

# **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum**

**Interview with Regine Ginsberg**  
**April 23, 2010**  
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## PREFACE

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## **REGINE GINSBERG**

### **April 23, 2010**

Gail Schwartz: This is a United States Holocaust Memorial Museum volunteer collection interview with Regine Ginsberg conducted by Gail Schwartz on April 23rd, 2010 in Washington, DC. What is your full name?

Regine Ginsberg: My full name is Regine Ginsberg, no middle name.

Q: No middle name. And what was the name that you were born with?

A: In Belgium, in Brussels, and probably in Poland also, it was **Zylberstejn**, which was spelled Z-Y-L-B-E-R-S-T-E-J-N.

Q: And where and when were you born?

A: I was born in Brussels on November 19, 1925.

Q: Let's talk a little bit about your family, your parents. Their names.

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A: Leah and **Volvish**. In America he became John.

Q: And your mother's maiden name. Do you know that?

A: **Silliman** [ph]

Q: And were they also born in Brussels?

A: No, they were both born in Poland. They met in Poland from what I understand. They married in Poland by a rabbi, had a child and then when they moved to Brussels they had to have a civil ceremony. So the three of them went and got married again.

Q: Where in Poland were they from? What city?

A: From what I remember mother was always talking about **Biala Podlaska**. Mother and dad never talked too much about their experiences in Poland, except that I remember dad saying that we had to leave Poland because he would have been inducted in the army and he didn't want to be so he went to Brussels and my mother followed him then shortly after.

Q: Do you know their birth dates?

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A: Mother was, dad was July the eighth and the year, perhaps, 18, one was 1896 and the one was 1898.

Q: That's fine. What kind of work did your father do?

A: He was in the leather goods, wholesale business. He manufactured leather goods like wallets, anything made out of leather goods. And actually we had a very nice house in Brussels but the factory was at the back of the house. And I remember coming home from school and often going up there and visiting with some of the workers. And it's really interesting because I must tell you that I'm 84 years old. And I've never talked about this before.

Q: We're very appreciative that you're doing this now.

A: And I felt it was time.

Q: Did you have a large extended family in Brussels or were they in Poland?

A: I had two grandmothers and two grandfathers. I remember them. My mother's mother lived across the street from where we were living.

Q: So they all came from Poland?

A: Yes.

Q: With your parents?

A: No, they came afterwards. And it must have been in the early 30s when they came. I remember my mother's father passed away and of course at that time we were too young to be allowed to attend funerals. And my maternal grandmother, as I said, lived across the street and I remember I went often over there to school. She was, used to fix my omelets, fried in oil, which seemed to be delicious at the time. For some reason my paternal grandmother, very sweet little woman. I remember her, but I don't remember where she was and where she lived. So perhaps she didn't live in Brussels.

Q: What about aunts, uncles, cousins?

A: My father had a brother that I remember also, quite a bit younger than he, about ten years younger. And he came to Brussels at a certain time. And my mother had a sister and three brothers. She lost all three brothers during the war. Her sister had gone to Israel. I remember that.

Q: Did you live right in the center of the city?

A: Yes, I did. I lived close to the **Gare de Midi** I remember because we used to take the train very often, we didn't have a car. And we traveled either by tram or by train. And every summer mother and dad would rent a house at the beach, **Blankenberg** [ph], and the family would spend the summer there. And my father would come out on weekends. And it was nice.

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Q: You mentioned that you had an older sibling, a brother?

A: I had a brother. He was seven years older.

Q: And he was born in Poland?

A: He was born in Poland and I was born in Brussels.

Q: And his name?

A: Jack.

Q: Is that the name he was born with?

A: I think so because that's the only way I know. In Belgium, it was Jack, which was spelled differently than the American so.

Q: Were your parents religious?

A: Yes, they were very observant in Belgium. Mother did kosher and kept the holidays. I remember the holidays very clearly. I really do.

Q: Can you describe the holidays.

A: Well Passover was just wonderful, because mother would start cleaning the house and cleaning the silver and bringing baskets of eggs and baskets of onions. And I really remember slogging **kaports** [ph] for the chicken. I mean it was a lot to do. I remember that before, and mother even would do, she would put the, she would make her own wine for Passover, because behind the barrier, and this is just now coming to me, there was also a big what would you call them, those great big jars that you keep wine in.

Q: Barrels.

A: Well it wasn't a barrel, it was made out of glass, but it was used and she would do cherries in sugar and they would ferment until Passover and it really was delicious. And I remember we finally got our own bathroom, because we didn't have one for the longest time. Not a bathtub, I meant my – because, no because I think, if I remember clearly, we used to go to what would you call them.

Q: Baths, you mean public baths.

A: Public, yes. And for Pesach we all had to clean up. We all had to dress up and we all had to sit at a table. It didn't matter if it was 11:00 at night. But you know there was a sense of peace, really I do remember that. We never complained about being hungry. Mother must have had the family over because there was always more than the four of us but I do remember Passovers. I



do remember Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur because the women and the men sat separately. Mama and I sat upstairs, while Papa and my brother were downstairs. And I do remember my brother's bar mitzvah, how he used to have a rabbi that used to come in and tutor him but not me. Girls were not as important at that time. Really. We thought that was very interesting. Now I think that's very interesting because he could read Hebrew and he had a good understanding even when he got married with his family and I never did. Until I was bas mitzvahed.

Q: What language did you speak at home?

A: French. Oh at home, Yiddish. At home we spoke Yiddish and when mother and dad didn't want me to understand they spoke Polish. And of course French was the language that I learned over there. I mean I went to school.

Q: Were your parents Zionists?

A: I don't know. I really don't know about that. I don't know.

Q: Let's talk a little bit about your neighborhood. Was it a Jewish neighborhood?

A: If it wasn't, we didn't mix with anybody who wasn't Jewish because it was very interesting. We all had identity cards and I don't know what year that came to be, but our identity cards were a different color than those who were Belgian and gentile. We had a yellow band across the identity card. And I was not allowed to mix with anybody who was not Jewish.

Q: So you never played with other –

A: I never did, no. It was ingrained in me. I don't know whether I thought I was going to burn in hell. It was a real scandal as mother would put it.

Q: What about the school that you went to? Was it a Jewish school?

A: No, it was not. It was a public school and I very much remember my father walking me to school in the morning holding my hand. But I only did, I couldn't have gotten too much past elementary school because, well I went to school. I don't know how the school was divided over there. Because I was 14 when I left Belgium, but a very young 14, very protected. No independence.

Q: I was going to ask you how independent you were.

A: No independence at all, no independence at all. I was under the protection of my parents. In fact now that I think about it, I don't think I was ever until I got married, without one parent or the other or both of them. Which is very interesting.

Q: What about any hobbies? Did you have any hobbies as a young –

A: No.

Q: Did you like to read? Or art or music or anything like that?

A: I don't remember studying, I did have a piano teacher that came to the house and gave piano lessons. I don't know that I was that interested in it. I did not become an artist. But I don't think they had the arts in school as much as they do now. It was mostly academic at that time because I remember I had a Latin teacher already because she would -- I remember one thing about her. She read palms. And she read my palm. This was before the war. She said I would have a very short life and she was very -- and you know that stayed with me my whole life. And now that I'm 84 I'm all right.

Q: So in your class, there were Jewish students and non-Jewish students.

A: Yes because I remember we celebrated Santa Claus which was on December the sixth, a different time then, yes.

Q: Would you describe your childhood, your young childhood as a happy time or a relaxed time?

A: I don't remember it as a happy time and I often tried to think why. My mother was a very beautiful woman. My father was busy during the day in his business and mother was gone when I came home from school. She loved to dress up, no she didn't work. She loved to dress up and go for tea in the afternoon. And she would come home later. I remember myself as being a lonely

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child because my brother was seven years older and I was always in his way. So that I don't remember a lot of family gatherings.

Q: Did you have any religious training yourself?

A: No. The training was at home. You knew you were Jewish and that's all there was to it. You practiced Judaism. You light the candles on Friday night. You celebrated the Sabbath. And I don't think mother celebrated the Sabbath on Saturday by staying home. And meditating all day long. I don't remember that. But I know that the Jewishness was ingrained in me.

Q: Were you proud to be a Jew?

A: Yes.

Q: Why?

A: Because I was born a Jew. And I just wouldn't think of any other way and you must remember that I only grew up in Brussels until I was 14.

Q: We're talking about this young –

A: And a 14 year old at that time would be like an 11, 12 year old in comparison today.

Q: Hitler came into power in 33. When did you start hearing about him or did you hear about him before you left?

A: The only time I started hearing about it that I would have become aware is that the -- a little later part of the, around 35 or 36 or maybe even 37. There were Germans who were fleeing German Jews who were leaving Germany to try to get to Israel and other parts of the world. They would come through Belgium. And I remember that we had some of them for dinner. Now how they came to my mother and dad's house. There must have been an organization that placed them in different homes for dinner, for hospitality. And I do remember that. And that was the only way I knew, and not realizing what the problem was because I really wasn't included in the conversation. But I do remember that there were German Jews who had run away from Germany and they were talking about some of the problems I'm sure. At that time. But there were many Jews who didn't believe that they would be touched. And obviously my parents didn't either because they waited until the Germans attacked Belgium. But my father was very wise. We didn't find that out until we were here. And I didn't find that out until, before my brother died, that my father in the 30s wired \$10,000 to the Chase Bank in New York. And that money was here when we came to the United States. That was very wise of him. And \$10,000 was a lot of money at that time.

Q: What year was that?

A: It was sometimes in the 30s. Because by the time we came in 1942 apparently his hand writing, my brother told me had changed a little bit. They were giving him a hard time. But he did collect the money and he opened up a leather goods store in McKeesport, Pennsylvania.

Q: Let's talk a little bit about the 1930s. And you said your first indication was when German Jews would come to your house. Did you know a man named Hitler at that point in the mid-30s, when you were 10, 11 or 12.

A: I might have heard the name but I think I was protected from hearing too much being afraid about too much, because again the atmosphere and the thought must have been at that time that it wasn't going to be so easy for the Nazis to overtake Europe the way they did. I'm sure that that's what was on their minds because I mean we really ran the day they attacked Belgium.

Q: Up to that point though you just had a regular childhood –

A: Regular childhood, yes.

Q: You played with friends, Jewish friends only.

A: Jewish friends only and I don't remember the playing with friends and I don't know why but I must have had some friends because I had some letters after the war from a couple of people who said they were my friends.

Q: Hitler invades Austria in 38. Does that mean anything?

A: It didn't, it didn't register with my parents. And of course you know I heard about the Maginot line, but didn't do any good. They went right around it.

Q: Kristallnacht, the Crystal night when they destroyed synagogues

A: No. No, no.

Q: Your parents had a radio?

A: I'm sure but I don't remember listening to a radio.

Q: Did you parents understand German?

A: No. No, there was Polish, French and Yiddish and I spoke Yiddish.

Q: What's your first memory of the difficult times? What's the first memory that you have?

A: That was the day that we had to leave our home with nothing. I mean we really just closed the door.

Q: How did your parents know this. What was the --

A: Because the Germans were invading Belgium and there were bombs coming down and some of the people, I remember were boarding up their windows and mother and dad --

Q: You're 14 at this time.

A: I'm 14 at the time. Mother, in those days you didn't sit down with your children and explain what the situation was and what we needed to do. You just said we're going.

Q: She tells you that you're going to --

A: We just started running. It was like we're, I remember the running. I don't know why we were running but I remember that we were chasing after a train that was leaving full of refugees. And that train took us to the southern part of France.

Q: Before we get to the train so your mother tells you that you have to leave.

A: We are leaving.

Q: And what did you do then?



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A: I just went with them.

Q: Well did you pack any, did you take anything with you especially. What did she take?

A: No because I think we really felt we were coming back. I really think that they felt they were coming back.

Q: So did you take anything special as a 14 year old.

A: Maybe mother did. I didn't.

Q: Just clothes and stuff.

A: Well very little.

Q: Little clothes.

A: Very little. I mean whatever we took was something that you could walk fast with. You could run if you had to and –

Q: Didn't take a lot of suitcases.

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A: No, no suitcases at all. We just packed something little for us. Maybe mama packed something for the four of us. My brother was along with us. And all I remember is the train.

Q: So you go to the train station. And you see a train filled with –

A: With refugees, people who were trying to get out and mostly Jewish people.

Q: Belgian Jewish.

A: Yes, Belgian Jewish. This was to leave Belgium.

Q: This is in the Brussels train station.

A: Correct.

Q: And you got on the train?

A: We got on the train. I don't remember anything about the train but I remember that we were let off in a French village.

Q: We'll get to that. I wanted to finish with Belgium first. Did you see any German soldiers when –

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A: No.

Q: You did not.

A: No we did not. No they were still behind us.

Q: So now you're on the train with the four, extended family or just the four

A: Just the four of us.

Q: Do you remember saying goodbye to your grandparents?

A: No. They must have been gone already because we didn't, I don't remember saying goodbye to anybody.

Q: Do you remember being scared?

A: Oh yes. I didn't really didn't understand what was going on. All I know is that we were running. Why, I wasn't sure.

Q: Did you know about Hitler at that point?

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A: I had heard about him but I didn't know exactly what was going on. My thoughts were about boys. I remember that. (laughs) And I –

Q: So you were sad about leaving your friends? Your boy friends?

A: I didn't have one. God forbid. Mother would have absolutely (laughs) -- but no, I was just dreaming at that time. Those were dreams of a 14 year old.

Q: On the train, were there other people that you knew or –

A: I don't remember anything about the train. All I remember is running.

Q: To the station.

A: To catch the train. I don't remember being on the train. I don't remember getting off the train. My next scene in my mind is that we were all brought together in one place and then we were distributed to different farm areas.

Q: Now we're in France.

A: Now we're in France. And we stayed with the farmers for a few days until they could relocate us. We were refugees in France. Now whether there was a committee like HIAS that was

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working with the French I don't know. There must have been somebody working with the French at that time. And after we stayed there we were relocated to –

Q: The first location, do you know where that was?

A: No.

Q: Was it in the south of France?

A: It's south of France, yes. And we must have been very close to Spain because they relocated us to a town called **St. Gaudens** where you could see the Pyrenees from the house. So it couldn't have been too far from where we were.

Q: So it's still the four of you.

A: There are still the four of us.

Q: What were your parents' state of mind. Do you remember? Were they calm or was your mother frightened?

A: You know I have often thought about this feeling of survival. I don't know what their state of mind was then, but I do know by what they did and what they accomplished that they only

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thought of survival for the children first and then for themselves and they were successful in accomplishing that.

Q: What about your brother, Jack. Was he, do you remember what his state of mind was?

A: He was very busy being unhappy because he had left a girlfriend that he loved very much behind and he was already 21 years old. And he really wanted to go back to Belgium. I remember that. He and mother were having some violent words about all of that because he either wanted to go back to Belgium or being able to, for her to come with us. But all of that didn't work out. So he was very busy being unhappy. But as far as doing anything, neither he and dad were allowed to do anything. None of us were allowed to do anything. We just waited. Mostly. In that little apartment which was maybe you know a room and a half or something like that. We were given food stamps and that's the only way we could get our food. We couldn't buy it. We had to get it with food stamps. And I remember mother used to go get the little bit of groceries, that we had.

Q: Were there many other refugee families with you in that town?

A: Not in the apartment where we were and I don't think that we were busy mixing socially with anyone because it was a bad time of our lives. We didn't know what was going to happen.

Q: Did you see other refugee families?

A: I don't remember seeing other refugee families. Except we were arrested while we were in **St. Gaudens**. And I'm not sure why we were arrested at that time. We were arrested by the French and we were put in prison, right there in **St. Gaudens**. I always had the impression that it was because mother's little town of **Biala Podlaska** might have been on the border between Russia and Poland. And perhaps at that time there were bad feelings between France and Russia. I'm not sure. Or we might have been arrested because you know this was the Vichy government and perhaps that they were already working with the Nazis. Because the Nazis were really being very clever I think now that I think about it. They didn't want to do too much to the Jews because they wanted the Jews to come back to where they were living before, because for the longest time you would hear rumors. Come back to Brussels. They are not touching anybody. They are not doing anything to anybody so my mother probably in 1941 and because she was a woman she smuggled herself back to Belgium. And she did salvage some of the jewelry you know. And she brought back her Sabbath candles which I have. She brought back my father's **tallis**, which I have and she brought back my father's **tfillin**, the **tfillin**, which I still have also. But she brought her diamonds, her jewelry. Not anything beside that. And she made it back.

Q: Did she tell you where she was going?

A: No.

Q: Did you know?

A: Not til we were in the United States did I know that story. I didn't know where she had gone yeah. When, to go back to when, the time we were in prison in **St. Gaudens**, I remember they walked us through the streets of **St. Gaudens**. And I remember the French people standing there and spitting at us. I've never forgotten that. And I thought to myself, I remember thinking what did I do cause I didn't quite understand. Mother and I were sent to a special place in Toulouse and dad and my father were put in a French concentration camp for seven weeks.

Q: Your father and your brother?

A: And my brother, I'm sorry. My brother and my father. And mother and I were released because I was 14 years old. She had a child with her. At that time that was a child. Today it's a **ganzer mensch**. [ph - Yiddish] And I remember we went to visit my brother and my father and I remember that they came to the fence, also dressed in pajamas with wooden shoes on. They went to –

Q: You went to their prison?

A: Yes. It was like a concentration camp. It had barracks outside.

Q: Was that also in Toulouse?

A: It must have been somewhere in that vicinity. Now the story goes in my family and I don't



know if, and I don't remember it but they seem to remember that mother told them that she with, some of the jewelry that she had, she either bought off some of the principal there or the guard there and after seven weeks my father and my brother were released and came back to **St.**

**Gaudens.** We had been in **St. Gaudens** all that time. So I thought that's probably true because I can imagine that the French guards probably could be bought off at that time.

Q: And what condition were your father and brother in when they got back?

A: They had lost weight. It was a frightening experience for both of them.

Q: Did they describe anything about their experience?

A: If they did, they didn't do it in front of me. The protection was immense, it really was immense. Even when I was a grown woman we didn't discuss it and this is really from memory, going back and seeing some of these images from the past in my mind.

Q: What did you, you're 15, 16 years old, what did you do all day?

A: Nothing. Absolutely nothing.

Q: Did you get out and walk on your own?

A: No, that I wasn't even allowed to do in Belgium. We really did absolutely nothing for two years that we were there. But my father had a first cousin in Squirrel Hill, Pittsburgh Pennsylvania, whom he had never met before. And he wrote him as soon as the war broke out.

**Hymie Morovitz.** They owned the OK grocery stores in that area. Very comfortable financially and he decided that he was going to save this family. So my father went to Toulouse which was not too far away and that's where the consulate was. And he would stay every day in front of the consulate to see if there was any news. And they would have ways really of arresting people for what reason I don't know, because I remember my father telling me that he would hear the whistles blow and he would run. But he would go back again in a day or two to see because of course we couldn't leave without a sponsor. And we finally got the papers in 1942.

Q: What month in 42?

A: We left in June.

Q: These are papers for all four of you?

A: For all four of us. We left in June and in July two months, two weeks later all of France was occupied by the Nazis. They took over all of France. And whoever was left was sent to concentration camps. That's how lucky we were. We just got a – we were the last boat out of France with Jews coming to America.

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Q: Did you have any contact with, or did your parents have any contact with the extended family when you were in this small town, your grandparents, your aunts, uncles.

A: If they did, I did not know. I do know that my grandparents both died. I don't know how. I do know I have a cousin, my father's sister left her children with nuns during the war. And I do see my cousin now. She comes to see me. I go to see her. And my brother. My mother lost all three brothers. In the war with some of, so their wives and children. She had one sister left who went to Israel.

Q: But the ones she lost had stayed in Belgium? Is that what you're saying?

A: No, everybody ran. Everybody ran.

Q: None of them were with you?

A: No.

Q: In the small town

A: No, none of them were. Why everybody went in different directions, I don't, I honestly don't know. But they did.

Q: So then you get on a boat?

A: A very small one.

Q: Leaving from?

A: Marseilles. And that was on the Petain government.

Q: Marshall Petain.

A: And the Vichy, I mean they were really very helpful to the Germans. They did everything –

Q: So when you saw them, the Vichy people and saw them in uniform, police and so forth, what were your thoughts?

A: You know it's amazing because I see that in children today. We have the ability to unfocus when we are afraid. I see children do that today. They act like they don't see and they don't hear and I must have done the same thing. I just, I adored my father and I remember holding his hand a lot.

Q: When you were out on the street –

A: Mm hm, mm hm. The boat we were on I remember the conditions were pretty bad because they where they keep the luggage. They call that the hole I guess. They had fixed up because

nobody had luggage really. So they had fixed that with cots all over the place. I might be wrong but I remember that it was so small. It was only about 2500 tons the boat. And it took us six weeks to get to the United States. I do remember being very ill because we were walking a lot and we stopped in Casablanca.

Q: What was the name of the boat, do you know?

A: No, I don't know. And I would love to know really.

Q: Do you know what line it was, what company?

A: Mm, mm.

Q: What did you do on the boat?

A: I was sick. I remember that. I was --

Q: Sea sick.

A: Sea sick. Yeah I remember that. Otherwise the rest of it is locked out pretty much. I remember we stopped in Casablanca and we must have stayed there for a couple of days. I guess to replenish on the boat. My father who had a wonderful sense of humor and he was trying obviously to make me feel better was negotiating with an Arab trying to sell me. (laughs) I still

remember that and I remember being so scared. (laughs) and I can just see him talking. My father did have a wonderful sense of humor. And after that, from there we went to Vera Cruz.

Q: Do you have any other memories of Casablanca besides the one incident of –

A: I think we walked around a lot. We did some sight-seeing with the markets. I remember that. We walked to the markets so we must have been there a couple of days.

Q: By that time did you have any more knowledge of what was happening in Europe or what Hitler was doing? Did you know about the conditions and what was happening to Jews?

A: No.

Q: You did not?

A: No and by that time I was already 16 but as I said a very young 16. Very young 16. It was not a time in my time anyway where the family would sit as the do today and talk and explain why we are in this situation, why we are doing what we're doing.

Q: You never asked.

A: And I never asked. I think almost didn't dare ask. (laughs) So perhaps it was not like that in every family. But it was like that in my family. At the time growing up, I didn't ask any questions and my brother because we really were not that close until we got older.

Q: When you were on the boat with all the other refugees, did they sit around and talk about what was happening and having to leave home?

A: I have a very lonely feeling. A very frightened feeling. By that time I was in my teens, but I wasn't doing what teens were supposed to be doing at that time. I wasn't growing up and I didn't have a chance to grow up. Actually I lost all of my teens here. All of them. I mean I didn't have the teen years that a teenager will have from the time she is 14 until at the time I got married.

Q: Are you very sad about leaving Belgium?

A: No, I didn't know –

Q: Did you feel Belgian or did you feel Jewish when you were there or both?

A: Did I feel –

Q: Belgian when you were living there and then –

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A: Well you know when I went back there as a married woman, I realized my roots were in the United States.

Q: But I meant when you were a child, a young woman, a young girl?

A: Did I feel –

Q: Did you feel like you were leaving your country?

A: No, I felt relief, I felt relief that we were leaving because I mean even though I tried not to know what was going on, you were bound to know what was going on and it that there was real fright about whether we were going to get out of this alive or not. And now that I think about my parents really it was a miracle. It was a miracle what they did. And it was a miracle what my family in Pittsburgh did because it was just as I said two weeks later that the Germans were, took over all of France. And arrested the rest of the Jews.

Q: After Casablanca you get back on the boat.

A: We get back on the boat.

Q: And your next stop?



A: And we stop in Veracruz. And we must have spent the day there too cause I remember they must have had some kind of a festival because there were young woman in their full dresses and young men. And I remember somebody telling me that if you wore a flower on your left ear you were not married. If you wore it on your right ear you were. These were the things that a young 16 year old was interested in. So we didn't stay as long in Veracruz as we did in Casablanca. But it was six weeks that much I know, before we finally came to New York.

Q: You landed in New York.

A: Yes.

Q: That was your first vision of New York.

A: The Statue of Liberty.

Q: What did the United States mean to you as a 16 year old. You didn't know any English, I assume.

A: I didn't know a word of English.

Q: What did that country mean to you?

A: Well it meant that I understood that we were safe, that we were not going to be killed and that

we had a chance for a future. Whether I thought that at that time, I'm not sure. But I'm sure thinking of it today, at this time. (laughs) I remember my mother, God bless her, cause she still had some of her diamonds with her and I guess she didn't want to declare all of them. So I remember her putting one down in my pocket and she said shh, don't say anything. That frightened me. And that's why I remember that. It really frightened me. I was very scared.

Q: What did the Statue of Liberty mean to you when you saw it? Anything special?

A: No. No, no. It didn't at that time, though I must tell you that ever since I came to America, I worship this country because I realize and I mean this most sincerely. What this country did for us and the freedoms that we had which we never had in Belgium when we lived there before the war. Because we were certainly branded as Jewish.

Q: Let's go back to that time. What restrictions did you have before the war? Yes, you were Jews.

A: And I knew I was different. I felt very different from everybody else.

Q: Was there anything that you wanted to do that you couldn't do because you were Jewish?

A: I wouldn't think of doing anything (laughs) that was not permitted. The, it's really interesting that the questions in today's world can be answered that way but not in my world.

Q: You're on the boat and you see the Statue of Liberty and you dock and –

A: It must have been a very strange feeling for me also at that time. I mean I was in a strange country. I didn't speak a word of English. I hadn't been to school in two years. And –

Q: Who met you at the boat, your relative?

A: I don't know. And I'm trying to remember if daddy's cousin must have met him at the boat and taken us back to Squirrel Hill. And we stayed with my relatives for a few days or maybe longer.

Q: This was in Philadelphia.

A: No this was in Pittsburgh.

Q: Excuse me.

A: In Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. And they lived in a community called Squirrel Hill. And dad must have tried to look immediately as to where we were going to go settle down. Because for some reason they picked McKeesport, Pennsylvania. How long it took him to go into business. My dad had a wonderful personality. He and Jack went to New York to buy merchandise, leather goods, the handbags, suitcases, anything that's made out of leather goods. Rented a place on Main street in McKeesport, Pennsylvania. And I understand that some of the wholesalers loved

dad so much that they sold him on credit. In those days people did that. And then we rented an apartment. And I went to school. And that was the worst day of my life. That I do remember because mother God bless her, put me it must have been a high school class at 16. I didn't speak a word of English and I was told swim or sink. (laughs) And, but everybody was wonderful. They really were wonderful. And for some reason I still remember the first question. This country was so isolated I guess there at that time, they wanted to know if we had, real floors. We were living on dirt floors. (laughs) Did we have commodes. Did we have running water. And I remember being asked those first questions. But I learned the language very quickly.

Q: Did you?

A: Yes, I did.

Q: What were the teachers like? Were they helpful to you?

A: Yes they were. They were very nice. They obviously because I do remember being miserable, and particularly I had never dated before in my life. And then all of a sudden I was asked to date. And this was very, very foreign to me. And it didn't work for me because I really didn't know how to act. I didn't know what to do and I do remember being very disturbed by that facet of life in the United States. But I adjusted and –

Q: You arrived in 42.

A: In 42, June of 42.

Q: So you started school in September?

A: Mm hm.

Q: Did the –

A: By that time I was almost 17 cause my birthday was in November.

Q: Did your teachers ask you about what you had gone through? Did they ask you those kind of questions?

A: No, because my language capacity was very low and I don't think I could have answered those questions at that time. Now that I think about it, it must have also been a very lonesome, lonely feeling and like I said you know between those ages, I mean I just lost that time in my life completely.

Q: Besides the other kids asking you questions, about what life was like, were they friendly to you?

A: Yes, but it was a very difficult adjustment, very difficult adjustment for me. I was very lucky that I married the kind of man that I married. I really was so lucky because I was very insecure,

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frightened by many things, many things frightened me. And it took me, I don't know that I ever adjusted during my school years. I did graduate from high school, but I don't ever remember being at peace in high school because it was a different country, it was a different style. And the kids here they had a lot more independence than I had had. So it – but I was very popular in my senior year. I remember that.

Q: What year did you graduate from high school?

A: Oh my. I'll have to look up on the papers.

Q: Did you do the four years of high school?

A: Yeah I did

Q: The four years.

A: Well did I? Let's see. If I came in 42 and I got married in 47. And I was 21 when I got married. And I was 16, yeah.

Q: Did your parents pick up English well?

A: Yes, they did, yes they did pick up.

Q: What was your mother's state of mind? Do you remember?

A: She was very strong. She really was still very, very strong. And she adapted well. Because she had to go buy groceries. She had to adapt to a completely different life and she did.

Q: Did she make friends?

A: After a while but she was so busy working with dad and working in the store that I don't think she spent too much time in that direction. Her life changed completely from the life that she had in Belgium. She was a queen in Belgium really and she had to turn to a completely different life style and she did. She did.

Q: Your father's business was successful?

A: Yes it must have been. Since he had the money, well , no, no I mustn't say that. It was successful. And it would have continued to be successful except that being a Jewish mother, her son got married and he moved to Texas. And mother just couldn't stand it.

Q: This is your –

A: My brother.

Q: Your brother moved to Texas.

A: And mother made dad sell the business and they moved to Dallas. But I understand that that's very natural. (laughs) So they, I was already, I got married. I met my husband in the small town of Athens, Texas.

Q: Oh so you moved. You finished high school.

A: Yes.

Q: In McKeesport.

A: And I started working in the store.

Q: In the store. And then.

A: Helping my father. My brother met a young woman from Kaufman, Texas and her first cousin was my husband. And he lived in Athens, Texas which was about 35 miles away. When she and Jack were engaged, she wanted me to come to Texas and meet the family and I came on the train, I remember, to Dallas, Texas. And there were four sisters and every Sunday cause there was nothing else to do they all had dry goods stores in the little towns. The four sisters would get together with their children and bring food or whatever and meet on Sundays and then go back home. So on one Sunday I went with the family to Athens. And there was my husband Reuben.



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And the story is that he fell in love with me. The moment he saw me (laughs). And it was interesting actually. We didn't date very much. My mother was very anxious for me to get married. I was already 20 and 21 and I wasn't married yet. So there was an engagement party in McKeesport Pennsylvania for my brother and his future wife. And Reuben decided to come and we talked and then I went to New York with my father. I remember to cause he was going to Columbia law school. And I went to New York with my dad to help him buy inventory. And I met with Reuben again and he asked me to marry him. And it must have been instant because we had a beautiful marriage. We really did have a beautiful marriage, for 61 years.

Q: That's wonderful.

A: 61 years.

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(Tape 2 – RG-50.106.0183.02.02; duration: 41:21)

Gail Schwartz: This is a continuation of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum volunteer collection interview with Regine Ginsberg. You had mentioned about your last name being changed. Your birth name, your surname, your final family name was, your family name.

Regine Ginsberg: In Belgium.

Q: In Belgium.

A: **Zylberstejn**.

Q: **Zylberstejn**, right. And then did change when you came to this country.

A: Yes, my father changed it to Silven, S-I-L-V-E-N.

Q: And when did he do that?

A: I think when he went into business. In McKeesport because it was the Silven's leather goods store.

Q: You mean that's the name he gave to the store.

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A: Yes, unh hunh. And how he came to Silven, I really have no idea because his brother in Belgium kept the name **Zylberstejn** until the day he died which was just a few years ago.

Q: So did your name then become Regine Silven.

A: Silven, Regine Silven married to Reuben Ginsberg.

Q: How did you feel about that?

A: Had no feelings about it one way or another. If I did, it wasn't discussed with me. You know, it really wasn't something. You know you accept it, the facts as they came because you didn't question. I mean they didn't ask me what my opinion was. And that's just the way it was, that's all there was to it. And –

Q: The war was over in 45. Do you remember, have any memories of hearing that the war was over?

A: I have memories of hearing of the war being over. There is one thing that I must tell you that my brother enlisted in the army when he was here. He became a captain and he was sent back to Belgium and lived in our home in Belgium as a captain of the American army. And I thought that was just absolutely wonderful.

Q: When was this?

A: During the war, during the war. Not after the war, during the war. And I remember his writing us that he was in the house and he was living in the house with other officers and I thought that was absolutely wonderful. What else do I remember?

Q: Was he being used as an interpreter or –

A: Yes, actually he was in intelligence. Yes he was in intelligence cause he had had a college education. He was -- and his French was absolutely superb. He sounded like Charles Boyer. And he had his charm also. He did.

Q: Did he bring back anything from the house or did he say what condition it was.

A: You know actually I had, not from the house because I think everything was pretty well destroyed inside the house. But he brought me back and I still have it, a bracelet that has all the communities in Belgium, **Rabon**, I remember and the east coast, the names of the important provinces. And that was a long time ago. He brought it back to me in 1945, I guess.

Q: And just to repeat when you were settled here you did not really talk about or did you talk about to your parents what you had all gone through?

A: No.

Q: Just turned the page –

A: Never. We turned it completely because mother was never happy, I don't think in the United States. She had a difficult time adjusting and my father had his first heart attack at 50 and mother was so afraid of losing him that she didn't allow him to, out of her sight. And I think that happened quite a bit in those days also, between husband and wife. So they were not, they never adjusted. I think it's very difficult in later age to adjust to a different country.

Q: I mean they came in their 40s, they were in their 40s.

A: Mm hm, which shouldn't be too bad really, but they had a good life. They had a very good life in Brussels. And from then on, it was a struggle. From the day they left Brussels it was a struggle for them. And I do think and I hope they can hear me that they show such courage, such courage, both of them really of survival. That it's mind boggling sometimes. I mean do we still have that in us and I hope we do. I really hope we do. Because I think when you're faced with that kind of crisis you really don't know how you're going to react. But they just were incredibly courageous.

Q: You graduated from high school, worked with your father and then met your future husband.

A: I graduated at 18 yeah. I must have met Reuben when I was 19 for the first time. Mm hm. And at that time I was still a very protected young woman.

Q: Had you thought of going to college or was that not on the horizon?

A: That was not on the horizon. It was not even discussed at that time. Why, I'm not sure. Maybe mother and dad needed me there.

Q: I was going to say they might have needed you in the store.

A: I think they might have needed me.

Q: And then you got married and where did you live? What year did you get married?

A: 1947 and Reuben was in law school and we lived in the little community in upper state New York. I think it was called Nyack. I'm not sure. Nyack. And we lived in an army barracks and I must say that was the happiest time of our lives. My mother came to visit me and the first thing she said was **oy veyzmer**. His mother came to visit me, both of us and she said it's beautiful. I'll never forget that. But it was wonderful. I would drive in with Reuben and I would take courses at Columbia University while he was in law school. And you know I adapted to marriage very beautifully because he was a very kind and patient and understanding man and I think the security and I don't mean financial security. I mean –

Q: Emotional.

A: Emotional security that I have today is really due to him, it really is due to him. Because I was a pretty messed up 21 year. I was afraid of everything. Thunder. Flying. You name it. Going into a store. And buying something. Everything scared me really. But over the years, it's worked.

Q: Do you attribute those fears when you were young to your childhood –

A: Absolutely, absolutely. And I had them for a long time in my married life. I can see, because we had actually two sets of children because there is 14 years difference between my son and my youngest daughter. So that we had my son and Debby and then Jackie and Lisa. And these two are not quite as hyper. These two, the first two.

Q: So your first child was born when?

A: My first child was born. I went home to mother because we were living at Camp Shanks, actually was the name of the place Camp Shanks. And there was a military camp at one time but in my ninth month. The beginning of my ninth month I went home to mother and Reuben must have had a feeling because –

Q: Was he still in law school?

A: He was still in law school, but he came flying home on the evening that I went into labor. He just had a feeling. And Michael was born. He was such a Texan, my husband that he always

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wanted to he was sorry he hadn't brought a little dirt from Texas to put on the table. He was a devoted Texan. And Michael was born in McKeesport Pennsylvania.

Q: What year was that?

A: Michael is 61 years old, so that would be 1948. I was so, so naïve. I remember. We had a neighbor at Camp Shanks who explained to me at what period of time I couldn't get pregnant. It didn't work. (laughs)

Q: Speaking about 1948, what did Israel mean to you then? A large part of your awareness?

A: I don't think that I was brought, broaden in enough really to think about that part of the world. I didn't think about Israel until my oldest daughter went over there, when she was in high school and got caught in the Israeli war. And from then on I think Israel started having meaning for me.

Q: What was the reaction of your parents when the war was over and the news came out about what had happened to the six million Jews and so forth?

A: You know I think they must have known about it. Because why did they want to run like that if they hadn't known what was happening.

Q: The full extent of what had happened.



A: Probably not the full extent, but I think they must have known about the extermination because it happened before, even. I think rumors have a way of you know coming around like a newspaper. They must have heard, maybe what was going on in Poland. I think that that was going on before 1940. They must have heard about the ghettos. I don't think they heard the full extent of it. Of what I saw in the museum for example, yesterday. The outrage of the Americans and the British when they came, what they saw. I'm not sure that they saw, they knew it to that extent. They knew that they had to save themselves and their children. Now why did they know that. I don't know. I really don't know.

Q: My question was what was their reactions when the full extent came out after the war was over. The pictures –

A: It was again something that was not discussed. With me. Which I find very interesting.

Q: Too painful.

A: I guess because they lost so many members of their family. There. And that's the way they lost them.

Q: You had your first child and then how long did you stay in the east. Or your husband graduated from law school.

A: Well Reuben graduated from law school and nobody would hire him in Texas. They all told him to go west. And –

Q: Why wouldn't they?

A: He just couldn't find a job. But he had a sister who lived in Tulsa and she found him a job with an attorney there and we moved to Tulsa with Michael and we lived there for about a year but Reuben really wanted to be in Texas. So we came back to Texas and you know those were the days that you really were living on a shoestring. But parents were always helpful. His parents and my parents and he finally found a job in a lawyer's office who gave him space for typing for the lawyer. So he typed a lot of his material and he didn't have to pay rent. And he grew very successful after that.

Q: What town were you living in?

A: What town. Dallas. We were. We always lived in Dallas, yeah. That was in the 50s when we moved back to Dallas. And then we had Debby. And we lived in the little house in Dallas. And I must say those were the happiest years of our lives really. It was not complicated and then we moved to our big home that I'm still in right now. I started getting busy myself. I had a career. I was an art dealer. And in the 70s I had an artist friend who came to me who wanted to open a gallery. And I was interested. We worked very hard. We were never in the red. After about five years, I sold out to her. And Reuben who was very wise at that time, this was in the early 80s, insisted that I go back into business. And insisted on setting me up again but I worked out of my

house. And at that time is when I really made all the wonderful contacts that I made and have a wonderful art collection.

Q: These are paintings or sculpture or –

A: Both. Truly a wonderful, mostly contemporary art and I'm delighted because I think I have quite a legacy for my children. I also when I stopped doing that, I became interested in Golden Acres, which is a Jewish nursing home in Dallas. We formed an organization called friends of Golden Acres for the renovation that was very needed in the home at that time. Ethel Frankfurt and I who is now Ethel Zale, she married a Zale. Managed, we built such a successful organization, we managed to raise over the years that we were together about a million and a half and we renovated several floors really in the home. And I was president, I really loved it at the time. I did that in honor of my mother and father who both were in the home. I also was bas mitzvahed in 1992. In honor of my dad cause he had died and I wanted to do that for him. So that even though I didn't go to college, I managed to have two wonderful careers, one that I'm still enjoying because I love the art in my house. And I have some very good art. And that's one of the reasons I'm not selling my house because I get up every morning and it's still rejuvenating. It really is rejuvenating and my family loves to come over and I'm still very close to -- I have a wonderful family. Reuben passed away a year and a half ago. And they have just, everyone should be as lucky to have the kind of attention that I have had. Really. It, I'm blessed. I am truly blessed and as I said starting in the late 70s from the time I went into the art business and going on to what we did for Golden Acres has been very rewarding. Very, very rewarding

and I'm just so happy that I've had that time to have to have two wonderful experiences later in my life.

Q: Can we talk a little bit about your thoughts and your feelings now about what you went through. When your children were the age that you were when you had to leave quickly and being in France and that, 14, 15, 16, 17 year old age bracket. When your children were that age did it bring back memories for you. Did you relate?

A: Gail, it did not because as I told you when I started, this is truly the first time that I have spent any amount of time talking about my growing up. It almost seems as if my life didn't start for me until I got married and moved to Texas.

Q: Two parts to your life.

A: Yes, two parts to my life. And my best memories are from that time on. In fact when I went back to Belgium with two of my girls, I wanted to show them the place where I lived. And I couldn't believe it, it was condemned. For what reason I don't know. So there were no memories there.

Q: My point was it didn't trigger when your children were that age. It didn't trigger memories of what you had to go through?

A: Only because I was too young really to be able to impart those kind of memories at their age to them. And it was a time of my life that obviously I didn't want to think about. And I didn't. It affected me emotionally very badly, very badly and I think because it affected me emotionally so badly that I just closed it off.

Q: Where your parents aware that it affected you so much?

A: I don't think that psychologically people of that time thought about those terms. Because if they did they would have sent me for counseling. That isn't anything that occurred to them really. Life was simple.

Q: Did you parents become more religious when they came here or less religious?

A: Actually it was difficult to keep kosher in Dallas, Texas. Mama didn't like the kosher butcher. He was very mean. I remember that. The only time that mama kept kosher which really tickled me, holidays. Jewish holidays we had to be kosher and Passover we had to change dishes, the whole time that she lived in the United States. It was all right not to the rest of the week. but my sweet memories of Passover was that the day before you were supposed to get not the day, but the day that you were supposed to get rid of the **hametz**, [ph] mother always had for lunch, liver and potatoes, boiled potatoes and we had to come for lunch. And that was the end of the **hametz** [ph]. After that we started Passover. And you know I think it is so wonderful to keep up those traditions because it stays in the mind of children. Those are the things that really remain with them and how important it is. And I do think today that the Jewish institutions are trying to

go back to that. I know that our temple has changed tremendously in their practices of Judaism. They are catering to the younger people now. Because I think they feel there's no hope, once we are set in our ways.

Q: Do you remember the Eichmann trial at all? When Adolf Eichmann was --

A: Well that was already when I was grown up. Yeah I got emotionally involved in that. Yes I did get emotionally involved in that and I remember I watched it. In the sense of what happened through them because of them. I have several friends who were still living, who was survivors. They are the ones who really went through Dachau and the horrors of the concentration camp. The experiments, the nakedness, the shaving of the hair, everything and but I told my children today at lunch that I really feel, as badly emotionally it affected me, in life it made me strong. My experiences during that period. Giving me a strength that I don't even see in my children. I mean I really feel strong in crises. It's very interesting. I change completely in a crisis. I don't scream, I don't cry. I just internalize it and I become strong. And I'm grateful for that. And I really think it's because of my war experiences. Because I can't place it anyplace else really, that kind of strength.

Q: Having to cope.

A: Yes. Mm hm, yeah.

Q: Do you talk about your war time experience or did you talk about your war time experience with your brother later on? As adults?

A: No because unfortunately there was not a good situation between his wife and my mother who lived around the corner, which affected our relationship. The good old Jewish story. So that we didn't have much time together to talk and I regret that very much really. And I'm very serious that today my friends who still have husbands, who still have a brother, I'm like a preacher. I really am, Gail. I tell them I appreciate that what you have the time that you have together and don't stop and pick nit, you know the little things that are not important. Discuss your childhood. Discuss things that have happened between the two of you and they do.

Q: Do you feel you were over protective in raising your children or did you raise them –

A: Very much so. Very much so. But thank God, I had a balance. I had a husband that didn't feel that way, very over protective.

Q: Because of what you had gone through.

A: Exactly. I mean don't do this and don't do that. You're going to get hurt. Really, really to the point I think where they resented it. And, I think my youngest child probably didn't go through all that and she's the one that has the most even temperament. Of the four children. No it's true. Terribly protective. Terribly protective.

Q: Were you active in any way when the civil rights movement began? I mean here Jews were deprived of their civil rights in Europe.

A: I couldn't understand it. That was one of the things when I came to the United States that I had never seen before where blacks were not allowed to drink from the same fountain or use the same bathroom. I really was incensed about that. I remember that because I had never seen anything like that. I wasn't there when the Jews were deprived also of doing that because we had left already. So I had never seen that before. And I remember telling Reuben, how can you accept anything like that. You know like that. I really remember having some very violent reactions to that.

Q: Is that due to what happened to the Jews in Europe?

A: Perhaps, perhaps. It was terribly unfair. A mensch is a mensch. It didn't make sense to me.

Q: What was your reaction going through the Holocaust museum yesterday? You said you went through the exhibits.

A: I felt at one time that I wanted to get out of here and then I –

Q: Too close to home? Too close to --

A: It, I don't know and then I told myself don't give in to your weakness. This did not happen



to you. And although it happened to several members of my family whom I didn't know that well. If I had been very close to them it probably would affect me more than it has. It didn't happen to my mother. It didn't happen to my father, it didn't happen to my brother. But it did happen to some very close friends of mine who have not talked about it, but Jesse was gracious enough a very close friend to let me listen to her yesterday. **Erma Freudenreich.**

Q: To listen to her?

A: When she gave --

Q: To listen to her interview.

A: Interview, yes. And she never had told me some of the things that she went through. Which is very interesting. It, that's what I'm trying to explain. You really don't want to talk about it. Do you have a hard time, people talking about it. Gail, when you interview them?

Q: Are you more comfortable around people from Europe who went through, Jews, let's say who went through the war. Are you more comfortable than someone who was born here.

A: No, no. As a matter of fact today I have more, for a long time, more feeling for people, this is my country.

Q: That was going to be my next question.

A: This is my country. I'm American. I mean I'll always remember a friend of mine who said also a refugee who said when she comes back from a trip, she wants to kiss the ground when she gets off the plane. No I am really 100% American.

Q: Do you feel that the world has learned a lesson, learned the lessons of the Holocaust?

A: Has the world ever learned a lesson, Gail? As you look back into the centuries. I don't know. I hope so. All we can do is hope but that what you're doing is marvelous. Recording it. You know I listened to a lecture by the director of the Holocaust museum in Dallas who died recently of a heart attack. And he was talking about the fact that even though the war was over in 45, the Holocaust didn't come really to be talked about to the surface until what, 1979.

Q: It took a long –

A: It took a long time.

Q: Are there any sights today or sounds or smells today that remind you of –

A: Of what?

Q: Of running to the train when you were leaving and hearing the bombs and –

A: No, it's –

Q: Living in the south of France, there's nothing that triggers it.

A: No, no. It never did, never did from the moment I came to the United States. I used to have nightmares at night I remember.

Q: About what?

A: The Nazis chasing me for months and maybe for leaving, years really. I remember the nightmares but I don't –

Q: Did you tell your folks about that or you kept it to yourself?

A: No, I kept it to myself yeah. Mama would say it's nothing. You know I think that there's such a difference in parenting today.

Q: That's for sure. As you've gotten older do you think you think about what happened more? Or do you not think about it?

A: As I told you when I started this and when Jesse asked me if I would do this, is the time I started thinking about it. I don't think about it. My best memories of my life started in, maybe not right away in 1947 but from the time I got married. And I'm not just saying that. That's

when I really started growing, living, understanding life and learning about life a little bit. Because I didn't know much about life before.

Q: How soon did you tell your future husband about what you had lived through? At the beginning?

A: What I was going through.

Q: No what you had gone through as a child. You know having to leave. When did you tell him or –

A: We didn't talk about it a lot. But he did know because I remember him repeating several times when we were out that we were the last boat out of France. Of refugees before the Nazis took over all of France and everybody died. And then that, that was in June. And for some reason that was a paragraph that he kept repeating and repeating and repeating.

Q: He would tell other people?

A: Yes that we were the last boat out of France the four of us and we were. It was miraculous.

Q: And he was born in the United States.

A: He was born in Texas. A real Texan.

Q: Is there anything, any message you wanted to leave for your children or your grandchildren that you haven't said. Any thoughts that you had because of what you went through.

A: Appreciate this country. Appreciate what you are allowed to do in this country. The freedoms that you are allowed, the fact that you don't have to carry an identity card that says that you're Jewish. The fact that you don't have to be recognized as a Jew or Mormon, any religion that you can practice any religion that you want to, that you are accepted. This is something that you should treasure because as a child growing up I really never knew that. And if you could just remember how lucky you are to live in this country. There is no other country in the world, no other country in the world where you can live and allowed to live the way you live in this country. And I mean that from the bottom of my heart. I've always appreciated that from the moment I set foot in this country because I've had a wonderful life here. I've lived in a part of the country that has been hospitable, that it was just a joy. And when I hear some of the things that are going on now I just can't understand it. But to my children and to my grandchildren and to people in general, cherish it.

Q: What are your thoughts about Germany? Have you been to Germany?

A: No I haven't and you know my husband bought a German car. I never would drive it. I never say this. Actually there's a whole new generation of Germans now and I don't think you can blame that generation for what happened. But they should be aware that it never happens again. But I don't blame the new generation that has sprung for what their ancestors have completely

ignored and they were not the only ones. It was ignored all over the world, what was happening. In the camps and during the war. Or the soldiers wouldn't have act so amazed when they opened the doors. They didn't know. And it was interesting yesterday to read Eisenhower's comment really, this is – and I was so delighted to see so many children standing in a line and there was heartfelt thought to see a couple of young kids crying, actually crying yesterday and this is good, this is good. And I didn't know that you have such an attendance. I mean it's constant. And I think that's great, I really do. In fact I think I'm going to become a member of this one too. You could sell thousands of memberships.

Q: Have you been back to the south of France to where you –

A: No. Never been back.

Q: Do you have any desire?

A: Not really. Not really. It doesn't bring back good memories. Why go back to a place where you were miserable. Go back to happy place. Yeah.

Q: Is there anything you would like to add?

A: No I think that –

Q: Anything you wanted to say before we close?

A: Well I thank you for the privilege of being able to remember some of the things of my childhood though I must tell you that right now is a good time in my life also because of my family, my children, my grandchildren, my art that I still enjoy and it's wonderful at 84 to be able to have the kind of feelings I have. I'm very grateful for that. We all have our moments but I think that the good moments overshadow anything else. And I thank you Gail.

Q: That's a nice note to end on. To say that a good time in your life.

A: Yes, yes so whatever time I have left, I want to enjoy it, I really do and that's what my husband would have wanted me to say and feel.

Q: Thank you for doing the interview.

A: Thank you Gail, thank you very much.

Q: This concludes the United States Holocaust memorial museum interview with Regine Ginsberg.

(end)