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Title: Oral history interview with Paula Goldlust Blue

Interviewee: Ms. Paula G. Blue

Interviewer: Susan Goldstein Snyder

00:00:00

**Q: What year were you born?**

A: 1928.

**Q: And wha – when you were born, you – today your name is Paula Blue, but what was your given name in –**

A: My name was [indecipherable] Paula Regina Goldlust.

**Q: Paula, okay.**

A: Yeah, Paula.

**Q: And in 1928, describe to me – in the later years, when you remember, as early as you remember, what it was like in Constance.**

A: Constance being a smaller town, there was a – a Jewish community, synagogue, Jewish life. Jewish schools, teacher. And the – as I said, our Jewish community was quite active, and the – and the children were at that – at that time, we went to public school, and Hebrew school.

**Q: Would you say you-your parents were very religious, or moderately religious?**

A: My mother was leaning towards really rel – quite religious. My father was more to a lesser degree. But he kept ko – kept kosher, as far as possib – as far as I remember. http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 4

**Q: You kept kosher?**

A: Yes, mm-hm.

**Q: Your parents, what were their names and birthdates, if you remember them?**

A: What were their names?

**Q: Their names and their birthdates.**

A: My father, I think was May 30th, 1896, and my mother March 24th, 1894.

**Q: Your father’s name was Bernard?**

A: Bernard.

**Q: And your mother?**

A: Manya.

**Q: Where were they born?**

A: They were born in Poland.

**Q: Do you know the towns?**

A: I believe was a small town near Kielce, or something like that.

**Q: Did they come from large families?**

A: My mother had a – yes, actually, I believe so. And I don’t know, I don’t remember how many brothers and sisters they had. But the – my mother’s family may – they emigrated to Canada, brothers and a sister, and nothing but three brothers em-emigrated to Canada, to Toronto. http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 5

**Q: Do – do you know when they emigrated?**

A: I don’t know –

**Q: [indecipherable]**

A: 20s – oh yeah, through the 20s or late 20s, so in the 20s somewhere.

**Q: Your father was still considered a Polish citizen after he moved to Germany, or did he –**

A: No, no, he was considered stateless.

**Q: He was considered stateless, okay. And –**

A: And in Germany, who – whatever the – the head of the household is the whole family considered stateless, takes on the nationality of the husband and the father.

**Q: What did your father do?**

A: He had a business, a clothing and tailoring.

**Q: And would you say you were a prominent Jewish family in the community?**

A: Moderately so, yes, we were, yeah. Belonged to – I mean, everybody belonged to the synagogue in the Jewish community, or what they call the gemeindehaus, which was community center.

**Q: As far as siblings, you had an older brother. Can you tell me his name and his birthdate? http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 6**

A: He – his name – my brother’s name was – was Leo Goldlust, and he was born October 7, 1924.

**Q: Do you recall early childhood with Leo, being able to roam freely in the streets, do things?**

A: Early on, yes, yeah, yeah. Let’s say until – let’s say 30 – as I recall, ’36 - ’37, we – not freely. I mean, there was always the fear of – of Nazi. We’d play Juden and so forth and so on. But we went to school in [indecipherable] to public school, he went to public school and I went to public school and they – there were a few Jewish children. There was another Jewish child – girl in my class. Boys and girls went to separate schools, and the – it – it was so-so. I mean, the other children greeted the fuehrer and so forth and so on and we – we were sitting, I mean Jewish – Jew children – Jewish children, we were sitting in the seats, we didn’t get up. Whatever, whatever, the – but the – but otherwise we were mostly together with other Jewish children.

**Q: When earlier on I asked you about your father leaving Poland.**

A: Mm-hm.

**Q: Do you recall why he left Poland?**

A: I don’t know.

**Q: It’s a hard question because – http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 7**

A: I [indecipherable] I don’t know, he left – probably – he had an uncle there, in Germany, which – you know, so he – the reason why, I – I don’t know.

**Q: Once he was in Germany, did he ever travel back to Poland?**

A: No.

**Q: And did you –**

A: No, he lost Polish citizenship. I think he left across the border illegally, or came to Germany illegally, or left Poland, or whatever. I – I don’t know exactly, but we were stateless, we were not Polish citizens.

**Q: When you – when we first were talking earlier with your son, he mentioned that Constance is literally on the Swiss border.**

A: It is.

**Q: You can walk back and forth.**

A: Right, mm-hm.

**Q: Before the war, do you remember being able to do this? Do you remember people being able to cross the border –**

A: Oh yes. Yes, we did.

**Q: And was there a thought that your parents might try fleeing over the border into Switzerland? http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 8**

A: Switzerland was closed. I mean, if they didn’t – if they wouldn’t – wouldn’t accept Jewish refugees, very, very few. But they immigrate – to immigrate into – to Switzerland was quite impossible, apparently. But we did cross the border, was a – was one – one Jewish community for – at a certain time, but they became – as things became worse in Germany, the – the Jewish community in – in Switzerland [indecipherable] remained – remained by themselves.

**Q: And they re – they remained intact, but in Constance the –**

A: People started –

**Q: – people started to flee?**

A: Yeah. People started immigrating to – to United States, to Argentina, to wherever. Where there was any – any opening to go to – to – at that time to Israel, which was Palestine at the time, if they were lucky enough to get there.

**Q: Tell me about your f – your recollections of Kristallnacht, the November pogroms of 1938.**

A: November pogrom, 1938, a – a – that’s very early they were – they came into the nac – I don’t recall. It was quite, quite early and they – two Gestapo came in, and they took my father, they went through the apartment, didn’t do that – that much damage, but they were looking for a – was later on my father mentioned the things, they were looking for literature, for books, which not – which were forbidden to http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 9 read. And the – and so forth and so on, but then – but then when I woke up they had – they had just left with my father.

**Q: They took your father with them?**

A: Right.

**Q: They arrested him?**

A: Yeah.

**Q: Do you know where they took him?**

A: Gestapo headquarters, we – we assumed, and from there to Dachau. The – all – all the Jewish men were taken to – were arrested the same – that same night or morning, early mornings.

**Q: How long was he in Dachau, do you know?**

A: He came back – I re – I recall he came back Hanukkah time, which must have been about four or six weeks later.

**Q: So, just to clarify, he was arrested on Kristallnacht, which was November –**

A: Just November 10.

**Q: – ninth, 10th.**

A: Right

**Q: Came back around Hanukkah, so perhaps he was detained for a month, or – http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 10**

A: Sounds right. And then they started releasing peop – men and – slowly, with the provision that they would leave Germany within, I don’t remember was six weeks, or six months. I’m assuming it was six months because my father left in June of 1939.

**Q: How did they –**

A: So they had to leave. They had to leave Germany.

**Q: How did he leave?**

A: He left – there was an opening – England had an opening for the a – as I recall, I – I think I’m correct about it, for men being released from – from the camps, there were other camps, Buchenwald was one of the camps, Sachsenhausen, there were other camps that they took the [indecipherable] men, the Jewish men there. And they – so England opened up for those men that were released, without their families, and the – they – there was a camp, called Kitchener camp in – in England, near London I presume it was, that housed – housed the men. And the – my father tried, of course, to – the separation was supposed to be brief, but to bring us there, but war broke out in le-less than six months later and that – that was the end of that for us. http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 11

**Q: Back up a little bit, and just explain to me. He left in June of 1939, and at that point, had he – had your family tried to get on the quota to go to a different country?**

A: Oh yes, my – actually we had a very eva – to the United States. There was a – which we fell under the Polish quota, where my – my father was born, and it was a very – very – and I believe my father [indecipherable] qui-quite early with the American consulate, which was in Stuttgart, I believe. And the – but – but it was very slow, slow moving. It was a quota, so –

**Q: So he had applied for –**

A: And we had – we had papers for the – my father’s cousin in New York who sent papers, but American consulate was slow in – in – in giving out papers – visas for families. Many of them – some of them made it, some of them don’t. Many, many did not.

**Q: So you remained with your mother in and Leo after June of 1939 in Constance.**

A: Right, right.

**Q: And how was the situation in Constance for you? Were you still going to school?**

A: No. 1938 we – Jewish children couldn’t go to school any more. So also there were pe – many Jewish families had left already, and there were few Jewish http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 12 children left, actually, and they – we didn’t go to school. There was a – the teacher and the – the cantor, he – they left for a – the U.S., and the – so, there was some [indecipherable] teaching there in the Hebrew school, but we were very – not too – not a great deal, put it this way.

**Q: How did you feel day to day? What was feeling in your household, what was the feeling [indecipherable]**

A: Well, we were very – a – it was rather a desperate situation. W-We couldn’t – we didn’t get any more mail from my – from my father, we were cut off. Did get some mail from – to Switzerland. Somebody smuggled it in, or from – from a neighbor that we wrote to, but we were pretty much cut off.

**Q: His business gone, taken from him.**

A: Business gone, right, mm-hm.

**Q: So what were you living on?**

A: I don’t – I – I don’t know. There must have been a – there must have been a – some kind of a thing, because we – we did – I mean, we just existed, I mean, put it this way. My mother and Leo and myself.

**Q: What did your mother do – do during this time period, just work on trying to get you out?**

A: Just trying to get us out. http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 13

**Q: And –**

A: And then – well, it was a – at an earlier time there were kindertransports, which I – I don’t know when they were, you know, the hope that we could leave as a family was always present, which you know, obviously has not come about.

**Q: And when did it change for you again? What was the next thing that happened?**

A: A – well, the situation was quite – was in – quite desperate, I would say.

**Q: It was –**

A: And when the war broke out –

**Q: It was quite desperate?**

A: Yes. And the – after war broke out, and well, in 1940, all the Jews from that area ca – bordering France were deported to Camp de Gurs in France.

**Q: This was October, 1940?**

A: In October, that’s the – October 19 – 1940 – October 22nd, 1940 was the day that the –

**Q: How did you travel from there to – from Constance to Camp de Gurs?**

A: To Camp de Gurs it was, you know, a – I remember being places, but I don’t remember how – how I got there. This – some like a vague – vague memory of it. It was a train, I don’t remember if they have benches or anything. Did have benches, http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 14 but a – along the side of the – of the wagons. But it was not – it was not the – you know, it was a regular train, actually. That kind.

**Q: Were you with other Jewish – German Jewish refugees?**

A: Yes, from the same town, right.

**Q: [indecipherable]**

A: Were deported from the – I don’t remember how many people were fe – from – from our town. And they – from the whole area which is called Baden-Pfalz, which was like here – here you would call it a state, or a subdivision that they wanted to make – make that area Judenra – Judenfrei. So the – the first – that was the first deportation from Germany, actual –

**Q: Can you translate what you mean?**

A: To make it free of Jews.

**Q: When you were gathering things, because you were forced to leave, your mother and you and Leo, what did you do at the house, what –**

A: We – oh, we lived already three families in one, Jews had to start living into one area, on one street. Anyhow, I suppose that was the – the plan to – to make it easier, I suppose. And we lived in – with another – with other three families in one large apartment, which I walked in, by the way, in May, when we were in Constance, which was pretty – quite traumatic, actually. http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 15

**Q: This past May?**

A: This past May, right.

**Q: How did you feel, standing in the apartment?**

A: A – difficult to describe. It’s – it’s – it’s still with me. So we were – Gestapo – again Gestapo came and the – un – unexpected, unexpected, I mean. But the to -- about 15 - 20 minutes, I remember one of them leaving, pushed Leo, says hurry up, hurry up, schnell, schnell. And we were taken out of the apartment with very small – whatever small baggage or luggage, whatever, whatever people took with. And we were assembled at, I think it was the [indecipherable] it was the train station. I don’t recall exactly.

**Q: Did you know where you were going?**

A: No idea.

**Q: Did they tell you [indecipherable] France.**

A: No, people – people did not know where we were going. I remember Leo talking and he – talking to someone – he was quite bright. He knew which direction we were going, but we didn’t know we were going east or west. So people are going – were hoping we’re going west, at least. And –

**Q: You arrived in Camp de Gurs in France.**

A: In France. http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 16

**Q: In the internment camp.**

A: Mm-hm.

**Q: Describe your experiences when you first arrived.**

A: We were taken from the train, as I recall. We were taken from the trains onto camion – trucks. And the – we were pretty – from – from the same community, actually, we were together. And the – that was long way. I believe the Germans probably had an – had a – had – they don’t need the consent, but they – Vichy, France accepted, or had to accept the Jewish refugees from there. I don’t remember how many there were from the whole area [indecipherable] from larger cities. And there were quite a few – quite a few children actually there. In Constance there were not too many children, there was just Leo, myself and Hootie(ph) and another child was there actually, or teenager, in this – left in the city of Constance.

**Q: So you – it took days to get to Camp de Gurs?**

A: We – I-I don’t remem – probably two or three days, something like that, because we stopped, I think. As I learned later on, there was – we didn’t – Vichy, France didn’t want to accept us, and they – the Germans, you know, tried to – I mean Vichy didn’t have much chance there. So in – we went to the – got to the internment camp of Gurs, and it rained and it was miserable, and we were taken by truck, and then they – first, old men out to – so – so [indecipherable] Simon http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 17 [indecipherable] was a cousin to my father, he Hootie’s(ph) – Hootie’s(ph) father, and they – I remember my mom saying please, please take care of my child, this I remember. And … and Leo got off with the men, and we went on, and I was pretty desperate at that point. And then they had ilot in Gurs, separate ilots which were barbed wire with some of them double ba – between el – ilots, I think was double barbed wire, between the ilots. And with the French – first it was fr – I believe it was French army actually, then they changed to Vichy, to the Milice, which was the pr – Vichy – Vichy police, they were guarding us at the time. And the –

**Q: You – were you with your mother [indecipherable]**

A: I – first of all with was my mother, and then they separated the children up to the age of 14, separate –

**Q: How did you see your –**

A: We were in the same ilot, so it – I – I could s – I could see my mother.

**Q: When you says ilot, is it –**

A: Ilot means the – each separate entity that was surrounded by – by barbed wire.

**Q: So multiple barracks.**

A: [indecipherable] an ilot was – I don’t know how many barracks was in each one.

**Q: What did you – what were your impressions of the camp? http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 18**

A: The camp? There was – well, it was in October, the – the mud was – people – people get mired into – into mud, couldn’t they – it – it was incredible. It was in the Pyrenees, and it rained continuously, and there was no – no – yeah, and the latrines, and the – i-it – i – I mean, was pretty unbearable conditions.

**Q: The conditions were poor?**

A: Very.

**Q: What did you – how did you [indecipherable]**

A: Food – huh? Food was – I mean, hunger was one, which – which came after a few days already, you know, there was hunger in there, and rats, and vermin, and –

**Q: In your –**

A: And we were in a barrack, the barrack we were in was a – in Gurs, there were – I think it was right next to a – what was it? A spozak(ph), a – a bag for [indecipherable] straw that the under-underground [indecipherable] ground. And there were no windows, there were just like – like shutters, like, wooden shutters there, the wooden barracks.

**Q: And were – were they heated?**

A: There was one small stove, one small heating stove. So who was lucky enough to get close to it was – was better [indecipherable]. I remember being next to a – a mother and a young girl, who didn’t sp – they spo – I don’t know what they spoke, http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 19 either Spanish or Portuguese, but we just, you know, looked at each other and smiled at each other and she may – she may have been – she was ol-older at that time, she must have been a teenager, 15 at that time. And I remember sleeping next to her, and on the – the other side was my mother. And then they separated the chil – the – I don’t know if was voluntary, who did it, that they took children under 14 into separate barrack and they – but it was pretty voluntary. A – because the food that was distributed was more or less – they did try to give the children preference with food. But I do recall the Quakers, I mean, I think Quakers were very – were quite active in the – in – in Gurs actually. I don’t remember Rivesaltes, but Gurs they were quite active.

**Q: Can you describe how the – what the Quakers did in –**

A: I don’t know – I don’t – I have – I didn’t meet them, but we – we did know that the Quakers provided some – provided some food into the – was miserable, the kitchen was in a open barrack like a big –

**Q: What kind of things did you eat?**

A: Oh, it was a sl – small slice of bread, which was divided. And the food itself was a – I remember the first few days when we came, the people of – there were some people there from – from Constance, too, who couldn’t eat it. So they gave the http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 20 children, gave us the food. But you know, after a few days they become hungry too, and they – they actually ate the food.

**Q: Your –**

A: Hunger, I remember. Hunger and cold and wet. And the latrines, open latrines.

**Q: You talked about the latrines, they were –**

A: Open latrines, an open barrack, an open – not an open barrack, just a – a raised steps up, and the open – you know, just an open thing in the ground, like a – and the end of – the – what Gurs is known for is the mud. Mud, deep slime and mud that people got stuck in, and couldn’t – couldn’t get their – couldn’t get out.

**Q: So, open latrines, I mean, my guess is that –**

A: And open like a barrack.

**Q: And people were –**

A: [indecipherable] themselves.

**Q: And –**

A: The women were separate from the men, had – in their own ilot.

**Q: Tell me about in your barracks, you mentioned there were Spanish people because of the Spanish Civil War.**

A: Yeah, right, right. Gurs – excuse me – Gurs was built by, I believe, by the Spanish, the – I suppose the anti-Franco Spain. I think they built – they built Gurs, http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 21 I mean. They were ilot F – I don’t remember what, ilot F, I believe. They were not behind barbed wire somehow. And there was – there was a whole [indecipherable] people there from everywhere, from – from – you had people – you had people from Germany. We met somebody from Constance by the way, who went to fight [indecipherable] against Franco, and – a non-Jew. So it was a mixed – a mixed kind of thing, but mostly Spaniards.

**Q: How did the different populations get along with each other?**

A: Yeah, well, they were separ – separated. They got along, I mean, as far as that goes. I mean, they had a lot of people that fled Belgium, for instance, Jewish people fled Belgium. They had to take long trip, until they got to – they were interned there already from the summer 1940 on, so they were there already when we came – when we ca – and the –

**Q: What did the children do all – what did you do all day?**

A: What did we do all day? Y-You know, when Jewish people – somebody finds two – two Jew – two children, they make a school. So they did try. They tried to teach us French –

**Q: And who –**

A: – in the hope of we – we make it out of the camp one of these da – one days – some days. http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 22

**Q: Were the educators other refugees, were they relief workers?**

A: They are other refugees, right, yeah. Other [indecipherable] I mean, I don’t – deportees, in other words, right.

**Q: Do you remember – do you have recollection of people who were particularly influential to you, or helpful?**

A: A – in Gurs itself? Not – not that I recall, I’d say –

**Q: We talked about Andre Solomon briefly, is –**

A: Oh, right, she – that was in Rivesaltes [indecipherable]

**Q: That was later?**

A: Yeah, in Gurs – Gurs. There may have people – there may have been peoples that tried to help, or bought f – with – with food, or with – with the – but – like I said, Quakers, for instance. There may have been French Jews that may have [indecipherable] but – but I don’t – the – in Rivesaltes, French – French Jews did have – until the – the Germans occupied France, the-they had some clout.

**Q: Talking about the French population –**

A: [indecipherable]

**Q: – around Gurs, near Gurs –**

A: I don’t know.

**Q: Did you connect with them at all? http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 23**

A: No.

**Q: Did they come to the camp to try to help?**

A: I don’t th – no, I –

**Q: Nothing.**

A: No, no.

**Q: What about Judaism?**

A: What about Judaism?

**Q: Was there Judaism?**

A: Yes, there was a – there was even a girls’ Haggadah, by the way. I don’t know if you’re familiar with that. You saw the girls’ Haggadah? Yeah, I don’t recall – led by Anspach, I believe, Leo Anspach, who – who was a – I think he was from Germany, a refugee from Belgium or somewhere. I don’t – I really don’t recall exactly, who – who seemed to be a – but we were depor – we were taken from Gurs early in – before Passover. If anybody knew – if anybody knew a holiday coming on, a thing like that.

**Q: Right, 1941.**

A: 1941. So the people with children were assembled and were sent to Rivesaltes. Don’t ask me about the trip. I don’t know how – how I – http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 24

**Q: Back up one second. You were – you s – while you were in Gurs, you saw your mother, you saw [indecipherable]**

A: I saw my mother, I saw Leo. Like I said, some a – a – like a – is a – you know Ruthie, yeah, she was quite little, she was about three and a half years old. And some of the guards let us out, and sometimes we – you know, I – we went through the barbed wire from one [indecipherable] to get out. And we went to see – she had her father and her [indecipherable] and – and Leo was in same. All the – all the men, by the way, were in the – in one barrack in Gurs. They somehow were simply in one. The – the women, somehow, were dispersed through the camp from the – from that deportation, the – from the whole Baden, from that area.

**Q: How do you suspect your mother dealt with this day to day?**

A: I don’t know. I don’t know.

**Q: She was just strong?**

A: Hm? Strong? She was strong. She was strong. She – she didn’t – yeah, she sort of didn’t do that well after my father left, we were in Constance, she didn’t do that well. She was ill, she was in the [indecipherable] the hospital. She was treated well, it was a Catholic nuns’ hospital, and there –

**Q: This was in Constance?**

A: Hm? http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 25

**Q: Was this in Constance?**

A: In Constance, still in Constance, right, she was ill. But once we were – we were in Gurs, she – she – she did – she held up. She held up.

**Q: At this point are you back to writing to and from – re-receiving anything from your father, any words?**

A: We didn’t – well, we – if – we were cut off, we were cut off.

**Q: You still had no correspondence from him.**

A: And we had correspond – some – we had correspondence. I think telegrams came through. There was correspondence, actually.

**Q: You were writing?**

A: We were writing, but we didn’t – I – I believe there was a telegram from ta – once we arrived there. We were writing to him, I don’t know how it got there, or who took the mail, I – I don’t recall.

**Q: Some of your letters are quite vague about your circumstances.**

A: Well, you don’t –

**Q: You don’t really describe – was that purposeful?**

A: Yes.

**Q: Your letters, in some cases, are even upbeat. http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 26**

A: Yes. Yeah, yeah, well, couldn’t – I mean, didn’t – didn’t want to make it worse for my father when – than it was already.

**Q: So in April of 1941, you’re moved to Rivesaltes, as a family?**

A: Yes, it was in April, possibly, I – I don’t –

**Q: Summer 1941?**

A: No, before.

**Q: Before.**

A: Before. May have been – I think it – End of Tape One http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 27 Beginning Tape Two

**Q: Okay, so before Passover in 1940, you – 1941, excuse me, you’re moved to Rivesaltes. Again, do you remember?**

A: We were – s-sentiments. We – I don’t recall having – remembering any holiday, Jewish holiday, period. But apparently in Gurs I did – did have some [indecipherable] Haggadah, but in Rivesaltes we didn’t. We didn’t even know it was Passover, I mean, I – as far as I’m concerned, I mean, I didn’t – we didn’t.

**Q: You were moved with your mother and Leo.**

A: Right.

**Q: Did you again live in separate barracks from Leo?**

A: Yes, mm-hm. He was in the men’s barracks. There was a men’s barrack in –

**Q: Where were you in Rivesaltes?**

A: I was together with my mother.

**Q: Do you remember the barrack?**

A: I think I wrote it down. Can’t remember. Ilot N? Yeah, I wrote it down because I got it from letter – from a letter. I – I wouldn’t – I wouldn’t remember it otherwise, like, you know, from the letters that the have – I have that. And the – so that we – we got to Rivesaltes. I don’t remember getting there, I don’t remember how we got there, or the – I remember walking a lot, but I – I don’t remember the – the trip. I – I http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 28 – I don’t recall going from place to pla – I re – I know being there, but I can’t remember going from place to place. Leaving my mother, for instance with the OSE, going to the home. I remember leaving her, but I don’t remember getting there. It’s – it’s blacked out.

**Q: So once you were in Rivesaltes, what was Rivesaltes like?**

A: How can you describe Rivesaltes? Number one, it was huge. The barracks were rabbit cage like, you know, first we were on the second floor. An incident I recall is they took young men to – again, Vichy police came. I suppose they had an order from the Germans for forced labor somewhere. And again my mother panicked, Leo came into the barrack and the –

**Q: Leo was how old at this point?**

A: Leo was – 1940 – he was born in fo – ’24, so he was 16 – 16, almost 17. And the – she – she threw a blanket over him and I sat on him so they shouldn’t – shouldn’t – to hide him.

**Q: And that – that worked?**

A: They – and – and that ha – they didn’t tou – yeah, he – he – he didn’t. But they took men, and at that time people didn’t know, because they were families [indecipherable] father was in England, or was safe, wa-was getting out already, but there were many, many families. And they took the men to we didn’t know http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 29 where. Appar – some of them came back. Some of them came back and said they were building installation for the Germans in Normandy, which is interesting.

**Q: And you were living in a barracks. Describe the barracks. Describe what the –**

A: The barrack was the –

**Q: – inside was like, the daily life. Physical.**

A: Y-Yeah, well you know, it was really long time, the hunger was – hunger was a – one of the big, big problems. People went through garbage cans, I mean, a – and the – the barracks were – cause in Gurs there were wooden barracks, I believe [indecipherable] in there. I don’t remember any windows there either, by the way. But they – they had like, you know, rabbit cage kind. I think girls were sleeping on the – on the ground on straw, bags of straw.

**Q: In Rivesaltes?**

A: In the re – in – in Gurs.

**Q: In Gurs.**

A: In Rivesaltes they had the double the rabbit cage, first floor and second floor. It’s like the long – you see it sometimes in – in the – I think there’s one from [indecipherable] Rivesaltes. That’s the kind of thing they had in Rivesaltes too.

**Q: You slept – http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 30**

A: We were on top, we were on top, right. My mom and me were on top, the top floor.

**Q: Who were the other people in the barracks?**

A: Huh? It was a mixture of people, but there were many of them from you n – from – from – Jews from Germany that I remember primarily, and the others, I mean, we didn’t have that much contact with them and it was huge, I mean ba – I don’t know how many people it held.

**Q: And so you were 13 at this point, do you – were there other preteens and teenage kids in the barracks with you that you could have befriended? Was there some kind of camaraderie there?**

A: There was – what people th – primarily remember is – is the vermin. Fleas, lice. Fleas in Rivesaltes.

**Q: Were you able to bathe?**

A: Huh? There was a – there was a ba – yes, there were – there were showers there.

**Q: There were showers, but there were still – you said –**

A: There was water at a certain time only, and so forth and so on, in – in the – same as in – same as in Gurs. Or they put – somebody died at night in Gurs, by the way, they used to put – somebody died, they put him into the – the barrack where the – the [indecipherable] water, the fau – you know, th-they had water and the – some http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 31 shower stalls, so they put the bodies there, which – which one of the kids were in the kids barracks [indecipherable] were going, ran into it early and there were, you know, the bodies of people, their bodies. One, I recall.

**Q: Do you know what happened to the people who were – who had –**

A: They had a cemetery. There was – there was a cemetery in Gurs, actually.

**Q: Do you recall seeing a cemetery in Gurs?**

A: Yeah, because we were in the ilot which was the last ilot, it was ilot M, and the – next to ilot M there was the – they buried the people.

**Q: And so –**

A: [indecipherable]

**Q: In Rivesaltes was it the same situation, where people –**

A: I don’t know, I don’t know.

**Q: Do you recall people being sick, dying?**

A: Sick yes, dying I don’t – I don’t – I don’t recall. Not – not in the barrack I was in right away. I’m sure they did but I – I – I personally don’t – haven’t – haven’t experienced it like in Gurs.

**Q: And again the question: What did you do all day?**

A: What it – did we do all day? I don’t know. Be hungry mostly.

**Q: Your mother, what did she do? http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 32**

A: Huh? I – I don’t – I d – I d – I don’t know, I don’t remember. Just – just –

**Q: Was there ever a point when you – when you or your mother or Leo, that you know of had to do any kind of labor, or –**

A: We were taken, at one point in Rivesaltes we were taken to a – yeah, it wasn’t forced, I mean it was, you know, they – they took people, I suppose the – the – the farmers around needed help for – to pick –

**Q: Harvest?**

A: Huh?

**Q: To harvest?**

A: To harvest the grapes, I believe, and then they – the topinambur, which is sort of potato-like kind of – ugly kind of thing. So we were taken. We were together, which was actually – which – which was actually a relief to be out of the camp. And we – we were watched by Vichy police –

**Q: Were you –**

A: – and we did work early morning til ni – evening, but – but my mother mentioned – there was another family there, a Jewish family with – also with two children. And we were living in – in a end – sort of a cave-like thing, we lived in, with – with a big pot over a [indecipherable] fire. And the – that t-two – two mothers cooked, or whatever were they cooked. It was good, but – http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 33

**Q: So let me clarify, you were – you weren’t leaving in the morning from Rivesaltes and coming home in the evening –**

A: No, no, we were out –

**Q: – you were living at the farm.**

A: We were out – we – right, we were living on – I don’t remember where we were living, but it was a – I don’t recall exactly, but I remember it was cave-like.

**Q: How long did this – how long did this –**

A: I don’t remember, but it was – it was a relief to be away from the camp.

**Q: How was – how were the –**

A: Because food was – i-it wasn’t plentiful, but – but i-it was there, and there together with – my mother and Leo was there together with the other family, the same thing. I don’t remember sleeping conditions there, how it went. But, you know, it’s called vendanges, which means to – the – the – the grape harvest – harvesting – grape harvesting and something else, was potatoes or whatever it was. Potatoes didn’t exist in southern France altogether, didn’t see a potato.

**Q: How did – I mean – so, at this point, you’re living, you’re doing – you’re leaving to do some harvesting, you’re coming – you went back to Rivesaltes.**

A: Back to – we were taken back to Rivesaltes.

**Q: And while you were out at the farm, did you interact at all with just French – http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 34**

A: Yeah, Leo spoke a little French, which he learned in s – in school [indecipherable]. But they didn’t speak fr – they didn’t speak – it wasn’t French, it was Catalan, which is the – the language between Spain and the – Spain and France. So they spoke – they didn’t – don’t remember them speaking French, but like I say, it was Catalan, it’s a language that’s a mixture of a – so, we didn’t interact with them, just we – we harvested, we worked.

**Q: So you didn’t feel like there was – you didn’t have any chance to even know [indecipherable]**

A: Flee, or to go, or it was – yeah, now in – in retrospect think maybe we were probably not far from the Spanish border, but we had – didn’t have a chance to get away.

**Q: And in retrospect –**

A: Or maybe could have, maybe – I – I don’t know.

**Q: Also in retrospect, could these people have helped hide – hide the Jews, hide some of the Jews?**

A: They – this – you couldn’t underst – they couldn’t understand us – we couldn’t – first of all, we only spoke German, by the way. Didn’t speak French. Leo spoke a few high school – high school French, but that’s all [indecipherable] I – I think it was just a – a woman with a child or two children our age. http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 35

**Q: And so – and when you’re 14, I believe, in 1940 – you were in Rivesaltes until when? When were you in Rivesaltes until?**

A: Til October ’41, I think.

**Q: October ’41?**

A: Yeah.

**Q: And then in October ’41, what happened?**

A: I – again, it must have been a – I suppose OSE, hm – either OSE or I don’t know who – who took us out, very frankly. I have no – no idea, I mean, somebody must have spoken to the parents, or my mother, and they –

**Q: Do you remember how it happened?**

A: How it happened?

**Q: Yes.**

A: No, I don’t know. I just know that I was leaving, I was leaving my mother, who –

**Q: Do you remember saying goodbye to her?**

A: Yeah, yeah, I remember her saying to – remember who you are, and the – to be good, and the hope to – to be reunited.

**Q: Did your mother – did you feel that your mother had hope you would be reunited? http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 36**

A: I imagine so. Hope springs eternal, they say, but I – I re – I – I imagine so, that we should all be united – reunited with the – with my father hopefully, but the –

**Q: Where were you taken?**

A: The – we – taken to a home in – OSE home, in cru – La Creuse(ph), which – which there’s about three homes there that they – they – many of the – many of the children or teenagers that were there were from the camp, and some of them were from – who were refugees or Kindertransport children from the – from Germany that were in the Paris area, and as the Germans came in they – they fled f-further. Many of the parents remember remaining in Germany didn’t know what happened to them, and they – so –

**Q: How long were you at this home?**

A: At the – hm?

**Q: In the –**

A: The home?

**Q: The first – the first home that you were in?**

A: A – Marjolet? ’41 til – til about ’43, I believe.

**Q: Did your – your mother was not able to see you?**

A: No.

**Q: How about Leo? http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 37**

A: Leo was left – Leo was left there also in the – in the camp, and he, later on [indecipherable] I don’t know if s – I don’t know if I gave it to you, I may not have, where he writes that he has to leave Maman, and he’ll have to – that the Eclaireur Israeli de France, the French scouts had a home in Morsak(ph) which is in south [indecipherable] who had the home, also took out the teenagers, the older ones, that freedom or [indecipherable] and for a time, yeah, I was in – I was with him in Morsak(ph) for a few – oh, maybe a month or six weeks.

**Q: Was this before you w-were in –**

A: After my mother wa – after my mom was deported.

**Q: So, in wa – in Marjolet, can you just describe what it was like for you? Did you feel a sense of relief being out of the camp?**

A: No, I – I probably cried for two weeks, being separated from my mother. And we were – how should I put it? Kids that came from the camp, they had to be deloused. And the – it – it – the first few weeks were – were very hard. But the children there were – you know, telling [indecipherable] and some of them – we didn’t speak French, most of us didn’t, you know, came from Germany and barely – and the – we learned really fast. The smaller they were, the faster they learned.

**Q: And so –**

A: So it was French mostly – huh? http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 38

**Q: Day to day, what was it like?**

A: In the home? It – it was – it was good, you know, it was good.

**Q: And [indecipherable] were –**

A: It was interesting with the – with – with the other – with the other children. There was even a class, there was even a school classroom. And we were, you know, the kids from – from – yeah, from – from that – we were integrate in the whole – so – so to learn French wasn’t – I don’t even [indecipherable] I think it took weeks, the kids just – just started speaking it and knowing it.

**Q: Do you remember anyone during that time period, any figure or person that stood out in your mind as being really helpful to your survival, your day to day survival, your emotional survival?**

A: Yeah, there was a director of – the director of the – of the home was Monsieur, Madame Bloch, Bloch, b-l-o-c-h, who – who were the really kindest – kindest, best people that you – who consoled us, I mean, people that came there, I think they – we understood them, I think they spoke German, and the – until we became integrated into the – the French society over there.

**Q: And –**

A: Which didn’t take long, by the way, anyway.

**Q: You were there for two years, a little – http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 39**

A: Yeah.

**Q: [indecipherable] two years, a year and a half, two years.**

A: Yeah, close to two years –

**Q: Right.**

A: – for only one.

**Q: And then you were moved – where did you move?**

A: We were in the – they star – we were – they started looking for places to – to hide children, and they – so that was in the – near the Swiss border, and then i – so that was already after deportations from – that we knew already that – we didn’t know, I mean, that that would be final – the final solution there. And hope was always there. But they were hiding children either with fra – in France or in – in the – I was in Chambéry at the Salvation Army, by the way, with another few girls. There was a – not a convent, they – where they were hiding the boy – th-the boys in the religious – a – like a monastery, probably off in that area. So –

**Q: Hand up for a second to – you mentioned deportations. Had you – once you left Rivesaltes, how did you know what was going on with your mother?**

A: We – we were in – in contact at – for – for a while.

**Q: You were receiving letters? http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 40**

A: Right. I – I remember her last letter I got from her, I mean, that she was taken to a different – we didn’t – we didn’t know at that time, we didn’t – we didn’t know what the – the fi –

**Q: Can you [indecipherable]**

A: – we didn’t know about the final solution, let me put it this way.

**Q: You received the letter, and what did the letter say?**

A: That they – she will be going to a different camp, and she will probably hear from – we will hope – hopefully hear from her. Something like that, the last – the last letter which we had – first of all, when we were – left Marjolet to go to Haute- Savoie being hidden with a family, with a French family for a wh – for a few – for a while, we had to – we had to get rid of everything [indecipherable] in German everything al-already, uh-huh. I recall an incident I wrote to Leo, who was in Morsak(ph), which was the – with the French scouts Eclaireur Israeli du jour – de France. And I used to turn over envelopes and it was from Rivesaltes, and I turned them inside-out to send to him. And he – he wrote me back to – to – to be careful. So in – he [indecipherable] he wrote on one side of the corner of the letter was g-i-e-b on the – on the bottom, he wrote an eight, which means in German gieb - give, acht, mean, be careful. And I understood what he meant.

**Q: So he wrote in code, and you – http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 41**

A: He wrote in code, and I knew what he meant.

**Q: When did you hear the – so, you received the last letter from your mother.**

A: In other words, not to return – turn the envelope that anybody’s is in the – anybody’s in the camp, I mean, they – would would be in a camp, in Rivesaltes?

**Q: Right. So she was deported to a different camp, you didn’t know what camp.**

A: We didn’t – we didn’t know at the time.

**Q: And what about your father?**

A: We didn’t know at the time.

**Q: Were you hearing anything at this point from your father?**

A: We didn’t – in Marjolet I – I believe I had letters from – or telegram or – there was some – there was some – you know, I don’t even recall. I believe there wa – there was some, a – not much.

**Q: At this point, are you still keeping track of Leo, until you’re together in Morsak(ph) again?**

A: Well, Leo was already – Leo was taken to – he – it was [indecipherable] French, and he was taken to – it was a Vichy youth camp in – in Annecy.

**Q: Do you remember when this was?**

A: When he left? No, I don’t know, because he – we – I was in one home, and he was in the – in the – but they started taking young a-as – Jews to – to deport them, http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 42 or if they had French papers, even if they had French papers, they took them for forced labor. So they had to find a – I mean, the – the – the French – the French Jews did amazing job, they – they saved thousands of children, I would say OSE did, Eclaireur Israeli de France did.

**Q: So, you moved to Haute-Savoie, you’re in sh – you are in – hidden in Chambéry and Annecy.**

A: Chambéry and Annecy, I was there briefly with the French – the French family in Peseux [indecipherable] in to – to Switzerland. I was there for maybe a week, but that’s about it. And the – crossed the border in Switzerland, which I do not remember – Ruthie is better than I am at that. I – I don’t recall.

**Q: She does remember this –**

A: I don’t re – hm?

**Q: She does remember this [indecipherable]**

A: She remembers it?

**Q: She remembers it’s a Polish woman –**

A: Yeah, yeah, I know, but she remembers a – a – I – I remember [indecipherable] crossing, I think either as a small child or my – you know, holding my hand or –

**Q: She doesn’t remember exactly, but –**

A: And she remembers, it’s amazing. She remembers. And I – and I don’t. http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 43

**Q: Once you – once you –**

A: – I don’t. I remember arriving in Geneva.

**Q: You do?**

A: I do remember

**Q: Can you describe them?**

A: Oh God, huh? They were not very kind, the French – the French gendarmes over there. One of them said [speaks French] where do you come from, you little Jews?

**Q: You were in Geneva?**

A: In Geneva, at the police.

**Q: What did you do once you arrived in Geneva?**

A: We were taken to camps.

**Q: Refugee camps?**

A: Refugee camps.

**Q: Did you realize, we’re free?**

A: Ye-eah.

**Q: [indecipherable] made it.**

A: We were – I don’t know. I – I – I don’t recall.

**Q: You still didn’t have a sense of – http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 44**

A: Well, you know, in the camps you’re still not free, but the a – I – we couldn’t – we couldn’t write. I couldn’t write to my father, that – you know, like [indecipherable] you know, you write to Papa, and you re – you know, that we’re alive. And – but we couldn’t write to – we couldn’t – we couldn’t write from the camp to – to England, only into anybody in Switzerland, if we knew anybody. So you couldn’t write there and the – that was really – so the same time that I c – my father probably died the same time when I ca – when I came into Switzerland, or before, or after that, I don’t know exactly.

**Q: You knew that after the war ended, right? That –**

A: We found out – we found out after the war.

**Q: Let’s back up for just a second.**

A: Well, we didn’t hear from him, and it just couldn’t, I mean –

**Q: Which could have been the war, but –**

A: Yeah, but we found out – we f – we f – no, during – during the war in Switzerland, even, I found out. I don’t know when Leo found out, we never talked about it, we never talked about the –

**Q: How did you find out about your father?**

A: I was with the –

**Q: Just for the sake of the – the – getting it on tape, what happened to your father? http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 45**

A: He – he died of a heart attack. He didn’t hear from us and he died of a heart attack in – in London.

**Q: Do you know when he died?**

A: When? Yeah, I know the date.

**Q: What’s the date?**

A: And the date was May – May 17th, 1943

**Q: And how did you find out?**

A: I found out in the – I was with a family in Kreuzlingen, which is the s – the Swiss part of the – I was af – with family there. And I didn’t go to school or anything, I don’t remember. Just – just worked, I did housework there, they took – what is – which was very kind. I had a friend there [indecipherable] they took especially girls, I mean to – you know, for – for help in the house, or housework, or so forth and so on, but you know, we were not in – we were not danger of our lives.

**Q: And when did you find out?**

A: I – I found out at a – I think a – the – I don’t know how she found out, the mother – was a Jewish – Jewish family there, she – she told me.

**Q: She told you exactly what happened**

A: She told me – she told me that my father was dead.

**Q: And – and – http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 46**

A: And I didn’t hardly react. I think I – I didn’t speak for weeks, apparently, to others. I mean, to a – Swiss people, Swiss chil-children teenagers already, my age, and I just [indecipherable] I – I – I didn’t – I didn’t talk.

**Q: So at this point you were 16 –**

A: I didn’t – I didn’t – I just didn’t – didn’t speak, I lost my sp – I don’t know how that comes, but the – it’s – it’s – yeah. This I recall. I just – but functioned, but I didn’t speak. This I remember.

**Q: Where was Leo during this time –**

A: Leo was in the – Leo was in – in – didn’t hear from him, I mean he couldn’t, it was – he was in Annecy, he was in the – the – forgot the name of the thing. The company en France, which was a Vichy [indecipherable] camp kind of thing, which quite a few Jewish boys were there his age, teenagers that time. And what happened by him, I do not know. As far as I know he joined the – after the Normandy, I believe he joined the – the Maquis, and from the Maquis he joined the army.

**Q: And when did you learn about your mother, can you tell me what happened to your mother?**

A: Yeah, well, after the war, we started looking, with the others like me, and we started looking on the Red Cross in – you know, it was really in Geneva – in geni – http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 47 in Geneva [indecipherable] yeah. And they – they were looking from – there were names, names, names of people, the survivors. And you didn’t find a name, and I mean, it came out that – what happened, after the war.

**Q: Can you tell me what happened for th – on tape?**

A: What happened?

**Q: What happened to her?**

A: What do you mean what happened?

**Q: What happened when she was – when she left Rivesaltes. I know –**

A: Well, the only thing I know – the only thing I know is from – from the [indecipherable] list. And she’s in the 19th – 19th transport, August – August the 12th.

**Q: 1943?**

A: 1942.

**Q: ’42?**

A: ’42.

**Q: And she was deported st – through Drancy?**

A: [indecipherable] to Drancy, from Drancy to Auschwitz, I mean, whatever that’s – http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 48

**Q: And when the war ended, I’m assuming that at one point you were reunited with Leo.**

A: With Leo? I didn’t hear from Leo for a long time. He – got a letter from Leo that he wrote from the army that he didn’t hear from me, he wrote to OSE. I got the letter here – I don’t know if I brought it or not, but it’s – it’s in French anyway. So he – he – he didn’t hear from me, and he didn’t know what happened. He didn’t know what happened, if I – if I – if I ever wound up in Switzerland, or what happened, he didn’t know.

**Q: He didn’t know if you’d survived that.**

A: He didn’t know if I – if I made it across or not. So he – so after the war, he wrote to that small town in the – which was the sort of sister town in Germany, which was called Kreuzlingen. And he – I think that’s how he found out – we found each other. And he came on conge, which is furlough. I was in Geneva that he found out where I was. And he was on furlough, and I – I don’t remember how – how that came about, but he was on the French side, which is [indecipherable] Geneva side, but we met on no man’s land in between.

**Q: When did you come to the United States?**

A: In 1947.

**Q: And did you come from Switzerland? http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 49**

A: I came – yeah, I got my – I – I was in Paris with the – Leo when he – after he was released from the army, and I was the – the – yeah, the consulate was in – my family in Canada found someone here to – to make papers for me, because I couldn’t get to Canada, believe it or not, I was German. End of Tape Two http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 50 Beginning Tape Three

**Q: – letters that Leo was able to get – retrieve in 1950s – in the 1950s from the United Kingdom, you donated the letters to the museum, but when did you first receive the letters? When did you first see the letters?**

A: You mean – the letters for what? For –

**Q: The letters from your mother from you, from Leo to your father.**

A: I don’t recall that. How did I get those letters?

**Q: Cause when I visited you, you told me that you’d really not gone through them.**

A: Hm?

**Q: You re –**

A: I did – did I remember?

**Q: You – it had only been a couple of years since you’d received them, and you told me that you didn’t really ever look at them.**

A: That is true, I never looked at them. I think Leo – Leo handed them to me, I believe, Leo handed them to me, the whole – the whole pack, and I di – I never looked at them. Y-You – you’re right, Leo probably brought the letters, they were letters from us, right, to my fa –

**Q: Yes. http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 51**

A: Yeah. So he got them [indecipherable] my father’s belongings he gave me from my father a – his watch, I have, and what else ha – he gave me something else, which I still have.

**Q: Just – briefly just to – to – before we end, I just wanted to ask you, tell me about what it was like to arrive in the United States.**

A: I was supposed to get to Canada, arriving to the United States, it was – it wasn’t – it was a happy – it wasn’t a happy event, it wasn’t a happy moment.

**Q: Can you –**

A: It was – it was not, you see, because first of all, my parents wanted to come. We – friends of my parents, which he – and a – that the son was a good friend of Leo’s, who lives in Pittsburgh, which I’m in touch with [indecipherable]. He – I think Leo was in tou – he was in the American army, Leo was in French army, so I – I don’t know where they met or where they got contact. He – he wrote to me somewhere in Switzerland and he – so – so we were in touch with them, with his – with his parents, and he had a sister, an older sister, and when I came to – to the States they picked me up, and it was [indecipherable] they lived in oh, a very German Jewish neighborhood. And the – I think it was Broadway, all the way up Broadway somewhere. So I stayed with them for a while, and then I – I couldn’t get into Canada, believe it or not. A si – a sister, I think, a sister-in-law, or a sister http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 52 of my – my aunt, my uncle’s wife came to visit her family in New York, and she – that ti – and my uncle said to contact – contact me to come to Canada. And I – I was smuggled across the border to Canada. And the border came, she says, you know, we’re going to the thing and to close the – I couldn’t get into Canada.

**Q: So, you [indecipherable]**

A: And first time I got to Canada, I got smuggled in, by the way, that’s it, by – by a sister-in-law of mine, yeah.

**Q: When you said that you – it was not happy, can you des –**

A: Maybe – maybe it’s me, I don’t know. It’s – it’s –

**Q: Did you feel that your experiences –**

A: I – first of all, Leo remained in France, and I would have – I would have stayed in France, but he says go [indecipherable] and I wanted to – friends – the – my – my friends went to Israel, [indecipherable] ma – most of them did. The ones – most of them, they were like, you know, like me, refugees from – from – from the ref – from – from Germany, or from – or even French kids have remained with their parents went to Israel. And I did want to go, so Leo says, you know what? You can – you can go to – I-Israel wasn’t Israel yet, by the way – you – later, if you want to go to Israel, you can go to Israel, go – go to u – go – go to United States, or to Canada, to United States or whatever. He had more resentment http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 53 against the family in Canada than I did that they didn’t help. But they tried. They re – they really tried. It was impossible.

**Q: He had resentment that they didn’t help during the war – before the war –**

A: Before the war. Before the war. But – but I – I – I – I believe they did. Cause I did have an uncle that traveled to New York, later on I found out to – to Canada – Canada was closed, by the way, didn’t – but the – to encourage cousin of my father’s to – to send papers. Again and again he sent papers, I mean, he – to – to the American consulate.

**Q: So when you arrive, you’re in your late teens?**

A: Mm-hm.

**Q: You ended up – did you work?**

A: In ne – yo – yes, I found my job here in Chicago. Yeah, somebody found me a job to support myself. [indecipherable] my marks, no school [indecipherable] my marks. And I – do you believe it?

**Q: Did you – did –**

A: And I had to sa – yeah – no, I didn’t stay with that family, very briefly. I needed a place, and child was growing up, and he needed a place, and so I had to get out. And I – I mean, you know, and I had a room with a – they were from France, a French, a husband and wife with a – with – with a child, who – where I took – I http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 54 took a room [indecipherable] moving – moving with us and I stayed there for a while, and I had a room there.

**Q: Were they Jewish, the family?**

A: Yeah, yeah, they’re French fre – from France also.

**Q: Did they ask you about your experiences?**

A: They had their own.

**Q: They did.**

A: They had their own.

**Q: Did anyone ask you about your experiences?**

A: Not really.

**Q: And what was – did you regain some –**

A: English, you know, E-English I – I – Leo spoke English quite well when he came. I – I did too, I mean, was still quite – you know. We – we had – my parents hoping to come to United States, and we couldn’t go to school any more that we [indecipherable] a tutor. I don’t know how good he was, but he – he – ma – my parents wanted us to learn – speak English in the hope of arriving here someday. So my English was pretty good, so –

**Q: You married a su –**

A: Or reasonably good, I think. http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 55

**Q: You married a survivor.**

A: I marred a survivor.

**Q: Did you talk about your experiences with each other?**

A: Not much, not much. He – he – he was a survivor, he – number one, he was quite a few years older, was about 20 years older than myself. I was alone, and he was in – he was a – a – Kraków-Płaszów, Auschwitz, M-Mauthausen survivor, mostly in Mauthausen, so he had his own [indecipherable]. Oh, my poor kid.

**Q: Your kid seems fine.**

A: He’s fine, he’s fine. He’s fine, isn’t he?

**Q: Backing up, I mean you had said earlier that your experiences differ so much from people who were in the concentration camps, and Leo suggested that you just move forward?**

A: Y-Yeah, yeah.

**Q: Did you feel that way with your husband? That you – that his experiences were so much –**

A: No.

**Q: He didn’t.**

A: No, no, he didn’t. He didn’t make me feel this way.

**Q: And he didn’t – so he didn’t diminish your experiences? http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 56**

A: He di – no, no. And he didn’t speak that much about it. I – what I learned about him, he was – we were – someone [indecipherable] Płaszów in the camp, i-in Kraków, in Płaszów and pretty much through the war, another one who lost a wife, lost a child – h-he did lose a wife and a child, by the way, a young baby. He – so – so it was a – I lost my train of thought.

**Q: He did not diminish your experiences.**

A: Hm?

**Q: He was –**

A: No, ya – ya – you know, the thing was, you had it [indecipherable] you had it good. I mean, that was the feeling, you had it good.

**Q: What was his name?**

A: Huh? Abe, or Fritz Blue.

**Q: And when was he born?**

A: Hm?

**Q: Your husband, when was he –**

A: He – I think 1910 – eight or 10.

**Q: When did he die?**

A: Well, they had pa – you know they – you know they –

**Q: Right, they didn’t have papers. http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy. Interview with Paula Blue August 7, 2009 57**

A: They didn’t have papers. Or one – one brother came, took the papers from the next one, so they – so he finally – he wrote to – to – to Poland, he says, I want a birth certificate. I want to know when I’m born. And he fi – he got it. So it was – it was in ’08, I believe. ’08 or ’10, I don’t recall which was the right one.

**Q: When did he pass away?**

A: In 1982.

**Q: I just wanted to thank you very much for doing this. I wanted to know if there is anything that you want to add, or to say?**

A: No, that’s about it.

**Q: You okay?**

A: Yeah.

**Q: Okay. Thank you very much.**

A: Okay. End of Tape Three Conclusion of Interview http://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word. It is not the primary source, and it has not been checked for spelling or accuracy.