ten kilometers, this is a strange city, and I don't know nobody there. We went back, I carried her. But we had a terrible (?), we had. We saw the Germans, the Russians, the tanks, went under Germans was (Yiddish -- mud) you know what means blottis?

**INT:** Mud.

**CHARLES:** Mud, like this. And the goyim, the Germans, with the nice uniforms, were with the tanks like this (pause). So we take a look. They thought they are going to (Yiddish -- rule the world) and take a look what happened to them. And hundreds were laying on the street.

**INT:** Laying there.

**CHARLES:** Laying there. Nobody took them away, because the Russians, they had to go, they went with the tanks.

**INT:** All teut.

**CHARLES:** All teut.

**INT:** You didn't have to worry.

**CHARLES:** You didn't have to worry about them. I went back to Kopyczynce. I remember the first thing, I went through to the pharmacy. So when the pharmacist saw me, he came out, he said, "Come in, and maybe you need a suit." But I didn't want to take it.

**INT:** This was your old pharmacy you saw?

**CHARLES:** No, my brother **was** there.

**INT:** He owned it, your brother.

**CHARLES:** No, no, he owned it in another city. But when he saw, when the Russians came, he gave the pharmacy to my brother. He said, "Take it." Because he was afraid of the Russians. He wasn't afraid of the Germans. He was afraid of the Russians.

**INT:** Why?

**CHARLES:** Because they're going to take him to Siberia. Or they're going to kill him. Because he's a Polack, and they know. But he took it there, and he wanted to give it to me, and we stood a few days, again the same thing. Then we went already not to Choroskov, the tanks took us to Podvolochisk(?). I had a brother there. I have a married brother and two children. So I was ready to go there. I asked him, "Where we going?" He said, "We're going to Podvolochisk." I thought, maybe somebody's alive. I didn't know. Nothing. So we went there.

**INT:** With the wife, your wife, and the sister-in-law.

**CHARLES:** No, the sister-in-law remained in there, because she couldn't walk.

**INT:** She couldn't walk. She stayed.

**CHARLES:** She stayed there in Choroskov.

**INT:** Safe? You felt she was safe now?

**CHARLES:** She was safe. She'll get some piece of bread someplace.

**INT:** You don't have to worry about the Poles killing her or anything?

**CHARLES:** No, the Poles wouldn't kill already, the Poles are in bad shape. They were afraid of the Russians. The Russians are strong. With them, there's no this or that. They saw something, they...

**INT:** They didn't let the Poles kill Jews.

**CHARLES:** No. They didn't let nobody kill Jews. When they killed, they killed, when they caught a Jew at night, they killed him. But they didn't...

**INT:** Why did they kill the Jews at night?

**CHARLES:** Not the Russians.

**INT:** The Poles.

**CHARLES:** Not the Poles. At that time, the Poles were afraid of the Ukrainians. The killers were the Ukrainians at that time.

**INT:** The Poles were killing Ukrainians.

**CHARLES:** But they didn't kill. The Ukrainians killed the Poles. Because the Ukrainians were the majority there.

**INT:** In that town.

**CHARLES:** In that whole neighborhood there.

**INT:** In the whole area.

**CHARLES:** In the whole area, not only the town. So the Poles they were quiet, they went with Jews there. So I went to Podvolchisk, and there I went to see my brother's house, and nobody's alive, nobody there, nobody knows nothing. So we go around there. We used to go everything, a piece of vodka, this saved us, because the goyim, the soldiers, they gave us food. And there were a lot of people from Shortkopf. From there they gave us one house. Everybody was dirty. And we looked, I go on the street. I looked for somebody there. I found a man. A Yid. (Yiddish -- "Where does a Jew come from?") "Yes, I am from Kopyczyne." "Do you know the (?) Schechter family?" "Yes, she's my wife. This is my wife." (Yiddish -- they find out that this is a cousin of the wife.) He was already a few days before there, so he had already a piece of bread, he brought it out. He told us gehe dor, we stood a Pesach there. They make potato latkes there, plain potatoes.

**INT:** You had matzah?

**CHARLES:** No, what matzah? We didn't have a piece of bread even, nothing. A potato, the goyim gave us a little bit potato.

**INT:** Did you try to have a Seder there, or no?

(Chaim laughs at the ridiculousness of the question)



**INT:** I don't know. What, you didn't have wine, nothing.

**CHARLES:** We didn't have what enough? Nothing.

**INT:** All right. I'm just asking you.

**CHARLES:** And fancy ladies from Shortkopf, and the lice all over the body. We knew them. Fancy ladies, rich women. So we got a few days there, we stood there over Pesach there, and I went back to Kopyczynce was already quiet.

**INT:** You went back yourself?

**CHARLES:** With my wife. Everything with my wife.

**INT:** So you went back with your wife. How did you go back? You walked back? You went by the...

**CHARLES:** We walked back.

**INT:** How far was it?

**CHARLES:** It was a kilometer. It was ten kilometers.

**INT:** So you walked back.

**CHARLES:** We walked back, surely. And somebody...

**INT:** You still had that vodka with you? You couldn't carry vodka with you.

**CHARLES:** No, I had little bit, little bottles. It was like gold.

**INT:** Little bottles.

**CHARLES:** And in another city we went, he took us to Podvolochisk. So naturally they put us first of all when they came at night, with the tanks, they put us in jail, and in the morning, Jude, Jewish. They let us go. I asked a goy, "Where can I find a Jew over here?" He says, "I know in this house they say there's a few Jews." So we go in there, we go in there, we meet a friend there. A...boyfriend of ours of my sister-in-law's sister. So we told him...

(END TAPE FIVE, SIDE ONE. GO RIGHT TO TAPE SIX, SIDE ONE)

(TAPE SIX, SIDE ONE)

**INT:** Today is April 17, 1994, and we are picking up from tape one (FIVE) on when Mr. Scherz came to a Jewish house, this is after the war, and met his wife's sister's friend, in

the Jewish house. And we're going to talk until he wound up in Russia, and he got a package of rubles from, it was a cousin?

**CHARLES:** No, my brother-in-law.

**INT:** From your brother-in-law, sent a package of rubles. So we're going to pick up on, with Mr. Scherz, on meeting these Jews in the house. All right, so you went into the house.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, I went into the house, and I saw his name was...Shimick.

**INT:** What happened to Shimick? Do you know?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, I know what happened to him.

**INT:** What happened to him?

**CHARLES:** Shimick got found out his fiancée lives, (?) was her name. So we told him this, and right away he came back with us, and it was thunder, and they got married.

**INT:** How did he survive? What did he do?

**CHARLES:** He survived, with him, he had a shiksa. And he was in a...

**INT:** A shiksa from before the war?

**CHARLES:** From before the war. Not a shiksa, he knows somebody from his city. Zhymolov(?), was the name of the city. Zhymolov. And she thought that he's going to marry her. Because he was an educated boy.

**INT:** This was a shiksa.

**CHARLES:** She was a shiksa. No, no, she took him in the field.

**INT:** But they, I want to understand. Before the war he was going to marry a shiksa?

**CHARLES:** No, no, no. He got a friend.

**INT:** He had a friend who was a shiksa. Just a friend.

**CHARLES:** Just a friend, yeah.

**INT:** Okay.

**CHARLES:** He was engaged to that sister-in-law.

**INT:** Oh. But he knew this shiksa.

**CHARLES:** But he knew the shiksa. And she thought, he promised her that he's going to marry her. Otherwise why should she do a thing like this? She risks her life? But she took him in the field someplace. She digged a hole, and she made a bunker. She covered it with grass, and made a little bit hole to give him food, and she brought the food there.

**INT:** Wow. Well, for how many years?

**CHARLES:** This was say for...from...it was Judenrein, the date I don't know exactly, because this was in another city.

**INT:** Yeah. But roughly how many years?

**CHARLES:** He lived there from '43 till '44.

**INT:** He stayed in that hole. And she took care of him.

**CHARLES:** And she took care of him.

**INT:** And then what? The Russians came?

**CHARLES:** The Russians came. He went out, he got right away a job...

**INT:** And ran away from the shiksa.

**CHARLES:** She lived there. She didn't let him run away. But he ran away from her. She came to his home. She committed suicide, the shiksa.

**INT:** But this was in a different town than where you found him.

**CHARLES:** Yeah. Far away.

**INT:** How far away?

**CHARLES:** Zhymolov. This was about say, maybe 100 kilometers.

**INT:** Oh, so this was far. They were far away. Okay. So he came, he found out she was alive in this town. And he came to the town.

**CHARLES:** So he came to our town, to Husiatyn (?), and they married. And her brother-in-law gave him chuppah and kiddishin. So for chuppah and kiddishin you don't need any minyan. Three people.

**INT:** The eydim and the...

**CHARLES:** Two were the witnesses. And he gave them chuppah and kiddishin.

**INT:** Right there in the house?

**CHARLES:** In the house.

**INT:** Were you there?

**CHARLES:** I wasn't there.

**INT:** It was before you came.

**CHARLES:** No, no this was, I was already, he took her to his house, because she lived there. The sister-in-law. Her father was a very wealthy man. He had a mill that made flour. And he had a lot of woods, he was a wealthy man. And she had a house there, and so she moved there, and later they came to our city. I was already in Russia. And the brother-in-law, he died in Israel. He was a very intelligent man, and he gave the chuppah and kiddishin.

**INT:** Okay, but when you came to that house, and they told you they were Jews in that house, and you came with your wife to that house.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, yeah sure. Naturally.

**INT:** And in there was this sister-in-law was in there?

**CHARLES:** No, Shimick.

**INT:** Shimick was in the house. Okay. So then what happened? You walked in and you saw Shimick.

**CHARLES:** Then we told him, we told him, we kissed each other. We knew him from before. And we told him, you know, "Your kallah lebt." Because we were together with them. So he was very happy, and he right away asked where she is, and he came, and he found her.

**INT:** Where was she?

**CHARLES:** She was in our neighborhood, in Husiatyn (?).

**INT:** She was in a house somewhere?

**CHARLES:** With us.

**INT:** Okay. So he found her. And he brought her to this house, where you were?

**CHARLES:** And he brought her home, and he married her.

**INT:** But when did she, she didn't get married to him when you were there?

**CHARLES:** No, no, no.

**INT:** So you were all together in the house. You and your wife, him and her and who else?

**CHARLES:** Him and her, and a sister, and our sister-in-law. His sister was our sister-in-law. The brother died. I mean, they killed him, also.

**INT:** How did he die?

**CHARLES:** He got killed in a pogrom in 1942. So we lived through about 12 pogroms. And he had a place where to hide, with the two sisters, with his wife and the other sister. And then the police, the Ukrainian police, they want to take him in. He was a very intelligent man. I mean, he graduated the highest school in Warsaw. And he knew the policeman. And that if we are warned, they'll pay him back plenty. Because he knew they had plenty of real estate and everything. That's why he did it. And this, she borned the baby, she gave birth to a baby. For five years, they couldn't have babies. And at that time she got pregnant. So she went to the hospital. She went to the hospital. She wasn't allowed to go to the hospital.

**INT:** Because she was a Jew.

**CHARLES:** Because she was a Jew. But my brother was at that time a pharmacist, and he had connections, and they had connections, and they put her in as a goya. She had a child, at that time, was already the twelfth pogrom. On a Sunday. **Never** was on a Sunday. Suddenly about 12:00 they surrounded the city, and they started to kill. I had my bunker inside my house, so I jump upstairs, I was hiding. But he had a bunker someplace else. At that time he couldn't run to the police. This was for the future. When we're Judenrein. We knew it was going to be soon Judenrein. So he went with that Shimick. And that Shimick was in that house. So he made a bunker where they lived. So he went with this mother-in-law someplace else because they wanted to go to the child, to see the child. And Shimick went to this side, to that bunker, and he survived, and he got killed. With the mother. With the mother-in-law.

**INT:** With the mother-in-law. Meanwhile, the wife is in the hospital. What happened?

**CHARLES:** She had a baby. She came home when the baby was about three, four days old, she came home, she was bleeding and everything, you know, a sick person. And then the second day. It was a Sunday, then Monday was quiet already. She came home, so she went to the house of my father-in-law, and she stood there. Then in a week. This was on a Monday. On a Sunday, and on Thursday was another pogrom.

**INT:** Germans.

**CHARLES:** The Germans. They surrounded the city. Was a Rollcommander. So they went from city to city only for the pogroms. Not the army. They called themselves "Rollcommander." And they surrounded the city. And that time my brother was killed, and Dinah's father. He begged himself they should kill him right away, they shouldn't take him, because he thought they take away, he wasn't a poor man. So he had some gold, and he gave it to them, and they killed him. They did him a favor. They killed him. And they left the child and they went out. Because what do you do? She wanted to take the child. So my wife, how can you take it? Maybe a child like this, two, three days, four days old, they wouldn't take. They took it anyway. They took the baby. They gave it to the Roll, Schmidt. And the father was killed, and she came to me. Because she lived with her father. We had a bigger family. So she came, and she was in my bunker. I had a bunker, and she came.

**INT:** With your wife.

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** Okay, you were in the house now with Shimick.

**CHARLES:** No, no, Shimick...

**INT:** No, no, we're now after the war in the liberation.

**CHARLES:** Now we skip this.

**INT:** Yeah. That's why I wanted to pick.

**CHARLES:** Shimick went back to Zhymolov, because he was born there.

**INT:** With the lady friend.

**CHARLES:** No, with the girl already. And they lived there, and later they came back to marry off.

**INT:** Okay. And you stayed in that house. And what happened after that?

**CHARLES:** Then I was mobilized. Drafted.

**INT:** Yeah, but tell me how you got...you're in the house now. How are you eating? How are you getting food? From the leather? How did you have food?

**CHARLES:** We got food. We give into Dinah's hometown. She got back some things from the goyim, because some goyim, not everybody didn't give back. A lot gave back. For her they gave a little bit flour, this and that. And that's what we ate.

**INT:** Was there anything in her house?

**CHARLES:** No, she was rented by a goy. Her house was, was in another city. But she went there, and then she started to go there, and she brought back some things to eat. Because a doctor survived, Dr. (?), so he came over to her, he said, "Don't you dare to go anymore there. Because they killed yesterday, they killed another woman."

**INT:** The Poles did?

**CHARLES:** No, the Ukrainians. There the Poles didn't kill, because they were a minority there. They got killed themselves from the Ukrainians.

**INT:** Why did the Ukrainians want to kill the Jews?

**CHARLES:** Why they want to kill the Jews?

**INT:** Yeah.

**CHARLES:** Why Hitler want to kill the Jews? No reason at all.

**INT:** I thought maybe they were going to take over the Jews' houses.

**CHARLES:** No, they took it over already.

**INT:** They took it over already. Oh.

**CHARLES:** First of all, later on, I remember once a Ukrainian said, "Now when one Jew remains alive, he'll tell everything what happened." So the goyim, the Russians, they're going to kill them. So they were afraid. When they saw a Jew, a Jew was (Yiddish -- A Jew was in their eyes like poison.) No reason why.

**INT:** So she didn't go anymore. Your wife.

**CHARLES:** So she didn't go anymore.

**INT:** She stayed.

**CHARLES:** She stayed.

**INT:** All right. So tell me how you got to the Russians. What happened?

**CHARLES:** Then we lived in the city in Husiatyn. Husiatyn was a town, the army got together there. The army, they drafted from there everybody. They gave, everybody has to come there. So then I found one man a doctor, that he knew me from before. Because this was a city, it was divided. Half was Russia, and half was Poland. So he came, at that

time my name was Chaim. My name was Chaim. "Come work with us. What you going to do? Come work with us. You'll help us, and then we'll see what's going to be. I don't know myself."

**INT:** They'll give you money or food?

**CHARLES:** Food. A little bit, yeah. Money? What money? They didn't have what money.

**INT:** No, but food.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, and I stood there, about four, five weeks. I was there working with them. To help them, because they didn't know, the Russian people didn't know Ukrainian. And I knew the language. They had to ask this, what's your name, what's this, and write down. So I did it. Meantime, because he knew me that I worked in a pharmacy, so meantime he gave me a thermometer and this, I should help them out in case somebody gets sick.

In the meantime they brought, from the front they brought soldiers. There was no doctor, no nobody. So they sent me over, I should give him a bandage. And I did it. I worked all day there. And they used to tell me, "Go to jail, but don't go to the war. Because it's terrible."

**INT:** They were fighting the Germans.

**CHARLES:** They were fighting the Germans. And they were invalids, they brought back invalids. Terrible. Without a hand, without, this. They couldn't kill them. So till they die, by themselves. And some of them, they were only wounded, so I put a bandage on them. (Sanitarium.) They called this. And I worked there for a few weeks, and then there was no people already, so at the last shalom. What could we do?

**INT:** Did you know they were going to draft you?

**CHARLES:** Yeah surely. I knew. I knew about it.

**INT:** Why didn't you run away?

**CHARLES:** Where? Where to run?

**INT:** I don't know. Did you want to go in the army?

**CHARLES:** I wanted to go to the army.

**INT:** Why?

**CHARLES:** First, I wanted to fight the Germans, and I didn't have no choice.



**INT:** You'd have to leave your wife.

**CHARLES:** But I didn't have no choice. I left her at least in a city that she had a brother-in-law there. And she could manage there. She managed there.

**INT:** You weren't afraid of Ukrainians in that city?

**CHARLES:** No, because there were Russians there.

**INT:** Oh. Okay. So when the Russians came, there wouldn't be any pogroms of any kind?

**CHARLES:** Oh, forget it. With the Russians you couldn't do it. And she started to do a little bit business. Was one man survived, he married also. He started to be right away, the head of the magazines. So naturally, he gave her a piece of paper and a few pencils, and he sold it.

**INT:** What were you thinking about when you went in the army? After all you went through, you may get killed by the Germans.

**CHARLES:** That's why I was happy, I was satisfied there, because I know they wouldn't take the Ukrainians to the army. They told me. "We're going to send you to (?), to the labor camps." And they did it like this. Because they didn't have no confidence in them.

**INT:** So the Ukrainian police and everybody who was in the town, they put them in labor camps. The Russians.

**CHARLES:** The police escaped, but they caught a policeman, they killed them. How many policemen were there? But they drafted to the army, and they sent them to the labor camps.

**INT:** But you, did they tell you what was going to happen to you? That you were going to fight the Germans, or you were going to be in Siberia? What did they tell you was going to happen?

**CHARLES:** First of all, you'll go to Siberia. As a (?) somebody needs a bandage, somebody fainted. They gave me whatever they had. They didn't have much, but they gave me something. And I liked this. Because I saw what happened from the front, a lot of Jewish people, a few survivors, not a lot, but a few survivors, they came also through me, and they went drafted to the army, and they never came back.

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

**CHARLES:** So when they told me I'll go to Siberia, in the meantime, till I'll go, till all that, the war is going to end, because when the Russians are already here, in Lemberg,

and this, so soon they'll be in Germany. It's not far from there. So they thought, if they win Germany, they going to win the war.

**INT:** So you would rather survive than get killed fighting the Germans.

**CHARLES:** I'd rather survive than get killed by the Germans. So I went to Siberia. And there I was, four Jews came there. Me, I had one cousin who survived, and two friends.

**INT:** You went together, or you found them there?

**CHARLES:** No, they were drafted.

**INT:** No, but the Jews found each other, the four Jews?

**CHARLES:** (?)

**INT:** I see. Did you get sent there because you were a Jew? If you would have been a goy...

**CHARLES:** I would be worse, if I were a goy. They sent out the goyim.

**INT:** To where? To Siberia?

**CHARLES:** To Siberia, surely.

**INT:** Why didn't they put them right in the army? Who got drafted? Who got put in the army to fight the Germans? You got sent to Siberia. Who were they taking to fight the Germans on the front lines?

**CHARLES:** They had their own, they didn't trust the Ukrainian.

**INT:** I see. How about Poles? Did they draft them in the army?

**CHARLES:** They draft Poles in the army. They organized a Polish army.

**INT:** To fight the Germans.

**CHARLES:** To fight the Germans.

**INT:** Okay, but you were sent to Siberia...

**CHARLES:** In Poland they had more confidence, because the Poles, Hitler took from Poland, and the Poles didn't know them they killed there in Katyn 5,000...

**INT:** They blamed it on the Germans.

**CHARLES:** And they mobilized in Russia also a army. Only the officers they killed. The Polish people they organized and they came back. And they took Jewish people also to the army, to the Polish army. Wherever you wanted to go, you could go.

**INT:** You could go. To fight the Germans.

**CHARLES:** To fight the Germans.

**INT:** Okay. But you're now in Siberia. And you've got three landsmen there.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, no separate.

**INT:** But you found them.

**CHARLES:** In Molotov they split. It was already two, because two escaped.

**INT:** Two Jews escaped.

**CHARLES:** Two Jews escaped.

**INT:** On the railroad going out there?

**CHARLES:** On the railroad.

**INT:** What was it like to go out there? It was a long trip. Tell me about the trip.

**CHARLES:** The trip was freight. And they put them like animals.

**INT:** You and all of them and a bunch of goyim and everybody.

**CHARLES:** A bunch of goyim and everyone together. And they gave food, they gave to eat. They stopped in every station, every three, four hours, they stopped, and you could go out a little bit, stretch out. We were like, they says we are liberated. But not the Ukrainians. They didn't believe in that.

**INT:** Were they on the train, too, the Ukrainians?

**CHARLES:** Surely. On the same train.

**INT:** On the same train.

**CHARLES:** Thousands of people.

**INT:** Did they know you were a Jew on the train, the Ukrainians?

**CHARLES:** They knew.

**INT:** But they didn't bother you.

**CHARLES:** They didn't bother because they were afraid of the Russians.

**INT:** You were the only Jew in your train?

**CHARLES:** Yeah. I was four Jews.

**INT:** Oh, in that car.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, was about ten, twelve cars.

**INT:** Yeah, and in one car...

**CHARLES:** Thousands they survived there. But they didn't want to leave them, because they needed workers. They didn't have already, because they killed a lot of, the Germans killed a lot of Russians, too. So we went there.

**INT:** What was it like leaving your wife?

**CHARLES:** It was very sad. But I left also the sister-in-law, and I went to war, to say so. She didn't know where they going to take me.

**INT:** Did she want you to go?

**CHARLES:** I couldn't help it. She couldn't help it.

**INT:** But she didn't want you to go.

**CHARLES:** She didn't want it, but I had to go. She understood that I cannot help it. Everybody's drafted. What they going to say, the Russians? You want to be drafted? Do you want to fight the Germans?

**INT:** No.

**CHARLES:** They can give you a shot. I was happy. They freed me. I was a new man. I could go out, I could talk to. Before I didn't.

**INT:** So you felt good about the **Russians**, that they helped you, you're going to help them.

**CHARLES:** I would naturally defend the Russians. And Dinah lived already in a house. We didn't see a house for, from 1943, to 1944. No food, no house, no water, no nothing.

**INT:** When did you think you would see her again? How long, when you said good-bye?

**CHARLES:** I knew that I would go there to (?), the war wouldn't be forever, because we saw already, we had a paper there, we were free people. We had a paper, we saw, they took this, they took this, they took this. The war is going to end in no time. Especially the way the Russians are invading, America should come, should open with a second front. When they opened the second front, they were very happy, the Russians, because soon, soon, we gonna squeeze the Germans.

**INT:** And you knew about the second front.

**CHARLES:** Surely we knew.

**INT:** Okay, so this is 1945. March.

**CHARLES:** 1944.

**INT:** March, 1944. Okay, and you went to Siberia on the train, when, in what month? In March?

**CHARLES:** In May.

**INT:** In May, because March you were liberated, and now it's a couple of months later.

**CHARLES:** May, and we came back, it took us about a week to go there.

**INT:** On the train. But you had to eat, and you could sleep a little bit.

**CHARLES:** I could sleep, I could eat like normal people. Like the Russians.

**INT:** Okay, and you came to Siberia. What was it like? Do you remember when you got off the train? What was it like, what did you see?

**CHARLES:** They started to divide, because they took us to private houses, and started to divide, a hundred people there, two hundred people there, and I went with a lot of people in one room. We came and registered there, and this and that, and we started, they gave us food. They gave everything.

**INT:** They treated you like a mensch.

**CHARLES:** Like a mensch. Sure, like a mensch. So I was very, I go to Siberia. I remember, the two that escaped. Stupid. Where you going to go? Russia, a strange land, you haven't got the language, you haven't got nothing, they going to catch you, they going to put you right away on the front. On the first line. The first line is zechere teut (sure death).

**INT:** Just like you're dead.

**CHARLES:** Just like you're dead. We'll go to Siberia and we'll survive. Worse than the Germans cannot be. There we were not human, and there we were human.

**INT:** But they went away anyhow. You never heard from them again.

**CHARLES:** No. Never saw them. We saw thousands and thousands of people in the DP camps, because they caught them and they put them right away in a uniform, and they sent him, whether he knows how to shoot or not, they're going to send him.

**INT:** So you thought that Siberia would be better.

**CHARLES:** I thought so. My wife, my wife was the last time with me, we talked the whole night till the morning. Look, the German is teut. We thought even shorter it's going to last. A few people of my friends went there.

**INT:** Instead of Siberia, they chose to go to the front?

**CHARLES:** They didn't choose. They just put them there. Me, they needed, so I should be with the goyim. But they were also like the draftees. The Ukrainian people they were afraid to send to the front. Because they know they did very bad to them, and they know they are enemies. An enemy you can't give, this they didn't want it. And they had a very bad name. You know, all the Ukrainian, when it came to the Germans, they put their hands out, and they gave in.

**INT:** They gave in, they fought with the Germans.

**CHARLES:** And later on, they fought with the Germans. They knew about it.

**INT:** Now when you got to Siberia, did they divide the Ukrainians up?

**CHARLES:** It was only Ukrainians.

**INT:** It was only Ukrainians and you and four Jews, and two Jews.

**CHARLES:** Two Jews.

**INT:** What did they do with the Ukrainians? They made them work.

**CHARLES:** They took us together, they didn't kill them also, they washed them first, they went through a sanitation, they put up the air, they got disinfection.

**INT:** Did they treat you different, as a Jew, to the Ukrainians, or did they treat you the same?

**CHARLES:** No, the same.

**INT:** All right. So when did you find out what you were going to do there?

**CHARLES:** There, when I started to work the KGB right away, shouldn't be right away, you see, they were afraid of everything. They figure a Jew, they take away. They called me in. "First of all, how did you come over here? They killed everybody. The Juden went away. Did you work with the Germans?" They thought maybe I worked with the Germans. I said no, I was hiding. "My name is so and so." They knew already my name. They said, "Okay, we're going to write." They make a telephone, in that day a telephone, they had everything, and they called up in my city. Who is there? Chaim Scherz. And I had a friend, and he survived, so he was a Communist, so they took him right away to the sheriff's office. He received a letter from me. (Yiddish -- and he wrote back right away. He wrote that I was a good person.)

**INT:** And he wrote back.

**CHARLES:** He wrote back right away.

**INT:** A great fine mensch, and he wrote back...

**CHARLES:** (Yiddish -- he wrote back that I was an honorable person.)

**INT:** Did he say you were a Communist, did he have to say you were a Communist?

**CHARLES:** Surely.

**INT:** So he said you were a great Communist?

**CHARLES:** Because in a way to them, I have to say it, because they liberated me. If they wouldn't have come, if they would have come two, three days later, I would have died with my wife. Because we used to go to Polish people to take a piece of bread. And lately, the Ukrainian fight. They throw the goyim. I told you already when I was in the house, and I begged them they should keep me over, and at night they surrounded and they burned it all. When I came to another goy. But later on, you see what happened last night? There and there got burnt. And we **were** there. They gave us one day, was a chicken for the first time, and they gave my wife stockings, and this and that, because it was a friend. So they were afraid to put into the army. And they called me out, the KGB, we going to make you a foreman.

**INT:** Over the Ukrainians.

**CHARLES:** You know how to write? Sure, I went to school. So I started to write whatever they made. They worked hard. And they cut woods, and they got paid also, because they had to eat, there was a restaurant, and they had to pay. And my wife, at that

time went to the city, that she passed through that director from the school, and he knew her very well, and he said, "I have a letter for you, for your brother." At that time she was (crying)

**INT:** A letter from her brother, it said.

**CHARLES:** From her brother, yeah. That he's alive. And we asked who remained alive, what happened? We didn't have nobody living. So she wrote him a letter. And what, he got killed, and she's alive with me, and he's dead in there. And he was in a neighboring state. But he was there from 1939. And he's a (?) man, and he knew how to (?), so he became...

(END TAPE SIX, SIDE ONE)

(TAPE SIX, SIDE TWO)

(long pause)

**CHARLES:** ...He accumulate a little gelt. He was a socher, a businessman, he could do this, and he had already money. What should I do with the money, then? There's no such a thing as buy a car. You could buy a car if you have the money for the car. You eat better. You have a girlfriend, you have this, and you drink, and you buy better food, and nobody knows. But right away he said 500.

**INT:** So they didn't open it up and take out any of the money on the way?

**CHARLES:** No, there was very deep in Russia. They didn't do it. Because they paid in pennies for the brot. A month, a hundred ruble a month. (inaudible)

**INT:** A month. And you had five hundred rubles.

**CHARLES:** I had five hundred rubles in my pocket.

**INT:** In your pocket.

**CHARLES:** So they asked me, the KGB asked me where I got the money. I said, "I got it from my brother-in-law." He told me, he wrote me a letter right away, the head of the department. But they didn't bother with small things. Then KGB was only interested in politics. Not in private...politics. Who the Ukrainians are. That's why they kept them there. They were afraid of them.

**INT:** All right, you had the money. Now, from the money on, I have on the other tape. I wanted to ask you, what happened to the brother-in-law? Did he live?

**CHARLES:** He was mobilized. From there.



**INT:** For the Russians.

**CHARLES:** They had already trained companies. Because they saw what they did to the Jewish people. He wouldn't be against that. So he got mobilized, and he went into the army. And he fought in Czechoslovakia.

**INT:** In the Russian army he fought.

**CHARLES:** In the Russian army. He fought in Czechoslovakia.

**INT:** Did your wife get a chance to see him before he went into the army?

**CHARLES:** No!

**INT:** I mean, he didn't come back or anything?

**CHARLES:** No, there were thousands of kilometers, how could he go there?

**INT:** Did she know, he would write, though. And he told her he's now in the army.

**CHARLES:** He's now in the army. He send her money, whatever he had.

**INT:** Was he married at that time?

**CHARLES:** No, no.

**INT:** So he was alone.

**CHARLES:** No, he was single. So he sent her money. He sent her documents, diary, he had a diary over there. He had it good. He remembered the name of her uncle in New York. But he used to write to them all the time, so he remembered by heart the address. So the doctor there, they also used to send them the packages. And he used to send them money, also. And they were allies. America and the Russians.

**INT:** What happened to him? He fought in the war.

**CHARLES:** He was drafted. He got in the war, and he fought the war, and he got wounded in Czechoslovakia. So he went to the hospital, and when he went to the hospital, the war ended. He was very happy. He ordered there, and he came home. In no time, he came home.

**INT:** He came to where your wife was.

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** And she saw him.

**CHARLES:** She saw him, sure.

**INT:** What happened?

**CHARLES:** They lived together. They lived together. She had already there, he was mobilized, he got some pension, whatever they give.

**INT:** And what happened to him eventually, after that?

**CHARLES:** He lived, then I came home. We lived together, but they had to go as Polish citizens, till 1939, we had a right to leave Russia to Poland, because Poland was an ally of Russia. We had a right to go to Poland. We figure we have to go to Poland, and Poland maybe we'll be able to go to America, because they had family in America. Or Israel. And there was no Israel, there was Palestine. The schweier, the brother-in-law, that he survived, his two nephews fought in the English Brigade.

**INT:** From Palestine.

**CHARLES:** From Palestine. So he got together with them, and they sent him right away a certificate. So he came to Israel with the certificate, to Palestine, not to Israel. To Palestine.

**INT:** By himself.

**CHARLES:** With his wife.

**INT:** Oh, he got married, and he came with his wife.

**CHARLES:** Yeah. He got married. He was married all the time.

**INT:** I thought you said he wasn't married, he was alone, when he...

**CHARLES:** My brother. But my wife's brother-in-law.

**INT:** Oh yeah, that's what I'm talking about now. Is your wife's, the one in Lemberg. The one who got drafted, and who sent you the money. What happened to him?

**CHARLES:** So he was living with my wife.

**INT:** And then what happened to him, just to him?

**CHARLES:** Then when I came home, we started to go to Poland. And we can't believe we got to Poland, in May, in May 1946. I came home January '46, I came home.

**INT:** Okay. But what happened to him?

**CHARLES:** He (?). He would live with us together when I came home, then we went to Poland.

**INT:** And then what? What happened to him? You I have on the other tape, but what happened to him?

**CHARLES:** He went to Poland with us.

**INT:** And then what?

**CHARLES:** And then we went together, all three of us, went together from Poland to the American Zone.

**INT:** And then what happened? And then what happened to him?

**CHARLES:** And then we was in DP camp. In DP camp wasn't bad, because we got right away food from the UNRA. Took Americans from the Austrian government.

**INT:** And what happened to him?

**CHARLES:** He was a teacher in the DP camp. A Hebrew teacher. He was a very talented man. And they accumulated, some people didn't know Hebrew, and they organized a school right away. The Jewish people. Right away there was a school. And then he went to Israel.

**INT:** He went to Israel. He knew somebody in Israel? How did he get in?

**CHARLES:** He knew there was this brother-in-law, no, it was already Israel. 1948.

**INT:** But he had to go illegal. Oh no, in 1948 he could go right in.

**CHARLES:** He went legal.

**INT:** So he went in. What happened to him there in Israel?

**CHARLES:** He was in Israel, he was in the Israeli army, and he, my daughter was already born. She was already a year old.

**INT:** Did your wife see him again?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, surely.

**INT:** When, in Israel?

**CHARLES:** No, in, we came over here in 1950. In 1951 or 1952 he came from Israel to Canada, because we had family in Canada. And he had a girlfriend from way back, and she started to write letters to him, and he came back, and he married her. In Canada.

**INT:** In Canada. And then what? He stayed in Canada?

**CHARLES:** He stayed in Canada.

**INT:** He never went back to Israel?

**CHARLES:** No.

**INT:** Oh, and he had children in Canada and he stayed in Canada. In Montreal?

**CHARLES:** In Montreal.

**INT:** I see, and then he later died and the children...

**CHARLES:** He became an accountant.

**INT:** I see. Did he remained religious, or no?

**CHARLES:** No.

**INT:** Not so much. And the children?

**CHARLES:** No, no, no.

**INT:** No, no, no.

(Pause)

**INT:** He laughed that you sent COSSE to the yeshiva? Why?

**CHARLES:** He said, "What are you doing, what are you doing, what are you sending her to the yeshiva?" First of all, I don't know, I'll teach my girl myself, because he was a teacher over there. And he knew Hebrew very well, very well.

**INT:** And he didn't do anything with Yiddishkeit himself? Shabbas and kashrus...

**CHARLES:** No. They didn't buy chazzer, but...she was also like this. What he went through, he suffered, what are you doing with all the people. So he was an accountant, and he made exams. He became, he had a very good...

**INT:** And the daughter is there still in Canada.

**CHARLES:** The daughter, he doesn't know. You know how a teacher.

**INT:** He didn't teach her anything.

**CHARLES:** He taught her but she didn't...

**INT:** One ear and out the other.

**CHARLES:** She is a very rich lady.

**INT:** Yeah. But Yiddishkeit.

**CHARLES:** But Yiddishkeit, she doesn't know nothing. She's the president of the sisterhood there. You know, because she gives money.

**INT:** Okay.

(END TAPE SIX, SIDE TWO. GO BACK TO TAPE FIVE, SIDE TWO. THERE IS A LONG PAUSE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SIDE, AND THEN INTERVIEW CONTINUES.)

(TAPE FIVE, SIDE TWO)

**CHARLES:** ...she gave to hide. Some people gave it back, and some people say no. They lost it. But she couldn't do nothing anyway. So the school director knocked her over, and called her over. "You know, you have a letter from your brother." Oh boy, something. Who is alive? (crying) So she wrote him a letter. Then I was there. I was drafted to the army, and I was wrote right away to the wife. And she said, "I am there and there."

So he right away sent me **five hundred rubles**. It was a fortune there. Because you make fifty, sixty a month, that you work. Five hundred rubles. I had a letter, I am a big shot. He was the commander of the old apartment. So naturally he got paid off, give him a better apartment. He got already plenty of money. So he sent me five hundred rubles. When he sent me five hundred rubles, I could get bread as much as I want. And the restaurant as much as I want. They had one portion, a little bit, they were crying. I had three portions. Bread, I become acquainted with the bakeries. They were also not natives there. They were sent over. So we got acquainted to the restaurant there. So they gave me bread. I got every day a kilogram. This is two pounds of bread.

**INT:** Two pounds of bread.

**CHARLES:** Five pounds I got, and five pounds I bought separately. Also for pennies. Where I lived was a woman, there was two children. The husband was a (?), and we were ten goyim together. And the children didn't have what to eat. So they didn't get a pension like here. She had a garden, potatoes, and she cooked a soup. I came over, that

nobody should see, I gave the child a piece of bread, and to her a piece of bread, I was already like a king there, treated.

**INT:** And you were the foreman, too.

**CHARLES:** And I was a foreman, right. So I made more money, and I didn't work, already. I went around, whatever he made.

**INT:** They didn't have any problem making a Jew a foreman, then. It was the Russians.

**CHARLES:** No, at that time, a Jew, KGB was Jewish people.

**INT:** Any Jews work for you? Any Jews worked for you?

**CHARLES:** No. Goyim.

**INT:** Did you wear a uniform? You had a uniform?

**CHARLES:** No. Not a uniform. We were private workers. For the labor camp. For the army. Everything for the army. They made the woods, they got woods, sosna (Yiddish for pine trees), the straight woods.

**INT:** The high trees. How cold was it there in Siberia?

**CHARLES:** It was very cold. Because I bought right away, whatever they had there. If you had money.

**INT:** Did you try to give them money to get out of there?

**CHARLES:** No, you cannot. This you cannot do. How could I go?

**INT:** If you're the right person, they give you a seal in the Russian.

**CHARLES:** The KGB you cannot do. But I was long there, till 1946. I get home. January, 1946 I got home from Siberia.

**INT:** Right, now you were keeping up with the war. You knew what was going on there, that the Germans had surrendered?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, surely. We had a, there was a ball when they surrendered.

**INT:** Did your wife write letters to you?

**CHARLES:** Yeah. Surely. She sent me packages. But I didn't receive no package.

**INT:** No. Somebody stole them.

**CHARLES:** Ganavim? No, ganavim went to there, and they said, "Who has people there and there, I'll take it, and I'll bring it to them. I have to give them so much money." So my wife right away...

**INT:** What were you thinking about in Siberia? Were you thinking about what it's going to be like after the war already?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, I thought right away.

**INT:** What were you thinking about?

**CHARLES:** They're going to send us home. After the war, they're going to send us home. But I got home very early. The goyim didn't go home. Because I had money. So I went to Siberia, on a Sunday -- we didn't work on a Sunday -- I went to Molotov, to the big city. Take a look, there you can buy something, you can go see a cinema, a movie. I go to the city, with the yacht, was a...I keep forgetting, a boat, with a boat I got to Molotov. For pennies. Everything was for pennies there. You make pennies, and you spend pennies. If you have where, what to spend. I come to Molotov, I go buy in the city, I see, "(Polish)" (?) this is an organization from the Polish citizens. So I went in there. I thought I'm going to ask the Polish officers, what they took away, they got killed already in Katyn. Thousands.

**INT:** The Russians did it.

**CHARLES:** The Russians did it, surely the Russians.

**INT:** Blamed it on the Germans.

**CHARLES:** They blamed it on the Germans. Then, there got killed over a thousand Jews.

**INT:** In Katyn?

**CHARLES:** In the papers, in the Yiddish papers.

**INT:** Yeah. They were Polish, they were way up in the Polish...

**CHARLES:** Polish officer. My brother was an officer in the Polish army.

**INT:** Yeah? I didn't think the Poles, they let them.

**CHARLES:** You see, when you had a (?), you went to school, you finished high school, you became right away a higher rank.

**INT:** Even a Jew.

**CHARLES:** Even a Jew. Those people they didn't mobilize too much, but a little bit they mobilized. Even a Jew became an officer there. Surely, we had big shots in the Polish army. With anti-Semitism.

**INT:** All right, so you went up to the Polish union there.

**CHARLES:** Oh, and they saw me, (Yiddish -- and they took me around, they hugged me) a newcomer.

**INT:** All goyim in there?

**CHARLES:** No, alle Yidden. I **thought** was goyim. Yidden.

**INT:** Yidden?

**CHARLES:** This is emes. This is emes what is du geshribben. And they wrote terrible things. Everything is emes. You wouldn't find nobody. I was the only one that told them the idea what happened there. So they didn't know.

**INT:** They didn't know.

**CHARLES:** They didn't know.

**INT:** What were they doing there? They ran away to Siberia?

**CHARLES:** No, they were **taken** to Siberia. They were taken to Siberia, a little run away.

**INT:** But they didn't know from the war?

**CHARLES:** They knew from the war, because Stalin took out about three to four hundred thousand people to Siberia. Because all those people they escaped from the Germans.

**INT:** Yeah, they thought they were capitalists.

**CHARLES:** Yeah. Later they say they wanted to give them citizenship. They didn't want to take it. Because they wanted to go back. They don't want to become Russian, Soviet citizens. They say, you want to go to Russia, to a German back? They killed Jewish people? You don't want to be a citizen, then you are against Communism. So they made their sign, "Who wants to go back to their home, we're going to take them to their home, to their house, and that's all."

**INT:** Now these Yidden were living there since 1941?



**CHARLES:** '41.

**INT:** '41 they were there. Four years already. How were they surviving?

**CHARLES:** From 1939. They lived there. They survived there, they worked there. They had jobs.

**INT:** Yeah? The Russians didn't bother them? They left them alone?

**CHARLES:** They took them already. What they going to do with Siberia? They cannot escape. They stay there.

**INT:** But they didn't know as much about what went on as **you** did.

**CHARLES:** They didn't know about it. But when they took them away, was no war. Later when the war broke out, so they were already happy that they're there. And later on when they got together with America, America says first of all, the two or the three or the four hundred thousand people what you took away, you have to free them. They are no more prisoners.

**INT:** Is it all men? Are there women and children?

**CHARLES:** No, women and children are there. A lot of people died. Moshe.

**INT:** Moshe Sommerfeld.

**CHARLES:** Sommerfeld. He was there. His two brothers died there. He was there. He was taken.

**INT:** They were there for the whole time. And the brothers died because they didn't have...

**CHARLES:** They didn't have what to eat. They got sick, heart troubles, and no in there, and no other things. So they died. But he was a free man. When they got together with America, right away they became free. They left Siberia. They went to Tashkent. They were warm. They had already business people. For instance, my brother-in-law, he had an uncle in America. He remember he used to write to him. So he remembered by heart his address. He wrote him a letter, he got packages from him. To Siberia. They didn't take it away. No, because they were friends with America. They wanted to please the Americans there.

**INT:** So you told them that bad, that they probably killed most of their relatives.

**CHARLES:** So they registered me. He said, "How did you get over here?" So I told him the story, I was mobilized. He said, "Now you are a Polish citizen, and forget about

it, you don't have to be afraid of the KGB. They haven't got the right to you. And in a short while you'll go home."

**INT:** You don't have to go back as a foreman?

**CHARLES:** I had to go back. That was a different story. But we will try to work, in a short time you'll go back.

**INT:** Like all of them will go back, yeah?

**CHARLES:** Like all of them.

**INT:** You're the same as they are.

**CHARLES:** The same as they are.

**INT:** And they're going back.

**CHARLES:** Not a soldier anymore.

**INT:** Right. You're a civilian like them, and they're all going to go back, so you'll go back. The Russians told them that.

**CHARLES:** The Russians, there was an agreement, and that's what they kept, because they were afraid of America. If they wouldn't keep it, if not America, they wouldn't have won the war. See, because America gave them...

**INT:** The tanks and the trucks and...

**CHARLES:** Million packages of (?). They sent them. This was their main meal. To feed the army. They didn't have no food. Because the Germans burned everything.

**INT:** Burned everything.

**CHARLES:** Surely.

**INT:** So they told you you're going back.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, so they got already literature Polish. The Polish literature, and when it's a Yom Tov, and everything. And then when I got a letter from them that you have to go back there on that and that date, you have to go to the KGB, they'll give you a stamp, then you'll go back. When I came to them for the stamps, they almost, "How did you get it? How did you know about it?" (?) "My wife did everything." So he thought so. He couldn't tell, because I didn't tell him. It wasn't written that I was there.

**INT:** Then who did it? They did it in Molotov.

**CHARLES:** In Molotov. In Molotov.

**INT:** That's where they did it.

**CHARLES:** That's where they did it.

**INT:** Yeah. He didn't know that.

**CHARLES:** They didn't know that. How did they find out, my wife wrote it. This, he believed it. It came the time, he gave me a stamp, and I went home.

**INT:** You went home.

**CHARLES:** I went home.

**INT:** How did you get home?

**CHARLES:** **Eleven days**, day and night, I was riding.

**INT:** On the train.

**CHARLES:** On the train. I had a little money, I prepared a sack of bread, I mean, like melba toast, I made it toasted, and that's all. And one good thing in Russia. On every station, they got a (?), they call this. Boiled water. And I had already a tea to make it, and sugar, I bought it, little by little. Because I had money.

**INT:** What were you thinking about on the train ride? To reconstruct life again in Poland?

**CHARLES:** In Poland, no. Not in Poland.

**INT:** Not in Poland.

**CHARLES:** Not in Poland. They said, "Why don't you stay over here? We're going to bring you your wife. We're going to give you a job for (?) pharmacy, you'll be a pharmacist over here. What do you have to go to Poland? You know Polish people are bad for you if you're Jewish." But I said, "This is my language, I had to school there, and I went this."

**INT:** You didn't want to go back.

**CHARLES:** We didn't want to stay in Poland. Even, I didn't want to get a **job** even.

**INT:** In Poland. In Russia or in Poland?

**CHARLES:** In Poland. In Poland.

**INT:** All right, so you were on the train, and you were thinking to yourself, I'll get my wife and go somewhere.

**CHARLES:** I'll get my wife and go...

**INT:** Where? Where did you think you would go?

**CHARLES:** To Poland. First from Ukraine to Poland. And from Poland to try to go someplace.

**INT:** But you didn't know where.

**CHARLES:** No, we didn't know where. Maybe to America. She had relatives. First of all, we wanted to go to Eretz Yisrael. We were Zionists. But from Russia, you cannot say you're Zionist. From Poland, was allowed organized kibbutzim.

**INT:** But in your mind, when you were riding on that train, and you were thinking what's going to be, you were thinking you were going to take the wife...

**CHARLES:** The wife and go.

**INT:** To Eretz Yisrael?

**CHARLES:** To Eretz Yisrael.

**INT:** That's what you thought about.

**CHARLES:** First we have to go to American Zone, to escape from the Russians. From Poland, from Russia, and from Poland, and go to Hungaria to America. And we did it like this.

**INT:** Now, when you were coming back, were you sure 100% who lived and who didn't live? From your mispocha, from your brothers?

**CHARLES:** From my brothers I know. From my brothers I knew when they got killed.

**INT:** How did you know?

**CHARLES:** Because I lived through twelve pogroms. In the city.

**INT:** So you saw, and you knew, finished.

**CHARLES:** And the last my wife, and they killed all the people in the camp, they killed the ghetto, too. From there my mother was killed in the ghetto.

**INT:** Yeah, I remember that.

**CHARLES:** And that's how I knew. They got killed. And I haven't got nobody in the world. And I haven't got nobody in America. But my wife had a family in America. They knew my wife, but...

**INT:** Some of your brothers and sisters married, yeah?

**CHARLES:** All of them.

**INT:** They all of them married. And they had children.

**CHARLES:** Children.

**INT:** And you still didn't think any of them were...

**CHARLES:** I knew it already they're not...

**INT:** You knew it already.

**CHARLES:** I knew it already. I knew.

**INT:** Nobody from your family.

**CHARLES:** I knew nobody from my family.

**INT:** Okay. And your wife's family? Did you know about that?

**CHARLES:** Only from that brother that he lived there.

**INT:** Only from him.

**CHARLES:** When I came home, he was already home.

**INT:** Okay. So her brother survived?

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** And her sister survived.

**CHARLES:** Sister-in-law.

**INT:** Sister-in-law survived. Anybody else?

**CHARLES:** No.

**INT:** Did she have any other?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, she had.

**INT:** What did she have besides?

**CHARLES:** She had another brother.

**INT:** Another brother, and he didn't live.

**CHARLES:** He didn't live. He was a high-educated man with a diploma from the biggest school in Warsaw.

**INT:** Okay, did you know he had died?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, we know.

**INT:** When you were coming back on the train already.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, sure.

**INT:** All right. So you knew already what was.

**CHARLES:** And my brother-in-law that he survived, I knew he survived with his nephew, and he had another child. And we knew who killed this child. Because he went to our city, and he saw this eineckel, Shechter's eineckel. So a policeman took him. And took him to the...

**INT:** The Ukrainian police?

**CHARLES:** Ukrainian police, took him to the Gestapo, and he got killed. But we knew about it. Because the other goyim told us. But my brother-in-law, he was a big man by the Russians. Because he was also a high-educated man. So he was the nachalnik (Russian for overseer, or high clerical position) He collected all the taxes what they gave with the grains, a big shot, they wanted to take him to Moscow, he should be even bigger. But he was a Zionist, he wanted to go to Israel, and he went to Israel. He went to Israel before Israel, he went to Palestine. Because he had two nephews, two nephews, and they worked in the brigade, in the English brigade, you know, Palestinians, so they took him as a father. So this was his brother's sons.

**INT:** So they let him in.

**CHARLES:** So they left him in.

**INT:** Otherwise you couldn't go.

**CHARLES:** They send him a certificate. But he was with us in the DP camp. We went together from Poland. From Rushaten (sp?) to Poland, and from Poland we went together. Because he was a Zionist, and we wanted to go, and we went to the DP camps. My brother was already in there, and my brother-in-law was back already.

**INT:** Now when you came back on the train, you came back to which town? Where your wife was?

**CHARLES:** Where my wife was.

**INT:** And she was there with her sister-in-law.

**CHARLES:** In a few weeks, yeah.

**INT:** And you saw, do you remember coming to meet her the first time?

**CHARLES:** Sure, I remember.

**INT:** Tell me, where was it? You got off the train and what happened? She was there? She didn't know when you were coming on the train.

**CHARLES:** She knew, because I wrote her.

**INT:** She knew when the train was going to come?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, it was another nes gadol.

**INT:** Tell me what happened.

**CHARLES:** I came home. So the train goes to Rushaten. She lived in Rushaten. And whom I ask there, all the big shots from the train, the train stops in Rushaten, so this was a big city, a stop. Said, "Yeah, surely." I went there, and the train didn't stop. So I was ready to jump down and I can get killed, I went through so much, and my wife is alone? I'll go further. And I went to (?).

**INT:** How far away?

**CHARLES:** We were ten kilometers.

**INT:** That's not so far.

**CHARLES:** I knew everybody. In this city where she lived. I came to the city, the nachalnik, the head of the station, saw me, knew me very good.

**INT:** A goy.

**CHARLES:** A goy. Very good. "Oh, (Yiddish -- he hugged me, he embraced me) we knew about you, that you were taken, because you're not a Communist, that's why they took you." And he made (Yiddish -- he was always talking politics) against the Communists. "Why didn't you come to me for a piece of bread?" "I was afraid." "You were afraid of me?" What shall you do, now that, he is the head of the underground. "I am the head of the underground. What shall I do with you? The train comes back at 4:00 in the morning," and I came there about 10:00 at night. "What shall I do with you? And we had a meeting today. I'm not afraid of you, I'll tell you. We had a meeting today." (Yiddish -- Oh! I realized now I'm stuck for good. Now I've fallen into a trap.) This is terrorism. They killed people.

**INT:** They killed Germans. They were part of the Polish underground?

**CHARLES:** There was no Germans already.

**INT:** Now who were they killing?

**CHARLES:** They were killing the Russians.

**INT:** Russians. They wanted the Russians to get out of the country.

**CHARLES:** They wanted them to get out. The Russians killed them in the thousands. Took them to Siberia. So you know what he did, they had a storage room. So (he said), "I'll open the door, and I'll put the closets there, and you'll go in there." And they have to meet 12:00. Couldn't sleep. 12:00 they have to be there. They'll be there about an hour, a meeting, and it's over, and then they'll go, and then I'll send you back to...

**INT:** He was afraid they were going to kill you?

**CHARLES:** Surely they would have killed me. A hundred percent.

**INT:** Because they thought you were a Communist.

**CHARLES:** Not a Communist. I'm a Jew.

**INT:** A Jew.

**CHARLES:** A Jew.

**INT:** Okay, so kill Russians and kill Jews.

**CHARLES:** Kill Jews, because the Jews are Russians.

**INT:** Okay. You trusted him?



**CHARLES:** I didn't have no choice.

**INT:** You could have said, "Leave me alone, I'm going to walk into the town." And disappear.

**CHARLES:** Where?

**INT:** In that town.

**CHARLES:** In that town, but...

**INT:** You were afraid.

**CHARLES:** They would have killed me, too.

**INT:** Okay. So you trusted him.

**CHARLES:** I trusted him.

**INT:** So he hid you in the closet.

**CHARLES:** He hid me in the closet. And I saw 12:00 they're here. And they talk, da-da-da-da-da, and they go away, and meantime the train came, because they had to go away because the train came 4:00. They run away, and he took me out in a hurry, and go to Rushaten. When I came to go home, my wife saw me. I'm coming from this side.

**INT:** She was waiting by the train.

**CHARLES:** She was waiting when I had to come in from this side.

**INT:** How long did she wait there?

**CHARLES:** She didn't wait there. But in the house, she figure, I have to come, because it was already ten days, and I said I'm leaving. So she thought that after ten days I'll be home already. So when I came home, she said, "From where you're coming?" From (?). From (?). They killed another Jew there.

**INT:** The Poles.

**CHARLES:** The Ukrainians. Not the Poles. The Poles didn't have anything what to say there. They killed (?). Was a very intelligent guy. A very fine guy. He's the head of the Bonderkes (underground group). (?) is the underground. Bandera was his name. The organizer. So the name there. So he took me and he hide me there. I'm very thankful to G-d. A nes. They killed in my neighborhood, they killed about four, five Jews.

**INT:** So you came back to the house where she was?

**CHARLES:** Where she was. The brother was already.

**INT:** They were there, and she saw you. She hadn't seen you in how long?

**CHARLES:** A year and a half.

**INT:** A year and a half.

**CHARLES:** But we were together all that time.

**INT:** Yeah, yeah.

**CHARLES:** She had a suit for me. She was a business lady.

**INT:** Your wife.

**CHARLES:** My wife. She handled, and you sell this.

**INT:** But the Ukrainians in that town were better than the town where you came from. They didn't have too many Bandera and this kind of business in the town where you...

**CHARLES:** No, first of all they were afraid. Only at night. The Russian people might kill them.

**INT:** But your wife was free, they were freer in that town.

**CHARLES:** She went to that city to Bosnakovska. So a doctor survived. He went to Israel. He survived so he came over to my wife, so he said, "What are you doing? You went to Bosnakovska. Saved a few people, he came to hiding. It's a danger." So she stopped going there. But when I come home, they caught my wife, the business.

**INT:** The Russians.

**CHARLES:** The police, they haven't got enough already. But she did business. She had paper goods to sell, and everything. And everything what you had to sell was there. But they didn't have nothing there.

**INT:** So what did they do, the Russians, when they caught her?

**CHARLES:** They put her in jail.

**INT:** While you were there?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, when I was there.

**INT:** Vey iz mir.

**CHARLES:** I went to the Russians, to the KGB, to the head. I am, honorable discharge, honorable discharged from the army.

**INT:** You had the papers.

**CHARLES:** I had the papers. I couldn't leave them. Day and night. And I came over to Kiev (?), was already apples for sale, the bazaar to buy something to eat. But there they didn't have it. So, what do you do? You sold something. He went with me right away, he took her out.

**INT:** How long was she in jail?

**CHARLES:** She was in jail about a few hours. And they put her in jail, they told her, (Russian -- this is your house) This is your house. You're against the government. So this was the...

**INT:** She continued to sell?

**CHARLES:** Surely she continued to sell. But we made preparations to go.

**INT:** How did you feel about the Russians? That they were the liberators, or you didn't like them, or how did you feel about Russians?

**CHARLES:** No, they were the liberators.

**INT:** Most of them were all right?

**CHARLES:** Most of them, they were **all** all right.

**INT:** And the Ukrainians?

**CHARLES:** The Ukrainians, they were bad. I was there, with one Jew among twenty goyim. I wouldn't do this in my own city. I would be afraid.

**INT:** And the Poles? How did you, with them? What did you think of the Poles?

**CHARLES:** The Poles are very bad also. They were in bad shape because the Ukrainians, they used to put fires in them.

**INT:** But they were still anti-Semitic the Poles?

**CHARLES:** There they were not anti-Semitic. They were of tsuris with themselves.

**INT:** So they didn't bother with the Jews.

**CHARLES:** They didn't bother the Jews. They helped the Jews. All the goyim that I went to, I went to Polish people. Not the Ukrainians, because I was afraid of the Ukrainians.

**INT:** I see. Who were living in the Jewish houses?

**CHARLES:** The goyim.

**INT:** Poles or Ukrainians?

**CHARLES:** In their houses, Ukrainians.

**INT:** Ukrainians. Not too many Poles moved into the houses.

**CHARLES:** The government was already Polish. They had their own houses. But the Ukrainians, their house, right away they took away, the police was there, because this was a very good nice house, just standing there. 1927 was built. I have a picture of it. But I'm afraid to go.

**INT:** Now, even.

**CHARLES:** Now. Maybe they would give it back. Because we haven't got no papers, no nothing. And the goyim, they'll say, one will say yes, and one will say no.

**INT:** So what house was your wife living in there when you came back?

**CHARLES:** A rented house. Owned by Polish people.

**INT:** She was with who? She was living with who?

**CHARLES:** With her sister-in-law.

**INT:** With the sister-in-law.

**CHARLES:** Sister-in-law with the Polish people. Was a very nice lady. She gave us food.

**INT:** Okay. So you didn't worry about the Poles.

**CHARLES:** No, about the Poles we did not worry.

**INT:** But the Ukrainians you worried.

**CHARLES:** But the Ukrainians we worried. But also the Soviets, a Jew is there, they didn't do nothing bad, the Ukrainians, because they were afraid from the Russians, KGB

at that time. Stalin was a murderer. He was a murderer, but not you. If you say "Jew, Zhid," you can get a year in jail for that. You got it.

**INT:** But you didn't think about taking back the house in Poland and starting the life there again, with the pharmacy?

**CHARLES:** The pharmacy was in the (?) city.

**INT:** But starting another one, or you didn't think a life in Poland...

**CHARLES:** No, I wanted to go. I wanted to go. I cannot do nothing. I wanted to go out of Poland. I wanted to go to Israel. In Israel I wanted to build a new life. And my brother-in-law went to Israel from the DP camp. We were in the DP camp for...

**INT:** Now tell me what happened after, now you came home with your wife. Now what happened?

**CHARLES:** Now we escaped, we went...

**INT:** What do you mean you escaped?

**CHARLES:** We organized, normally, we registered, and the day we wanted to go to Poland, was Polish citizens. And the Polish citizens, people wrote us that tea is very expensive. You cannot get tea.

**INT:** Where?

**CHARLES:** In Poland. We should try to bring a little bit tea. We could exchange for bread, for egg, for this. So we bought a little bit more tea, on the black market. So we had money. My wife got paid a little bit money.

**INT:** Where was the town that your wife was in?

**CHARLES:** Rushaten.

**INT:** And what part of the world was that in?

**CHARLES:** That was in the border from Russia.

**INT:** The border on the Russian side.

**CHARLES:** On the Russian side. And we were later on the Polish side. So we escaped. We organized to go. There were thousands of goyim, we were two Jewish people, I think. Two Jewish families.

**INT:** To go where?

**CHARLES:** To go to Poland.

**INT:** To go back to Poland. You didn't want to go to a DP camp straight?

**CHARLES:** We couldn't go to a DP camp there. There was no DP camps.

**INT:** There weren't any DP camps.

**CHARLES:** No, the DP camps were in the American Zone.

**INT:** So first you had to get back to Poland. So where, your hometown, or her home town?

**CHARLES:** It doesn't matter. This was Rushaten. This was not my hometown, not her hometown.

**INT:** Just to go to a town.

**CHARLES:** To go to Poland.

**INT:** Where in Poland?

**CHARLES:** Wherever they're going to send us.

**INT:** Oh, okay. So you told who, the Russians there?

**CHARLES:** The Russians, we want to go...

**INT:** We want to go back home.

**CHARLES:** From there they took us to Lignitz (sp?).

**INT:** Okay. So now you're back in Poland.

**CHARLES:** Back in Poland. We lived together in one house. They took us out from the Germans, and we're back in Poland, and we live in the same house with my brother-in-law. And we lived there, and we go to the Jewish, the organizing this, the Bricha, was a kibbutz, and my brother-in-law went into a kibbutz, and he went to Israel.

**INT:** Okay, so you went back to this town, Lemnitz?

**CHARLES:** Lignitz.

**INT:** How long did you stay in the town?

**CHARLES:** Maybe two weeks, three weeks. I don't remember exactly.

**INT:** Okay. And you stayed there to do what? Just to find out how to get...

**CHARLES:** How to get out.

**INT:** How did you get out? You heard about...

**CHARLES:** Bricha.

**INT:** Bricha. What is that?

**CHARLES:** Bricha is the Israelis got money from the Joint. From the HIAS, I don't know where they got the money.

**INT:** They were in that town.

**CHARLES:** And they were in that town.

**INT:** So you met Yidden. You saw Yidden there.

**CHARLES:** Surely!

**INT:** Okay. They were Israelis, or what?

**CHARLES:** They were Israelis. And they got together with the Russian generals. And they paid them off. Let out the Jewish people from Poland.

**INT:** To go to...

**CHARLES:** To go to the American Zone.

(END TAPE FIVE, SIDE TWO. GO ON TO TAPE SEVEN, SIDE ONE)

(TAPE SEVEN, SIDE ONE)

**INT:** ...to get out of there, and they paid off to come to the American Zone in Germany.

**CHARLES:** Paid off the generals, the big shots.

**INT:** The Russians.

**CHARLES:** And the Poles didn't know. And we stood there, and they said they came over, there was an organization, you know, they're going to take us tomorrow. Get ready. We got ready. We didn't have nothing. What we took? A valise. Nothing, we didn't have nothing. I had a suit.

**INT:** How about money?

**CHARLES:** Money, we didn't have any.

**INT:** From the 500 rubles.

**CHARLES:** I spend it already. Sure.

**INT:** Your wife made from the business, not much.

**CHARLES:** She made a little bit.

**INT:** She had a little bit of money.

**CHARLES:** She prepared a little bit there. She had a little bit. But she had to buy something to take with you. The money, the Russian money was not in gold. They called this "chazerlach." Golden pieces they had in Russia. It used to be for the Czar. Golden money. Like in America, twenty-dollar bill was gold. She had a few.

**INT:** Where did she get it from?

(Pause) So she was smart enough to trade in the money, the goods, for the gold.

**CHARLES:** The goods for the money. For the money, you know the black market is booming there. You can buy there anything, for money, for gold. So we went to (?), and we were hiding, and meantime, that colonel, or that general, was on vacation, so we had to stay there for two days, in a house near the border.

**INT:** Of Germany.

**CHARLES:** Near the border from Czechoslovakia. But was Russia at that time. And it was Poland there. And then he came back. When he was there, we could have gone. Let them go. Came the Bricha, they told us, the children, take away, whatever you have, documents, burn it, and no language. You shouldn't say a word in language, not Polish, not anything. They told them that the Greek Jews are coming back.

**INT:** How many of them are you now? How many Yidden are you there, in Czechoslovakia, on the border there?

**CHARLES:** On the border there we got accumulation.

**INT:** A few hundred?

**CHARLES:** No, no, a few ten. Tens. Forty, fifty people. And the soldiers, the Russian soldiers, they're going to ask you the name, (Yiddish -- they should answer words like



"Ein Keloheinu," etc., names of pieces of the liturgy. We were supposed to act as if we didn't know what they were asking us. That we don't understand.)

**INT:** You didn't want them to know that you're Poles, or Russian.

**CHARLES:** That for sure.

**INT:** Farstehe gar nicht.

**CHARLES:** Farstehe gar nicht. (Yiddish) (Laughs). On the border, it was at night. The Polish people took us naked. They thought the Jewish people they had money. I remember me, I took it off naked, and they looked for money.

**INT:** But where is this happening?

**CHARLES:** This was happening by the border.

**INT:** Oh, by the borders. The Poles. They're looking for money from you.

**CHARLES:** They're looking for money. We had a, they allowed us to go. But we take care of the money. They figure, the Jews, they didn't find a penny. Whatever we had, we put it away. (Phone interruption).

People from, Jewish people from Czechoslovakia, or Hungaria, they gave us a cocoa, I remember that. We went to Austria. We stood in Vienna a day. Later we went to a camp called Kleinmilchen (?). There was already thousands of people, Jewish people, from all over.

**INT:** How did it feel being in Austria and Germany with these Deutschen?

**CHARLES:** But we know where we going.

**INT:** So it didn't bother you. To hear German didn't?

**CHARLES:** It didn't bother too much. We went there to a camp, and they took us to Camp Kleinmilchen. There was Rosh Hashanah. In the beginning we came already. We had a camp of thirty people.

**INT:** Thirty people.

**CHARLES:** Thirty people in one house. They gave us beds, we had it very good.

**INT:** Who's running the camps now? The Americans, the Israelis? Who is it?

**CHARLES:** No camps now.

**INT:** No, I mean, wherever you were. You were in a DP camp.

**CHARLES:** It was the Jewish people, but the Americans, the UNRA gave money, the Joint gave money.

**INT:** Did you meet Americans for the first time there?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, yeah, surely.

**INT:** You saw English and some Americans.

**CHARLES:** Some.

**INT:** And you're all Jews there.

**CHARLES:** All Jews. All Jews.

**INT:** And you were living in a barracks. With your wife in a barracks?

**CHARLES:** First we lived in the big, there was a Rosh Hashanah. So there we had a good time because...

**INT:** You came on Rosh Hashanah?

**CHARLES:** No, we came before Rosh Hashanah. But Rosh Hashanah, there was a cantor, a cantor from Lemberg, (Yiddish -- oy, did he daven, did he sing!)

**INT:** And the Jews were all davening there?

**CHARLES:** Not all of them.

**INT:** Half.

**CHARLES:** Half. Who got a siddur, who was anxious to go, so he go, he got a siddur. Some people not believers, because what we saw? We couldn't believe it. He cannot say, when you see rebbeim, (Yiddish -- when you see people going to be killed, going to be gassed) so you cannot be a believer.

**INT:** So you saw a change in Jews there, for the first time?

**CHARLES:** Surely.

**INT:** Because what you knew in your town, **everybody** would have gone on Rosh Hashanah, yeah?

**CHARLES:** Surely!

**INT:** Everybody.

**CHARLES:** Everybody would have gone.

**INT:** But now you saw Jews that didn't believe anymore?

**CHARLES:** No, I saw a lot of that. Hungarian people have two kinds. Either they go white stockings like Ricky, or free completely. They didn't know they're Jews. Come Yom Kippur, or Rosh Hashanah, they didn't know nothing. But Poland wasn't like this. In Poland we had even, not, but Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur was a holiday. For them they didn't know even if they're Jews.

So we went and we stood there about a couple weeks, and then they sent us to all kinds of camps. Because we were hundreds of thousands of people there.

**INT:** You went to camps. Big camps.

**CHARLES:** To DP camps, yeah.

**INT:** To big DP camps.

**CHARLES:** To big DP camps. In the DP camps we met already all kinds of people. Those people we were together in the DP camp in Austria.

**INT:** And all in your mind you're going to go to Eretz Yisrael?

**CHARLES:** To Eretz Yisrael.

**INT:** That's what you were thinking about.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, because England promised 100,000 Jews to let in. Do you remember this? So we figure. In the meantime, there was a black aliyah, there were people, single people they went black aliyah. Like the "Exodus."

**INT:** Yeah. They had to go on the boat, it was illegal to try to get into Israel. Did they ask you to go on one of the boats?

**CHARLES:** No, I was with my wife.

**INT:** So you didn't go.

**CHARLES:** I didn't go.

**INT:** You could have gone on one of those boats? But you decided not to go. Why?

**CHARLES:** Because we were afraid. We lived so much through, and there she had an uncle over here, and we had a visa to go to America right away.

**INT:** How did you get that?

**CHARLES:** Because my wife had an uncle, an uncle and two aunts. Sisters from the father. They right away sent us a paper.

**INT:** To come to America.

**CHARLES:** We could have come to America two years earlier, but we didn't want to go.

**INT:** Why didn't you want to go?

**CHARLES:** Because we wanted to go to Eretz Yisrael. Because we don't want to go to another galus. We saw what the galus is already. And we didn't have nothing. So we figure start in the beginning, we'll start in our land.

**INT:** I see. But because it was illegal you were afraid something would happen? Who's going to kill you? The English would kill you?

**CHARLES:** The English.

**INT:** You were afraid the English, you heard stories the English were going to...

**CHARLES:** Surely!

**INT:** I see.

**CHARLES:** They didn't want to take even husband and wife. They wanted to take single fellows. They haven't got what to lose. In the meantime my wife became pregnant.

**INT:** In there in this time.

**CHARLES:** In this time. And COSSE was born.

**INT:** In the camp, in this grosse camp.

**CHARLES:** And we had already, not bad, in the kitchen they gave us food. The American people gave us, the UNRA and the Joint, and the Austrian people. And I had a job there. So I had a job, in the (?), where they gave me, I had plenty.

**INT:** When did you start thinking about, I don't know, maybe it was a little bit all the time, about the loss of the family and everybody? Like you say, most people have time to have shiva. You didn't have shiva.

**CHARLES:** We didn't have shiva, we didn't have nothing.

**INT:** So how?

**CHARLES:** We knew already.

**INT:** There wasn't a time to have that, though.

**CHARLES:** No, Yom Kippur we cried in the shul, and that's all.

**INT:** Yizkor.

**CHARLES:** Yizkor. Yom Kippur was a chazzan, and they gave us machzerim, and they gave us tefillin, who wanted to daven. So I stood there in tefillin.

**INT:** Yeah? So you went to daven.

**CHARLES:** It was the Polish people, also Hasidische mentschen, Yidden, chazzanim.

**INT:** But did you have to think about that? "Should I daven, or shouldn't I?" What did you think?

**CHARLES:** Some people, sometimes you think, and sometimes you didn't think. You know how it is.

**INT:** But all, you just think...

**CHARLES:** Everybody's very selfish. (Yiddish -- I saw that this one remained alive, and I saw what a klula, what a terrible thing it is, what a painful thing it is.) I lost three sisters and three brothers. All married, with children.

**INT:** But did you ever think about G-d while you were alone there in the camps? That you were taken care of, that you survived, that somehow maybe this came from G-d, or no? That you survived, and your wife survived. What are you thinking?

**CHARLES:** To tell you the truth, we didn't know too much about G-d. That G-d can see what's happening, it is bashert, but not too much about G-d.

**INT:** You didn't think too much about G-d saved you or didn't save you or whatever?

**CHARLES:** No.

**INT:** But you went...

**CHARLES:** I had times, while I was saving, like a nes.

**INT:** Yeah.

**CHARLES:** But we are worried about our family. Why? My mother was such a religious person. Not the mother. The father, (Yiddish -- Such a religious man. Only ate one meal a day, and would fast on Mondays and Thursdays.) Religious people.

**INT:** So you expected that religious people would live.

**CHARLES:** Would live.

**INT:** That this wouldn't happen.

**CHARLES:** And not even one religious family didn't survive. Just the opposite. (Yiddish -- Because you had to be a rascal.) Because you needed to be a ausbuf to survive. To know how to run at night, to this, to jump. By us a yeshiva bocher wasn't like here a yeshiva bocher, he plays baseball, he plays football. It was a young boy, he...

**INT:** That's all he knew, is learning.

**CHARLES:** That's all he knew, to learn. He went away to eat bubelach essen, whatever they gave him.

**INT:** So you didn't think too much about it was a nes that you survived with your wife? You didn't talk about that.

**CHARLES:** No, no, no. We didn't think about that. Why we survived? I don't know why. We went in the devil's eyes, and we were almost every day. I couldn't tell you everything. I went through to our house, where I live, so the police was there. And over here, when I went, just, they recognized us. (Yiddish -- Non-Jews, a boy and a girl would recognize us and would say) "Look, look, there's a (would point us out and then say something in Polish and be so close to them, almost being able to see them by knocking on the window.)

**INT:** Did they do that?

**CHARLES:** No, they didn't.

**INT:** They didn't do that.

**CHARLES:** They didn't do that.

**INT:** It was so close.

**CHARLES:** It was a nes. So close, a nes that we survived. Later we went to a goy. To a goy. There, maybe five yards to a goy, she had our silver there. She should give us back the silverware. She could say, "What kind of silverware? Go away, because I'm going to call the police."

**INT:** What did she do?

**CHARLES:** She gave us silver. It was a Christmas night, we went in there. "Oh, I'm very sorry, I haven't got too much food, but I got some leftovers." "Okay, give us leftovers."

**INT:** So she gave you.

**CHARLES:** We were starving to death.

**INT:** Did you ever go back to any of the goyim that helped you, when you were back in Poland?

**CHARLES:** No.

**INT:** To see them?

**CHARLES:** No, because I was there, and from Poland, you have to go from here.

**INT:** So you never had a chance to say to them...

**CHARLES:** Never have a chance to say thank you. I would like to go, because we were afraid to go back. So I wanted to say, I didn't finish. When our nephew, our brother-in-law's two sons, one got killed, and he went to the city (?), and he said who he is, he figure maybe they going to save him. And they killed him. A cop took him.

**INT:** The kleiner.

**CHARLES:** The kleiner. The cop took him to the police, and they killed him. That brother-in-law, he was a big shot, I told you, so he got that man, that we knew where it is, because the goyim told us. His name was (?). He was a terrible man. Policeman. We told the Russian people. They took him to Shortkopf, Shortkopf was a big city, and in the center of the bazaar, in the city, they hung him. Because of that. The Russians, from the beginning, they were very good to us. Because Jewish people were Communists. That's what they thought. We knew in case this will change sometimes, the Jewish people will suffer very much.

**INT:** The Russian Jews were Communists. And some of the Polish...

**CHARLES:** The Polish. I'll tell you why. A boy finished, not high school, the high school was for money. Not everybody went. Only the rich people. He graduate public school. He couldn't get a job. No police, no post office, no...sheriff's office. He couldn't get. So why shouldn't he be a Communist? And he had the literature, the lies from Russia, everybody's equal.

**INT:** Wonderful, yeah. This is in the thirties, you're talking about.

**CHARLES:** In the thirties, in the forties. Everything is equal there. The Jew was a...when they came over there, the Jew was a policeman right away.

**INT:** How about religious Jews? Were they Communists?

**CHARLES:** No.

**INT:** They didn't bother.

**CHARLES:** They didn't bother. They said they both the same. Hitler and Stalin is the same. Stalin kills the guf, and Hitler the...

**INT:** Hitler kills the guf...

**CHARLES:** And Stalin kills the neshama. All the people with the shtreimel, not Communists.

**INT:** So you came, you were in the camp with all these other people, you saw some people from some towns?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, surely.

**INT:** But no more mishpocha. Just what you knew, that was it.

**CHARLES:** I didn't have it. And then I was looking. Somebody told me there that he saw my nephew. What I called him Velvel, he had a brother. They went to high school. They were intelligent boys. They escaped to Russia. This I knew about. So somebody told us that he saw him after the war. So my brother-in-law, because he was a writer in Russia, so he wrote to every one of them. Came answers, Oh no, oh no, oh no. So I knew then that we have got nobody.

**INT:** Do you think you were different now than you were during the war, at this time? After being through all this. What were you like in the camps?

**CHARLES:** When we came over here, we had COSSE, started to go to school.



**INT:** Let me ask you before that. When you were in the camp with all the people there, were you sad or were you happy? You just went through all this. Were you looking toward the future, or were you thinking about the past?

**CHARLES:** We were thinking about the past. We were looking toward the future, and (Yiddish -- it wasn't easy. We had troubles.) What shall I tell you?

**INT:** Because you were afraid? You weren't thinking about America as the goldene medina?

**CHARLES:** No, we knew what kind of medina without a language, without money. Without this. We're going to go to school now?

**INT:** So you were afraid.

**CHARLES:** So we were afraid. I'm going to make a living.

**INT:** What did you talk to your wife about? About being afraid, about...

**CHARLES:** We talked, we wanted to be already a citizen, to go to America. We have family there, maybe they going to help us. They didn't help, they didn't do nothing.

**INT:** Well, we'll come to that. How about when you talked? Did you talk to each other about everybody that got killed?

**CHARLES:** They didn't ask.

**INT:** No, you and your wife. When you were together in the camp.

**CHARLES:** We were talking.

**INT:** In Germany, there. You used to talk about the brothers, and the Mame...

**CHARLES:** We used to talk about the brothers and the Mames.

**INT:** This is what you talked to her about?

**CHARLES:** (?)

**INT:** And you cried and...

**CHARLES:** Yeah, and we cried our heart out. We told, we're going to come to America, they're going to ask brothers and sisters. After all, there were brothers and sisters. She had over here, two sisters and one brother. And they have to ask, another two, three sisters.

**INT:** She had never seen these people, had she, your wife?

**CHARLES:** No, she remembers one of them.

**INT:** And on your side was...

**CHARLES:** I didn't have nobody. My wife, my father was in America in 1912, came for a lustreise (vacation) and he wanted to move to America. And he said, it's okay, my father was a husky man, and he was a strong man, and he wasn't afraid. And he saw that you can make a living over here. We were already all boys, except me six brothers, so this is going to be a business there, you can have a pushcart, we'll manage. And my mother, (Yiddish -- she went to the rabbi and said, "What? What do you mean? America is such a treif land. What will you do there with such fine children here?") I was already a pharmacist.

**INT:** Yeah. The rabbi in Poland told you this. But she wasn't in America. Just him.

**CHARLES:** She told him that G-d is only in Kopyczynce. (Yiddish -- My father said, "No, no, there's G-d in America, too. There are shuls in America. It depends where you go. You can go to some places where you won't find what you need, and other places where you can." And he was ready to sell the house and go to America. He had already a ticket. At that time you didn't need much. You just needed to have the money to buy the ticket. And he had that. And here he was going to go, he had these three boys and three girls, and he wanted to go.)

**INT:** So what happened, she wrote to him and said, "You'd better come back."

**CHARLES:** No, she wrote to him come back.

**INT:** Said come back. He wrote to her and said you come here.

**CHARLES:** You come here, no, (Yiddish -- so he saw when he came back, he thought about what he'd have to do. He'd have to sell the house, liquidate the business. He was after all a businessman. But he saw that his wife was going around asking people advice and worrying about what would happen in America.)

**INT:** America's treif. That's it. So he came back.

**CHARLES:** So he came back. He had a (?) and he went to (?) because that was Galicia. Hungary was one land. He bought a house. He bought a house, and he came back, and the war started. Forget about it.

**INT:** But she wouldn't go anyhow, the Mame.

**CHARLES:** She wouldn't go anyhow. She was a very religious woman.

**INT:** All right. So now you're getting ready to come to America. You came by a boat, or how?

**CHARLES:** We came by a boat.

**INT:** Did you have to pay for this boat, or...

**CHARLES:** No, no, no. Nothing.

**INT:** Okay. So you got on the boat. Now, was her sister-in-law on the boat, too?

**CHARLES:** No, the sister-in-law, she went to Canada.

**INT:** Why did she go to Canada?

**CHARLES:** Because she had relatives.

**INT:** She had relatives. And there was a brother, what happened to him?

**CHARLES:** The brother went to Israel.

**INT:** Oh, the brother was single.

**CHARLES:** He was single, so he came into Israel, and they gave him the heavy things to Israel, whatever we accumulated already, and then he was there, he was there in the bittere zeiten, in the hard times, right away after the war, 1948, he left in 1950.

**INT:** He fought in the war?

**CHARLES:** So he says, "Hast a klein Kind." COSSE was born already, she was a year old. (Yiddish -- Here it's hard, you won't be able to make it. It's too difficult. Go. Go there. Go to America.)

**INT:** Go to America.

**CHARLES:** Go to America. In America she has an uncle. So we came to the HIAS, and we renewed our affidavit, because we had an affidavit already a long time ago. So then they took us and then we went to America. It took us eleven days with General Newer, (Yiddish -- ach, a broken ship.) (laughs)

**INT:** It was all Yidden on the ship?

**CHARLES:** No.

**INT:** It was all kind of people.

**CHARLES:** It was all kind of people. Goyim. Yidden also.

**INT:** And what did you hear about America? You thought, what kind of place it was going to be.

**CHARLES:** No, we thought, my father used to tell me stories, "America, America, America," you can make a dollar. (Yiddish -- My father used to tell us about America, that you can work there. There are businesses there, there are pushcarts.)

**INT:** Okay, and your wife had uncles.

**CHARLES:** And my wife had uncles there. Married with uncles. She thought, (Yiddish -- he was on top of the world here) because he used to send money there, although they didn't need it. Her brother used to send money. And they were rich, they didn't need it.

**INT:** But they sent money, so you assumed they had some money.

**CHARLES:** That he had some money. Then he was a businessman, he worked seven days a week, he had a delicatessen store, and although he was a (Yiddish -- shochet's son, a very intelligent man, when he came here, he had to go into this business, and he worked very hard all week long.)

**INT:** And meanwhile you had a baby. You had COSSE.

**CHARLES:** We had COSSE. When we came here, she was two, three years old. Two and a half years old.

**INT:** I see, so you had COSSE yet over there. So you weren't worried about, you had a child, it wasn't...

**CHARLES:** No, my wife, she had tumors inside. The doctors thought that she had another baby, and she was about ten days in the hospital, and they operated, and this and that, and COSSE was never with the goyishe doctor. Everybody said, a Yidden, a Jew is there, everybody came to look at her. They thought a Jew had herne (horns). But he was a very good doctor. Specialist. A German doctor. Very **fine** man. I remember.

**INT:** A Deutsch, but a fine man.

**CHARLES:** A Deutsch, but a fine man. I remember COSSE, when my wife was in the hospital, he came on Christmas, and I brought a package of chocolate, because I was the bookkeeper in camp, and I could bring out whatever I wanted. And the Joint gave us specially if someone was sick. And I brought her a pack of chocolate, and I brought her in something. He kissed me.

**INT:** The German.

**CHARLES:** The German doctor. And he tried his best. Then she was operated by a Hungarian doctor. The chief Hungarian doctor. The chief doctor was a goy. A goy. He would never be able to come to me. He was so good to them.

**INT:** No kidding. Why do you think they were like that?

**CHARLES:** He was also in DP camp. They escaped from the Russians. They're nice people. Some people are nice people, too. Germans. Take Schindler. He saved a thousand people.

**INT:** Sure. So you weren't bitter from all of them. You didn't say all Deutschen are no good.

**CHARLES:** Gestapo and SS. Those are the two kinds of organizations that were very bad. We understand. We were four years in a DP camp, and I didn't learn a piece of English because I thought we were going to go to Israel. In my land, and we know in Poland. What we did in Poland. So we built Poland.

**INT:** The Jews.

**CHARLES:** The Jewish people. You know, Lemberg, Cracow, Warsaw, all the business, the big buildings, belonged to Jewish people. The goy was only the farmer. And when he opened a store, he got money from the government, so he ruined it, because he didn't know how to handle it. The Jew was born, he was born to be a socher. And the Polish people, the Jewish people, they used to work 14, 15 hours a day, and their mother, and their wife and their child worked to make a business. A goy knew right away that they give out 10 percent profit, he has to make (?). And people sometimes sold for one percent for two percent. As long, they used to say an expression: (Yiddish -- from small profits) Small profits, you don't get broke.

**INT:** Yeah, a little bit.

**CHARLES:** A little bit.

**INT:** What did you do four years in the camp? You couldn't get out of there more, from the DP camp, quicker?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, I worked there.

**INT:** You worked.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, we couldn't go.

**INT:** Why didn't you want to go sooner?

**CHARLES:** Because we couldn't go sooner.

**INT:** Oh, you couldn't go sooner.

**CHARLES:** Because the first two years we waited to go to Israel. And later on there was already so many people.

**INT:** And then you waited to go to America, and that took two more years.

**CHARLES:** Took two more years.

**INT:** But you always knew you were going to get out of there.

**CHARLES:** Yeah. That we knew. Everybody got out.

**INT:** And you were positive enough to have a child.

**CHARLES:** We tried, so we had it.

**INT:** But to have a child. You didn't wait to come to America to have a child.

**CHARLES:** No, we had it there. Because we got older, who knows if we're going to have a child.

**INT:** But you're willing to have a child even in mitten drinnen (in the midst of everything).

**CHARLES:** In mitten drinnen. And the camp wasn't bad. I told you, I had a job. So we had this and this.

**INT:** But you didn't know where you were going to wind up. But still.

**CHARLES:** But still, my wife wanted a child. She got older and she said, "Who knows if I'll be able to do it?"

**INT:** And you could take care of the child with good food, with good...

**CHARLES:** Good food, she had a maid.

**INT:** Who did you name COSSE after, there were so many people?

**CHARLES:** We made it for her mother.

**INT:** For her mother. So you named after her mother.

**CHARLES:** And the grandchildren, Eli didn't let.

**INT:** Okay, but she's named, COSSE's named after your mother. She has two names or one name?

**CHARLES:** No, just one name. At that time we didn't have this.

**INT:** So you had her Yiddish name then, her name was Malka? When you were there?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, Malka, surely.

**INT:** And COSSE's first language that she heard was what?

**CHARLES:** Was Yiddish.

**INT:** Because that's what you talked to your wife.

**CHARLES:** Beautiful Yiddish when she came over here. Now she forgot already. When she started to go to Hebrew school, then we had a problem to yeshiva.

**INT:** Okay, so I want to ask you. You had COSSE with you, you came over in the boat. Tell me when you landed. Do you remember when you landed? Tell me what it was like.

**CHARLES:** My wife was looking.

**INT:** You're looking out at New York, at Ellis Island.

**CHARLES:** She thought the uncle was coming.

**INT:** Did they know the uncle, did the uncle know when you were going to land?

**CHARLES:** They knew, but they didn't come.

**INT:** All right, but you're waiting.

**CHARLES:** We're waiting, and they took us to a hotel, to Klein.

**INT:** What was it like when you saw New York for the first time?

**CHARLES:** We had friends that came to visit.

**INT:** But I mean when you got off the boat and you looked around.

**CHARLES:** It was just before Christmas. We came the thirteenth of December.

**INT:** Of what year?

**CHARLES:** 1950. It was just before Christmas, we saw the richness, the show windows, my goodness...

**INT:** Like a goldene medina.

**CHARLES:** Like a goldene medina.

**INT:** Like you need a lot of money?

**CHARLES:** I don't know. First I got a job. The first job I got.

**INT:** But wait a minute. So you looked around. Did you have any money? How much money did you have between you and the wife when you came?

**CHARLES:** I didn't have nothing. My uncle gave her five dollars.

**INT:** You didn't have anything? But you worked there as an accountant.

**CHARLES:** So I came with two nice suits.

**INT:** You came with suits.

**CHARLES:** Because I don't know where I'm going to get another suit.

**INT:** I see, so you came with two suits.

**CHARLES:** The last 50 dollars, I bought a camera. Because they say in America, a camera, a Leika is hundred dollars.

**INT:** You bought a camera, a good German camera.

**CHARLES:** We sold it over here, and we bought right away an apartment.

**INT:** All right, so they took you, who took you to the apartment?

**CHARLES:** First we were about six weeks in the hotel, and the HIAS gave us food.

**INT:** And the uncle came, to the hotel?

**CHARLES:** The uncle didn't come because he went away on vacation.

**INT:** There's two uncles, yeah?

**CHARLES:** Two uncles.



**INT:** And they lived in New York.

**CHARLES:** In New York, yeah.

**INT:** And they didn't come?

**CHARLES:** No, we went to them.

**INT:** You went to them?

**CHARLES:** Yeah. Because he went away.

**INT:** Where did they live, the two uncles?

**CHARLES:** They lived in the Bronx.

**INT:** In the Bronx. All right.

**CHARLES:** One was an architect. There was a sister of my...

(END TAPE SEVEN, SIDE ONE)

(TAPE SEVEN, SIDE TWO)

**CHARLES:** They got killed. (Yiddish -- "Where, who, when it happened, how people got killed?") They didn't ask. We were crying like that. Take a look. The kids, they don't ask.

**INT:** They don't ask.

**CHARLES:** They knew they got killed. How, how did they get killed, so many millions of people, just killed? This was systematic, systematically.

**INT:** They didn't ask any...

**CHARLES:** They didn't ask. (crying)

**INT:** All right, so you felt bad about that.

**CHARLES:** Very. My wife still, this is her sickness.

**INT:** That they didn't ask.

**CHARLES:** They didn't ask.

**INT:** So she thinks they didn't care? Maybe it's too painful. How about their wives? Were the wives nice?

**CHARLES:** No. They didn't care nothing.

**INT:** Did they offer you money?

**CHARLES:** One uncle gave one month rent. Was fifty dollars rent. Forty-five, he gave a month rent.

**INT:** How about the job?

**CHARLES:** And that's all. And I have an uncle, he was a very intelligent man, but he was a stupid man.

**INT:** Your uncle.

**CHARLES:** Not my uncle, my wife's uncle.

**INT:** Your wife's uncle.

**CHARLES:** You see, people came, a lot of people did the black market there, and they made money. I had a landsman, he came over here, with a quarter of a million dollars. And they had money. But I didn't work. Those people came from Russia. They heard what the Deutschen did. But I couldn't go to a Deutsch and sell him a piece of something. I couldn't talk to him. I couldn't see his face. So I got a job in the lager. A job is a job, you know. I got more food than other people.

**INT:** So you came without any black, just with the camera.

**CHARLES:** Camera, and I bought a suit and...

**INT:** So what did you do next? You're living in the hotel and...

**CHARLES:** In the hotel, and then they have to look, so the HIAS gave everybody two or three hundred dollars to buy furniture, to buy apartments, to, you have to give under the table to get apartment. It was very bad with apartments at that time. And when I saw the apartment later, for ninety dollars, so came a matchmaker, and he said, "You know, I have an apartment for you. They want ninety dollars. Under the table, the super." Okay. I bought it. I gave him the ninety dollars. The uncle gave me five dollars was traveling money. And then when we went to the HIAS, the HIAS gave everybody two hundred dollars. Don't say nothing, you want to give, so give him two hundred dollars. But don't tell it to them. What do you have to tell it to them? You want to give? Okay, good enough. So he came to them, and they asked him. Okay, I'll give him a job. A job, I'll take him. Apartment.

**INT:** The uncle said this.

**CHARLES:** But I told him not to say it, so he says just the opposite. (Yiddish -- He was ashamed. He wanted to show that he was a big shot. So what happened, they didn't give me nothing.)

**INT:** Nothing? After he told them he's going to give you this?

**CHARLES:** Because he told them that he's going to give me. They gave two hundred dollars to everybody. He said he's going to give it to me.

**INT:** So now you're living in a hotel, or living in an apartment?

**CHARLES:** Living in a hotel, so we got a apartment.

**INT:** You got an apartment now. But you had no money. Except the two hundred dollars they gave you.

**CHARLES:** They gave me, and then one month, they gave me a month rent.

**INT:** A month rent. Okay, now you have to find...

**CHARLES:** I got a job in a cleaning store.

**INT:** Who got you a job?

**CHARLES:** The uncle in the affidavit.

**INT:** He got you a job.

**CHARLES:** A job by a cousin. He was a (?) a factory. So I became a clerk.

**INT:** In the cleaning store.

**CHARLES:** Nicht a cleaning store. A clerk in a factory.

**INT:** In a factory. Make sweaters. And meanwhile, in the apartment that you lived in, where was it? In Manhattan, in the Bronx?

**CHARLES:** It was in the Bronx.

**INT:** In the Bronx. Were there other Yidden like you around?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, yeah.

**INT:** So you had other people you could talk to?

**CHARLES:** Oh, yeah, I could talk to them.

**INT:** That all had gehakte tsuris.

**CHARLES:** All had gehakte tsuris.

**INT:** And all were looking around to find a parnosseh and learn the language and every other...

**CHARLES:** That apartment, that was a lucky thing. I had two friends, we went together to school. And because I wasn't in Kopyczynce, I was working there, I came home, when the Soviets were already, so they told me they went to America. So I know I have two friends in America. So how do you get to the friends? I haven't got no address, no nothing. And I come to this, there was a shelter already. Came an old lady. She lived there (Yiddish -- and she spoke Yiddish, and she asked, "From where does a Jew come?" I said, "Poland." She said, "Where in Poland?" I said, "Do you know Tarnopol?" She said, "I know Tarnopol. Do you come from Tarnopol?" And I said, "A small town near Tarnopol." She said, "Which one?" And I told her Kopyczynze. And she said, "That's where I come from, too.")

**INT:** She left, but years before.

**CHARLES:** She left years before. (Yiddish -- "So who are you?" Then she describes it. And then I say, "If that's the case, then you're an aunt to my friend, (?).")

**INT:** That's his aunt.

**CHARLES:** This was (Yiddish -- Oh, well then this friend, he's going to come tonight. He's going to come see me tonight, so you'll be able to talk.)

**INT:** Oh, he's going to come right there.

**CHARLES:** (Yiddish -- We found out that we knew a lot of people in common, and in fact she asked about her brother, and I was able to tell her that he died of typhus because there had been a typhus epidemic in the town, and nobody could get any food from the goyim, nobody could get anything, no food.)

**INT:** Yeah, so they starved.

**CHARLES:** Yeah. (Yiddish -- This man came and he brought his wife, and as a result I entered that social network, and we met with other people from the town as well.)

**INT:** How long had he been...

**CHARLES:** He came in 1937 and I came in 1950.

**INT:** Oh, so he had a job, and he was married, he had children, he was American.

**CHARLES:** So he had a brother, he had a grocery. (Yiddish -- So he asked me, "So where do you work?" So I told him I work in this factory. He said, "That's not for you. So what, after a year you'll save five dollars? Come. I'll give you a job. I'll give you a job in a supermarket.")

**INT:** He gave you the job.

**CHARLES:** Yeah. Like a big supermarket. With the language. (Yiddish -- This man said to me, "You know, if you stay in the factory, you'll never learn the language. Come work in this job. Can you write down an address?" I said, "Yeah." So he said, "I'll write you down an address for the supermarket," and it turned out to be Deutsch supermarket, and so I went there.)

**INT:** So he got you the job in the...who owned the supermarket?

**CHARLES:** Deutsch. Deutsch Shopwell. Like Acme here.

**INT:** Goyim.

**CHARLES:** Yidden.

**INT:** Deutsch Yidden.

**CHARLES:** Numen is Deutsch.

**INT:** The numen is Deutsch. He knew them.

**CHARLES:** He didn't know them. (Yiddish -- No, it's not that he worked there, this friend of mine. He had another job. I didn't know the language, but I learned the words to say in English, "I'm looking for a job." And that's how I went into the supermarket. I was told to look for Mr. Goldshuck who was head of the union, and see him, and he would just be able to say the words in English: "I'm looking for a job." (laughs) He told me there's a manager, a Jewish manager I should go speak to, who would speak to me in Yiddish. So I got the job, and I did very well, and I got a raise, and it was fine.)

**INT:** So you worked there. It was close to the house?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, it was very close to the house.

**INT:** Okay. And your wife, what was she doing?

**CHARLES:** She didn't work, she was with COSSE.

**INT:** She stayed home.

**CHARLES:** She wouldn't leave COSSE.

**INT:** So she stayed home in the apartment. Did she have much to do with the uncles? She called on the phone, she talked to the uncles.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, she called on the phone. (Yiddish)

**INT:** How about holidays? Did you go there for Chagim?

**CHARLES:** No, we were right away by ourselves.

**INT:** The uncles didn't invite you?

**CHARLES:** No, they invited, it was very difficult.

**INT:** Were the uncles religious?

**CHARLES:** No, not religious. They were very angry at me that I'm giving COSSE yeshiva. Because it just happened to be that in our neighborhood they built a new school. But we...

**INT:** This is in the Bronx.

**CHARLES:** I talked to my wife. Okay, (Yiddish -- I wanted to give COSSE an opportunity to go to school so that she wouldn't meet non-Jews, a non-Jewish boy. Sure, if they had more money, they could buy more furniture, or new furniture, or a better apartment, but now the important thing is to give her the right schooling.)

**INT:** You...

**CHARLES:** So we decided to give her to a yeshiva.

**INT:** You didn't want to make her an American, to go to a public school and become an American?

**CHARLES:** No. No.

**INT:** Why?

**CHARLES:** Because we want her to be Jewish.

**INT:** Why?

**CHARLES:** Because...we didn't believe in that, we wanted her to go to her Yiddishe background.

**INT:** Was it more the wife, or you too?

**CHARLES:** Both. Both, sure. And we had to pay. And we paid at that time twenty dollars a month, they gave us a scholarship. But twenty dollars a month to us was more like two hundred dollars. We were poor. That was a lot of money at that time.

**INT:** So she would learn to be a Jew.

**CHARLES:** A Jew.

**INT:** But you didn't think sending to the public school and coming home to you wouldn't...

**CHARLES:** She would be a goy.

**INT:** How about most of your friends? Where did they send the kids to?

**CHARLES:** They sent the kids to yeshivas.

**INT:** They did.

**CHARLES:** Oh, yeah. Not everybody, but a lot of friends.

**INT:** Even though the public school was free, and she would learn English there, the rechte English, and this...

**CHARLES:** She knew English in the yeshiva, too.

**INT:** So it didn't worry you, though, you sent her to the yeshiva.

**CHARLES:** We sent her, and we paid already.

**INT:** Now how about that they would teach her frumkeit there, to be kosher, or to be Shomer Shabbas.

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** And that was okay, too.

**CHARLES:** That was okay.

**INT:** Did you have to work on Shabbas in the supermarket?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, sure.

**INT:** So what were you going to do with COSSE if she came home, and Shabbas?

**CHARLES:** Later on...

**INT:** You would worry about it.

**CHARLES:** Then I would worry about it.

**INT:** So it didn't bother. Meanwhile you kept kosher in the house?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, surely.

**INT:** Okay. So you worked in the supermarket, and you sent COSSE to the yeshiva.

**CHARLES:** And I went for myself.

**INT:** You went where?

**CHARLES:** To buy a store. I was in business for myself.

**INT:** Wait. So far you're in the supermarket. What year is this? 19 when? 53?

**CHARLES:** 1953, '52, and I went to school at night, meantime.

**INT:** Okay, your wife, too?

**CHARLES:** My wife, when I finished, she went.

**INT:** To learn English.

**CHARLES:** To learn English. Because she had (?). She wouldn't leave her with a babysitter.

**INT:** And to be a citizen? How about to be a citizen?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, after five years, so I became a citizen, and my friend came with me.

**INT:** And became a citizen. So after 1953 you're still working in the supermarket, and COSSE's going to the yeshiva, and your wife is home. Your wife is happy in America, or what is she like?

**CHARLES:** She wasn't too happy. She wasn't too happy.

**INT:** She wasn't happy. Why?



**CHARLES:** Why, because she was from a rich girl's home, had a maid at home, and over here, she saw that her friends, they didn't know from nothing, and she wasn't too happy.

**INT:** Did she have lady friends, yentas that she talked to?

**CHARLES:** Yiddish, yeah.

**INT:** She would talk to them.

**CHARLES:** Yeah. Newcomers.

**INT:** The newcomers. And how about in New York? Did you get around New York? Did you learn New York? And you found a lot of Yidden in New York.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, surely. We had in our neighborhood, we lived in the West Side New York, we had a lot of neighbors, auch gruner gekommen.

**INT:** And a shul, you went to a shul?

**CHARLES:** I went to shul with Leo Levine. He still remembers.

**INT:** Yeah. So a greener shul? A lot of greener there? He wasn't a greener.

**CHARLES:** He wasn't a greener, but he lived there in the neighborhood.

**INT:** But you went to a shul like that with greener?

**CHARLES:** Not with greener. Greener (Yiddish)

**INT:** No, they didn't go to shul so many.

**CHARLES:** No. They went a grosse shul with a chazzan, with a...

**INT:** I see, and that's the shul you went to.

**CHARLES:** You talk to Leo Levin.

**INT:** You had to pay?

**CHARLES:** Sure, you had to pay.

**INT:** But you didn't want to go to a shtiebel or something?

**CHARLES:** I wasn't a member. I wasn't a member. I paid only for the tickets. For shtiebel, no, I wasn't a shtiebel. There was a chazzan. There was a nice rabbi, Rabbi Kramer, and COSSE went to their school, from that yeshiva. It was called Akiba.

**INT:** I see. I see. Okay, so COSSE went to school, and your wife wasn't so happy there, because she had to adjust. Not having such money and...

**CHARLES:** I went to school to the work with people.

**INT:** You were outside.

**CHARLES:** Greener, Americaner, fremder, people I don't know. Landsleit. (Yiddish -- and they would say, "Oh, we knew you. We knew your mother, we knew your father.") And I was with people all day long.

**INT:** When you met the people, the people from Europe, did they talk about the old, or they forgot about it all?

**CHARLES:** They forgot about it. Everybody was lost everybody.

**INT:** So they didn't talk about it.

**CHARLES:** They didn't talk about it.

**INT:** Everybody's talked about America's where you're going to be, and this is it.

**CHARLES:** And this is it. Then I was worked for Deutsch, so there was a man, they came earlier from that shtetl that I told you we went, and we had to come back. My sister remained there. Choroskov. They had a store there, named Halpern. He, you must know the name. He's on Yad Vashem, no, I mean the museum, they on the board now. Multi-millionaires. They had a supermarket. So they wanted to go out of the supermarket business and go into the real estate business. So they were looking for a manager. A manager, so they asked somebody there, and Deutsch, they worked also for Deutsch. Deutsch was doing all right. Charles, (Yiddish) Ah, a landsmann, nicht a landsmann, 10 kilometers from here, auch a survivor. (Yiddish -- he was interested in getting me to work for him, because he had heard that I was a good worker, so he wanted me to be the manager of the supermarket. Mr. Halpern asked me, "Tell me, what's your future there in the supermarket where you work now?" And I said, "Well, I hope to become an assistant manager, or a manager. Something. Work my way up." And Mr. Halpern said, "What does a manager earn?" "170 dollars a week." "What if I make you a manager now and pay you 170 dollars a week?")

**INT:** From what kind of place?

**CHARLES:** Supermarkets. (Yiddish -- Halpern said to me, "I'll make you a manager right now. I've seen you now, I've watched you work for the past couple of days, and I like the way you work.")

**INT:** He watched you.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, he watched me. (Yiddish -- Yeah, that's why he wanted to take me, because he was watching me. And he said, "You can start to work for me tomorrow.")

**INT:** Where was the supermarket, where was it?

**CHARLES:** On Broadway.

**INT:** Yeah, okay.

**CHARLES:** (Yiddish -- Well, but you know, I feel secure where I am now. I've been here now three years, and I don't feel like I have to be watched and evaluated so closely. )

**INT:** Yeah? You already were there three years.

**CHARLES:** I was there three years. (Yiddish -- And here, if I go to a smaller supermarket, who knows what can happen with it? They might sell it tomorrow.)

**INT:** Yeah.

**CHARLES:** (Yiddish -- I was wondering what to do.)

**INT:** What did the wife say?

**CHARLES:** The wife say, (Yiddish -- I should take a chance.)

**INT:** Yeah!

**CHARLES:** (Yiddish -- Yeah. Because there I was earning \$75.00 in my present job, and so one day somebody in the supermarket where I was working came over to me and said, "What's happening, Charlie? Are you thinking of quitting? Because you know I was going to make you into a manager.")

**INT:** It was a chain store? The other one was a chain store, where you were going to go?

**CHARLES:** No.

**INT:** One person, the one store.

**CHARLES:** They had two stores.

**INT:** Two stores. He knew the store, when you told him where you were going to go?

**CHARLES:** No, I didn't tell him.

**INT:** So what did he say when you told him you wanted more money?

**CHARLES:** He said, "I think you want to better yourself. I understand you. Better yourself. Don't worry, if you get lost your job, you'll come to me, anytime I'll take you back. Not that I need people, but I like you, and I'll take you back."

**INT:** So you went.

**CHARLES:** So I went there. (Yiddish -- So, they gave me right away the keys I should open the doors in the morning. And then a year passed, I worked there, and they said they wanted to go in the real estate business. And they said,) "We would like to take you there, but you must have \$20,000."

**INT:** To go into the real estate business.

**CHARLES:** We are there already. \$20,000.

**INT:** This is 1955, '54?

**CHARLES:** This is 1954, '55.

**INT:** That's a lot of money! Who had that kind of money? Where did he expect you to have that kind of money?

**CHARLES:** (Yiddish -- I used to fix some things for them.) I am a handy man.

**INT:** So you had it on the side.

**CHARLES:** The bunkers, that's how I survived, because I am handy. Something happened, and I fixed it. They had a man, they called in a man, he wanted three hundred dollars, and I fixed it just like he, maybe better, and they liked it very much. The two brothers. They were in business, and little by little, we met in Israel, they became multi-millionaires. Now he's on the board of the Museum.

**INT:** These are the ones that went into the real estate business, but you didn't go.

**CHARLES:** I didn't go, I didn't have the money.

**INT:** So what did they do, they sold the supermarket?

**CHARLES:** They sold the supermarket.

**INT:** And you had to find another job.

**CHARLES:** They wanted to sell me the supermarket. One partner came back.

**INT:** Why didn't you buy the supermarket?

**CHARLES:** I didn't like it.

**INT:** Why?

**CHARLES:** Because I saw downstairs, they need about ten, fifteen thousand dollars to stock. Everybody, new items, new items. In the supermarket, Deutsch became big, he opened big supermarkets. I like better the restaurant. And then I had a friend also from DP, and he was in the restaurant business. He had a clean store, with soup and this and that, and he became rich. So he called me once a week, we got together, "Charlie, what you going to work in the supermarkets? You need a lot of money. Come into the restaurant business."

**INT:** When you were a manager in the supermarket, how did you deal with goyim?

**CHARLES:** I knew already the language.

**INT:** You knew the language and you could talk to goyim? You didn't have any trouble?

**CHARLES:** No.

**INT:** You talked to goyim, I mean not only, just that they were goyim, it didn't bother you.

**CHARLES:** I saw they stealing. I worked for Deutsch, I talked to people all the time, and I went to school at night.

**INT:** But you could also handle mit the goyim, that's what I mean. You knew how to deal with...

**CHARLES:** Surely.

**INT:** Was it hard for you to do it, beside the language, I mean, just to tell them what to do?

**CHARLES:** No, this was easy.

**INT:** What was the hardest thing about being a manager? With the people? Was there any problems?

**CHARLES:** No, I didn't have problems. I knew how to manage. They were satisfied. The goyim, they liked me very much there. But I wanted to be a supervisor for myself, and then I went into the restaurant business.

**INT:** How did you go into the restaurant business?

**CHARLES:** I had a friend from the DP camp, we were together. So he said, "Come in, I'll teach you a little bit."

**INT:** He had a business.

**CHARLES:** He had a restaurant, a small restaurant.

**INT:** So he wanted you to come with the restaurant business. Now here you're making good money in the supermarket.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, but the restaurant business.

**INT:** How much is he going to give you? Is he making you a partner, or...

**CHARLES:** He made me a partner, sure.

**INT:** And you had to give him money?

**CHARLES:** No, I had to invest money.

**INT:** Did he guarantee you how much you were going to make every week?

**CHARLES:** You cannot guarantee in business.

**INT:** So you're going to take less, maybe.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, but I liked it, I liked it.

**INT:** And your wife said okay?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, okay. You never know. You never knew. From a supermarket manager, you'll never be able to...

**INT:** Okay. Meanwhile, you're still living in the same apartment in the Bronx?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, in the Bronx.

**INT:** It's a two-bedroom, or a one-bedroom?

**CHARLES:** No, I moved already. I moved close to the store.

**INT:** So you moved close to the store?

**CHARLES:** There was an empty apartment.

**INT:** Where?

**CHARLES:** I had to give three hundred dollars under the table.

**INT:** Where was the apartment now?

**CHARLES:** University Avenue. You know New York?

**INT:** This was in Manhattan now?

**CHARLES:** No, no.

**INT:** You're still in the Bronx. So it's still a Jewish neighborhood, and COSSE's still going to the same place.

**CHARLES:** Surely. And I went into that restaurant business, and I was there two years. I didn't like it, either. Because I had a partner, he was stealing from me.

**INT:** This Yid that you knew from the DP camps?

**CHARLES:** No, another one. Also a Greener. But he was a thief. He was, he knew the business.

**INT:** And he taught you the business.

**CHARLES:** He didn't teach me, because he didn't want I should learn the business. He wanted to register. And he was stealing. And I saw it. And that man when he gave me the business, by you, he can steal. You better watch him. And I watched him.

**INT:** Did you tell him that he's a ganav?

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** What did he say?

**CHARLES:** Him? No, him I didn't tell, otherwise, he wouldn't tell.

**INT:** Why didn't you tell him, and then he would stop?

**CHARLES:** I didn't like the business. A ganav, kann mann nicht stop. If you're a ganav...

**INT:** He would have continued, even if you told him. Okay. So what did you decide to do?

**CHARLES:** We sold it. I said I want to go out, I want to go by myself.

**INT:** Without anybody.

**CHARLES:** Without anybody.

**INT:** And now you had some money to buy?

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** So you looked around...

**CHARLES:** Looked around and I found a kosher store.

**INT:** You found a kosher deli.

**CHARLES:** A kosher delicatessen.

**INT:** Where at? Around there?

**CHARLES:** On Broadway. Broadway and Eightieth.

**INT:** Eightieth.

**CHARLES:** Eighteenth.

**INT:** Eighteenth and Broadway. It's down...

**CHARLES:** Where the Barnes and Noble store.

**INT:** This is in Manhattan.

**CHARLES:** Manhattan.

**INT:** So you had to go from the Bronx to Manhattan. All right, so it was a five-day business?

**CHARLES:** Five-day business.

**INT:** Did you know you were going to make money, or you took a chance?

**CHARLES:** I took a chance. But I made money.



**INT:** Who sold it to you?

**CHARLES:** It was an old delicatessen.

**INT:** An old delicatessen. Did he stay on with you and show you how to do?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, I didn't need it already, I knew how...

**INT:** You knew. Did your wife come to work in the business?

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** This was the first time she was going to work?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, she worked there in the restaurant, she was a cashier.

**INT:** Oh. And now in this, did she mind working? Did she want to work?

**CHARLES:** Oh, she liked to work. It was a very good store.

**INT:** So she liked to get up and to come to work. It was good for her to work.

**CHARLES:** It was good for her. She liked it very much. It was a nice store, a nice business, and five days only. Saturdays we closed, all the Jewish holidays closed. It was a kosher delicatessen.

**INT:** You had a mashgiach come in?

**CHARLES:** No, I didn't have a mashgiach.

**INT:** Some rabbi came?

**CHARLES:** A rabbi came.

**INT:** And he put up on the wall...

**CHARLES:** No, he came around, he checked and...

**INT:** And that was it.

**CHARLES:** Came the rabbi from....

**INT:** Well, you were a frum guy, so he could give you...

**CHARLES:** Well, I wasn't so frum, but he knew...

**INT:** Not going to do anything.

**CHARLES:** Shabbas is closed. This is enough. Because in New York, ninety percent of the kosher delicatessens are open on Shabbas.

**INT:** And they have hechsher when they're open on Shabbas?

**CHARLES:** They didn't have hechsher. They open on Shabbas. They have a kosher store. The government guarantees you, you see, you cannot fool around. You have to have kosher meat, because you can go to jail, if they catch you. Not a kosher store. But for Shabbat, they don't bother. Shabbat, they sell you kosher stuff, but they don't sell you religious. If you don't like it, don't come. But I had a good neighborhood. I couldn't handle so much, it was too much business.

**INT:** So you make business.

**CHARLES:** Came a Yid, ask for a hechsher.

**INT:** I see.

**CHARLES:** I didn't need him. I had goyim, the Muslims came, because there was no pork. It was a good neighborhood.

**INT:** It was a good neighborhood. You didn't have milchigs there.

**CHARLES:** No.

**INT:** No milchigs.

**CHARLES:** Only fleishigs.

**INT:** And you didn't have to cater, or do anything. You didn't do catering, or make platters?

**CHARLES:** I think only for Christmas, Christmas, I used to make two, three nights, around the clock I used to work.

**INT:** When you went through the week, was there anything that reminded you of Europe, and problems or anything? I mean, did you see things that would remind you?

**CHARLES:** I forgot already. I have all kinds of nationalities came. Came Polish people.

**INT:** Yeah? Did you talk Polish to them?

**CHARLES:** Surely. I knew Polish very good. Better than English.

**INT:** So you would talk to them in...

**CHARLES:** First of all, when I came in to buy the store, I had a Polish woman who worked there. I recognized her as Polish, but I didn't know. She looks to me Polish. For me, I know something. So I asked for a super, I still remember, and she gave me a, and I don't know she's Polish. I say, "Jenkuya." I said, I'll tell her a Polish word. If she knows Polish, she says, "Oh, you're Polish." So she understands. She doesn't understand, so she wouldn't pay attention to this. So she became already friendly. I could tip, and then I told her, "You know what? I would like to buy this store. This is a terrific store, but this old man, he's already old, he's no good for the store, he don't want to work. You buy it."

**INT:** Who told you it was going to be for sale?

**CHARLES:** A broker. The broker told me it's a good store. The broker told me, "If you don't want to put in money, I'll put in the money, and I will be a partner." But I figure, I have the money, I'll do it myself. I bought it and I was lucky.

**INT:** How about when you dealt with Poles, it didn't bother you? I mean, with Polish or anybody. Poles, or Germans, or whoever came in.

**CHARLES:** No, it didn't bother me. The German didn't bother me.

**INT:** The German bothers you.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, I didn't talk to them.

**INT:** As soon as you knew, you heard.

**CHARLES:** When they speak among themselves German, because a lot of tourists are there. It's close to Fortieth Street. So they speak German, so I have nothing to do there. My wife didn't want, although we speak German.

**INT:** But things during the week don't remind you of Europe, when you see something, or anything that reminds you?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, this reminds me a lot. Then when you get older, you have your own tsuris, so you forget about other tsuris.

**INT:** But then...

**CHARLES:** Then, surely.

**INT:** You'd think about it.

**CHARLES:** We used to talk. We made a party, and her parents, her sisters would come. We didn't have nobody to come. We had some aunt in Montreal.

**INT:** You, or her?

**CHARLES:** Her.

**INT:** You, still nobody.

**CHARLES:** But she was very good to us.

**INT:** The aunt in Montreal. Your wife's sister, sister-in-law was in Canada.

**CHARLES:** Mother's sister. The sister-in-law they got married, they were a very rich family.

**INT:** Do you see them? Did you ever see them?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, I used to visit them.

**INT:** Did they have children?

**CHARLES:** Sure, they had children.

**INT:** Did they stay frum?

**CHARLES:** No.

**INT:** And the aunt, there's an aunt?

**CHARLES:** Aunts in there. My aunt.

**INT:** They are frum people? In Canada. And they raised frum people?

**CHARLES:** Very frum people, yeah.

**INT:** And you visited with them? They're nice people?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, surely. They were very good to us. They took us on vacation. They put us in a hotel. They paid.

**INT:** In Montreal.

**CHARLES:** In Montreal. We used to vacation there. And we liked it very much. The mother's sister. And the uncle was a nice man. He was a big shot in Europe before the First World War. He was a big macher in the army, in the German army, and then in the

Russian army, and then when the Polish took it over, they were looking for him. So he escaped to America, to Canada. Since 1916. In 1920, he was in Canada.

**INT:** So he has einachlach already.

**CHARLES:** Surely.

**INT:** All right. And these two uncles on the wife's side, you didn't have too much to do with anymore.

**CHARLES:** No, they died.

**INT:** They died, and the children?

**CHARLES:** The children, we didn't have nothing to do with them.

**INT:** Nothing to do with them. How was it raising an American girl? What was that like? Did she come home with things that you never heard of?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, but she was very good at school. We used to tell, in Poland...

(END TAPE SEVEN, SIDE TWO)

(TAPE EIGHT, SIDE ONE)

**INT:** This is post years. It's April 17 (1994). This is tape five (eight).

Where we left off, you had the, you bought the delicatessen in New York. And there was an old man who owned the delicatessen before, and you bought it and made it into a business. The delicatessen was closed on Shabbas. How important was that to you? Would you have bought a business that was open seven days a week? When you thought about buying a business, how much important was it that the business would be...

**CHARLES:** It was very important because of COSSE.

**INT:** Why?

**CHARLES:** Because COSSE was a religious girl. She went Saturday to shul. Every Saturday to shul.

**INT:** With you? She couldn't go with you. You were working in the supermarket.

**CHARLES:** She couldn't go with me. Before I went.

**INT:** But she went alone.

**CHARLES:** She went alone.

**INT:** The wife, you told her to go, or she went by herself?

**CHARLES:** She went by herself. I didn't tell her nothing. She told us. Make this and make this, and she got the rabbi, the rabbi liked her, and another rabbi, and another.

**INT:** Did you go to that shul when you could go to a shul, was that your shul? You belonged.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, I went.

**INT:** It was a frume shul.

**CHARLES:** It was a Young Israel. And later on, she had to make exams. She didn't go on Shabbas. It happened to be on Shabbas. So she had to go to the rabbi, and bring a letter that she is Shomer Shabbas, and she doesn't go Shabbas. So they made the exams on Sunday.

**INT:** Just for her? For Shomer Shabbas.

**CHARLES:** For Shabbas.

**INT:** How old was she when you bought the restaurant?

**CHARLES:** When I bought the restaurant, she was already a college graduate. She was about eighteen years old. College graduate from City.

**INT:** Oh, so when she was growing up, you were working on Shabbas?

**CHARLES:** When she was growing up, I had another store.

**INT:** You were in the deli with the two partners.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, with the two partners. Not in a deli, we were closed Saturday. Was a dairy restaurant.

**INT:** It was a dairy restaurant and you were closed on Shabbas.

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** So before you went in with the two partners, you were working in the supermarket.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, then I worked.

**INT:** You worked in the supermarket. Before you went with the two partners.

**CHARLES:** Together with (?) the big (?)

**INT:** Alper. Who was he? Oh, he made a lot of money now in the real estate.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, he's the board of the museum.

**INT:** Oh, in New York.

**CHARLES:** Not in New York.

**INT:** Oh, the Holocaust Museum.

**CHARLES:** The Holocaust Museum. He's on the board.

**INT:** Oh, he's a survivor?

**CHARLES:** He's a survivor, sure.

**INT:** But you didn't know him from the old country?

**CHARLES:** No, from the old country I didn't know him.

**INT:** He's Polish.

**CHARLES:** He's Polish, from ten minutes, say ten kilometers from us.

**INT:** Okay. So you went with him and the other partner. How important was it then, from the time, from the supermarket to that business, to be in a Shomer Shabbas business?

**CHARLES:** It was very important.

**INT:** Did you want to get out of the supermarket to come to Shomer Shabbas, or you would have worked in another place seven days a week, it wouldn't have mattered?

**CHARLES:** I seven, days a week, the gelt, the money was there, because we came over here with nothing.

**INT:** I understand.

**CHARLES:** And we wanted to make a little bit money.

**INT:** But you picked a business that only was five days a week. The dairy, the milchig.

**CHARLES:** The milchig was six days a week.

**INT:** Was six days a week.

**CHARLES:** This was a friend of mine, that we were together in DP camp. He had a store, a knish store, a dairy restaurant, a small one. But he got rich from that little dairy restaurant. And there was another man, and they were wealthy people.

**INT:** And they took you in.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, and then we went...

**INT:** Six days was from Sonntag to Friday. It was not on Shabbas.

**CHARLES:** No, not on Shabbas.

**INT:** So you went, not to work on, this was important. Why?

**CHARLES:** Because I wanted to go to a shul. I don't play golf, (laughs) and I don't play nothing, so I wanted to go to a shul on Shabbas. So he took me as a partner, because he didn't work, because he had a store. And the other one had also a store. But me, he took in as a partner, and I was there, but it didn't work out.

**INT:** It didn't work out. But, you were going to shul on Shabbas. You would go with COSSE?

**CHARLES:** At that time...

**INT:** How old was COSSE at that time?

**CHARLES:** At that time she was about twelve years. She was going into high school. She quit that yeshiva.

**INT:** Yeah, I want to ask you about that. But now you're going to shul with her on Shabbas. Your wife would go, too?

**CHARLES:** No.

**INT:** How come?

**CHARLES:** She didn't feel like going.

**INT:** She's a religious person?

**CHARLES:** She's a religious person.

**INT:** But she didn't want to go.



**CHARLES:** No.

**INT:** Why?

**CHARLES:** I don't know. It was a rich neighborhood, and my dresses, my this, my that. I couldn't afford.

**INT:** You lived in the same apartment from when you came in 1951 now, when you went to Young Israel, or a different apartment?

**CHARLES:** This was already the third apartment.

**INT:** The third apartment. So it was in a nicer area?

**CHARLES:** Oh, surely.

**INT:** But she still felt...

**CHARLES:** At that time, we went together Shabbas.

**INT:** She went then. She would go to the shul too.

**CHARLES:** At that time we lived differently from COSSE. So we wanted to go to a yeshiva. Was a Central yeshiva. We sent in fifty dollars tuition. Fifty dollars. And later she decided she don't want to go there.

**INT:** But COSSE went to the yeshiva from when she was in kindergarten until the eighth grade. And she went straight along. Did she complain about going there? She didn't want to go there?

**CHARLES:** No, she didn't complain, but she said, but then we signed her up to Central, she passed the exam, because they made an exam.

**INT:** To go into the bigger yeshiva.

**CHARLES:** To go into the bigger yeshiva. And then she said, "I want to go to see what the other life, the other world lives." Not to be a ghetto. One yeshiva to another. She went into Bronx Science.

**INT:** What did you say when she told you that? Were you unhappy, you were happy?

**CHARLES:** I was, "Okay, you can go in."

**INT:** It didn't bother you. That she was going to go to school with goyim?

**CHARLES:** No, it didn't bother me.

**INT:** Why?

**CHARLES:** Because she was already a religious girl. I went to a goyishe school, too. So what? If you want to be religious, you can be religious. On Saturday you don't go to school here, anyway.

**INT:** I see. So you weren't afraid.

**CHARLES:** No, I wasn't afraid. Because Mame told her, don't make a date with a shaygetz. She had a good average. Because not everybody they take into that school. You needed over 90 average. She went in there, she was there four years. Or six years. She was very happy there. Because my wife went for open day school. Open day.

**INT:** To meet the parents.

**CHARLES:** To meet the parents, so the president of the school, the teachers, you don't have to come. COSSE's an excellent student. Come people that I have to tell them something.

**INT:** Not with her.

**CHARLES:** Not with her.

**INT:** So you were happy when she was going to the school. Even though she wasn't in the yeshiva. Did she stop altogether going to the...

**CHARLES:** No, she didn't stop going to shul.

**INT:** She went to shul.

**CHARLES:** Surely, surely!

**INT:** On Shabbas.

**CHARLES:** On Shabbas. And the rabbi gave...

**INT:** Did you go too on Shabbas? Then you had the deli.

**CHARLES:** This wasn't with the deli. This was when I worked in the dairy store.

**INT:** In the dairy store, yeah. But all along when she was in high school, you owned the dairy store.

**CHARLES:** The dairy store, yeah.

**INT:** I see. And she went to shul with you.

**CHARLES:** So it didn't work out and I sold it.

**INT:** No, I understand. But she went to shul with you on Shabbas. You came back, and you had the Chagim together.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, then we had dinner together. When I worked, when I finished the dairy store, the dairy restaurant. Was a bargain, a restaurant, to take it and the broker called me up, "The man got sick, had a heart attack."

**INT:** The old man.

**CHARLES:** No, another man. Another man got a heart attack. "Charlie, you the only one, you can take it over. I'll invest the money, whatever you have, you have. Buy this store. I'm telling you it's a good store. But it's a six day store, Shabbas open." And at that same time, came in the restaurant the deli. So I wanted to buy it because it was in the neighborhood. Maybe Shabbas, we'll see what we can do. And when we were there, COSSE came with us, she said, "Daddy, I'm begging you. Buy the deli." Because the deli was five days. And Shabbas closed, and all the Jewish holidays closed. "Buy it, and I'm telling you, and I'm telling you," and I looked at her, she talked me into that store.

**INT:** Yeah!

**CHARLES:** Yeah. And it was this store that thanks to her, she talked me into this store, because for this I had to invest two thousand dollars, and this was the right thing what I did.

**INT:** And your wife, what did your wife tell you?

**CHARLES:** She was very happy.

**INT:** That you did this one.

**CHARLES:** I did this one, sure.

**INT:** If it wouldn't have been for them, maybe you would have done the other one.

**CHARLES:** Maybe. But it was a bargain. A good store. Money, this, that, because somebody was dead. And this one wanted to sell, and I stood there, and I watched the store, and I liked it very much. Then somebody comes to lunch, thousands of people are coming down. You didn't have to wait for a customer, and she talked me into it, and I went into there to that restaurant, and was a Polish waitress. I didn't know she was Polish, but she looked to me Polish. And I guessed it. I came over there, and I had a bowl of soup, and I talked to her. "Jenkuya." "Oh, you Polish?" So I told her, told her I

wanted to buy this store. "Buy it. It's a very good store. It's a old man, he's already old, he doesn't know, he aggravates himself, and he aggravates us, and he doesn't know how to run it. You buy it, you'll see you wouldn't be sorry." And I did it. And this was the right thing. It was five days a week. In this five days, I make more than I ever made in six days.

**INT:** What was the shul like? Was there a lot of Europeans in that shul, or was it...

**CHARLES:** No, it was a regular shul with Levine was there. Leo Levine.

**INT:** Yeah, but you had other people in there? You had other landsleit from Poland in there and different countries?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, you had a few people that lived there. When they came, they were factory workers, or owners of factories.

**INT:** So you had some chevraman there. How about your wife? She met people there, too?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, surely. She has friends better than any place else.

**INT:** There were plenty of people to talk to.

**CHARLES:** Plenty of people.

**INT:** Survivors?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, surely, survivors. Only survivors.

**INT:** Only survivors. So you talked to them about the war? You talked about the war?

**CHARLES:** About the war, surely. We talked about how they survived, they came with children.

**INT:** How about what you told COSSE about the war? Did you ever sit down and tell COSSE everything that happened?

**CHARLES:** Not everything. A little bit, she started to cry.

**INT:** She did, or you did, when you would tell her.

**CHARLES:** I started to cry.

**INT:** When you would talk to her about it.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, so she said, "Stop it, stop it, stop it." She said she's happy now. She said now I'll be able to hear everything that she didn't know. But to the children I used to say a little bit sometimes, because they had from the school. They asking me, she says everything how the parents lived through. So I told them everything.

**INT:** You came to the school?

**CHARLES:** No.

**INT:** You told COSSE.

**CHARLES:** You told the children. Shuli, she wrote it down. As a homework.

**INT:** Oh, the einachlach.

**CHARLES:** The einachlach. Was the homework, yeah.

**INT:** Oh, okay. But when she was growing up, you wanted to tell her everything, or you decided not to, or what?

**CHARLES:** I didn't want to varbitter das lebe.

**INT:** You didn't want to make a bitter life. Did she ask you about grandparents, about...

**CHARLES:** Yeah. That, grandparents, that uncle, they're very good people. This is a sister of my wife's mother. She's a very fine woman, and the husband is also a very fine religious man. So they came to see us. When they came to see us, COSSE was a child. COSSE was a very smart child. She talked to them. He says, "I had a girlfriend," she had a girlfriend, "she had two grandmothers. And I haven't got even one." (Crying) "Would you like to be my grandmother?"

**INT:** Would I like to what?

**CHARLES:** "Would you like to be my grandmother?" she said to that lady.

**INT:** Oh, she said that to the lady.

**CHARLES:** She said, "Yeah, surely. I'll be the grandmother, and he'll be the grandfather." And this was the way...

**INT:** They were like that to COSSE.

**CHARLES:** They were like that.

**INT:** Like a zayde and a bubbe.

**CHARLES:** Like a zayde and a bubbe.

**INT:** Very nice. So she saw them once in a while?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, she used to go there, she used to stay there. And they used to come to us. And they used to stay there. All the vacations, they used to take us, I mean not me, I was working. She liked very much that COSSE talks Jewish. Because American child don't talk Jewish. They can't understand a thing. And she talked Jewish, and she talked nice expressions. And she never heard of this.

**INT:** So they went on vacation together.

**CHARLES:** Zusammen. She used to stay in a hotel. And they used to pay for it. I used to come over there for a week. For vacation.

**INT:** Very nice. How long did they live? They were older people when they died?

**CHARLES:** He was 96 years when he died.

**INT:** Keine hora.

**CHARLES:** He was a big officer in Europe in the First World War. He was a big officer. Later then Poland took it over. They looked for him, so he escaped to Canada. They came in 1920, they were in Canada.

**INT:** And they had children?

**CHARLES:** They had one child. He just passed away.

**INT:** The child passed away. He was a religious...

**CHARLES:** He was a religious man. He was a college graduate man, he worked in a Jewish institution, and he used to come the newcomers, he spoke Jewish, French, and...

**INT:** And how about einachlach?

**CHARLES:** He didn't have children.

**INT:** So that's the end.

**CHARLES:** That's the end. And the aunt passed away before the wedding. Before COSSE's wedding.

**INT:** So you wanted to tell her, but every time you tried to tell her...

**CHARLES:** I cried.

**INT:** And how about your wife?

**CHARLES:** The same thing.

**INT:** She wanted to tell her, too?

**CHARLES:** My wife cannot take it. She cries her head off.

**INT:** So she can't. So COSSE just picked up pieces.

**CHARLES:** Pieces, yes.

**INT:** Not the whole beginning to end.

**CHARLES:** No, not like you have now.

**INT:** Not like I have. Just pieces, okay.

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** Now I want to ask you, when you worked in the store, everything was all right then, when you owned your own store.

**CHARLES:** Oh, I was happy, yeah.

**INT:** And you bought a house?

**CHARLES:** I didn't have a house. A new apartment, a new house. A very nice apartment, furniture.

**INT:** In the same neighborhood?

**CHARLES:** No, the business was in Manhattan.

**INT:** No, no, but the shul you went to was the same.

**CHARLES:** In the same neighborhood, sure.

**INT:** No matter where you moved, you stayed in the same shul.

**CHARLES:** The same neighborhood, the same shul.

**INT:** Okay. Was your wife's mood the same, or it changed? Now that life was easier, was she happier, or was she...

**CHARLES:** She was happier, naturally she was happier. But she still cries about, especially the brother. Not the brother that he was in Canada, the younger. It was a younger brother. Did I show you a picture? He graduated the highest Jewish high school, nicht Jewish high school, Jewish studies, in Warsaw. If he was here, he would be a professor of the biggest college. And he got killed, just like that. And he had a place to be hiding. Because the two sisters were hiding there. His wife, and his sister, and they survived.

**INT:** But he went out...

**CHARLES:** He went out and he got caught in a pogrom. He would have seen, don't do it.

**INT:** She keeps a picture of him in the house?

**CHARLES:** Yo.

**INT:** What makes her cry? Like during the holidays, or different kinds of things?

**CHARLES:** The holidays are terrible.

**INT:** The holidays are terrible. Pesach and...

**CHARLES:** Pesach.

**INT:** Has it gotten any different over the years? Any better?

**CHARLES:** It got worse.

**INT:** Worse.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, sure.

**INT:** Even though it's further away. Why do you think it's worse?

**CHARLES:** She zebenkt (she misses, she yearns for). We haven't got nobody. Nobody. They passed away. The aunt and uncle passed away. And over here she had also an aunt and uncle who passed away, and the children were American children, they don't know nothing.

**INT:** But thank G-d there's three einachlach. That live close.

**CHARLES:** That live very close. Live very close. They come around to us. They're like in their own home. And they have more than they have in their own home. I buy things because they like it. Camera, and soda, this, that. The little one, they come around. We try to please them, too.



**INT:** But it's not enough for your wife. I mean, she still thinks about...

**CHARLES:** She thinks about the whole family. I had for instance eight nephews. Eight nieces and nephews. One brother, one sister, two sisters, they have two children. One sister, it was a daughter-in-law of the Hagger, in Monsey, there is Hagger, from that family. The shver was a rabbi. A rabbi aus gewehen a rabbi in Poland. She was a Shneier there. They passed away right away. They got killed the first day. She wrote us a letter. (Yiddish -- There was a wedding, and they got married in this attic, and then they had to leave right away, and they ran away right away.) And this was the uncle to that Hagger in Monsey.

**INT:** Right before the wedding, the Germans came and took them away?

**CHARLES:** Took them already. (Yiddish -- There wasn't really a chassene, but they were afraid to write that.) Somebody came to Kopyczynce. (Yiddish -- So they sent a letter, and these were the people I gave some bread to.)

**INT:** When your wife, during when COSSE was getting raised up, and she worked in the store, your wife worked in the store with you, yeah, where you were?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, but she was already eighteen years old. Otherwise she didn't work, my wife. My wife wouldn't leave COSSE.

**INT:** No, when COSSE was eighteen. When you keep your mind busy, when you're working, rather than being in the apartment, is it easier?

**CHARLES:** Surely would be easier.

**INT:** So when she worked...

**CHARLES:** She was very happy in that store.

**INT:** She was happy in the store working.

**CHARLES:** It was a very successful store. We had about (?) across the street from our store. Was three dancing companies. Manhattan's a big...Three dancing companies. From all over the world. They used to come around for lunch to us. So I saw it's no good, they come around, they take right away the place. So I made them a deal, and they accepted. You come around 2:00 after the rush is over, you'll come and you'll get 20% off, whatever you eat. And they accepted.

**INT:** They accepted. So you had the lunchtime regular crowd, and then, when they went away, you had them coming.

**CHARLES:** We had them coming, and my wife was sitting with them. They was from Israel, they was from all over the world. Dancing, all kinds of dancing. Three schools over there. So she was very happy. And there came around people, other people.

**INT:** So the more she had to keep busy, the less, and the same for you?

**CHARLES:** The same for me. I was busy.

**INT:** When you're busy, you don't think about it.

**CHARLES:** I was strong and happy. I used to get headaches, I would take two Anacins, and it went away. It was successful. When you cook a soup, so all the soup goes away, and everybody praises it, and you make a sandwich, everybody says it's a delicious sandwich, because I get...

**INT:** But retirement, you don't have this.

**CHARLES:** Retirement, you don't have this.

**INT:** You're not making soup. You're not making sandwiches. But, why did you retire then?

**CHARLES:** I retire because first of all, came the time.

**INT:** How old were you when you retired?

**CHARLES:** 63 years old.

**INT:** 63. It's not so old.

**CHARLES:** It was very hard work. And I figure, she was afraid, she didn't feel so good, and I didn't feel so good, in case I get sick, when I am open, when I am there, I am able to sell. Because the building didn't belong to me. And if I go out, my wife won't be able to handle it two days, three days. So in case I get sick...

**INT:** Did you feel sick, though, did you feel something was going to happen?

**CHARLES:** Who knows what's going to happen? You work very hard. In case something happened. I have what to sell. To close up the business. In the meantime I have customers. I sold it.

**INT:** Did you picture to come to Philadelphia, or stay in Manhattan?

**CHARLES:** No, we didn't have a picture to come to Philadelphia. First of all, you sell over here a store, you sell a mortgage. I figure, in case they wouldn't pay, I sold to Israelis. In case they wouldn't pay, you never know, so I take over. I put the

Charlie is back, I had the same thing. So I had to stay there, until they paid up everything.

**INT:** How many years was it?

**CHARLES:** Five years, six years.

**INT:** Five, six years. So you stayed in the apartment, you would come to the store once in a while to see what they were doing?

**CHARLES:** Once in a while.

**INT:** And they were paying you.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, they were paying, because it was a good store, they had to pay. But who knows how they going to provide it. And they made it very good there. I was in Israel, I was in their house, they sent me to, they had tenants in Israel. They took me on like I would be a relative.

**INT:** They're frum people?

**CHARLES:** No, no.

**INT:** They bought a Shomer Shabbas...

**CHARLES:** They bought a five-day store, and they opened the store Saturday, and this Saturday covered them the mortgage for me there.

**INT:** I see. So it's no more kosher.

**CHARLES:** It was kosher.

**INT:** With the rabbi though. Nobody's going to give fleish with them, but you don't have to worry about that.

**CHARLES:** First of all, in New York, 80% of the kosher stores are open Saturday in New York. No such a thing they were...

**INT:** And the rabbi gives hashgachah? The rabbi has a teudah?

**CHARLES:** They have a kosher store with the government. Because the government will check it, if it's kosher. But not kosher on Saturday. Not in Boro Park. In Boro Park, a business wouldn't be able to exist. But all over the city. Manhattan, kosher store.

**INT:** So let me understand. You thought you would stay in Manhattan. You would sell the business and stay in Manhattan. Not in Manhattan, where you lived in the Bronx. And what would you do with yourself? What did you think you were going to do?

**CHARLES:** Over there was a Bronx house, close to me, twenty steps. I went every day swimming. And we went every Sunday, we went to the Jewish theaters. My wife is missing very much. This theater. Once in a while to a regular theater. To the movies. It's a city. You cannot compare to Bala Cynwyd. You have to go to the city. And to Philadelphia, you cannot compare.

**INT:** So it looked okay. You could retire, and you would have what to do.

**CHARLES:** I went out shopping, because I didn't have shopping, I didn't have a car like here. In our neighborhood we had about three supermarkets. And other stores, two kosher Shomer Shabbas stores. Challah, Shomer Shabbas. So we didn't have to...

**INT:** So you had what to do.

**CHARLES:** And then my wife, we used to come over here. We used to come over here every six weeks. A month, a yontif. And then, my wife says, "It's too lonely. Once in a while I'm with the children, the grandchildren." The problem is they didn't have children. And then they started the grandchildren. So my wife said, "Let's move. What do we have to do here?" And little by little...

**INT:** You originally didn't want to move.

**CHARLES:** No. She talked me into it. And we found right away in Montgomery One a nice apartment. A beautiful apartment. And what do we have there? We have a few acquaintances. But we didn't know it was going to be so bad, and we didn't know they were going to split. We didn't have no idea, never. COSSE never told us nothing.

**INT:** She said move, or not to move?

**CHARLES:** She said, "Okay, move, you'll see the children." But she never told us something is wrong with Eli. We didn't know nothing.

**INT:** But it doesn't matter, the children were here. The einachlach were here.

**CHARLES:** Einachlach were here.

**INT:** That's the main thing.

**CHARLES:** And we talked ourselves, and we moved over here. And over here, she's very unhappy. She hasn't got nobody there. Friends. A few stores. But the difference was you know people from twenty years, twenty-five years. And we got such a nice people.

**INT:** But you knew that coming? You knew that before you came, yeah, that there wouldn't be as many people? You knew who was here, you knew who was in the shul?

**CHARLES:** We wouldn't get acquainted in the shul, and this and that. Started not to feel good, and this and that, and meantime we get older. We all get older.

**INT:** We all get older.

**CHARLES:** Started already with the heart, also. And my wife was afraid in case I need a heart operation. I haven't got nobody there. Over here, she had the children. When we came here, right away I had a heart operation. Right away.

**INT:** So it's good you see the einachlach more than you would in New York.

**CHARLES:** Surely!

**INT:** Much more than you would in New York.

**CHARLES:** They used to come. Surely.

**INT:** I want to ask you a few questions, for me.

**CHARLES:** Okay.

**INT:** Americans had an easy life. Most Americans had an easy life. Like me, or COSSE, or my parents were born here. You can't compare.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, can't compare.

**INT:** When things happened, when things happen, people get upset, when bad things happen. A little thing, like you have a car accident, or you slip and fall, or somebody loses a hundred dollars, or whatever. To somebody who doesn't have a lot of tsuris, this is a big deal.

**CHARLES:** A big deal.

**INT:** How about to you, and your wife? When things would happen like that, would you get excited, do you think, and be miserable, or you would think to yourself: What are you getting excited about? What I've been through, would you be different from a regular?

**CHARLES:** It doesn't matter.

**INT:** Did you ever think like that, that after what you've been through, it doesn't matter **what** happens here, or you would get just as excited if you lost money, or got a little sick, or fell, or got in an accident?

**CHARLES:** No, if I lost money, it wouldn't bother me. If I lost money, it wouldn't bother me, it wouldn't bother my wife. Because we lost already plenty.

**INT:** That's what I mean.

**CHARLES:** And over here we're just afraid of our children. When we see something would happen, the Ku Klux Klan, it could happen over here, too, the same thing.

**INT:** But how about kleine sachen that happen that make people meshugge, when you see people go crazy about little things?

**CHARLES:** No, about little things, it don't bother us.

**INT:** Don't bother you?

**CHARLES:** Don't bother us, no.

**INT:** Probably less than other people.

**CHARLES:** Less than other people, yeah. We just worry about health, and about the children. They should grow up and it should be a good time for them.

(END TAPE EIGHT, SIDE ONE)

(TAPE EIGHT, SIDE TWO)

**INT:** You're afraid of what?

**CHARLES:** Some day I can tell you, when I say, in our shul. Lately, when I say Adon Olam, the small children are sitting down. And they say Adon Olam. Lately. Usually, they used to do it. And I look at the children and I wanted to cry. (Crying) Because we had the same thing. We had the same children. My brother had two beautiful, wonderful children. My sister had two. The other sister from the Haggars had two, and the older brother had two, but they were already they went to high school already.

**INT:** Do you know their names? All the names of these children?

**CHARLES:** Surely I know.

**INT:** Do you remember the names? Why don't you say the names? Say the names.

**CHARLES:** My brother the pharmacist, the son was Marek, and she was Musha. The children from the, the older children from the Hagers family was Mottele, most probably from the same name, and Sura. Sura, Sarah.

**INT:** These are Polish names.

**CHARLES:** No, this is Yiddish name. Sura is a Polish name.

**INT:** Oh, Sura. I thought you said...

**CHARLES:** The sister, then she lived with me, I don't remember the names, because I never was with them. And the older brother, was also...

**INT:** Okay, so when you look at these children, habn moire. You're afraid.

**CHARLES:** I'm afraid.

**INT:** About what?

**CHARLES:** About (Yiddish -- that which awaits them). How they going to grow up. Who knows what is going to be? We didn't believe it also. When my wife, the pharmacist, the brother, he couldn't expect that something like this could happen.

**INT:** Does America seem different to you than Poland? Do the goyim here seem any different?

**CHARLES:** Oh, surely. Surely. We lived in anti-Semitism.

**INT:** Worse than here? Different than here?

**CHARLES:** Surely worse than here. Surely.

**INT:** So it's different.

**CHARLES:** Different here, but from our time, we were not afraid. We used to live in our city, from our house, to open the door, to go in, to give a guten push, you could open the door. Because we were not afraid. Although there was anti-Semitism, but we were not afraid. And over here we're afraid. We can't go out at night. I used to go out at night at home. I wasn't afraid of nobody.

**INT:** But it's not anti-Semitism you're afraid of here.

**CHARLES:** We're afraid of anti-Semitism.

**INT:** In America.

**CHARLES:** From America, surely.

**INT:** But it's different than in Europe.

**CHARLES:** Different than in Europe, because the government is not. The government is not. But in general, people are.

**INT:** In America.

**CHARLES:** In America.

**INT:** The same as in Poland?

**CHARLES:** The same as in Poland.

**INT:** How do you know that? What tells you that? What tells you that about America?

**CHARLES:** I see. I read the paper. They say that every fifth man is anti-Semite. The paper says so. Every six.

**INT:** But how about your experiences?

**CHARLES:** No, from experiences, I haven't got nothing bad. I didn't have a bad experience.

**INT:** In America.

**CHARLES:** In America. When we came over, I remember, I still remember, when I went on Rosh Hashanah to shul with my wife, dressed up, a policeman came across, and he was on the street, he says, "Happy Holiday to you." A shaygetz.

**INT:** A goy.

**CHARLES:** A goy, yeah. We didn't have this in Poland. First of all, we didn't see a policeman. We lived together, real like a ghetto. But now, we not afraid to go out over here.

**INT:** But that's different than anti-Semitism. That's what I mean. You're afraid, but it's not they're going to kill you because you're a Jew.

**CHARLES:** A Jew. Yeah, this I'm not afraid.

**INT:** Oh. But you meant...

**CHARLES:** But there they didn't kill you as a Jew either.



**INT:** But would you have run into more anti-Semitism there in your town than you would when you were working in New York? Compared to there, in Poland, in your town?

**CHARLES:** Compared to Poland? No, I was more secure over here.

**INT:** More secure. Because in your town, even though you left the door open, you knew there was more anti-Semites there?

**CHARLES:** Yeah, but the (Yiddish -- plain ordinary person), didn't come.

**INT:** He didn't come.

**CHARLES:** He didn't come, because he was afraid. And the few that lived there, they would be afraid to do something wrong. Because the police was with us.

**INT:** The police in Poland?

**CHARLES:** The police in Poland, every policeman got paid off, storekeepers, the business, was in the Jewish hands. So came Christmas, for instance, they got paid off. As a gift, or this or that. He didn't get this from the goy.

**INT:** I see. So he wouldn't let anything happen.

**CHARLES:** He wouldn't let anything happen. Although there was anti-Semitism, but he made a living out of it.

**INT:** There were never any pogroms in your town before the war?

**CHARLES:** No, it was after the war. The pogroms were in Russia.

**INT:** But they had no history of pogroms there.

**CHARLES:** No, no.

**INT:** How about during Pesach, during Easter, the goyim didn't do anything? Good Friday, and this kind of...

**CHARLES:** No, Weinacht, Christmas, we didn't go to cheder on Christmas. We kept the light on. We were afraid to go out. We didn't learn at that time. Because you're not allowed to learn because it's tumah. And we were a little bit, but they didn't do nothing.

**INT:** So you don't remember any problems before the war? Getting beat up, or throwing rocks at children, or any kind of business like that?

**CHARLES:** No, no. It wasn't like this. In Poland, the worst thing was in the school when a goy, a shaygetz, used to take a piece of chazzer, they used to eat chazzer and come over to my mouth. Then you're not allowed to do it. But they didn't beat us up, because the Jewish people were in the city. They were afraid.

**INT:** So you find goyim in America and Poland the same, or different?

**CHARLES:** The same thing. A goy is a goy.

**INT:** Okay. But when you look at the children, you're afraid.

**CHARLES:** I'm afraid. Who knows what is waiting there? Because we had the same thing. Our children were nicely dressed with maids, and with this, they used to go out, they used to play, a child was a diamond. And look what happened later on. A million and a half Jewish children got killed. They took them away from their mothers, they took them away this, and what does a child know?

**INT:** Yeah. You said to me one time, you gave me the feeling, how could they allow this to happen with the kinder? Does your wife feel the same way?

**CHARLES:** Surely the same way.

**INT:** That how could it happen?

**CHARLES:** I don't know.

**INT:** Over the years, did you ever come up with an answer to this?

**CHARLES:** No. I can't imagine. Do you think people know everything? They cannot know everything. For instance, my wife, when we came over to the city, I was living separate, and my wife was living separate, because she has her father. She couldn't leave him alone. When she was making a pogrom, to me, to the bunker, she was stepping over dead people and ligenen, the hearts was on the floor. Ligenen, some people didn't want to say, so they got shot. They didn't want to see somebody should kill them in the eyes, so they were running. So they shot them. I went once to say kaddish at night. My father died on Yom Kippur. So when I came home, at night, a Deutsch from far away said "Halt, halt." Maybe he wanted to tell me something, maybe he wanted to send me something. Maybe he wanted to kill me, who knows?

**INT:** He's a soldier.

**CHARLES:** Gestapo. Not soldier. So I didn't listen to him, and I run away. I could go, I ran Kaddish at night, just at night, because you were afraid. It was a terrible thing. A terrible track. People, three quarters of the city were swollen. They didn't have what to eat. You can't imagine. When there was the first pogrom was from the Germans, so the goy wasn't allowed to come in to rob people. They did it themselves. They went later on

the second day, and they picked together the things from the houses. At that time, and then they took the Jewish people to sort it, good things, bad things, then it had a little bit better. For instance, my two sisters, they went there to work there. So they used to see a good thing, they used to take it. They risked their lives. Later the goyim came to buy it, to exchange this for something, because they didn't have what to eat. So one friend of mine, a younger, a boy, he saw his playthings what they took away, so he grabbed it. A Gestapo saw it. So he came over to him. "Open your mouth." (Yiddish -- And he shot a bullet into his mouth.)

**INT:** He shot him.

**CHARLES:** He shot him.

**INT:** Right there.

**CHARLES:** Right there on the premises. People saw it. So they were afraid. But they did it anyway. Because their hunger was so bitter. They didn't have what to eat. You cannot imagine, the Russians they took away everything already. So they didn't have what to sell, even. And a goy wasn't allowed to bring merchandise to the city. But that he needed also a piece of something. And by a Jew he found it. A shweibele, a piece of naft, a bisl salt. So they came. They were not allowed, and they brought something to eat, and they got this. So this is not written in no place.

**INT:** Yeah, about what's going to happen. But there are things, like they had, when the Bais HaMikdash was destroyed, and it tells you, in Eichah that children were eaten by the mothers, the mothers ate the children, and all kinds of tsuris.

**CHARLES:** That's what happened. That's what happened.

**INT:** But the fact that it happened in the past, you couldn't imagine it would happen to Jews anymore.

**CHARLES:** See, a man who worked for the government, like you, has a house like this. It wasn't available. A job like this for a Jew.

**INT:** Yeah. He had to go in business.

**CHARLES:** He had to go in business. So some people got rich, and some people got poor. We had in Poland we had a half a million schnorrers, officially schnorrer. They used to buy a horse with a wagon, they used to put in a few people, they used to go, and when they came to a city, they stood on the side there, and all the people the children, they went to the city to, somebody gave them a penny, two pennies, five pennies, a nickel, somebody didn't, somebody just gave this. But this is the way they lived.

**INT:** When you look at the kinderlach, and you think about your own einachlach, would you say that Israel is a safer place than America?

**CHARLES:** No, I wouldn't say Israel is a safer place. Israel is also bitter.

**INT:** Why?

**CHARLES:** Because they kill every time they kill people.

**INT:** But yet it's never going to be like a pogrom like you were afraid of in America.

**CHARLES:** There wouldn't be a pogrom.

**INT:** It's never going to happen there.

**CHARLES:** That is the reason we wanted to go to Israel.

**INT:** So how about now, though, when you think about the einachlach, and these young, do you think they'd be better off in Israel?

**CHARLES:** No, I wouldn't say they'll be better off, because you take a bus, you wouldn't be in a pogrom, I don't think the government is going to let here, we'll have pogrom.

**INT:** Then what are you afraid of here, when you look at those children?

**CHARLES:** Who knows what is going to be.

**INT:** That's what I mean.

**CHARLES:** Do you think a man like Duke cannot be in the government?

**INT:** That's what I mean. Okay, so it could be something bad could happen. Could be. But in Israel?

**CHARLES:** In Israel, look what is doing nowadays. Comes a goy, comes an Arab, he puts in a truck, and...

**INT:** But it's different.

**CHARLES:** But it's different from a pogrom. That is a different pogrom. But you can get killed there. We used to pray. How come America, all the world, they don't bomb the ghetto? They don't bomb the roads to the crematoriums? Even when the Jewish people would be killed. They would be killed. But not burned. Not taken quietly, taken naked, and put in there, and beat him, and this and that, put him to the gas. Surely it's different in Israel. I wouldn't mind to live in Israel. Even today.

**INT:** Would you want your einachlach eventually to live in Israel?

**CHARLES:** No, because we want them to be close to us.

**INT:** I see. But eventually.

**CHARLES:** Eventually, when we wouldn't be alive...

**INT:** Would you want them, do you think it's safer to be in Israel?

**CHARLES:** At least to live a Jewish life. They have sorrow, and they're afraid. Yom HaAtzmaut is entirely different there in Israel than here. Chanukah and Purim and other things. Here it's goyish. I like it very much in Israel. I come in there twelve o'clock at night also, in Israel. I wasn't afraid. We lived in Haifa.

**INT:** For how long?

**CHARLES:** Four and a half months. Three and a half months, when the kids went to a sabbatical.

**INT:** Oh. So it was nice there.

**CHARLES:** I liked it very much there. Especially with the American dollar. I came to the supermarket, I like to see, I saw people buy for Shabbat, they bought about three, four challahs, and challah was very cheap. And five pounds of grapes, and that's all they buy.

**INT:** Do you feel more comfortable here or there? Forget about mishpocha, just as a place.

**CHARLES:** Just as a place? I would be more comfortable there.

**INT:** Because?

**CHARLES:** Because there I go as a Jewish.

**INT:** Did you talk Yiddish there?

**CHARLES:** I talk, in Haifa you speak German, and in Tel Aviv you speak Polish (laughs). And there Jewish, who doesn't understand. I used to ask an elderly man. Do you speak Jewish? Everybody speak Jewish there. And the youngster speaks English.

**INT:** Yeah. You found people there from Europe that you haven't seen?

**CHARLES:** No, I hadn't seen much.

**INT:** But Haifa is not so many.

**CHARLES:** Germans.

**INT:** Oh, German in Haifa.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, a lot of Germans.

**INT:** They came before the war?

**CHARLES:** They came before the war.

**INT:** All right. I think that's about all. You couldn't, if you wanted to summarize how you survived, thinking about all this, what made you survive, other people just couldn't do it? What would you say?

**CHARLES:** You have to have two things. First of all, you had to be handy, and the second luck. If I wouldn't have lived through the twelve pogroms...

**INT:** By making the bunker.

**CHARLES:** By making the bunker by myself. Because people make bunkers a thousand times more secure than I had, but somebody made it for them. And this was a bad thing. Because the man who made it, he knew there is a bunker. So he came over. He made a bunker can fit fifteen people, sixteen people, he wanted to go in with his family. Cannot go in. There's no room. So then he went away, they caught him.

**INT:** He told.

**CHARLES:** He told.

**INT:** Why? Because they said they'd let him off?

**CHARLES:** No, they said they'd let him off, they put a gun to his head. You don't tell, right away he shot him. And everybody thinks that maybe he's going to survive. And I made it by myself, nobody knew about it.

**INT:** And you only had for your, just a few people.

**CHARLES:** Just for my people, sure.

**INT:** That was the first, and the other's mazel.

**CHARLES:** Yeah. And the other's mazel.

**INT:** But you never think in any way that Hashem took care of you for some reason? Can you think that way?

**CHARLES:** I'm not such a, Hashem, why didn't He take care of the rabbi, the shochet, the....

**INT:** I don't know why.

**CHARLES:** I don't know why. So I thought He doesn't take care. He forgot about us. He didn't take care of nobody.

**INT:** He took care of you. You survived, and you had a nice life.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, He took care of me.

**INT:** Yeah. You survived and you had a nice life.

**CHARLES:** Yeah, I had a nice life. Since I came over here, I cannot complain. I wasn't hungry.

**INT:** Probably better here, than in Poland, your life. Not with the mishpocha, G-d forbid. I'm not saying anything, but the life would have been better here, than there, yeah?

**CHARLES:** Naturally.

**INT:** You would have stayed there, it would never have been as good.

**CHARLES:** Never. It was very bad. Right after the war, even before the war. Individual people, they had it good. But individual. General, it was no good.

**INT:** But it turned out for you, living in America, is a besserl life, a besserel leib than if you would have stayed in Poland.

**CHARLES:** In Poland, in Russia, and all over the world.

**INT:** Better here.

**CHARLES:** It's better here than all over the world.

**INT:** So for you, the war, except that you had such a horrible loss, it's not an except, it's the major thing, but parnosseh wise, it was better here. More comfortable.

**CHARLES:** I personally had it good there. Because I would have had a drugstore. There.

**INT:** But not as good as here. You think as good as here?

**CHARLES:** There is even better than here. Because here, we had thousands of drugstores. I'm not talking about a pharmacy. A pharmacy was very seldom, because it was controlled by the government. But a drugstore was also seldom. Here you have in every store, in every supermarket you sell this. There it wasn't allowed to do it. But if you're talking about me, I was the only one. But my brothers, my neighbors. It wasn't a life in Poland. It gets better over here. When I came over here, it was entirely different. I wasn't afraid here, also. I used to go at night to meetings, to union meetings, at night, and go to a restaurant at night, and come home 12:00, 1:00, I wasn't afraid. People used to tell me, nobody had an air conditioner, they used to sleep at night in the parks. Now it became terrible.

**INT:** Yeah, so maybe COSSE going to the yeshiva, it affected how frum you were? Say about that. Talk a little bit about that.

**CHARLES:** We became more frum. Because maybe we liked it very much. She came, she knew how to daven. I was very happy that she knows how to daven. Because by us she would have been in Poland, she wouldn't know nothing, and by us altogether, by good times, the girls didn't know much. They didn't teach them. And here they teach them, and they knew.

**INT:** So if you would not have had children, you don't know how religious you would have been in America?

**CHARLES:** No, if we didn't have children, we would be very heartbroken for the rest of our lives. My wife special wanted a child. She went through a lot with COSSE. I mean, because at that time she didn't have menstruation for years. It was terrible. But she had good doctors there.

**INT:** But having a child, you said, brought you back to Yiddishkeit.

**CHARLES:** Yeah.

**INT:** How?

**CHARLES:** How, because we sent her to a yeshiva. This is the first thing. We came over here with nothing. And the whole family were against. Her family.

**INT:** That were here. The Americans. They said don't do it.

**CHARLES:** And the zayde was a shochet. And they were (?) already.

**INT:** They said you don't have to send her. Was it your wife's decision to send her, or yours?

**CHARLES:** Both of them. We didn't do nothing, one over the other.



**INT:** You both decide.

**CHARLES:** We both always decided together.

**INT:** But you don't know without COSSE, how religious, if you would have sent COSSE to a public school?

**CHARLES:** To a public school, I don't know. I don't know.

**INT:** You can't say.

**CHARLES:** I cannot say it because I don't know. I would have been religious too. A shul to go to Yom Kippur, there's no question about it. We went even in the camp, in the DP camp, we went Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur davening. Pesach I made a Seder in the house. Even in the DP camp. We knew everything. We knew...we liked to be Jewish, because we suffered so much being Jewish, and now we going to throw it away?

**INT:** But you don't know to what degree, how much if you wouldn't have had a child in the yeshiva?

**CHARLES:** No.

**INT:** You didn't have to worry about that. She would not, she only went with religious people.

**CHARLES:** Only with religious boys. She went davening every Saturday. The rabbi knew her very well.

**INT:** So you never had to worry about who she went with, or what she...

**CHARLES:** No, no.

**INT:** Was there anything American about how COSSE was that was hard for you? Anything at all about doing American things, or the freedom that American girls had compared to being in Europe?

**CHARLES:** No, I didn't have. She wasn't that, she was European. She didn't have no problem with that, whatsoever. She didn't want to do things that we don't like it. She went from a yeshiva to a high school. In high school was serving, there was a cafeteria there. So she told me that this and this boy, and this and this girl, right away he ate whatever they could. She didn't eat nothing there. All the few years that she went to high school, she took sandwiches from the house. All those years.

**INT:** So Yiddishkeit-wise, you had nothing to worry about. You knew.

**CHARLES:** I knew. She was a very religious girl.

**INT:** How important it is for the einachlach to see.

**CHARLES:** Because they come in, and they know we're religious, and they've got yarmulkes when they eat. They make a bracha right away, and they make a wash to bread.

**INT:** How about knowing that you survived and being in Europe. Is that important, do you think, for the einachlach to know about?

**CHARLES:** Oh, they don't know yet.

**INT:** Is it important for them to know?

**CHARLES:** They cannot imagine...how is to be a Jew in Europe. They cannot imagine. They have a free land here, they don't know nothing. If they would go to a public school, somebody should say about Jew, they go always to yeshivas. So they don't know what it means in a goyishe velt.

**INT:** Do you want them some day to know about what happened with you and your wife?

**CHARLES:** They know a little bit, because they went to school, they ask me questions. How we survived. A little bit. I didn't tell them all, but a little bit.

**INT:** Do you think it's important that they know?

**CHARLES:** It's very important they know what could be. Very important they should know what could be. They shouldn't take for granted America. We're on the watch. We have to be on the watch over here.

**INT:** If you were to think about what's the best way for them to wind up, Yiddishkeit-wise, because you see now, you have all kinds from Americans, from American kids. They go to Israel, they become very frum, they wear black hats. What you see in the shul, you have...what do you wish for them?

**CHARLES:** I don't care about black hats.

**INT:** What should they be like?

**CHARLES:** That they should be religious menschen. They should be menschen, good menschen. Good character. Not to do nothing to other people. And provide a nice, clean Jewish life. It's very important for them.

**INT:** But what kind of a Jew? You look at, you have people with beards and kapotes.

**CHARLES:** They shouldn't be extreme. I don't like extremes. I don't like very much. People like Ricky, for instance. Too extreme.

**INT:** But not in Europe, it wouldn't be extreme. In your time.

**CHARLES:** In my time, it would have been extreme, a young man like him.

**INT:** It would have been.

**CHARLES:** They had already old-timers like this. But the old-timers like this, the children they were not already like this.

**INT:** Only some.

**CHARLES:** Some, some. Yeshivas wasn't in every city was a yeshiva by us. You had to go to the big yeshivas you had to go very far. And then the money.

**INT:** So how would you describe how you want them to be religiously?

**CHARLES:** I want them to be religiously like an American Jew from our shul. Like our shul is. Our shul is very conservative. Like our rabbi, for instance. He doesn't wear a gartle now. He didn't wear a beckishe. You remember our rabbi. He used to come without a, he wear a beckishe when he married off the second daughter. Because they're Hungarian people, they wear beckishes, and then Ricky came, Ricky wears a beckishe, and he shouldn't, he starts to...but he was a good Jew, our rabbi. A good Jew, a nice man, a good-hearted man, you can talk to him. You have a problem, you can always (Yiddish -- talk to him heart to heart) from him. Our rabbi. He doesn't wear a beard.

**INT:** No, he has...

**CHARLES:** Has a little bit, this is nothing.

(END OF INTERVIEW)