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Oral history interview with Gisela Stone

This is Mrs. Gisela Stone, West Palm Beach, Florida, the date is March 26th, 1994.

G. I hope that my voice will come through. Is it on already? Okay, I am very much involved in opera and very classical music and every year we have a scholarship going here where I go around, I used to go around, and collect money for the young people who are interested in opera. So four years ago, when I went over there on the other side I met a, an elderly lady and she asked me right away, what accent do you have, I mentioned it's German, yeah, one word and the other followed and it turned out to be she was very interested in and she told me that she has a brother who was involved, after the liberation of the DP's in Lansburg which is near Dah....., right? She called up her brother and he sent me right away copies of whatever happened there and asked me to tell him about my background and he mentioned that a friend of his whose daughter is also working on her dissertation from Princeton will be here in West Palm Beach and if I would mind to talk to her and this is the reason I had these, uh. Unfortunately, these tapes didn't turn out too well but that's another story again. I never talked about these things like so many survivors. You hear that on television like, I sort of like to bury it and forget it, start a new life and with my husband we even changed our names which used to be Steiner and now it's Stone. But you cannot do that, you cannot forget these things so after I got in touch with these people I sort of went back in my memories and they overwhelmed me. I remember things which were way back because we came here after the liberation in 47, I forgot about little things, little happenings and they all came back. Now, you are interested in some background but I would like to mention still, I am German born in Berlin, and my parents and my husband had a Hungarian background. We missed the war away from Germany in 39 when the war broke out. I'll be 80 years old so you have an idea. And, um, the only way out was the trip to Buddahpest. Of course we didn't want to but my husband had a mother there, an old lady, sick and so he didn't want to leave her so we went to Buddahpest. We left all of our belongings there, that was in 39 and we stayed in Buddahpest until 44. Things got very bad as you know it. Later on we had to live in the ghetto. I couldn't get a job because of my religion. We had air raids towards the end of 44. We couldn't get any food because people from the ghetto could only go out two hours a day and what could you get when there were air raids. There was not hardly anything available. We never took out clothes off because we had to run down in the basement on account of the air raids. Food as I mentioned was very little but still sufficient so your body didn't break down completely. It was in November, 1944 when things got very, very bad, we still didn't know about A..... My husband was already taken away to a labor camp but here and there I got some news from him so I knew he was alive.

D. Do you know where he was?

G. Yeah, he was in the labor camp in Hungary. They used him as an interpreter, the German's used him as an interpreter because he was German born, right, but very bad. And my whole family, who always lived in Hungary, was gone. My mother, I show you a picture there, uncles, everybody. But we still didn't know about Aushl..... and the little news which came in here and there, we just didn't believe this was possible. They had very bad political situation there, the fire cr..... you heard

about that, it's, it's like the swastika but a little bit like the fire. Anyway, we were in 1944, beginning, very beginning of November when it looked so bad already we had a little knapsack and in there was some cookies, so always prepared for taking a.... and then one morning on the, maybe on the 6th, I have to check that myself, either the 6th or the 8th of November there was a knock on the door, 6:00 in the morning, get out you dirty Jews and then we knew already that there was a place that they collected all the remainder of the Jews, who lived in Buddahpest so they gathered us in what they called the factory in Buddahpest, are you familiar in Buddahpest, in Budda, in the other side. And then one morning, the next morning I believe, they told us, well there was nothing there to, we just sat there on, it was a factory which was not working anymore and um, we had to, we had to make the best of it to, there was no toilet, I can't talk about this. There was no toilet and right away we started with diarrhea, right away. So then, they gathered us in a group and we marched to the border of first Austria and then into Germany, I don't want to go into too much detail, it took about four days till we made it. In that time, in the evening they gave us something like um, half...., do you know what that is? It's like grits but not as good as grits. Not with milk or nothing like that, and a piece of bread. No water, nothing, I don't have to tell you how important it is to have water. So we started to march there, toward the border, one night they put us up in a, you know what a schnier is? Where they gathered .

Pause in tape.

Schnier is, I have a dictionary there, when you gather your corn and everything you put it in, in the country.

D. In the country.

G. When you are in the country and you gather, in the fall, all of your

D. The harvest

G. The harvest yeah, and there they put us up and at that time I was already very concerned about if they put a match to that it'll be all gone. One night, this would have been the third night, it was at the Dannube, and um, we had a chance to take our clothes off, in November mind you, and washed ourselves. We proceed and washed, you smelled the diarrhea, all these awful things, I had to throw my blanket away which I took on this trip. And, um, we were freezing, our shoes started to fall off our feet, it was very cold and we started right away not to have our periods, I don't know if you are familiar with that. We were told that this is because of the trauma and of what we are going through there but there were, of course, all kinds of very strong women, I was never a very strong person physically. We also had women who were pregnant and some of them even had their periods but not for too long. We marched about 1000 in a group, toward the border of Hungry and then we were greeted by the SS, these were all young boys, 16, 17 years old.

D. That's it

G. That's it, they had the SS uniform on but they didn't know what to do. All they knew is that they put us in these cattle cars, 60, they always counted, 60, next day the cars went off, no food, no water, no nothing, we couldn't even sit down, there was 60 in that standing, we started to get lice right

away and some of them in the group, they were young girls, I would say, as I recall, maybe 3 or 4, they lost their minds and they started to scream and attack us in that small place. I have a sister-in-law who at that time was not my sister-in-law yet but my friend, we were girl friends. She had a knife, somehow she saved it and she threatened, of course, everybody because we still had a little food there and you couldn't eat there if somebody is, what if you have a little bacon or something, piece of bread, that's all, and they wanted to take that away and of course, with a knife, these are very unpleasant things. You are mostly interested in the physical so I will leave all details which happened there, you can get a copy from Dr. Peck, I am pretty sure he will send you a copy. There is a lot of detail in there. And the fourth day I recall, we arrived there at what they call cufering, which were about 10 or, I don't even know how many larger, you know what a larger is, near D....., we belonged to D..... So as we arrived they gave us a little food which was very good, they put us up in these

D. What did they give you?

G. Again, that was a cooked something and I understand from the carpals, you know what a carpal is, that they said there was bromine in it, so we were calm, we calmed down.

D. The carpals told you there was bromine in it.

G. Yes, my sister-in-law lived in Poland and she spoke Polish. The carpals were mean, mean people I must say but they told us that you don't have to worry about it because we mentioned this that they almost, our old people attacked us in the trains and no food, you get used to it they said. You will get used to it so we, uh, I will skip everything there with the work and with everything in Lager 11, that's where we arrived. In Lager 11, since my sister-in-law spoke polish we got a position peeling potatoes, now that was something. All day long, we threw it out there and there was like a little l....., you know what that is, where they were waiting there, those skeletons were waiting there and they grabbed the potato peels and they ate them, of course, they all perished sooner or later, a day or so later. It was a horrible sight but we tried not to eat that and we were always concerned about not getting a bed, water to wash our hands or anything and we still had diarrhea. Still, it didn't stop. We had no medication, nothing. So one day, it was, I think around Christmas time, we didn't have so much, so many soldiers watching us so we had these big vats or so where they sort of washed the potatoes which we peeled all day and I said to my sister-in-law, how about if we take a bath in that and we did. Not in that, I mean potatoes were out already, but we took a bath, cold water, and I got very sick from it. Not a cold in the sense that your nose was running, I never had a headache but I got the double pneumonia, no water, no pills, no food, no nothing. One of the officer, she watched me because they put me aside since I had a lot of lice and this sickness and after a certain time they put you in Lager 4, you heard about it, with sick people, the sick people were there.

D. Can you describe Lager 4

G. I wasn't there, I almost got there, and this German officer

D. Lager 4 from Gar.....

G. This is Lager 11

- D. You said Lager 4
- G. We had Lager 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 in Calf...., it was all attached to .. from there
- D. Lager 4 was the Conc.... house
- G. Con. Av....
- D. Can you describe that at all.
- G. All I know is that people didn't last long because they didn't get any food and they just died.
- D. Do you know how big it was? You know nothing, okay.
- G. No. but, there are people here who know. I met a lot of people who were in the same boat in counselling with me, Harry Buterman, Sam Berger, they all got in touch with me and called me like you did, but they were there. So, and, um, I was ready to be shipped out there and I knew about this and my sister-in-law tried very hard to keep me there and she said she will be alright and all of a sudden this German officer came in and she asked, are you still here, you should be out already and with all my strength I told her, I couldn't get up of course, I was laying there, we had straw, little straw, and I'll be alright, so she said, how come you have a German accent, but I'm from Berlin, I'm German and I played up a little bit an hour later she brought me her sandwich. You know what a sandwich meant? I could hardly eat it because I had no apatite but still, your body, you see we were there six months so in the fifth month my legs, my ankles were swollen already and my belly, I still have a big belly but I don't think this has anything to do, our bellies extended, our arms got very, very thin, this was going toward the end already. She came every day for about two or three days and she brought me food. That was my Mrs. Schlinder. Why I don't know. She was a very nice woman.
- D. What was her name?
- G. I forgot, I even forget the Lager commandant, you know who that is. Now we are skipping because I am not telling you everything.
- D. What kind of camp was Kaf....
- G. Kaf.... was a camp where they took the still stronger men or women to work in these underground factories and this Edith R.. who is the daughter of Dr. R.... in Lensburg, she was a student at the time when, she's 28 uh, no, she made her dissertation about this from Princeton, a very intelligent girl, she's still writing books but I'm skipping now, right, it's a little difficult to now, you want to know mostly about the health problems, in between I have to tell you something to tell you something of what happened.
- D. Oh, please tell me whatever.
- G. Because it has something to do with, that I survived right?

D. Oh, yeah, sure. Tell me.

G. We had a lot of lice there and a lot of typhoid. You heard about that. And the German soldiers who were watching over us, they were just as much afraid of the lice as we were because they transmitted typhoid. You know about this right. So, um, there was, um, we called that quarantine, couldn't go out because once you got out and had some assignment where it was in a restaurant like my sister-in-law who was scrubbing the floors, or in the underground factory there was always little food available but we couldn't get out and we the quarantine. And I don't have to tell you, our shoes, I was lucky I found somebody there who was a shoemaker and he put some wooden soles on my shoes so I could walk a little bit and I had all of that double pneumonia but that is a long story I don't think we can get that on that.

D. Well, this is what's important, how did you get over the double pneumonia?

G. She, uh, love and determination, and I was young.

D. Well were you quarantined, were you in a bed by yourself?

G. There were no beds they were bunkers, we laid on a piece of wood and there was a little straw in it.

D. How many people were in the bunker with you?

G. Uh, 60. 30 on this side 30 on that side. You could never lay like this, you laid on one side and we had a couple there, a woman couple who, middle of the night, said turn, then we all turn this way, there was no room.

D. How many people in your own bed?

G. 30 here and 30 here.

D. No, in the one you slept in?

G. Uh, when I was sick, there were not too many, about 10, not too many.

D. And it was just

G.I'm still scratching but, the side effect from the many years ...

D. You were just lying on straw?

G. Yeah

D. Did you have any pillows or blankets?

G. No, please. No pillows, no blankets, it would take a while to describe.

D. That's okay, describe it.

G. You see, I still keep scratching when I talk about lice. We had three kinds of lice, I'll describe them to you. We had lice, they were different like, I could tell you. Even if I would see them now I would tell you exactly how they look. We had lice here,

D. In the hair, in your head.

G. We had lice which were only in our clothing, what little clothing we had on, they were rags. They were only eating them. And we had personal lice, the pubic hair, the hair under your arms. Yeah, so that was horrible. All day long we went like this,

D. You were scratching.

G. Yeah, my sister-in-law had an assignment somewhere and she came into this countlager to be with me. We are like this,

D. You're very close.

G. Yeah, we are very close and you see I cannot forget that once she was assigned to a guest house there and she got a rotten apple and she brought me that rotten apple and it was heaven and she told me then later that I always asked for orange juice. I was sick.

D. Now I'm scratching.

G. I have no lice. No, we have little lizards here and bugs. You see I go from one thing to the other which doesn't really fit in. You see, came here on the recommendation of, uh, Mr. Hammond and since his sister lives here who I approached for money for the opera, she stayed there and she coached me so the voices are, you can hear the voices of these tapes.

D. So you were in the cottonball, were there any people who were taking care of the patients?

G. No. We had a doctor there, the Hungarian doctor who was supposed to take care of us.

D. Was it a man or a woman?

G. No, it was a woman doctor.

D. What was her name?

G. I forgot, there are certain things which are out of my

D. Was she Jewish?

G. Yeah, she was from Buddahpest. But thing with this, if somebody died, she was in charge

of that little cottonball where we had only women, no too many. When somebody died she checked it off and ration of the day of this dead person, was hers. So, you see there are little politics. My sister-in-law knew that and when she went out to work in the morning, like 6:00 they had to get out, she talked to this doctor and she still had the knife. This knife was very important and she said if my sister-in-law is not, I was her girlfriend at that time, we even said we were sister, if she is not here in the evening you get it. You will not get her rations. It was, you know like you see in the movies, in order to survive you have to do these things and I was still there, I got a little better thanks to this German woman who brought me a little food here and there and I asked to be transferred to the main camp again in, to Lager in Leven.

D. How long were you in Kron.....?

G. In Kron.... I would say I was about maybe ten days or so.

D. Was there anybody there who was, acted like a nurse?

G. No

D. Took care of anybody?

G. No

D. So what did you do all day?

G. We would just, I was delirious my sister-in-law said,

D. And what did the doctor do, anything?

G. No, the doctor was Helk... Fuerer Blanker

D. Blanker

G. Blanker, who shot himself, that's in all the books here and he was my schindler, he save med.

D. Oh, this is a he.

G. That's a he, he was from the whole Lager Doctor. He was actually a doctor, he was from the Rheinland, you know the west of Germany and uh, he was a pediatrician. Very good looking young man, was there with his wife and his child and he came to these Lagers and he checked them, how many died and uh, whatever was to be done. I never saw him then but later on when I went back to the main Lager which was number 11, I was glad to get out of that cotton lager, because that was terrible. One day they brought some petroleum, what do you call that, um, they washed our heads with it for the lice. Did you ever here? That stuff stinks.

D. Petroleum?

G. Yeah, petroleum. The lice disappeared but the little nicks you know, you put it like this and you put it down.

D. So they were

G. You must have seen it in movies already right? So anyway, when I went back in a few days, I do not recall exactly when, it doesn't matter, somebody came out, one of those big couples. They were strong men, Jews, but they were mean. We were doing nothing there because it was a quarantine, we couldn't go out of the Lager. And they said that they are looking for a woman who was typing and doing shorthand. In the camps, we never volunteered for anything because whoever volunteered, they needed let's say 30 dressmakers, of course everybody was a dressmaker, they all went to Havensburg and Blanburg and never came back. So, we didn't but I discussed this with my sister-in-law and I said, now maybe I should say it because with all these Hungarian woman I was the only one who said, she knows how to type and she knows how to do shorthand. So, I put my finger up and they took me to the lager commandant, the other that was his office, and, uh, there was Haukstrum Feurer Blanker. And, um, with his, what they call, adjutant(?), but he didn't talk to me, nothing and I must have looked like hell there, I was with no shoes and those skinny arms and no hair, very short hair, much shorter than this because they cut it in the beginning.

D. Did they cut your pubic hair and underarms?

G. No, this was, they were going to m....., you know Jewish, the whole thing went to Meeler(?), you know the end. So there were a lot of things that they didn't, they claim here there is a professor who does not believe there was a Holocaust, alright, we don't go into that. And, um, in this case, there was a bishun..... the whole thing, because we heard already the bombings and we had air raids there in the camp, so, there was, I went there and this Blanker man, he told his adjutant to try me out so of course, my knees were shaking, right, and he tried me, he dictated something from the, I still remember, you remember that newspaper, and then he said alright a few sentences, you type it then, there's an old typewriter there. It's difficult for somebody who takes a test right. I told him, listen, go easy I haven't done this for a long time because in Buddahpest I couldn't get a job in an office because I'm Jewish. And, um, they say I transcribe that to a piece of paper, he went out and so I told, yes, she knows and she speaks German perfect. So he said alright, go back to your camp. So I went back to the camp and oh, about a week or so I never heard of it and then all of a sudden they, I got the notice through the boarhorn again, I should come to the commandant. My sister-in-law started to cry right away, she knew what's going to happen, they take me and not her. And, um, the commandant said alright tomorrow morning you go to the enblaus....., you know what that is? And

D. To get rid of your lice.

G. Yeah, and uh, they take your clothes off and they put it in some hot chamber, some, so, I didn't say anything but I knew what that meant, just you he said, just you you go there. So, when I told that to my sister-in-law she was falling apart she said she was ready for suicide. She doesn't want to live, oh, I really mean it. We all were thinking of it, very often. So this was something not to be denied because this was Lager 1, the main Lager where I was transferred to, to get a job. You know what that means? So, next, uh, it wasn't the next, yeah, next day when I went to report, they said to me,

the commandant said, alright you get some clothes and some decent shoes so you can work there in an office and I said to him, I'm not going. He was more flabbergasted than you are here now. I had nothing to lose Diane, I said I have a sister here and we are very close, we lost our parents. He didn't want to know about it, he was yelling there, you know what that means, to deny an order from the German Army. Any soldier would be shot right away and I even said to him, I told him, Commandant..... my name is N... V....., that was in German right? Oh, he was yelling at me, out, out from

D. Let's translate that for the tape -- Commandant I have nothing to lose, my life is at it's end.

G. Yeah, I always said that, nothing, nothing to lose. I know it was my sister-in-law we were broken down, we were ready to, the only way was to run against that loaded gate

D. The wire, the electric wire

G. Then, that was a sure thing. And next day I get again an order to come to the, and oh, we hugged each other and we said good-bye and I was sure I would be shot. And I was not afraid. Today when I see a strong young man on the street, I always touch my money and I am afraid. I am such a coward. And there I was very, well, it's a situation when you don't care anymore and again, there was no, he said I wanted to see that person who denies an order to the German, I don't know what he called, to the German or whatever it was, it was an SS man by the way. And then, I cannot forget it, I'm not overdoing this because I don't publicize these things and he made like this

D. He winked, he winked at you?

G. Yeah, there was Mr. Schlinder and I don't know, I can't get rid of the thought of it. He said alright, tomorrow morning you will be picked up with your sister, you get new clothes and you come to the emblousing in Lager 1, that was the main thing, and you get a job. So that was that. Now, there are little details which I do not want to leave out because of the health and all that. Uh, next day we were picked up with another 100 men who went also to the emblouser because they had to put up a fire or whatnot to heat up the thing and we took a shower. We got a little piece of soap like this, you know that soap was made from the human bones, you heard about that?

D. You mean human fat.

G. Yeah, or fat or whatever it was. And a little towel.

D. What did the soap smell like?

G. It didn't smell

D. What did it look like?

G. You know what, like what you get in a motel, a little soap like this, but we knew what it is.

D. How did you know?

G. You know that was like, uh, radio, by mouth in the camp. Whatever one said, there was no secrets, nothing. There we knew already about Aushlitz, we talked to somebody who escaped from Aushlitz,

D. You talked to somebody who escaped from Aushlitz? Who was that?

G. I don't know who it was but he described everything. You know they worked only, they were strong couples, the months and then they put them also in the gas chambers so they put. Uh, where was I?

D. So you got the soap and you got the shower.

G. Yeah, we got the shower and uh, there was a klider.... and they took it away from, but I didn't care, Diane, I am sorry to say that but I didn't care whose it was, it was from uh, whatever it was. I found a jacket there, a brown jacket like this and that was a b..... do you know what a b..... is? It was like Hitler had the young people, the girls and the boys, they had assignments like, they were not soldiers because they were too young, so there were .

D. Hitler youth(?)

G. Hitler youth (?), with the little things, the Russians had it too they had the red

D. Little red tie?

G. Yeah, but they don't have it anymore but at that time I looked at that and that was another piece of heaven because it had pockets and I was always thinking where can I steal food?

D. Oh, it was a little uniform.

G. Yeah, but it was only the jacket, two pockets here, two pockets there and I think inside. You see, I know, I have a whole closet full of sm...., I , but that I cannot forget and I got a pair of shoes which had heels like this, couldn't even wear them. And anyway I got to a job. This was the main camp and there was an infirmary there for the SS soldiers and for the guards, not for us, when they are sick then they go in there and they had a little office there with a barracks and every morning the soldier came and picked me up and took me outside the camp into this uh, office there. It wasn't an office, just a little something with a, it was a better typewriter there.

Pause in tape

G. There is a lot to mention about my sister-in-law and I have crossed in the evening there to go down to the camp and you've got that slop that they gave you, even the Germans had no more food there so I finangled with the Ho..... that my sister-in-law is going to die and then I am going to die too because they don't give you any food. He went down to the camp and he almost killed that girl who was in charge. So, he told me from tomorrow on your sister will be in the SS kitchen. You see, as I talk to you about it I know what it means but you cannot visualize what it meant. There was a lot

of thing going on like scrap those vats where they cooked that little soup for the SS and there was always something she tried to get when the soldier was not looking, she grabbed her sugar and put it here and here

D. Under the arms

G. Under the arms and in the pockets and we ate it in the latrine. If, I bet you when you go here to a restaurant you always wash your hands before because you never know what you touch in the latrine, it was very good food and this is what kept us a little bit going. There was a time, we had air raids galore and when the sirens went off we were all running, the soldiers were all running and hiding and poor Gisela stayed there, waiting for, you see I must repeat again, I didn't care if I was killed, I was only interested in food. They had a little shelf there with vitamins, that was my first thing, to go into the vitamins, and cough medicine. A whole bottle of cough medicine I swallowed once during the air raid. I had such diarrhea, I couldn't even tell you. But what do I do with the bottle, they would have known. So I had to dig something to bury that bottle. We also got the red cross there one day, it was toward the end and they give us a little package like this, there was some condensed milk and a little sugar, chocolate, little things, everything very little, but you couldn't save anything because if you went down again in the evening to the Lager they would have killed you for it. So, what did we do? We ate it all in one. Again the diarrhea, we couldn't get rid of the diarrhea. One day they announced that whoever wants to have a job for one day to clean the latrines, you know they had to shovel the shit, excuse me but that's the thing. They had to shovel it for double rations, and bread, whatever that was. It was a little piece of something. And two dishes of that soup. We got so sick from that smell, my sister-in-law and me, that we couldn't eat that double rations, because of that smell. And that smell didn't go out from our clothes, and from nothing. It was very difficult. It was going to the end of the whole thing there, the war and everything and now we had lice in Lager 1. So far they didn't have any lice there. Men, and also the women, some women, and there were litvacks(?) there, and from all over the other countries. And they said that they have to examine, this is, I think, important for you to know. The stool examination. The stool examination. They issued, what did we know about? The stool examination, my, my. They issued little boxes like this with a cover, right, and they said that you have to put the waste in there and the number, our number. No names, just numbers.

D. But you weren't tatoed.

G. No. They had no more time and not What did we do? My sister-in-law had diarrhea and I didn't. I had to manipulate, I had to look for this, there were big stacks from everybody, in the little, little boxes for her number. I took that out, here again in the jacket, went to the latrine, took some of hers, it doesn't sound very nice

D. That's okay.

G. But, now I can laugh about it. Threw hers out and put half of mine in. I can't believe that I did it but it saved her life because if they would have discovered there was diarrhea, out, out from there. That's one thing, there, the liberation then, one day before the big liberation came they wanted to put us into trains and um, ship us to Austria, to Tivelo(?), and I said to my sister-in-law, there was such a dusch... there, running here and there, the SS didn't know what to do, uh, I would fear to

mention that in that little office they had, I sometimes typed some letters, whatever it was, and the copy, the dutsch...., what do you call that, a typewriter, I had to pull it out,

D. The German

G. The copy paper

D. The copy paper, the carbon paper?

G. The carbon paper. They asked me down in the camp, one of the couples approached me and asked me what are you doing there? What am I doing, I type letters. You bring us some of that paper and we give you a potato for it. You know what a potato meant, what did I care for the copy paper, it was scarce but it went into the jacket and what they did with it, there was a black market there in that camp. They made cigarettes out of it, they rolled it, they dried the grass and then they rolled this thing.

D. They had cigarettes out of grass?

G. But you know what, these are the little things which kept us alive. That's why I mentioned, the food, you must have food, you can live without food, not without water. Thirty days, you know that. So where was I, oh, I also had a big book where I listed the dead people every day. The person known as so and so, the number, and what he died of or she died of, and the date. And when I came in one morning there was no book. And when I look back now I should have taken that book and put it between my legs or what not because it was the end of the whole thing. What can I say but you have no words to describe this. I didn't know what to do then I realize the book is not there, where's the book and Hu... Fuerer Blanker came in and I asked him, stupid me, I cannot do the tot... book they called it, I cannot do it they took it. He said to me you don't have to do that anymore, you will be free soon and here is something for you. He gave me a pound of butter and a sandwich with bologna. Two hours later I heard from the others that he shot himself. And I felt sorry for him. He was good to me. He was so good that, and he was a beast, you know he put a match to that Lager 4 where the sick were, I think I have it on a tape and they all burned to death. He was so mean but he saw no way out I think. He took a liking to me although I assure you I must have looked like hell, we had no mirrors or nothing but because as I worked there and I tried so hard, he felt sort of, he felt sorry for me and I was, he always asked me about Germany and where I was born and I told him, Berlin and Berliners are known for being big mouthed, did you every hear that? So, you see here comes again the food. So then uh, at the end of it we had another air raid, they put us on another train, this time the train was open, not closed, what do you call those, freight trains? And next to us was another train and when there was an air raid, those soldiers who were watching us, they said, while you lay down and they went into the woods there. But we didn't all know it, we jumped off the train and that was good, otherwise I couldn't sit here next to you. The train next to ours was an ammunition train and they did that purposefully so that if the Americans came and bombarded they knew that this will go up in the air with us with all of the prisoners there next to it. But some of those strong couples, we made a div... , we had food. They knew it somehow and then of course, you want food, you give us food. So there, we were liberated the next day in uh, a little village, Pensing, I don't think you heard about it.

D. Pannzing

G. Yeah,

D. Pannzing, is it in Austria?

G. No, that's in Germany, not far from Munich and Lensburg

D. Oh, that's right

G. Yeah, now here comes another little item with food, first we, is it, first when we were liberated we stayed in those woods, it was raining, it was bitter cold, we were seven people, one had, two had typhoid already but we didn't know. Who cared about it, we were free. Next day they sent me out, I still had those stripped pants but I threw them off because I figured everyone would know I was a prisoner there. It as cold and I needed those pants

D. Did you have underwear?

G. Yeah, I got that from when I worked there, I got my underwear. First they gave me only one pair and I said if I have one pair and I wash them, otherwise I would smell. And this is what Lanka told me he liked of me, I have a big mouth and I said these things, you know, it stinks. But there are so many other things, I could not tell you right now, you would have to listen to all of these tapes. With the food again, we marched toward Pannzing there and there was gasoline station, there were Americans there. We knew it from the uniforms, they had these ... uniform on. And they didn't know who we are. Actually the soldiers who were not informed that there were prisoners there, nothing. Only in the last minute when we were on that train, they must have gotten orders not to bombard this train. But it was too late, some people were hurt already and died. We had babies ... they were born there. So as we came to this gasoline station I said to my sister-in-law get rid of these beasts here, these couples. We didn't care for them because they were mean individuals. I think they were also murderers, I think. So, the soldiers asked us and I spoke English, I learned English in Berlin, in school, maybe not as well I am not perfect in English but I could communicate with them and I told them we were just liberated and we don't know where to go. So they called their, there was a captain there, a captain from Brooklyn, NY. He spoke Yiddish and uh, I even spoke English to him

D. What was the name?

G. I don't know and I asked my sister-in-law, she doesn't want to hear about this. When I ask her things she says I don't know anything about this, leave me alone. I don't know. All I remember was, he was standing there, he didn't know what to do with us and he pulled out a little revolver. And I said to my sister-in-law, look at this, I hope he doesn't want to shoot us here. A little single revolver and he twirled it and you know what, I remember from the American movies because we had American movies, that they always had this, soldier always had a revolver and so, anyway, these stupid things are in my mind. He took us to the nearest farmhouse there,

D. What did he do with the revolver?

G. He was just playing and threatening maybe, who knows? I don't even remember. Yeah, but before that the soldiers, they went into their pockets and they got out their rations, the little package that they had, chocolates, cigarettes, you know what they get, the soldiers, and they gave it all to us. Chocolate we hadn't seen for years, cookies and little things, cigarettes. I said to my sister-in-law, this is food, cigarettes, we don't smoke but you can exchange. And when we went to this farmhouse the captain, the American captain, he said that these are prisoners and we should put us up and they did put us up in the house and they were very sort of nasty to us because they thought that we would take something away from them or, so. And feed them well he said. They did feed us well, I never, you see, I cannot forget it now, I am going to have lunch soon but I have no appetite, I can't eat, it doesn't taste anymore. They brought us a pitcher like this with milk

D. These are Germans

G. These are the Germans, they were afraid there right? And they made us omletes, I even counted the eggs. I said to my sister-in-law, six eggs, through the whole war we didn't see any eggs. And butter and that fresh bread, they and she cut that bread. You see, I can talk about it but I couldn't eat it now. So anyway, the..... understuffed. Did we get sick from that food. We didn't know that we should just slowly, everybody there got sick, all was liberated. But, then, um, we didn't do what the others did. They were sort of like Gestapos, they went and took from every German, they took their watchbands and everything. We went to work there for the American officers there, scrubbing floors, because we wanted to get a little money and go back to Buddahpest where hopefully somebody would have been alive. I found my parents, they were alive

D. How did your parents

G. In the basements.

D. In the basements?

G. Yeah, in the basements from the Ghetto houses and then the Russians came in, at that time the Russians came in, they didn't harm the Jews, they knew that these were Ghetto houses and they uh, but they had nothing to eat and they got very sick, my mother died then, she had typhoid. And, she had cancer of the liver, because she, all they had to eat was little beans and peas and she couldn't, my father was, uh, they found their apartment but nothing was in it but they found a jacket I think, from my husband, and he went on the black market and bought some food. He was a very thin man, I brought him here to America, but he was already ill when he came here, it was a tough life. And now you see, my husband, 31 years yesterday was the outside, 31 years, he could have been alive. There are a lot of things, a lot of things, maybe like four tapes, but I would suggest this Diane, you are friendly with Dr. Peck in Cincinnati, if he, he has these copies I am sure he has other things too, and I want to show you also something, if you are interest in it, maybe you can copy it. But it's not like this, they are big tapes like this.

D. Tell me something, did you work at all in the DP camps.

G. In the DP camps yeah, I was carrying stones from one place to the other and when it was

finished then we went back. I peeled potatoes and later on I had a job.

D. What DP camp were you in?

G. 11 and 1

D. 11 and 1, which were, what were the names?

G. Well the whole thing was called Kauffi.... which was part of Dahuagh. I even saw, after the liberation we went into what they called an office there, in Dahuagh and we got an, shiny, what's that, that we were in camp,

D. Certificate

G. Yeah, a certificate. You see Diane, I didn't know you were coming, I would have, I wouldn't have baked a cake, but I would have got, I have a few things like this is a safe because I feel that, who knows how long, that's why I am sending, when I called, what's the matter with my brain?

D. Dr. Peck

G. No, not Dr. Peck. Dr. Peck I have to call him. I'm so, not forgetful. I don't mind at all if I can remember.

D. Tell me what in the DP camp, what kind of health facilities were there?

G. Health facilities? How do you spell that.

D. I know that, it's like a hospital down here

G. Nothing, nothing

D. But they had sick people in the DP camps.

G. There were only, there was only where I was in Lager 1, that was the last camp right. They had these barracks with a infirmary for the SS

D. No, in the DP camp?

G. Yeah, but they were not for us, those health facilities.

D. No. Even in the displaced person camp, after the war....

G. That's another story

D. That's what I'm asking you

G. Irving Hemmon comes in. When we came to Lager 11 we um, there were some women who were pregnant and some babies were born. I had a chance to look at one of the babies, two maybe. I asked the mother, how she managed. She had to nurse. There was no milk, nothing there. She said that sometimes a soldier brought her some milk or so, the babies looked, they were, I think a few months, the ones who were born before already. But they looked like little newborn babies and they all perished as far as I know. Now, you want that envelope

D. No

G. I'll give it to you

D. Who took care of the sick people in the displaced persons camp?

G. Sick people?

End of side A

D. Irving Hemmon

G. When I met Irving Hemmon through his sister, I found out, he sent me right away the book, which he published, he wrote to his wife every day, what happened there. That's the same book as here. He was in charge of that camp there. You should get that book.

D. I'm not sure it's available, I don't know where I'd get it.

G. Ask Hemmon. They are exactly what happened. Unfortunately the letter that she wrote to him he destroyed. But this is a terrific book but then later on he sent me the same in German. Do you know how he looked? Diane?

D. No

G. Here I have a picture. We are on a friendly basis. He was here four years ago I think, then last May I was in Washington and he took me to the Holocaust Museum, I couldn't have gotten in there, the long line. Here look, when he was young there, it was put in charge of Lensburg which was a D..... counsellor. Here he is with his wife, she died four weeks ago. A nice person.

D. They have

G. Yeah, in Lensburg, I have a VCR tape of it but that you couldn't copy. They all show, they issue some, they call it Lensburg, I get a copy every 2-3 months, it's not that important.

D. So what kind of facilities, what kind of care did the sick people get in the DP camp

G. Nothing.

D. Nothing by the soldiers, nothing?

G. Nothing, what did I put down here? Do you need that too, that letter?

D. No.

End of Side B