

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Interview with Ralph Hockley
April 23, 2017
RG-50.030*0873

PREFACE

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RALPH HOCKLEY

January 12, 2016

Question: This is a **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum** interview with Mr. **Ralph Hockley** on January 12, 2016, in **Carrollton, Texas**. Thank you very much Mr. **Hockley**, for agreeing to speak with us today. We're going to conduct a long interview, trying to capture as many of your experiences as we can, in different places, and a – in different times. And we'll start at the very beginning. We'll ask the most basic questions, and from there we develop our story. So the very first question I have for you, can you tell me your date of birth?

Answer: October 17, 1925.

Q: And what was your name at birth?

A: **Rudolf** with an **F**, **Martin Hockenheimer**.

Q: **Hockenheimer**. And where were you born?

A: In **Karlsruhe, Germany**.

Q: Can you tell me ge – a little bit, just geographically, approximately where is **Karlsruhe in Germany**? What are other major places near it?

A: It's – it's southwest **Germany**, it's a cr – just across the river from **France**. It's where the line separates **Germany** and **France**, and then the border turns west – the German border turns west. It's 45 minutes north of **Strasbourg, France**, and it's due west of **Stuttgart**, and due south of **Heidelberg** and **Mannheim**.

Q: Okay. So could you call it a border town, a border city?

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A: You could, but it was more involved in the traffic of boats on the **Rhine** river.

Q: Ah, okay, okay.

A: It's actually called – it used to be, I suspect it still is, **Karlsruhe am Rhine**.

Q: Okay.

A: It's – it's right – it has a big harbor for **[indecipherable]** shipping.

Q: Okay. And how is it that you happen to be born in **Karlsruhe**?

A: My –

Q: I – were your fam – the –

A: My parents – my parents – my mother was from **Munich**.

Q: Okay.

A: And my father was originally from **Hockenheim** –

Q: Okay.

A: – which is – was a cigar town. And then, that is close to **Mannheim**, so he grew up in **Mannheim**.

Q: Okay.

A: And for professional reasons, he came to **Karlsruhe** and joined his brother-in-law in a business in **[speaks German]**

Q: Okay, what is that?

A: That is they – they sold machines for butchers. They sold everything the butchers needed, including sausage casings, because in those days, all sausages were still

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made with casings. And so that was a big business, and the – his – his store was right across the street from the slaughterhouse.

Q: So your father's store – your – your father's store was across the street from – that's pretty convenient.

A: Yeah.

Q: You know. Okay, I mean, when I asked that question, yes, it was sort of a backwards question to ask, is your family from **Karlsruhe**. And –

A: The answer is no.

Q: Yeah.

A: The answer is, my mother's family is from **Munich**, but that's got a lot of ifs to it, too. My father's family is definitely from **Baden**, from the **Hockenheim**, **Mannheim**, **Heidelberg** area. Ma – the reason I say with my mother is, because the – her mother was from **Mannheim**, and she married a gentleman who came from a place called **Buttenhausen**.

Q: **Buttenhausen**?

A: Yeah.

Q: Never heard of it.

A: Nobody else has either. It's a – it's kind of between **Stuttgart** and **Nuremberg**.

Q: Okay.

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A: There's a whole big area in there, but that – that's where her father came from.

And the thing that's very confusing, if you look at the – the family tree, or anything else, is that my grandmother, whose maiden name – well, my mother's maiden name was **Lowenthal(ph) – Löwenthal**.

Q: Mm-hm, **Löwenthal**.

A: And her mother – her father was **Hermann(ph) Löwenthal**, and her mother was also a **Löwenthal**, but they were not related. And so that gets very confusing –

Q: Yes.

A: – when you look at the – at the family trees, because you don't know which **Löwenthal** you're talking about. But they had nothing in common.

Q: Did you do that? Did you research your family tree, at some point?

A: Yeah. Yes.

Q: And ki – how fa – ka – what can you tell us about that, what you discovered?

How far back did your family go in – in **Germany**? How – how far back could you discover?

A: Well, my father's family, the **Hockenheimers**, I've been working on all week, to make it into some form that I can give you a copy. My father's family I traced back to about 1789, and my mother's family, I would say the 1850s.

Q: Okay. So that's how far back you were able to find, and they were all still in these areas for several generations.

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A: Yeah, what happened, the one thing that you notice when you do that, is that in the 19 – I'm sorry, in the 1890s, the Jewish people moved from the villages into the cities. So that was a big change there. They all were born in small towns, but they all wound up in big cities. And that had to do with the government attitude, and so on. They – there are a lot of little things you find out, you – for example, until the 1850 – 60s, children had Jewish first names. Starting about '70 – 1870, they all had very German names.

Q: Really?

A: My father's brothers were **Albert**, **Louie**. The youngest one was **Fritz**, heaven forbid, and my father was **Julius** –

Q: Yeah.

A: – and they all had the German names. The German Jews, it's a big thing that comes out of this, wanted to be Germans. A lot of them were very religious, some of them weren't, but they all wanted to be accepted, which was a – the key to this whole thing.

Q: Yeah.

A: They wanted – they finally wanted to be accepted.

Q: And so, were you able to find – if you – there was **Fritz** and **Ira** and **Julius**, what about their father, what was his name? Did you remember?

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A: Well, yes. My father's father's name – he was born in 1844 i-in **Hockenheim**, his name was **Maier**, **m-a-i-e-r**. There are two versions. It could be **m-e-y-e-r**, but he-he was **m-a-i-e-r**, and his father was **Isaac**, with two **As**.

Q: Well, you know that's very – that's interesting, because in eastern **Europe**, in **Poland**, you would still find people of your father's generation with Jewish names, rather than let's say, with a Polish version, or in **Hungary**, a Hungarian version. They would still be those old names, which sol – which kind of suggests the assimilation hadn't happened.

A: Yeah, it wi – yeah, the – unfortunately, I have to say that the German Jews felt very uppity about east European Jews, and the – and I don't – the older I get, the less I understand it, because I find out in looking at the family tree, that, for example – well, that f – the one thing that complicates everything is that because of all the wars over there, the – they – the people changed citizenship any time. I mean, they didn't know who was running what part of the **[indecipherable]**. On my – on my wife's – my late wife's family, her name was **Frankel**, and her paternal family, ther – her father was born in a place called **Drohobych**, in – in –

Q: Oh yes, in **Poland**, isn't it?

A: Well, depends when you're talking about it.

Q: That's true, that's true.

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A: When he was born, it was **Poland**. In, I think from 1871, after the Franco-Prussian war, it became part of the – of the Austrian-Hungarian empire. Because not her father, but her uncles all served in the Austrian army in World War I. And then, after World War I, it became – let's see, after World War I, I guess it was Polish, and after World War II, I think now it's Ukrainian. So, I can show you a document that I have, and they – the – the brothers of –

Q: Mm-hm, of your late wife.

A: Of her father.

Q: Okay.

A: The fa – his generation, born 1885, he – her father was.

Q: Right.

A: His brothers, who were – their oldest one was born in – in '73, 1873, they all served in the Austro-Hungarian army. I have pictures of them in Austrian-Hungarian uniform. And one of them, her father, I believe, when he came to **Germany**, he – they – they all had a business together in **Hamburg**, in **Germany**, and they ha – **Frankel** is a pretty German name. And so he's – his – his fr – his first name when he was born was **Moses**, and he changed it, in **Germany**, he changed it to **Moritz**(ph). So in **Germany**, he was called **Moritz**(ph). And in 19 na – 1920 – and I don't quite understand it, but I'd have to study a lot of history to figure it out, but in 1920 he –

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he wanted to go from **Hamburg** to **Solingen**, which is in what we now call **North Rhine-Westphalia** –

Q: That's right.

A: – on a business trip. And he had to go to the Chamber of Commerce, for the Chamber of Commerce to support – to support the request. And so, they supported the request. And – but on the – on the application, or on this paper, there's a statement, says, what's your nationality? And – 1920, and – and he answered Polish. And – and printed on the form it said, and what was it before 1919? Because World War I stopped in '18, what was – an – an-and then before – so, a year before, his nationality was Austro-Hungarian. So, you know, just trying to figure out what you were, wasn't exactly easy in those days.

Q: Could be confusing.

A: It could be very confusing.

Q: Very confusing.

A: But they all – they – they then, you know, they all had then German first names, from about that period on.

Q: Now, did you discover these things about your family through your own research, or were your parents storytellers, who told you about their lives, their childhoods, what – what – who their parents were, who their grandparents were? How did you discover what you ha – what you now know?

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A: Well, I guess there are two answers to that, as a child. I lived in **Germany** until I was eight years old, and as children we – we went to see the grandparents on my mother's side. My father – my father was the youngest of 10.

Q: Okay.

A: And his parents were long dead.

Q: I see.

A: I never knew my pater – my – my father's parents, but he had all kinds of an – brothers and sisters, so we went to visit the aunts and the uncles, and so on. And I happened to be very interested in fa – I always knew everybody. To this day, I can tell you what somebody looked like. But about their childhood, about my father's childhood, I know absolutely nothing. I have a sister, **Diane**, who is a year older than I am, and she is a **PhD** from **Berkeley**, and very into social work, and I – occasionally I consult with her, to find out whether she remembers. There are things that she remembers differently than I do. But I know a lot more about the family than – than she does. That was not part of her sphere of interest. On – so on my father's side of the family, I knew – I knew unc – aunts and uncles as a child, just up to the time I was eight or nine. As a – on my mother's side of the family, I knew the family, cause as children, we spent every summer in **Bavaria** with my grandparents, and particularly with my mother's sisters kids, who were the same age we were.

Q: Your – you said your father came from a family of 10?

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A: Yeah –

Q: What about –

A: – but you know –

Q: Yeah?

A: – it – it – it was, if you go and look at the family tree, his father was one of who knows how many, and – and they all had 10 – eight to 10 kids, so that trying to figure this thing out like this, it's –

Q: You can get a clan in no time. So, stories about your father's childhood, about his growing up, are kind of a blank, even though you did know your aunts and uncles, his brothers and sisters. What about from your mother's side? How many siblings did she have?

A: She was one of four.

Q: Okay.

A: She was the second oldest.

Q: And were they all girls or boys – or were there some boys?

A: Three girls, one boy.

Q: Okay. And let's – let's go through names. What was your mother's name?

A: **Lilly**(ph).

Q: **Lilly**(ph). **Lilly**(ph) **Löwenthal**. And her – her sisters?

A: Her oldest sister was **Elsa**(ph).

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Q: **Elsa**(ph), okay.

A: Her brother, who was next, was **Walter**.

Q: Okay.

A: And her small sister was **Margaret**.

Q: All right. And your grandparents on her side?

A: They're **Hermann**(ph), and **Yula**(ph).

Q: And **Yula**(ph), all right.

A: So they had – and my grandfather was born in 1857, so in – in 1857, his name was already **Hermann**(ph).

Q: Okay, so that's kind of like where the start – the start of this transition?

A: Yeah.

Q: It's interesting.

A: Yeah.

Q: I never knew – I mean, I never knew that, that it would have been in this ye – in these years that there would be this assimilation, this a – this attempt at assimilation.

And, until **Hitler**, who knew that it wouldn't be successful, you know?

A: Yeah.

Q: Because there was assimilation.

A: It would have been successful. It was successful.

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Q: Yeah, yeah. Was your mother's family – how did – how did your grandfather support your – his family, on your mother's side?

A: Well, let me say that both of my families were fairly well-to-do.

Q: Okay. That was one of my questions.

A: Whatever that means.

Q: Well, it means different things.

A: My – my maternal grandfather, **Hermann(ph) Löwenthal**, in those days they had the habit of marrying younger women, right?

Q: That habit hasn't changed, you know.

A: My – my grandfather was born in 1857, my grandmother was born in 1876, so she was basically 20 years younger than he was. So, when we, as children, got to see him, that was a big deal. We – he was an – already an old man. In those days, you know, if you figure it out, he was '57; in 1900, he was 43; and in 1930, he was 73. When we knew him, he was at least 70 years old. My grandmother wasn't, but he was. He had a – with his brothers, he had a ladies haberdashery store, a big one, in **Munich**, right one block from the **bahnhof**. And as kids, we were permitted to go there, there was a building with two stories. The hats were made upstairs, not in **China**. And – and we – we could watch them make the hats, and the thing that fascinated us is they had a – they had a dumbwaiter, or whatever you call the tubes.

Q: Yeah.

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A: They had a tube, so all of the – the – the accounting department was upstairs.

Q: Oh, so that –

A: So somebody bought a hat, they pa – they gave the money, they got a bill, and gave the money to the salesperson, and it was put in the tube, and they took care of it upstairs.

Q: How cool.

A: And we th – we thought that was – as kids, we thought that was great. Those are the little things I remember, but –

Q: Yeah.

A: – our relationship with my grandparents was distant.

Q: And why would that be?

A: Very warm.

Q: Okay.

A: Because chi – in those days, children – children – as one of my cousins famously said once, **les enfants ne parle pas à table**. He was French.

Q: Yeah.

A: Children are seen, but not heard. Which is totally against everything that we believe in, because we f-figure that kids learn from talking with their parents, not the opposite. But in those days – now, what I have to add is that my grandparents had a maid, the cook, everything goes with it. And the maid, **Lena**, was in charge of the

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kids when they came to visit, and my – my – my aunt and uncle – **Elsa**(ph), the older sister, lived around the corner. My – my grandparents had a big apartment. If you've ever been to **Munich**, it's one block from the – from the **Oktoberfest**, from the **Theresienwiese**.

Q: Wow.

A: That's where they lived. And my grandfather's brother lived in the building next door. And my aunt and uncle, now they lived in apartment houses, very nice apartment houses where a floor was big. My aunt and uncle, **Elsa**(ph), and her husband **Karl**(ph) **Heiman**(ph), they lived around the corner, they had a big villa. And so, as kids, we spent a lot of time over there, because their kids were the same age as we were, approximately. But when we got to **Munich**, to – with my grandparents, **Lena** was in charge of us. **Lena** took us places, and – and then, you know, my – my grandmother, I don't know what she did, but she worked in the store with my grandfather. And they came home, you know, they come home for lunch, and they have a big lunch, the main meal, and then they take a nap. And then, I still have that problem, when I eat, I always have to go to sleep. So don't feed me too soon. They – we were permitted to stay up until my grandparents came home, about 7:30, eight. We could spend 10 minutes with my grandparents, and then pff, off to bed we went. So –

Q: Formal.

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A: It was very formal.

Q: Yeah.

A: It was very formal. So –

Q: But is – they also sound like very nice memories.

A: Oh yeah. Nobody was nasty.

Q: Yeah. Oh, you know, from a childhood, you know, you – you're painting a picture for us, you know, of the **bahnhof**, of th – of the – of the, you know, haberdashery store, of the – the tubes, and so on. That's – that's exactly the kind of, I guess, evoca – you know, I want to have it evoked.

A: Yeah.

Q: What did it look like, what did it feel like?

A: Well, the – the – you know, from a sociological point of view, what this means is, because they had a maid and a cook, that meant that the parents had time for other things.

Q: That's right.

A: Nowadays, parents spend 24 hours a day catering to everybody, especially the mother.

Q: Yeah.

A: So, you know, it's a totally different world.

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Q: Well, when you look at houses here that were built for well-to-do people in the late 19th, early 20th centuries, there are often two staircases; one for the family, and one for the servants, you know. And to maintain such houses in those days –

A: It took – yeah.

Q: – you couldn't – you needed servants. And now –

A: Yeah, I can tell you that the house I grew up in – if you like to, my wife can bring you a picture of it – was also a big house.

Q: Tell me about it. Paint a picture about that.

A: It was in **Redtenbacherstrasse**, number two, in – still standing – in **Karlsruhe**. It – it was a **eine familie** house, a one family home. Nowadays, it's four apartments in it. But it – it – you know, it had a basement, and the main floor. The main floor had the kitchen, the dining room, the living room, and **das klavierzimmer**.

Q: My gosh, a piano room?

A: A piano room. And which you were only permitted to go into when there was music being performed.

Q: Well, who knew how to play?

A: Well, that depends who came along.

Q: Oh, but I mean in your family, was there somebody who knew how to play?

A: My mother and father didn't play.

Q: Okay.

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A: No. But we had lots of relatives.

Q: And did you have lessons?

A: But the main thing was the – the – the – the – you could call it den now, because there was a – I don't know how you say it in English – **Kachelofen**. There –

Q: Oh, one of those stoves that –

A: One of these stoves –

Q: – ovens –

A: – built in with – with tiles on it, and with a bench around it, you could sit on the bench to warm yourself, cause you know, that was the way it – everybody congregated there when it was – when it was cold.

Q: So it was coal oven. It was a co –

A: Coal oven, yeah, yeah.

Q: It was a coal oven, yeah.

A: And – and then upstairs were the bedrooms, and then there was another floor above, that had its own access to this little apartment, presumably for the maid, but our maids all came in. We had mainly one maid, she did everything. She raised my sister and me, and her name was **Sophie**, and she cooked. And the thing that I learned, you know – you don't know yet – but I spent 25 years in **Germany** as an intelligence officer for the **U.S.** government. And because of my position, I had vil – villas, and they – in **Berlin**, and in – in **Munich**, I had similar houses. And the one

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thing that absolutely floored me, was that the kitchens were all abysmal. The kitchens were – I mean, they were small. All of them, every single one. In **Berlin**, in **Munich**, the – the – the kitchens and – and the one I – I – I grew up in, as a child, they were all a postage stamp. And the only theory I have developed is that, you know, this was for the **angestellte**, you know, it was for the –

Q: For the employees.

A: – employees that didn't need much space, which is contrary to everything I believe in, but –

Q: Yeah.

A: – the – my – my wife and I, my late wife and I, in **Berlin**, and – and in **Munich**, the first thing we did when we moved into these houses is to change the kitchen. But you couldn't enlarge it, there was no space, but you could change stove, and a few other things, you know, because it just wasn't functional according to our concept. I had the good luck that the houses I lived in in **Germany** in my career were owned by the German government, and all I had to do is pick up the telephone, call the American engineers, military engineers, and say hey, I need this and this, and it came.

Q: Let me tell you, that sounds like a dream renovation plan, you know.

A: Well, we did – we weren't able to renovate it that much, but we were able to update some things.

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Q: Yeah.

A: We couldn't make it bigger.

Q: Yeah. Yeah, just as a point of interest, where – what part of town in **Berlin**, when you were – we'll go back to our main theme, but when you were a – an intelligence officer post-war, what were the sections of **Berlin** that you lived in?

A: **Dahlem, Zehlendorf.**

Q: Ah, ah. I went to the **John F. Kennedy Gemeinschaftsschule.**

A: Well, I know exactly where that is.

Q: Yeah.

A: It was just down the street.

Q: Yeah, yeah, **Teltower Damm.**

A: Yeah, **Teltower Damm.**

Q: **Teltower Damm**, yeah.

A: Oh, that's a different one. There is a **John F. Kennedy** school in what used to be the **Amerikanische Siedlung.**

Q: That's right.

A: The American settlement.

Q: Well, there's one – this was outside of it.

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah. Anyway, we'll –

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A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: – we'll talk about that in the break. But let's go back to **Karlsruhe** and your childhood, and **Sophie**, and your parents. What – what would you say would be some of your earliest memories from growing up in this house across the street – oh no, your father's business was across the street.

A: No, no.

Q: Or it was your home?

A: No, the – my father's business was across the street –

Q: From the –

A: – from the slaughterhouse.

Q: – house.

A: That was the other end of town.

Q: Oh, okay, so you lived in a residential section.

A: No, we lived in a residential district.

Q: Okay. This may sound self-evident, but what was the language that you spoke at home?

A: German.

Q: German. Any other language that your parents sp –

A: Not – not before I was eight.

Q: Okay.

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A: It was all German. I – we – the school that my sister and I went to was one block from our house. So that was very nice.

Q: Do you remember the name?

A: I – I know it as **Volksschule in der Gartenstrasse**. It may have had a name, I – but we always called it **Gartenstrasse**, where it was.

Q: Okay. And – oh, I just had a question in my mind. Your first years in school, do you have any memories of –

A: Yeah.

Q: – your first school year?

A: I spent – I went for two years, I went to school –

Q: Okay.

A: – in **Karlsruhe**, before we left. My sister went three, at least. I think that was all. You know, first grade, second grade. I had been to a kindergarten, which was private –

Q: Okay.

A: – before that, for a year. And I just remember – all I remember is I went to kindergarten, I remember the lady in charge, and that's about it. And then I went to first grade and second grade. Now, you have to understand, I went to first grade in 1932.

Q: Oh my. Okay.

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A: Yeah, '32. I have, if you're interested, I have all my report card books –

Q: Do you?

A: – from every place I've ever been. You ni – you have to understand Germans keep everything. I mean, they – they have – we defeated **Germany** because the Germans hold everything down. And the documentation – the documentation of **Germany** – when we took over **Germany** – I'm way out of –

Q: That's okay, that's okay.

A: – what we're talking about, but when we took over **Germany**, if anything you – you wanted to know, I mean, it's there somewhere. You just have to find it. Because everything – records are kept, and they're written.

Q: Your work is done for you, huh?

A: Work is done for you, and – but my report card for first and second grade, I have. I can show them to you.

Q: Now, what were your – did you have friends who were non-Jewish?

A: Yes. The – on **Redtenbacherstrasse**, about two or three houses down, there was a family, and his name was **Peitken**(ph), and they had two boys, and the older one was my sister's age, and the younger one was my age. That mean – meant that the older one was in the same grade as my sister, and I was – and the younger ones was in my class. And they were friends of ours. The younger one, **Gurz**(ph), was in my grade. The minute the **Hitler** movement started, he became turned, and he wouldn't

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want to play with me any more, and he called me a dirty Jew, and a few other things.

The older one always –

Q: Did he even know what he was saying?

A: No, of course not. The older one never did that. He always remained friendly. But there were, in my class of, I'm guessing 25 kids, there were four Jewish boys. I was one of four, and my sister was about the same. At the beginning, we had no problem at all, but once **Hitler** came to power, it became immediately – anybody who tells you that actions against the Jews in **Germany** started with **Kristallnacht** is – doesn't know what he's talking about. It started right from the – the first, immediately, in '33.

Q: And you felt – and you felt it in school?

A: Oh yeah, they started – every morning they had to raise the swastika flag, and they had to sing the – the – the Nazi national anthem, the **Horst-Wessel-Lied**, you know. De file – I can sing it for you, you know.

Q: I mean, it's – it's bittersweet, but what do you remember? T-Tell me, what do you remember from –

A: Well, I can – I get – I know the words for the **Horst-Wessel-Lied** because we had to sing it every morning. And then, you know, the first year, I don't remember who my teacher was the first year. It may have been the same one, but I don't remember that. The second year, I had a guy by the name of **Meininger**(ph), who turned out to

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be the head of the Nazi party in the area. And so, he took every opportunity to make snide remarks about the – the Jewish kids. And –

Q: Well, that's very cruel, you're children –

A: Oh, he was – and you know, my sister always laughs about it, but she always lucked out. Her – her teacher was the nicest guy in the world, always. And I always got these – these – you know, this – this was a tough age. I mean, you know, I was what, seven years old, eight years old, seven years old. And if you did anything wrong, you know – he had a stick, and you had to stick your hand out, and he went – you know, and it burned. And you know, he wasn't careful with Jewish kids, I mean, there's all these little, more than innuendoes. It was picked on, you know, and there with watch – they would watch us. We had to salute, or something, when the flag was raised every morning, and they would watch us. And if – if the **Meininger**(ph) felt like – like it, he said well, you didn't stand at attention when we were playing the **Horst-Wessel-Lied**. Stuff like that. All this little stuff, you know.

Q: But again, in my mind, I'm thinking of a grown person, a grown – an adult, and you're not even grown children, you're little kids, you know?

A: I'm just a little kid, yeah.

Q: You're little kids, six or seven years old.

A: Seven years old.

Q: Seven years old, and he's picking on little kids.

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A: Yeah. Well, but he was a Nazi, you know, they don't know the difference.

Q: And, was your family religious?

A: **Jein**.

Q: I love that German expression **jein**.

A: **Jein** means yeah, yes, and **nein**. So if it's so-so, you know.

Q: Okay.

A: My mother was – tended to be. She grew up in **Munich**, in the Jewish youth movement, she was a leader in a Jewish youth movement in **Munich**.

Q: Okay.

A: My dad couldn't – get away farther from religion than he possibly could. The only time he ever went in a synagogue is when he married my mother, and that was the first and the last time.

Q: Was there a reason why for him? Did he ever explain it?

A: I think the answer to your question is no. Unfortunately, my sister and I have often bemoaned the fact that we never found out anything about Dad, about th – well, he died young, too, so the years when you would have done that, maybe, but we could have found out something when he was young. We only know tidbits about him. He – our impression is that there was this – there were a lot of Jews in **Germany** that wanted so badly to be German, that they – being Jewish was –

Q: Something you wanted to get away from.

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A: Yeah, or at least you ignored it. Now, he married my mother, and – in a Jewish wedding, that – but it was – it was an arranged wedding, so that –

Q: So he still – I mean, he still – if it was an arranged wedding, that means he agreed in an old traditional way, to find a wife and a bride, not in a new modern way, but in a way that –

A: Well, my mother – you know, I've read some of this stuff with – earlier heirs. My mother belonged to a generation that was not subserv – where the woman – as a woman, she was not subservient to men, which was a new thing.

Q: Yeah.

A: And she had her own – she was well educated, better than her siblings. My father was educated better than his siblings, and I think that was the common denominator. They both went to the university – Mother went to **höherste Schule**(ph). I don't know how to translate that.

Q: I don't ee – I don't understand.

A: It's a – it's a – well, it's above – it's above high school.

Q: Okay.

A: It's not university, but it's for – for girls from families that had the money to send them to another school, they – they – they did. And she was – she was very well educated. But my father served for four years in the German army, in World War I. Got the Iron Cross, and the whole deal.

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Q: Was he a patriot?

A: Yes. And that's something that has not writ – been written about – enough, about the – the – the pre-war, pre-**Hitler Germany**, but th-there were a lot of them who were patriots. He was very proud to have served in the German army. And that's one of the reasons why so – and then **Hitler** came, in '33, and immediately, Jews were scum. And my father, who was a man of great integrity, he – he couldn't accept that. And that's why he left. He left in – he started leaving in '34, it took two years to do the whole move.

Q: And there are two – there – we'll come to that in a moment, but there's an impression that I get from your telling, that – and tell me whether or not this is an accurate impression – one, it must have been extremely painful. If you had – if you si – identified yourself with a nation and a people, and all of a sudden you're thrown out of that, it's a real – it's a personal rejection. Then –

A: Yes, especially if you just finished serving four years, risking your life –

Q: Life.

A: – for the country that's doing it to you.

Q: Yeah. So that – I mean, I'm sus – that's the impression I would get, if you – if you believed in it, if you put your heart and soul into it, and put your life on the line, this is – this is personal. Number two, there's a great deal of foresight in that. Very few people left in 1933, '34, '35 – you know, most were saying, it – it'll blow over.

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A: Yes.

Q: You know? He's not someone to take seriously. All the intelligent people don't take him seriously, you know, and so on and so forth. Was – was that part of your par – your father's decision making, too? Was he calculating, in that way?

A: Well, I think – I think – I can't prove it –

Q: Okay.

A: – but I think that the reason we went to **France** is because of that. That all of his relatives, on both sides of the family, said [**speaks other language**] you know, all this will go away. **Hitler** won't last, the others didn't. And so they didn't leave. And so my father, I guess argued with himself that if he went t-to **France**, when it's all over, he can come back.

Q: Yeah, it's not so far.

A: Yeah. So he didn't – th-the consideration of going to the **United States**, at that particular time, if it came up for discussion, I never heard it.

Q: Okay.

A: So I don't think it did. So we went to **France**. Whereas, on his side of the family, everybody stayed. They were – well, I'll tell you a little bit about his family, but –

Q: Yeah.

A: – the – on my mother's side, the – the leader, kind of, in Mother's side of the family was her sister al – **Elsa's** husband, **Karl(ph) Heiman(ph)**, who was very

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wealthy, had a big textile business, and he knew everybody in government, and elsewhere. And, you know, they kind of pooh-poohed the fact that dad wanted to leave **Germany**.

Q: And did Dad want to leave **Germany** because he was so hurt, or because he said mm-mm, nothing good out of this.

A: It's hard to answer. It's probably both. I – he was hurt. He had quote unquote, loyal customers for years, butchers mainly, who one day when he, or his representative walked in to see him, said we don't do business with dirty Jews.

Q: Oh.

A: And so, you know, you only need to hear that a few times before you – before you say hey, do I have to put up with this?

Q: Yeah, yeah.

A: So it was – but the fact that he had been in the military for four years during the war, definitely played into it, because his – his brothers – well, one of them was in the military, I don't know much about that, but an-and his – on my mother's side of the family, nobody was ever close to that. And you know, there's lots been written, I've read a lot. I have a book written by a German, at the request of the German Minister of Defense, that's in my f – later life, and – which explains what being a Jew in – in **Germany** was like in 1914, when the Kaiser said – when the Kaiser said to the Germans, you must all come fight with me for the – so on. The Jews – th-the

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grand rabbi in **Berlin**, and I got his words, I got his sermon, had a – had a service in which he said, we Jews must – we must answer the call of the Kaiser. The grand rabbi of **Berlin**. So that was the frame of mind.

Q: Yeah.

A: And that was the frame of mind of many German Jews.

Q: Let's turn – let's turn a little bit to a different area, but we'll come back to this.

Tell me a bit about your parents' personalities; your mother's personality, your father's personality. What kind of people were they?

A: Well, my mother had a never-ending social conscience. She – all of her life she was always doing things for other people. She started as a student in **Munich**. She was the head of the Jewish youth, and I – I have some letters in my documents, where the – the – the council of Jewish – the Jewish congregation sent her a letter thanking her for having led the effort during the elections, and without her, it never would have happened. She was like this all her life, as I will explain to you later. Without that kind of consciousness, I wouldn't be sitting here. But my dad was very intelligent. He was mainly, in the years that I knew him, he was mainly consumed in making a living, which became ever more difficult in **Germany**, because of what I said. And then when he went to **France**, nothing really worked.

Q: We'll come to that.

A: Yeah.

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Q: We'll come to that. But, as far as – who did you go to when you wanted to tell something about what was going on in your day, in your life?

A: Mother.

Q: Yeah? Okay. Same with your sister?

A: Yeah. My father favored my sister over me, but my sister, we have a strain in the family, of petite woman, my sister had that strain. My father had a sister who was petite, and my – my grandmother, whom I never knew, my father's mother, was very petite. I think that's where the line is.

Q: Okay.

A: Then my Aunt **Josephine** was like that. My sister is four foot 10, maybe.

Q: Okay.

A: And – and so she always was pale, and my father always protected her, so that – you know, and I was just the boy.

Q: That's just not fair.

A: It's all right, it didn't bother me. You know, I did my own thing, but it just – so my father was more – I don't think she talked that much more with him than I did. You know, in those days, fathers would say to you, are you doing your homework, as he went whizzing through the room. And it was just that kind of a world.

Q: Yeah.

A: Mother was concerned with all of the things we did.

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Q: Okay.

A: That was her job.

Q: Do you remember how they broke it to you that, we're leaving **Karlsruhe**? You know, was it an adventure, we're going someplace, or was it, we got to get out of here? Do you remember them telling you about it?

A: No. I – what led up to it, what I said before, let's start it from the beginning. We witnessed a number of things happening –

Q: Such as?

A: – around us.

Q: Okay.

A: The one – for example, they arrested Jews from the beginning. I mean, in 1933, the people who were judges, and university professors, and in charge of the opera, at any position, who were Jewish, were out of a job. And they arrested people. There was a family that we were friendly with, he – he was the Minister of Justice of – of whatever it was then, **Baden**? It was in **Baden-Württemberg** then. But – and he was a socialist, and so he ha – and he was Jewish. So he had three strikes against him, and he got arrested in the first bunch, and what they did, they put them on open trucks, and they drove them through the city of **Karlsruhe**, so that people could spit at them.

Q: This was the Nazis?

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A: Yeah.

Q: Nazi – you know –

A: Yeah, they were the Brownshirts. The **SS**, we didn't see, but the Brownshirts, there was Brownshirts all over the place. And they were just, you know, and they had signs, **Juden raus**, whatever. Whatever one through the ages I've seen, they had it. And – and – and the people on these trucks went to a concentration camp that you've never heard of before, and I can't remember. But –

Q: Was it local?

A: Local, yeah.

Q: Yeah.

A: Yeah. So it started from the beginning.

Q: Did you ever have these pleasant visits at your home?

A: No.

Q: Okay.

A: Not that I remember, because it didn't – I don't think they started before '35.

Q: Okay.

A: Maybe even later. But they did arrest people they didn't like. **Hitler** didn't – **Hitler** didn't like, I don't know in what order, trade unionists, socialists, Jews, Freemasons, har – I hardly believe anybody knew what a Freemason was, but you know, it sounded good.

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Q: He didn't like them.

A: He didn't like them. And so, if you were on any of these lists, or if you were on two lists, heaven forbid, you know. Then Catholics. He had a big war going on with the Catholic church in certain places, certain times.

Q: Interesting. I think he was born Catholic, wasn't he?

A: I have no idea. It was a mistake that he was born.

Q: Yeah.

A: The – the – the – I mean, when you think about the psychology of it, the – **Hitler** was a little guy with dark hair, a brown mustache, and he said that to be a good German, you had to be blonde and blue eyed. Now where – how does he fit into this thing, you know? So that people fell for this, that is unbelievable, but –

Q: Yeah.

A: – that's –

Q: There are some things that don't have logical explanations.

A: They don't have logic, yeah.

Q: Do you remember leaving **Karlsruhe**?

A: Not really. I'll tell you why. I said before that we left in '34, '35, and that's a true statement. We left, step by step, it wasn't that we left.

Q: I see.

A: The kids, that means my sister and I, were first sent to **Munich**.

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Q: With the grandparents.

A: With – actually with my aunt and uncle, but –

Q: I see.

A: – same thing. Around the corner.

Q: The ones who didn't want to leave?

A: The ones who didn't want to leave. And well, in those days you didn't talk that much about it, but that – you know, we were just sent to **Munich**, or taken to **Munich**, I guess, my mother took us. And we stayed with my aunt and uncle and their three kids, I would say, for three or four months. And – and that was in '34. Maybe the fall of '34 – I – the fall of '34. After school – there was no school. The new school year was starting, but it was at the end of '34. And then, after that, we were shipped from there – shipped to – to **Mannheim**, to stay with my father's oldest brother, and his wife. We stayed with them for three or four months. And then we were sent to **Switzerland**. My father had a sister in the **Zurich** area, and her husband was a teacher out in the country. And we were sent there for three or four months. And we stayed with them on a farm.

Q: It sounds like “**Heidi**.”

A: It sounds like “**Heidi**.” We were on a farm, and I – I was – I didn't go to school that whole year, and I was – I would go out every morning with the farmer, who owned the farm, a – out in the fields, and where they put hay together, and I was

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permitted to feed the cows, and stuff like that, you know. It was a new world for me.

And so the whole thing, that – that **Munich, Mannheim, Switzerland**, that was about a year.

Q: What were they doing, your parents?

A: They were – they were setting up – they were taking care of the formalities required to move to **France**. I can't tell you where they lived at the time, whether they – probably partially in **Germany**, and partially in – in **F-France**, but they weren't anywhere where we were. They came every once in a while to see us, of course.

Q: Okay.

A: But so it – it's in September of '35, that we left **Switzerland**, and moved to **Marseilles**.

Q: So, I have a few questions. Do you know if your father was able to sell his business, or did he have to leave it?

A: I don't know.

Q: Okay.

A: I assume he sold it, but I – they – they didn't take things away from you yet, at that time.

Q: And when – when you moved to **Marseilles**, that is, did you take anything of your own personal belongings with you? Was there furniture, was this –

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A: Yes.

Q: You – so your household, did it come with you?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay. And why **Marseilles**?

A: My father had a good friend who was a businessman in **Marseilles**. I think that's the reason.

Q: Okay.

A: He helped him get established.

Q: Okay. So he didn't know what – many other people in **France**, and this person – I'm making that assumption.

A: Yeah, he – he – this person was an – originally from **Austria**. His name was **Charles Pollack**(ph). And he had a – he was an importer/exporter in **Marseilles**, and he was a friend of his, and so he – he was – I – I'm sure the reason why they were very closely connected when we first got there.

Q: Okay. So tell me, what was **Marseilles** like? When you get there, you're eight years old, nine years old, something like that? What was the world – what was the impression? What was your first impression?

A: Well, they tried to teach us a little French in **Mannheim**, so that we wouldn't be totally lost. And the one sentence I can remember is the, **La boeuf - der Ochs, la vache - die kuh, fermé la porte – mach tür it zu.**

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Q: Tell me, what does that mean?

A: The ox – no, **la boeuf** is – is the ox, in **French**.

Q: Okay.

A: **La boeuf** – the ox, in German.

Q: Okay.

A: **La vache** is a cow, **die kuh** –

Q: Okay.

A: **Ferme la porte** - close the door, **mach tür it zu**.

Q: That sounds like a rhyme.

A: Yeah, it is.

Q: Okay.

A: Yeah. But we didn't know much French, but so they decided they – the powers that be – that means my father and mother, decided to send us to private school.

Now, you have to remember, in those days – I don't know how it is today, but in those days, boys and girls never went to school together. Boys' schools and girls' schools.

Q: But were these religious schools? Were these –

A: No.

Q: No. They were simply private schools.

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A: Just – I was sent to a thing called [**speaks French**], it was a private school, not too far from where we lived. My sister went to a thing called [**speaks French**] which was in a different direction, but about the same distance. And we were there to learn French. And I was there, I would say, two semesters, to learn French, and then both of us transferred to the lycée. I went to the boys' lycée, when I was 10, I guess. I went to the boys' lycée, and she went to the girls' lycée. Mine was called **Sanshal**(ph), but it was not religious, it was public. And hers was Lycée **Toma**(ph) same thing, public.

Q: Well, how – how did it compare to school in **Germany**? What were the similarities, what were the differences?

A: I think I have to think about that.

Q: Okay.

A: I don't think I – I've given that a thought. It – anything French is different from anything German.

Q: Okay, okay.

A: **France** is more fluid. **Germany** is [**makes sound effect**] especially under **Hitler**.

Q: Yeah.

A: In my book I've written that when I came back to **Germany** a-as a – as a lieutenant in 1953, and I was on a train from **Bremerhaven** to **Frankfurt**, and I looked out the window and I said – it all reminded me of everybody living in a box.

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Nothing is like that, it's all – it still is today, in my opinion. Not the same way, but the Germans have a certain way of being, and the French have a certain way of being.

Q: Okay, so maybe I should put the question this way; what was school like for you in **Marseilles**?

A: I had no problem.

Q: Okay.

A: I did well in – in [**speaks French**], you know, I can show you the report cards. And then went to lycée, and I – the classes weren't that big. I would say about 20. I can count that for you, but it was about 20, maybe a little more. And I started in what – you know, in **France**, the – it goes the other way. The **neuvième**, the ninth grade is – is – or **dixième**, 10th grade is for little kids, and it goes down to one, which is for 17, 18 years old.

Q: Boy, would that confuse me.

A: Yeah, well, it's just the other way around.

Q: Yeah.

A: So I started in **neuvième** –

Q: Okay.

A: – in the – in the ninth grade, and by – by the time I was in the eighth grade, in **huitième**, you know, you – you had to take exams, and everything, in main subjects,

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and in **huitième**, there were subject French, Latin, mathematics, geography, history.

And in **huitième**, which means I was in – in **France** two years, I got the first place in French. And did that cal – cause an upset in the school.

Q: Well, yes.

A: I mean, the – the teacher – the teacher, who was very French, a lady teacher, she stood in front of the class, and she practically screamed at them. Said, a little German kid comes in here, and he has the first place in French? And, well, I had to work harder, you know?

Q: Yeah.

A: For me it was always had to start from scratch, and I had to really put work into this. The others, they just sat there and enjoyed themselves.

Q: So this is interesting, she called you the little German kid?

A: Yeah.

Q: Was that how everybody saw you there, as you're the German kid? Is that how people saw you and your family in **Marseilles**?

A: Well, yeah, I guess so, yeah.

Q: Okay.

A: You know, there are other stories that I didn't – all my ki – my friends were, you know, French kids. We were – we were all buddies. I mean, I've – I met them until I was over seven years old. The – the – we – lycée was kind of a protected society,

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very well organized, and you knew what you could do, and what you couldn't do, and you learned, and you had good teachers or bad teachers, like everywhere else. We had mostly good teachers. And so, you know, I liked lycée very much. So did my sister. My sister was the top student in her lycée.

Q: My question was more to your – you've moved from **Germany** to **France**, and are you immigrants, are you refugees? And how did the people in **Marseilles** look at you, identify you? How – you know, how do you fit in as a family, as –

A: Well, we – we were – rented an apartment, which we kept the entire time, in a middle class neighborhood.

Q: Okay.

A: There were certain things that were primitive. Like we lived on the top floor of five stories, and no elevators or anything like this. The bathroom had a tub, but no hot water. And it was –

Q: Was it a step down from **Karlsruhe** in modern conveniences?

A: Yeah, it was falling off the mountain. It was a step down, but as kids you don't realize it. Our parents saw to it that we had everything we needed. We never went hungry. We went to school, we had a regulated life, and we had friends.

Q: Yes.

A: And even though for adults we were called German refugees, I guess, I don't think any of them, or most of them didn't understand that – why we had come there.

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So, you know, when the war started, the – the – we had to impress people that we knew with the fact that we were much more at danger than they were. Because to them, they were just Frenchmen. We were Germans who had left **Germany** because of **Hitler**.

Q: Yeah.

A: And so it – that was totally different thing, but –

Q: Were there many others like you, at that time, in ni – in the mid-30s, in **Marseilles**?

A: There were some. We had some neighbors two houses down that were in the same situation. Not too many.

Q: Okay.

A: The – the – the – there were two – there were two aspects. One is, were there any other Jewish people –

Q: Yes, that's one –

A: – French Jews.

Q: Okay.

A: And the other is, what about the German refugees? Now, the German refugees, there were a number of them. Some of them were doctors, for example. Our doctor was always somebody who was a German Jew. And even there, you have to split hairs, because a lot of them came from the **Saarland**. The **Saarland** was French

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from World War I, until 1935 or six, when they had a **plebiscite**, and they opted to go with **Germany**. And so the Jewish people in **Saarland**, when this happened, moved into **France** because they'd been living in **France**, and that was the natural thing. A lot of people from **Saarland**, who lived in **France** afterwards, after the **Saar** opted to go back to **Germany**.

Q: Okay.

A: So, our doctor was one of those, and there were a number of people like that, but not many. Now, the Jewish people, I suspected if my parents had been religious, they could have become more active, but that was not my father's cup of tea. And my mother was always conciliatory. And she did take my sister and me to the services at the Jewish synagogue, the main one – there were several – but the main one, for the high holidays.

Q: So it wasn't regular, it was just sort of –

A: Just – just –

Q: Just for the high holidays.

A: – Rosh Hashanah, and Yom Kippur.

Q: Okay.

A: And – but otherwise we didn't. And the French Jews did not – any generalization is – is bad, but generally speaking, the French Jews were not particularly interested

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in German Jews. They were not nasty or anything, but they – they didn't understand that we were all in the same boat, as it turned out to be later.

Q: Yeah.

A: But so, there was one family that was very nice. Well-known family that invited us, and stuff like that, but generally speaking, there was no effort on part of the – the – the French Jews in **Marseilles** for an outreach towards the Jews from other countries that had showed up.

Q: It was – it was too early for that consciousness. Is that what –

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay. Well, what about your friends then, did you – so I take it most of your friends were not Jewish in **Marseilles**?

A: All of my friends were not Jewish.

Q: All of your friends were not Jewish. Well, did you ever – if you went to the synagogue on high holidays, did you ever go with them to –

A: Catholic mass?

Q: Yeah, did you?

A: Sure.

Q: Yeah?

A: I know more about French Catholicism than I know about French

[**indecipherable**]. I grew up, you know, in a world that was all – that's why some of

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the things that happen in this country, I don't understand, because I grew up in a Catholic country.

Q: Okay.

A: There – there was no – no challenge to the Catholic church. And the Catholic church in **France** is very subdued, but they're there.

Q: Okay.

A: And you know, you – if you were Catholic, as my best friend was, anything we did, like we became Boy Scouts.

Q: Okay.

A: Anything that we did – if we left at seven o'clock on Sunday morning to go camping, or go out somewhere on the coast, or something, he'd get up at four and go to mass. And – and – and at seven o'clock, he was where he was supposed to be. Nobody ever talked about the fact that he'd gone to mass. If I hadn't known him so well, I – I wouldn't have known it. But, you know, that religion was a private part of your life. And **France** to this day, you know, is very secular. I mean, very secular. That – the – **Dallas** – you don't know this, but **Dallas** has a school called the **Dallas** International School, which the word international you can question, because it's totally French. I mean, from the top guy down it's French, and they speak French, and the kids all know French, learn French, and so on. But it says on the – on a big sign, that this is a **école laïque**, a lay school.

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Q: Ah, secular school.

A: Secular school. Don't misunderstand, this is not a French Catholic school. This is a secular school.

Q: And why is this such a articulated distinction?

A: It's the French constitution. Separation of church and state is in the French constitution.

Q: And it permeated down, and actually means something –

A: Yeah.

Q: – at – at an everyday level.

A: Now the French – French Catholics – like everything else in life, there are many exceptions, but the French Catholics are not super-religious. But they do get married in the church, and they – they go to the fu-funerals in the church, and the – there's certain things that happen.

Q: So how did it come about that you went to mass?

A: Oh, because my friends were – were – were Catholic, and they took me along.

Was interesting to find out what other people do.

Q: Okay.

A: I never felt I was anything special, you know, I like to know how other people live. If he's my best friend, I want to know what makes him tick, you know.

Q: Yeah. That's true.

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A: And it – it was never a problem. You know, I didn't go every Sunday or anything like that, but –

Q: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

A: – if there was a special occasion.

Q: But it means you had exposure.

A: Had exposure.

Q: Yeah.

A: It was not a strange thing.

Q: Okay.

A: I can tell you – this is a story you've never heard, but –

Q: Okay.

A: The father of one of my best friends passed away, and they had the funeral in the church. And in the Catholic ceremony, in **France**, I don't know how it is here, the – the – the – the coffin is covered by a cloth, and it's in the middle –

Q: Yeah.

A: – everybody is around it. And then, at a certain point in the ceremony, everybody gets the – what is a scepter, what is a li-little thing that the priest bless things with, you know, one of these things. It's got a name.

Q: I don't remember.

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A: But, you know, and the priest will hand that to the person next to him, family first, and everybody stands around the coffin and, you know, you make the sign of the cross. Well, you know, I was 10 years old. When that thing got to me, what do I do now, you know? I was trying real hard to look at everybody else and wha – what's going on here, you know?

Q: How do you – yeah, how do you do this?

A: But, you learn that way, you know?

Q: Uh-huh. And was Boy Scouts fun? Did you like Boy Scouts?

A: Yeah. You know, Boy Scouts were **Éclaireurs Unionistes de France**. Now, you had the main boy scouts in **France** are Catholic, ec – Scouts de **France**, Scouts of **France**, Catholic.

Q: Okay. Okay.

A: **Éclaireurs Unionistes de France** were the Protestants scouts.

Q: So this wasn't secular. In other words, in scout world, there were –

A: They were organized by secular –

Q: Okay.

A: No, they were organized by some religious order.

Q: Okay.

A: But they didn't ask you when you joined, what you were. And so the reason my friend **George**, who lived next door, and I belonged to the – and he was a very

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strong Catholic – why we belonged to the **Éclaireurs Unionistes de France** is because it was one block from our house. It was convenient.

Q: Location, location, location.

A: That's right.

Q: Yeah.

A: And there were also the **Eclaireurs Israeli de France**.

Q: Oh, was there?

A: But I didn't choose to join them. They were on the other side of town anyway, they were – would have been so complicated, that – you know.

Q: Yeah.

A: But, so I belonged to the – to the Protestant scouts. I – whatever, you know.

Q: Okay. How – how were things going for your father, in supporting the family?

What was he doing, what was he trying to do?

A: In **France**?

Q: Yeah.

A: He tried to be an em – importer-exporter, as he was, in a way, before. He – he – specializing on sausage casings, that he knew everything about, and – and spices.

And so he, again, dealt with butchers.

Q: Okay.

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A: But – and he did that. He must have made some money, otherwise we wouldn't have eaten, or paid the rent. But the – the main problem was political, or administrative, in a sense that the French police, the security – **Sûreté**, that dealt with foreigners, was totally unpredictable. You never knew. My parents had a residence permit, I believe by the year. Every year they had to renew it. And so, I'm guessing, in '37 or eight, probably closer to seven, but maybe somewhere at the end of seven, beginning of eight, he went on a business trip to the f – Swiss border, to **Basel**. And he was in **Basel** visiting clients, and then he said – he had a client over on the other side.

Q: Beani – meaning where?

A: In **Switzerland**.

Q: In **Switzerland**.

A: But you know, **Basel** is right on the border.

Q: Yeah.

A: And it's parch – partially the suburbs. I mean, in **France**, in – the main city is.

The downtown is in **Switzerland**. And –

Q: Excuse me for a second, can we cut? I hear music. [break] Okay, so your father's in **Basel**, visiting a client, and –

A: Well, he – the way it went is, he went to the border –

Q: Okay.

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A: – where the – they had – if you ever tried to get into **Switzerland**, you know that's a major job. They – he went to the border station at the French side, and asked them whether he could go to **Switzerland**, to **Basel**, just to visit a client. And the guy in the – in the French custom house, or custom, or maybe immigration police, whatever the p – the guy was, said, well you gotta go over there, and ask. So he went to the Swiss guy, on – you know, hundred feet, maybe. And he said, this is who I am, and I'd like to visit a client. And so they accused him of having crossed the border illegally.

Q: Oh my.

A: And so they didn't do much, except they made note of it. And then he went back to – and he did go over, but he went back to **Marseilles**, and from then on, in his police record, it said in **Marseilles** that he crossed the border illegally. And that was added to the following historic fact.

Q: Okay.

A: That my mother and my dad were in **Marseilles**, I believe around the 20th of October, 1934, to lay things out.

Q: So this is before you even moved there.

A: And they – they were downtown. The king of **Yugoslavia**, **Alexander** the first, came on a state visit, and he went in a motorcade down the – the **Canebiere**, which is the main street in **Marseilles**. And they were standing in front of – front of the

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stock exchange, and within, I don't know, a hundred feet of them, King **Alexander** was shot by a Croatian terrorist, and the French foreign minister, **Barthou**, was wounded seriously. And because they were so worried about **Alexander**, they forgot about **Barthou**, and he bled to death. And so **Alexander** was – King **Alexander** was killed, and so was **Barthou**. And all of the foreigners who were in **Marseilles** on that day, got put in a register. And when this thing – when the Swiss border came up, there now were two facts against him. He was in **Marseilles** when the king of **Yugoslavia** was assassinated, which he obviously had absolutely nothing to do with, but he was there.

Q: Yeah, okay.

A: And then he crossed the border into **Switzerland** illegally. And that haunted him from – from then on.

Q: Bureaucracy, you know, sort of –

A: And you know, in the French police, you had – you had good guys and bad guys, like everywhere else, and so this was – so that was in '34. In '37 – eight, he had that Swiss thing, and the – the next time they went to extend their – their – their – it may – I don't know whether it was the next time, or the time afterwards, when they went to extend their annual –

Q: Residence vi –

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A: – residence visa, they arrested them, both my parents, for being in **France** illegally. And –

Q: But that's not true, because they had all the permit – okay, it doesn't matter.

A: Well, truth – truth di – truth is unimportant when somebody wants to do something who has police power.

Q: Yeah.

A: And so they kept my father, and they let my mother go because she had two children. I was about 12, 13, and my sister was 13, 14.

Q: So this would have been '37 – '38?

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay.

A: It was definitely before the war. And th-the strange thing about it – there are many strange things about it, but one of them was that that particular afternoon, my sister and I had been invited to the home of one of her teachers for her son's birthday party. And my sister was invited, and they let come along, because my parents had to go to the police. And you know, and all the kids left, and my sister and I were there, and Mother didn't show up. And then ultimately she did show up. And she walked in the door, and she said, they have arrested my husband. And it so happens that this teacher's husband was a high police official, and – which helped, because obviously they knew who we were, they knew us and they were friendly. But nevertheless, my

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mother was out on temporary whatever, my dad was in jail. In jail, where they put him in a cell with a – with a guy who killed a captain in the es – a guy who killed a captain in the French harbor. And they put my father in with him, because he was from **Switzerland**, they boy spoke German.

Q: Well, there's something in common, you know.

A: You know, I mean a – it – the circumstances of – of some of these things is just unbelievable. So my dad was in jail, which I think did more to attack his health than anything else, because he was a – again, a man of great integrity. Now he's sitting in a French jail. French jails are not known to be exactly nice places.

Q: Yeah.

A: And so after about a month – and I have no idea whether it was – it was quite a while. I don't know, it was four week, six weeks, whatever it was, they – they brought him up for trial, and he was acquitted. So he came home. But he was very much taken by this. But my mother wasn't tried, hadn't been tried, because she was a separate case, I guess. And so a little while later they – they tried her. And they found her guilty. And so, really –

Q: And so what happened to her?

A: Well, they – they expelled her from **France**. And so you say, what do you do? Well, her sister, the sister from **Munich**, the wealthy people from **Munich** –

Q: Right, right.

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A: – they were – this was – this was just – it was after **Kristallnacht** – after Crystal Night in '39.

Q: Okay.

A: So they – they – she said, well I – if I'm expelled from **France**, I can go see my sister in **Paris**, and she – she went to **Paris**, and then she came back, and then we changed attorneys, and she appealed her expulsion. And she had a – now, a good attorney, and she was acquitted by the Court of Appeals. But you can imagine, you go through this exercise, how – how – what that does take – takes out of you.

Q: Absolutely.

A: So anyway –

Q: You're insecure to begin with, yeah.

A: And this is, you know – and then of course on the political scene now, in '38, the Germans, the Nazis invaded **Austria**, and took over **Austria**, and in the spring of '39, they invaded **Czechoslovakia**, and took over **Czechoslovakia**, and everybody figured, you know, it's going to go on.

Q: I have a question at this point. You mention that your – your aunt was in **Paris**.

And my question was, during these years that you are in **France**, in **Marseilles**, what's going on with the rest of the family that you've left behind? Have they decided now that they're going to leave, or try to leave? Do they stay? What happens?

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A: There are members who left. But the key members, like **Ed – Elsie(ph)**, and her husband, **Karl(ph) Heiman(ph)** in **Munich**, he was – in **Kristallnacht**, he was arrested and thrown into **Dachau** concentration camp. And his reaction was, if th – if – if this system can arrest **Karl(ph) Heiman(ph)**, it's time to get out of here. And for – overnight, they just dropped everything and went to **Switzerland**. And from **Switzerland** they came to **France**, to **England**, then the **United States**.

Q: Okay.

A: And –

Q: So that's your mother's older sister, and her husband.

A: Yes. He – he – char – **Charles**, in the **United States**, **Charles Heiman(ph)** established a textile company in **Cincinnati, Ohio**, and I believe that his company today is the largest textile company privately owned in the **United States**, pertaining to servicing hospitals and hotels.

Q: Wow.

A: You can go to any **Marriot**, and if you look at the label on your towels, it says Standard Textile Company, **Cincinnati, Ohio**. That's Uncle **Charlie's** company. He's long dead, but my cousin **Paul**, who is my age, is retired, and his son is running the company now, but that – that's –

Q: That's how.

A: – that's how.

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Q: That's how.

A: On my father's side, my mother's brother did leave – I don't know when, but he left in the late 30s, and came to the **United States** to go to **Seattle**. And it – and her youngest sister, she was married to a surgeon, and they left about that time.

Q: So the siblings all left.

A: They – they left, yeah. And her mother – her mother went to **Holland**, probably in '39 – '39, yeah. And so there was nobody left in **Munich**.

Q: Grandpa had died?

A: Oh yeah, he died. He died in '35, I believe.

Q: Okay.

A: Yeah. But that's my mother's side. On my father's –

Q: Excuse me, before we go to father –

A: Yeah.

Q: So your grandmother is in **Holland**, what happens to her?

A: She – she got out. You know, it all had to do with who in the **United States**, if **United States** was your goal, who in the **United States** would vouch for you. Of course, my grandmother never really worked. She worked in the store, but she was never employed. And so – and she was older, so she wasn't going to get a job, but you know, Uncle **Charlie** and Aunt **Elsa**(ph) brought her over. But she got out within – less than four weeks before the Germans invaded.

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Q: Okay.

A: And so – and so, she was in **Holland** for a while. Her two sisters were in **Holland**.

Q: Okay.

A: And – for a while. They – they – they left **Holland**, they went to **South America**, ultimately. But she came to **Cincinnati** to be with my aunt and uncle there. So, of the immediate family, there was nobody left. There were some brothers or cousins, but I don't know anything about them.

Q: Okay.

A: Tha-That was on my grandfather's side of the family, that he was in business with. I don't know what happened to the business, whether it was sold, or – I have no idea. And on my father's side of the family, they didn't leave. I haven't talked about them. My great-grandfather, in the mid-1800s, established a company in **Hockenheim**, which was a tobacco – particularly cigars, cigar manufacturer. Must have been a big deal, from everything – if you go to **Hockenheim** today, they'll tell you about the cigar industry they used to have. But he established the thing, it was called – his name was **Isaac Hockenheimer**, and he established this company called **Isaac Hockenheimer** and sons. **Isaac Hockenheimer und söhne**. And you know how primogenitor works, the oldest, his oldest, my grandfather's oldest son, **Albert** – these are the people that we stayed with for three months in **Mannheim**. He – he

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became a next generation director of the cigar company, and then one of his cousins. The two of them were the heads of that, of the cigar industry in **Hockenheim**. They – they – but **Albert** and his wife, **Alfreida**(ph) did not leave. Then there was **Alfreida**'s sister, who was married to a younger brother of my uncle, my father. His name was **Louie**, he was a bank president. See, they all had gotten into their own fields, he was a bank president. They didn't leave. The – there were quite a few of them. And I say this for a purpose. Because, after **France** fell, in June of 1940, the – some guy who wanted to – guy by the name of **Wagner**(ph), who was in charge of the – for the Nazi party in **Stuttgart** wanted to make **Hitler** believe that he was a genius. He invented the situation. You may read it differently in history books, but he – he told **Hitler**, we got to get rid of – they say we got to get rid of the Jews. And so they organized a deal where all the Jews of **Baden** – I don't know about **Württemberg** – I mean, he wasn't in **Württemberg** then, but **Baden** and **Pfalz**, which is **Palatinate** were ordered to be shipped out. They were put on trains and shipped not east, but to **France**, to the **Gurs** concentration camp, in the **Pyrenees**, in **France**. And so my dad – we haven't talked about that, but –

Q: Okay, we'll –

A: – my dad, who wound up at **Gurs** in the fall of 1940, after he was there, trainloads of – of – of Jews from just about all the Jews who were still in **Baden** and – and **Palatinate**, were put on these trains and shipped down to **Gurs**, and he – so he

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met his brother and sister-in-law, and the other sister-in-law, and the niece, and old aunts, 84 years old, and the whole family wound up in this concentration camp in **Gurs** which – where the conditions were not – they lived in barracks, and it was not very good. We'll talk about **Gurs** later.

Q: Yeah, we will.

A: But that's what happened to them. Now –

Q: So does that mean all 10 siblings of your father –

A: No, not 10, they – you know, they, through the years they got spread out. Let's see, the oldest one was **Albert**, so he –

Q: Okay.

A: – came to **Gurs** with his wife. The next one was **Karl**(ph); he had gone to the **United States** before World War I.

Q: Okay.

A: He lived in – in **Hollywood**, and wife and one daughter. And after that was **Louie**, the bank president. He died in '38 of a heart attack, but had this wife and daughter who wound up in **Gurs**.

Q: Okay.

A: That's number three that – then there were three sisters. **Bella** – **Bella** lived in **Strasbourg, France**. So she was – so, other circumstances. The strange thing in this family is that all three sisters married young, and were widowed young. Health si –

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health services weren't as good then as they are now, I guess. The second one, I don't know when she left, **Josephine**. She was married – the first husband died, she was married to a other gentleman by the name of **Odenheimer**(ph), who lived in **Baden-Baden**, and then she came to the **United States**. So she made it out before **France** fell. And then the young – younger one, the sister was **Amalia**(ph), and she's the one who married the gentleman in **Switzerland**, that we went to stay with. So she was in **Switzerland**, so she was safe. In those days, th-the girls, the sisters, had absolutely nothing to say about what they did. It was the **Albert** – **Albert** in s – in lieu of parents that didn't live, and probably **Louie** the bank president, because he had prestige, decided what the sisters would do, who they would marry, or not marry, and it was all organized. It's a different society. The – so that was **Amalia**(ph), and then my dad was next. So that's where they were. I saw – just a little side story – I saw **Amalia**(ph), I used to, when I was stationed in **Germany**, I went to visit her, after her husband – second husband died, and then she wound up in a Jewish old age home in the town of **Baden**, which is near **Zurich**. And, you know, she had this nice room, and so on. Nice place. It's a Jewish old age home. And I – every time I went there, scared me to death, because she had a bed that was about this high. She was –

Q: You need a ladder to climb into?

A: Yeah.

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Q: Okay.

A: And – and th – she – you know how the Germans and the Swiss always polish the floor. They have **parkettboden**. What do you call that in English?

Q: Parquet.

A: Parquet?

Q: Parquet.

A: Okay.

Q: It's a good English word.

A: And there – that – the maid would always come in wax, you know, and it's –

Q: Oh yeah.

A: And I used to watch her get – get out of bed. I would sit there, and walk around and it scared me to death that she was going to fall, break her hip or something. And I said to her – and we called her **Mala**(ph) – Aunt **Mala**(ph), I'd like to put a carpet in here. And she said, **darf man das**? She said, is that permitted? You know, in the world I come from, anything is permitted as long as you –

Q: That's right.

A: – do it the proper way. And I said, yeah, **das darf man**. I said, I'll go see the director.

Q: Okay.

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A: And just the mentality, the director, I went to the director, he was very nice. And I said I – I'm scared to death my aunt's going to fall, she's going to break her hip. And the – and the – I'd like to have a carpet installed, wall to wall carpet. And he looked at me – you never know what people are gonna do – and he looked at me, and he said, but i-if or when your aunt dies, the carpet must remain here. And I sa – and I s – and I said to myself, you know, okay, I said, of course, I'll be happy to leave it here. I mean, I'm going to come from **Germany**, and take out the carpet? A wall to wall carpet? I mean – but that's the – the mentality. **Darf man das**. And everything in her life, from the fact that the brothers decided everything for the girls, in lieu of the parents, is always, is it permitted, you know? And that it's just a – you have to understand that, you know, why people did the things that they – they did, and th – and the people always ask the question, why didn't the Jews revolt against **Hitler**? And you know, it's because that was the authority, and you did what the authority told you.

Q: Well, let me turn that around in a pro – more provocative way. If that is the – if that's the mentality, then can one blame the German people so much that they followed **Hitler**, because **darf man das**. It's what's – you know, it's – it's sort of like – do you understand what I'm trying to say?

A: Yeah, I – I – I am sure. Well, I don't know whether it has to do with blame, because people – the – the – the thing to me is that people should have had a

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conscience. And your conscience, that mean they – they raise you, saying what's right and what's wrong.

Q: Right.

A: And when you get to a certain point, and certain things are done. Now, **Hitler** – **Hitler**, one of the big things he used was the **Versailles** Treaty, and that – that **Germany** is only doing so badly because everything was taken away from us, and he – he provoked nationalism, more nationalism, nationalism. We are the poor – y- you know. I mean, think about this, he said the – that, you know, we – we need more **lebensraum**, we need more living space for the country. Well, but – but after the war, the **Bundesrepublik Deutschland**, without **East Germany**, became the most powerful economic thing in the world, with the space that they had. So, you know, that – this stuff is all just to suit his – his purposes. He wanted –

Q: Well, he was stoking resentment.

A: Yeah, exactly.

Q: He was stoking resentment –

A: That's right. He wanted to get the people to – and – and – and – and – and tell them that we're the thousand year **Reich**, and we're going to dominate history. And so that's he – he – that's how he sold the thing.

Q: Okay.

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A: I mean, there were good people in **Germany**. They're good – you know, it's just like we talk about **France**. Some – some of the police guys were bad, some of the neighbors were questionable, but there were an awful lot of good people. I mean, I could tell you the story that, when we lived in **Marseilles**, the – the guy that owned our apartment, I don't know how many months he didn't get paid rent. He never said – never said a word. He knew who we were, and that – what the circumstances were. And I suspect we'll get to how we got out of **France** later.

Q: Oh, a-absolutely.

A: Yeah.

Q: Absolutely.

A: I'll tell you a story about one of our neighbors which is moving to the end, I mean, it's just – so, you know, it's – there are good people everywhere.

Q: I know. It is – simply is – isn't it a – I guess the – one of the things that one should never do is ask a leading question. And here I am, and I'm going to ask a leading question, and that – and it's just to go on this theme a little more. Isn't it more – isn't it easier to sell this bill of goods that you described, to a populous that is raised not just to know what is right from wrong, but to ask for permission at every step of the way, of may I do this, may I not do this? And who are the authorities? Versus a population that believes in **égalité**, **fraternité**, and – and **liberté**? You know, a population that is also guaranteed, as in the **United States**, a constitution of

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freedom of expression, and freedom after expression, you know? Freedom of Speech, in other words. I – it's just –

A: So your question is, is it easier to do it the way the Germans did it?

Q: No. Is it easier to do it to a population which has a value in it that you have to ask permission for everything that you do in your life? In other words, that you accept authority easier, than in countries where authority is – it's okay to question it.

A: Well, the Germans – I'm trying to figure out how to answer that. The Germans are by custom – not probably so much today, but were then, a people who only operated by authority. I – I like to say in 1945, when I was in **Paris**, and this is the difference between I – you know, the French have poli – political cabarets, and you can hear stuff that you don't hear anywhere else. But my saying then was, the difference between a Frenchman and a German is that a German is on a Metro in **Paris**, and he has trouble coughing. He needs to cough and to expectorate, and the sign says, in the subway, **défense de cracher**. Spitting prohibited. And so the German will stand there and go – and practically strangle. The Frenchman will come along, and he says – and he looks at the sign that says, **défense de cracher**, spitting prohibited, and he'll spit at the sign.

Q: **[laughter]** You answered my question.

A: So, you know, it's a – it's – people are different. The French, even the French are different from themselves.

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Q: Of course, of course.

A: Like Americans are different from themselves. The northern French are very cold, the southern French are very, ah, **laissez aller**, let – you know, **mañana**.

Q: Live and let live, huh?

A: Yeah.

Q: It's an interesting example. Can we cut for just a second? **[break]** So you – you've kind of described to me that many of your father's relatives who were still in **Germany**, got to **Gurs** – were transported to **Gurs** – deported to **Gurs**. Can you tell me what their fates were? Did all of them make it out of **Gurs**, or did some of them not?

A: Both. No, that can't be both. Some of them made, and some didn't.

Q: Okay.

A: And some died there. My father's oldest brother, **Albert**, and his wife **Alfreida**(ph) –

Q: Okay.

A: – made it out. Their son lived in **Los Angeles**, and he was able – I don't know the details, but he was able to get them out, after we were gone. That's why I don't know the details. His – as I told you, **Albert's** wife **Alfreida**(ph) sister was married to his brother **Louie**. They were two sisters married to two brothers. **Louie** had died in '38, in – in **Germany**.

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Q: Heart attack, I think you said.

A: Yeah, that's what the records say. I had heard that he – the Gestapo came to arrest him, and he had a heart attack. So, whether it was this way, or that way, but he was a very formal man, what I knew of him. He would not open a door without having gloves on. Kid gloves, you know, suede gloves.

Q: Wow.

A: Door handles had germs on them. He died in '38, and his widow, **Clara**, and her daughter **Annie(ph)**, who's my first cousin, were shipped to **Gurs**, together with a group. Then there were a couple of old aunts, couple of whom died in **Gurs**. The conditions in **Gurs** were not like in **Auschwitz** or – or **Dachau**, but they – they were not good. You were, quite basically, exposed to the elements, living in these – in – in – in barracks. She was still there. She was there throughout '42.

Q: **Annie(ph)**, or – or – or –

A: Both the mother and daughter, **Clara** and **Annie(ph)** were there. There's quite an exchange, some of which I owe to this gentleman here, of correspondence that he got from the Quakers, and we'll get to that.

Q: Okay.

A: But where the – where she, in '42, was asking for money, because she had no money, and – and so on. So, I believe – I've got the date, I believe it was August of '42, that we got a postcard from her, **Clara**. We're being loaded on a train, we do

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not know where to. And that's the last we ever heard of her. Both she and – and **Annie(ph)** got gassed in **Auschwitz**, and – [sound of plane] Unfortunately, we're on the pattern for **Love Field**.

Q: Okay. So they were shipped to **Auschwitz**.

A: So they – they were shipped to au-aus-aus – **Auschwitz**. I have in the documents, which I have for **Ron**, one of my cousins sent a letter in '45, sent a letter to **Gurs**, when it was – there was still an administration there, and asked what happened to them, and I have the letter from them that says what train they were shipped off on. Didn't say to **Auschwitz**, but –

Q: And just for the camera, for clarification, you're talking about correspondence that you got from my colleague, **Ron Coleman**, at the **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum**, to augment what you already knew?

A: No, that correspondence I got from the family archives.

Q: Okay.

A: That particular one. But the – th-they have – th-they have the layout – you have the layout at the Holocaust Museum, which even gives the dates, and so on.

Q: Right. So that – those relatives didn't make it.

A: They did – they didn't make it. Then some died there. There was an Aunt **Sophie(ph)** that was in her 80s when she – she's buried there. **Caroline** and I went to **Gurs** about 10 years ago, and there's not much left of it, but the cemetery is there.

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The people five miles from there, they don't know what **Gurs** was, which is always pathetic. But there is a monument there with a train car, to remember. And the cemetery is there. Which is a point of interest. The city of **Karlsruhe** sends students to **Gurs** every summer, to take care of the cemetery, which should be noted as a statement of –

Q: Not forgetting.

A: – solidarity, or whatever.

Q: Or not forgetting.

A: Or not forgetting.

Q: Okay.

A: Yeah. They didn't have to do it, but they're doing it. **Karlsruhe** is very, very pro remembering the past, and all the bad things that were done. They're very nice.

Q: Let's turn back now to your family, and your immediate family in **Marseilles**, and your father is released, and your mother is tried and found guilty, and then gets another lawyer, and is acquitted. This must have taken a psychological toll on everybody.

A: Yes. The kids – also on the kids, but kids tend to be engaged in the daily activities and so on. It obviously was very hard, but as they say in German, if we're adults, **es bleibt in ihren knochen**. It remains in their bones.

Q: Yeah.

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A: The kids, if something had happened, it's not quite the same.

Q: More resilient, in some ways.

A: Yeah. Well, and they don't have any responsibility, you know, whereas the adults have responsibility for everybody.

Q: Yeah.

A: He – he was released, Mother was – so that was, obviously in – in '38 sometimes, I can't tell you when.

Q: What happened after that? How did life progress?

A: Okay, so parallel to all this, the – the Germans, Nazis, occupied – took over **Austria**. Then in the beginning of '39, **Czechoslovakia**. And on the first of September, '39 – I'm laughing for a purpose, but they invaded **Poland**. After they had had non-aggression pacts with the Soviets, and whatever. On the third of September, **France** and **England** declared war on **Germany**, and that was the beginning of World War II. Immediately when the war started, my dad, as now an enemy alien, was arrest – arrested. Interned, is maybe a better word. Sent to **les Milles**, which was a camp near **Marseilles**, in **Aix-en-Provence**, which is near **Marseilles**. And they collected all the people they didn't know where they fit in, and what did – who had a background from – at – now, at this point, this was a French action, nothing to do with the Germans.

Q: So he's a German, and Germans are now our enemies, and so therefore.

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A: That's right.

Q: Okay.

A: And so this cu – camp in **Les Milles** – you know how to spell it, I'm sure.

Q: **M-i-l-l-e**?

A: No, **M-i-l-l-e-s**.

Q: Okay.

A: **Les** in front of it, **l-e-s**. It was a brick factory that they converted into a – I guess they ran out of what to do – they didn't have any more bricks to make, so they used it for this, and they made it internment camp. And this was the craziest assembly of people that you ever heard in your life, because there were a lot of people who had left **Germany**, prominent people who had left **Germany**, who lived in **France**, and they're the ones who wound up in **Les Milles**. That included **Marc Chagall**; that included **Lion Feuchtwanger**, the famous author; that included **Nobel** prize physicist **Meyerhof**, and I could go on.

Q: Enemy aliens, in other words.

A: They were enemy aliens.

Q: Okay.

A: So they – they had this very strange – I read yesterday somewhere, that one of them was a famous surgeon from **Vienna**, he came with his two – he had two attendants, two –

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Q: Assistants?

A: – people that did things for him, you know? Household – he brought them along, you know? They weren't Jewish or anything, they were just – were his – his employees. So they – they had them all there, and they didn't know what to do with them. It was not super-dangerous, there were all kinds of outside contacts, but it was – but there was a fence around, and – and the conditions were not very good.

Hygiene, food, stuff like that. And my dad – that was in – in September, after the war started. By December of – of '39, he got out of there. He had friends in **Marseilles**, which was nearby, that vouched for him, that he was a good guy, and so they let him out. Some others never got out, but they let him out. And so, he was home in **Marseilles** with us, until May of '40.

Q: Okay.

A: In May of '40, the Germans, as you know, invaded **Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg**, came into northern **France** and in – in – in – in two weeks, reached **Paris**, and took **Paris**. And the French army was nowhere to be seen. I don't know whether that's true, but that's what it seemed like, because nobody stopped them. **Charles de Gaulle** would have said, well, the Germans had tanks, and we didn't. And that was true. And so they just kept going. So then the question came for us – I mean, the people from **Paris**, and so on, north, extreme south on the highways of **France**, and we were in **Marseilles**, and so then the authorities in **Marseilles**

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decided hey, what's going to happen. And so they – as one of the first things they did, is they took these people like my dad, and they put them back in **Les Milles**. So some were, probably at the end of May, I don't have the exact date, my dad was back in **Les Milles**, where they had left – you know, ha – they had let them go.

Q: But there's something – there's something that's really surreal about this, because the point of being in **Les Milles** is if you were an enemy, and that means if you're a German who would support **Germany**, and the people that you mentioned, were not those types of people.

A: Yeah, but the French couldn't tell the difference, and there were people in **Les Milles** who were not Jewish, quite a few.

Q: And were there some who actually were?

A: There were oc – an occasional Nazi in there, too.

Q: Yeah, that's one wa –

A: Not by design, but by happenstance, because there were some Nazis who were living in **France**, just like everybody else.

Q: Right.

A: And so they picked up everybody that was German, Austrian, Czech, and they – if they didn't know – you know. By this time, there were thousands of refugees in **Marseilles**, because everybody from up north came down. There were hotels that – the French police had police raids every day in downtown **Marseilles**, to find people

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who were here illegally. And so there – the stories are endless. But they were back in **Les Milles**, and the Germans came – were coming south. And so, there wasn't much time between the 20th of May, you know, and so – so, about – and there, it's a little vague, the date is not quite sure. Let's – the book on **Les Milles** says about the 20th of May, I – of June – I don't believe it, it's – had to be a few days earlier, it just doesn't fit – they took – not everybody, but they took all the volunteers in **Les Milles** who felt threatened by the Nazis, and is – and the – the commandant of **Les Milles**, who had some good sides to him. He was a reserve officer, that the army wasn't his thing, and he was running this camp, and he also had a – a conscience, and so he decided to use his personal influence, and he – he called up somebody he knew, and he – I just read that in a book, I didn't know how that worked. He called him up, and says, I want – I need a train. And so they produced a train for him, and said, anybody who wants – who – who feels threatened, we'll take you away so the Germans can't get at you. So they loaded all these guys –

Q: The **Nobel** prize winners, the –

A: Everybody. **Lion Feuchtwanger**, and **Hans(ph) Klay(ph)**, the famous artist, and I mean, there were dozens of them. They loaded them on this train, unless they refused. Didn't have to go on the train. But the train was the purpose of escaping the Germans. And they – they put them on this train, and they headed west, towards the **Pyrenees**, and basically towards the **Atlantic. Bordeaux, Bayonne** –

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Q: Was your father on this train?

A: My father was on this train, and I don't know, you know, he – you could visualize that he could have said to himself, oh, but my family is in **Marseilles**, why do I want to be on this train? Because they said it – they said they were going to take him to **North Africa**, where they would be safe. I don't know when they said that, but they said that somewhere along the line. And so the train took off, and the captain – I mean, the commandant of the ca – of **Les Milles**, kept track of the train, to be sure – yeah, then he called – they he called – like, this is new information for me, but he called a cousin of his, who owned the boat – the ship, in **Bayonne**, on the **Atlantic** coast, and he said hey, I need you. I – you gotta be in **Bayonne**, I have got a thousand – I don't know what the number exactly was – of – of refugees here, I got to get to **North Africa**. Well, how much are you gonna pay me? Well, 500 francs, or whatever it was, a head. Okay. So, they put him on a train, and the train took off. And he kept track of it, because the guy in **Bayonne** said, my ship will only be here until such and such a date. They gotta get here. So he kept working over the railroad official, so the train would keep moving, while the Germans were coming south. And so my guess is, on the 19th, I – you know, I'm a little vague on that, but on the 19th of June, we got phone call. We – my mother got a phone call from the Fr-French police, and they said, oh you gotta evacuate. Be – be at the train station at six o'clock in the morning.

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Q: So this is separate, your father's on one train, and you get this for another. Okay.

A: And – and be at – at **Gare Saint Charles, Saint Charles** train station at six o'clock in the morning, we're gon – we're going to take you away, take you out of danger. So, okay, so we pack our bags, and you don't know that you're ever going to come back, so we took clothing and food, cause you don't know whether there is any food. Well, then it happened that that night – and you can – we could figure out what the date was, because that night in southern **France** was the heaviest thunderstorm I have ever lived through anywhere. I mean, you thought the world was coming to an end. And we thought at the time it was caused by the artillery, that the artillery fire in northern **France** had caused so much disruption of the – of the atmosphere, that it screwed up the weather. And anyway, it poured, and thundered, and lightning, I mean – and there was no means of transportation. You couldn't get a c-cab or anything. Nothing moved.

Q: So you have this mandatory order that you have to be at this –

A: At the train station.

Q: Okay.

A: And so, we first – first we headed out, carrying suitcases, on foot. My house, without suitcases, was probably 45 minutes to an hour, by foot, to the train station.

Q: Okay.

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A: And so we walked a little bit in this thunderstorm. We decided that wa – we – we had to let the storm go by, there was no way we could keep going.

Q: Right.

A: And so we went back home. And then I went next door to my friend **George(ph)** **Garrute(ph)**, the Catholic kid who went to mass at five o'clock in the morning, that I told you about. He was a couple of years older than I was. And I said, **George(ph)**, I need you. He says, sure. I said, you gotta help me carry suitcases. Okay. So my mother and my sister went ahead, be sure to make – to be there on time when this was supposed to happen, and – and **George** and I carried the suitcases. And we had to stop every 20 feet, because we –

Q: Weren't you soaking wet?

A: Well, that – the storm wasn't that bad any more. That was the first installment.

Q: Okay.

A: By this time it wasn't pouring any more.

Q: Okay.

A: And so we – we – somewhere we decided that we had too many suitcases, we took a couple back to the house, and went with the rest of them. And we carried them to the train station. It took us more than an hour to get to the train station. Couple hours, I'm sure. We finally got – at dawn, we got to the front of the train station, and then we were told, oh, you got to go to the back of the train station. We

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had a pretty big train station. So, there was a cab there. So I took the cab, and I said, okay, my mother has money, I'll – we'll pay for the cab when we get there. And so we put everything in the cab, and we went around to the back. When we got there, my mother was hysterical, because I hadn't shown up, and she didn't want to leave with me – without me. And so she finally saw me, and she – she just – I can tell you that the train left about 15 minutes after I got to the back of the – of the train station. And wi – it was one of these – many miracles I've experienced in my life, this one of them. And so the train left. And the train went – there were all women and children, there were no men on this. And this, you – you know, I have to say, you were a man if you were over 18. Well, I wasn't, I was 14. So I was a child. And we – the train went, and there was a – it was a passenger train, with compartments. We were in a compartment, the three of us, with two ladies that we knew well, a mother and – mother and daughter, who was about my mother's age.

Q: Were these also German Jews?

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay.

A: Yeah. Whose – the younger one, her name – they were, Mrs. **Jacob**(ph) – the – the – the mother, the old mother, she was probably in her 70s, her name was **Devries**(ph), **d-e-v-r-i-e-s**. The elder frau **Devries**(ph). Because her son's name was **Devries**, and **Millie Jacobs**(ph) maiden name was **Devries**, and so we had the old

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Mrs. **Devries**, and Mrs. **Jacob(ph)**, and my mother and my sister and I in this compartment. And – and we went and stopped, and went and stopped, and this – you know, you – the Germans were coming south. Nothing worked. I mean, it was a miracle –

Q: And you didn't know where – did you know where you were going? Was there any idea –

A: No, the only thing we knew, we were going west.

Q: Okay.

A: And the – we went to – wound up in **Toulouse**, and then after **Toulouse**, whatever the next – **Niemes**. And – and – and then we wound up, and we – we stopped in **Lourdes**. And **Lourdes** is well-known internationally, because of the Catholic shrine there. And so we are parked in – on the tracks. And by this time, it's approximately the 20 – either the 21st, or 22nd of June. And we're sitting there for a while. We had gendarmes on board who were supposedly watching us, or taking care of us, or whatever they –

Q: Could you leave the train at all? Could you go on the platform, as you were –

A: In principle not, but if I'd gone on the platform, nobody would have said anything.

Q: Okay.

A: But we had no –

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Q: Okay. No reason.

A: – reason, because you didn't know whether the train was going to leave in the next minute.

Q: Okay.

A: We didn't know anything. Neither did the gendarmes. And so we were there – I know we were there four or five hours. And – and there was a – let's see, we were on this track here, and there's a track here, and the platform between us. And the – there's a train parked here, that's a freight train. And I'll – I'll swear to my dying day, it was a freight train, it was not a passenger train. And after a few hours, there's a woman on our train, who looked at the freight train, and saw her husband. And this train, the pas – freight train, is what in history has gone – gone down as the phantom train. Th-There are books written about the phantom train, I got a movie, and a – and a – books about it, what the phantom train was all about. And that was the phantom train. And after this woman discovered her husband, we all looked out, and got out, and my dad was on that train.

Q: So that was the train that was from **Gurs** – no, from **Milles** –

A: From **Les Milles**.

Q: – from **Milles**, from **Les Milles**.

A: That was the train from **Les Milles**.

Q: Wow.

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A: And the funny thing is, **Carol** and I watched th-the movie about it a week ago. I have a friend in **California**, just sent it to us. I didn't know there was a movie about it. And we just looked at it, and they've got a passenger train here. And it was not a passenger train. And I charged **Ron** with, somebody's gotta know why they – they say – you know, I thought that when it got to its end that they – the people got off, and then the ship wasn't there, and then they put them on a different train. But I have no – nothing in writ – written record I have found that – that says that.

Q: So did your father see you?

A: Yeah, we – we –

Q: Did you see – did you – did he get off of his phantom train, or not?

A: Yeah.

Q: So you met on the platform?

A: Yeah.

Q: Did you join each other then?

A: Yeah – well –

Q: I mean, could he leave –

A: – we talked to each other. We talked to each other for a few hours.

Q: So was he – did he –

A: Not only him, but everybody else who had their wives and kids on the – on this train.

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Q: So, did you then join each other afterwards, or did you each go back to your separate trains?

A: They made us go back on our separate train, and they – and they said e – well, what you have to understand is about this time, 22nd of June, 19 –

Q: Forty.

A: – 40, the word came out that **France** had signed an armistice, and the war was over.

Q: For them.

A: That the war between **Germany** and **France** was over. Now, what that meant, nobody could tell, at that point. And so, they – they – I doubt that they had orders, the guys in charge of these trains. It just what you do when you have to make a decision. So the gendarmes made us go back on our train, and they – the – the guards, th-the soldiers on the other train made them get back on their train, a-and said, and I quote, “Well, don’t worry. The war is over. You’ll – your husbands will soon be home.” And they – and so that train left, and we left. We went back to **Marseilles**. We went back home. So we were only gone a week, I – give or take, I don’t know exactly, but so – and so, we went home. And this train didn’t go home. They went to – they stopped them in – in **Nîmes**, which is a city on the way, and they unloaded them, and they established a camp called **Saint Nicolas, Saint Nicolas**, and they put them in there. Well, that was a very poorly prepared camp, and

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so he was in **Saint Nicolas**, this was June, end of June. He was, I think, in **Saint Nicolas** July and August. And then somewhere in there, I would say August, maybe the first of September, they decided to move the people from **Saint Nicolas** to **Gurs**.

Q: Oh, is that how he ended up in **Gurs**?

A: That's how he ended up in **Gurs**. Now to the history of **Gurs** is that **Gurs** was established in 1936, to bring in the refugees from the Spanish civil war. And so the – there probably were still some refugees of the Spanish civil war in **Gurs** when the Germans arrived. And – and my father and his cohorts –

Q: The other enemy aliens, yes.

A: Yeah, the enemy aliens.

Q: Yeah.

A: And so, that's how he wound up at **Gurs**.

Q: Okay.

A: And – and then, that was in sep – let's say September, and on the – I believe it was the second – 22nd of October that the **Gauleiter** of – of **Württemberg** and **Baden** and whatever, decided to send all the Jews from **Germany** down there. And so that was the end of October that the people from **Germany** got there.

Q: In all this time, I mean it sounds that it's – it – it was almost an – not necessarily an ending, but a constant stream of insecurity for your parents, of registering with the police, not knowing whether or not their – their residents' permit would be

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extended. Even after several years being in **Marseilles**, still being considered enemy aliens, of being picked up, let go, picked up, let go, on a train, not on a train, but – out of home, back to home. How did you have, I mean, not only the nerves that are – are involved here, how did you eat? I mean, how were able to make money, how were you able to make a li – how were they able to make a living?

A: It's – that's not a question that my sister and I can answer. We don't know, because we were children, and we were protected. I know that my parents sold furniture and items from their – the household at auctions, when they ran out of money. That much I know. Where the money came from to feed us, I have no idea. I know we didn't get any money from relatives anywhere else. As a matter of fact, if anything, we gave money to people, members of the family who were in concentration camps. You know, my dad did an occasional business deal. My mother, when the war started, knitted **genouillère**.

Q: What's that?

A: That's a thing that – knitted woolen things that soldiers wear on the – on – **genou** is the knee – wear on their legs to keep them warm in the front lines. She worked for the war effort. But you don't make any money at that, you know. Somehow, to her great credit, she – somehow she scraped by. We – we don't know how. We – there's no way we can figure it out. We know that our landlord didn't push us if we couldn't pay the rent. But we ate, and – and then this period when my dad was there, before –

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between **Les Milles** and **Les Milles**, you know, he came home one day and said, oh, you know, there was – there was no food in **France**. I mean, forget about us, there was no food. The only thing they sold in the – in the – in the grocery store were rutabagas. If you present me with a rutabaga, I'll kick you out of the house.

Q: You've – you've had your fill?

A: That's – that's all there was.

Q: Okay.

A: And the – so that – I don't know how we – how we lived. On the other hand, my friends, my French friends, never quit being my French friends. And my sister's French friends, she was – she has French friends from her school that she – that she calls on the telephone once a month to this day.

Q: To this day, wow.

A: And they're all – my sister is now 91, going on 92, and they've always been our friends. We grew up with them. They – they never said to us, you are a dirty German, or something. They were our friends. And I'll tell you that in a minute, how – to what – how that works. But anyway, he was in **Gurs**, and we were here. Now, September 19 – this is important, because without this, I wouldn't be sitting here. In September of 1940, school started. And you know, so I go to school, and she goes to school. That's the plan. And so I got to school, and they called me into the deputy director of the school, with my mother, and they said, oh, you can't come back. And

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my mother said – you know, I was probably afraid of the guy – my mother said, why not? Well, we – you're German. Your son is a German, and **Germany** has beaten **France**, has defeated **France**, and the other kids, who will know that you are German, will – will – will – will beat you up.

Q: He just didn't want you there?

A: Maybe he believed it, I don't know. And I said, I know, I said to him, nobody is going to beat me up. All my classmates are my friends. That – just the way it was. We been together for four or five years, and you know, I knew every one of them. They're all dead now, but I – if I walked down the street, they would embrace me. And – but he wouldn't relent. Okay. So now, my sister's going to school, and that's why I say –

Q: And she doesn't have the problem?

A: Oh no, there were – my sister never has any problems. It's always me, because I'm a boy. Girls get treated – **Caroline** doesn't believe it, but I can guarantee you that boys got treated differently from girls. And so Mother takes the position, well, he's 14 years old, Dad is in a camp, 14 year olds tend to get in trouble. Now, my mother didn't know my very well, because that was not something I knew how to do. That wasn't part of my scenario. But anyway, so she – Mother had an unbelievable social conscience, and did – you know, what this woman did is way beyond anything you can ever think of. And so she – she decided, first of all, she –

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we now knew that Dad was in – in – in the camp – yeah, he was probably already at **Gurs**. It was September.

Q: Is – is – geographically, is **Gurs** far from **Marseilles**?

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay.

A: It's at the foot of – foot of the **Pyrenees**, near the **Atlantic**.

Q: Ah, okay.

A: Do we have a map of that, **Caroline**, if we can show where it is?

Q: It's okay. It's just I wanted to get –

A: Yeah. Now, it's –

Q: – my next question would be, were you ever able to visit him?

A: No.

Q: Okay. So, correspondence only. Letters only.

A: Correspondence only. And so, but Mother tried to see how to get him out. You always – there was always a possibility you could get somebody out. You could get him out, if you could get him a visa to the **United States**. And so she was doing the tour of the relief agencies, of which everything had come to **Marseilles**. **Marseilles** was the center, the fulcrum of – of everything now, because all the refugees all – everything had come down to this place. And so all of the relief agencies, the – the Quakers, the – the **OSE, Office de Secours Enfants**, the – the – they took care of

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kids, and the American Mennonite committee, the Unitarian committee, they were – and then some non-American outfits, but they were all in **Marseilles**.

Q: Now is – at this point, was the **Pétain** government already established?

A: It got established in June of –

Q: 1940.

A: – '40.

Q: So this would have been four months later. Four or five months later, yeah.

A: Three.

Q: Yeah.

A: Yeah, July, August, September, three months. Was September.

Q: Okay.

A: Definitely September.

Q: Okay.

A: And yeah, they – they were there.

Q: Okay.

A: For whatever good they did. And there were some people on that – in the cabinet of **Pétain** that were **foo**, right wing fanatics. They worked with the Germans, they loved the Germans. So anyway – so Mother went, and took me along, to go to the relief agencies, to see how – what to do about Dad. And we had an application. I don't know when it went in, but we had an application for visas in the unite – to the

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United States, and you have to supply affidavits from relatives, that you don't become a burden to the **U.S.** government, etcetera, etcetera.

Q: So at some point, the conversation had changed. You mentioned earlier than when your parents moved to **Marseilles**, it was with the idea that that's not so far, we could go back at some point.

A: Yeah, well –

Q: And at some point, that changed.

A: Yeah, because the Germans went to war.

Q: Okay.

A: The minute the Germans declared war on – on – on the rest of **Europe**, to take over the world, that was passé, you know –

Q: Okay.

A: – that wasn't – didn't exist any more. The first place we went to, were the American Quakers, the Americans' Friends' Service Committee. They had an office on **Boulevard d'Athènes**, 29. The train station, **Gare Saint Charles** that I told you about, was sitting on top of the hill, and it – you could come straight down from there. The – some steps, and then there was **Boulevard d'Athènes**, Boulevard of **Athens**. And number 20 – on the – on the right hand side there was first the **Hotel Splendide**, and then this building 29, where the Quakers took over the floor. And so

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we went to 29 **Boulevard d'Athènes**, on the second floor, and there was a receptionist, and –

Q: Did you speak English?

A: Well, ah, you caught me. I – the last two years in school, in lycée, I had taken English, and I had the first marks in English, both years. And well, it was easier for me, because I knew German, and you know, once you go languages, you –

Q: Yeah.

A: But, so I knew some English. I know – knew more English than kids who go to American high school and take two years of anything. My English was better than that. It wasn't good, far from it. So we got there, and th – rang the doorbell, and this lady, whose name I have to look up, because I knew it so well, opened the door, and she was the receptionist sitting in the lobby there. And we told her what we wanted, and we got to speak to a representative, and tell him the story, etcetera, etcetera, and we went away. Mother observed that this was a total f – fallacy, this whole thing.

That here you have have only the clients, only spoke no French, they all spoke German – most of them. Some of them spoke some eastern European languages, but mostly German.

Q: German.

A: And the receptionist doesn't speak anything except French.

Q: Was she American?

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A: No, no, she was French.

Q: She was French.

A: Was a local hire.

Q: Okay.

A: And so Mother thought this over, not very long, and sh – we went back, and Mother offered my services as an interpreter. Volunteer.

Q: Okay.

A: I had nothing to do. She wanted to – the whole purpose was to get me to do something, because –

Q: To keep you off the streets.

A: Keep me off the streets, exactly.

Q: Okay.

A: And they accepted me.

Q: As a volunteer because you spoke languages?

A: Yeah. I could speak German. Anybody that walked in the door, that came for help, I could ask them in German, what do you want? And I spoke French, I could tell the lady there, that's what they want. And I spoke some English, so I could interrelate with the Quakers, who were very nice people.

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Q: All right, let's pause here just for a second, to get a sense of the lay of the land. Can you describe the building for me, what it looked like? You said it was on the second floor.

A: Yeah, was a big, old, well-built –

Q: Stone?

A: – stone apartment house, basically.

Q: Okay.

A: But they had offices. Maybe – I don't know how long they had offices, they – maybe they had always offices down below, but it was really an apartment house.

And the reason I mention that it was next door to the the **Hotel Splendide** is because the Germans made the **Hotel Splendide** the headquarters of the armistice commission. So every day, when I went to work for the Quakers, I had to go by these damn cars, with swastika flags on. And which di – scary enough. And also because – and this is way off from what we're talking about, but there's a guy by the name of **Varian Fry** that you might be familiar with. **Varian Fry** came into – into **Marseilles**, and made his headquarters in the **Splendide**.

Q: As well?

A: As well. **Varian Fry** was sent over by **Eleanor Roosevelt** to rescue a few hundred people like the ones I described to you before. **Nobel** prize winners, famous

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international painters, artists, engineers, poets, writers, musicians. And that was **Varian Fry's** task.

Q: And the surgeon with his two assistants?

A: I don't know where he fit in.

Q: Okay.

A: Maybe the surgeon would have made it, but not the assistants.

Q: Yeah.

A: See, he had nobody to polish his shoes any more. But **Varian Fry** was there for a while, but then he – he – he was advised to get out of there because the Nazis would figure out who he is, and that – that would not be good.

Q: Did you meet him at the time? Did you know who he was?

A: I've met **Varian Fry**, but you know, I was a 15 year old boy, I've met him because he came to our office, which was the headquarters of the Quakers, for the whole **Europe**. And the –

Q: For all of **Europe**?

A: Yeah, they – well, they got kicked out of **Paris**, they got kicked out of **Spain**, **Marseilles** was the only place left.

Q: Okay.

A: And I could ri – I could tell you about the Quakers for days. They – the kind of people they were, the – unbelievable people.

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Q: I would like to hear about it.

A: Yeah.

Q: But first, let's talk about **Varian Fry**.

A: So, we –

Q: He came to your offices?

A: Well, he just came to visit.

Q: Okay.

A: And I, you know, I knew he was **Varian Fry**. I did not know what his mission was. I knew that he worked with us, but I didn't know that he was charged by the U.S. government, of rescuing famous people. And then he took an office somewhere in [indecipherable]. The rest is about **Varian Fry's** history. But – but that's – you have to understand how this layout worked. The **Splendide**, with the Germans here, and we were in the building next door, 29 **Boulevard d'Athènes**. So, anyway – so I worked there initially, as the interpreter. And then they got to know me, and I got to know them, and – but you have to keep in mind, I was 14 years old. I keep telling my grandkids, who are 25, don't know how to get their finger out of their ear, what you can do at 14, if you have to, you know. It's – was not my choosing.

Q: Yeah.

A: It was fate. And so – so at first, I did some of that all the time, but then there was a gentleman by the name of **Andel(ph) Burns Chalmers**, he was a minister,

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Protestant minister from the **United States**, very soft spoken, twice as tall as I was.

And he decided that I was going to work for him. And so –

Q: And he worked in that office, too?

A: Yeah, he was there. Like, he – he was the guy responsible for answering refugees' questions, problems. And that included – that included refugees in concentration camps. So all the correspondence from the concentration camps came to Mr. **Chalmers** – Dr. **Chalmers**. And – so gradually, besides going with Mrs. **Kirschner**, Mrs. **Kirschner** was the wife of the president. The president was **Howard Kirschner**.

Q: And he – of the Quaker organization.

A: Yes. He is – he was the big guy, and he had a deputy, whose name was **Herbert Lagler**, who was a young American. **Kirschner** was a very religious man, who had made a lot of money, and he decided he had to give back. And so he took over helping refugees in **France** – **Spain** and **France**. And his wife was in charge of all the children's colonies. They established children's colonies, there were a lot of kids around whose parents had disappeared, and the Quakers took them all in, and – and set up schools. My stomach is working again, I'm sure you hear.

Q: Okay.

A: And I'm sorry if they're recording.

Q: It's okay.

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A: And he then decided to use me. And he and I sat down and we developed a questionnaire, which the Germans call a **fragebogen**. And we developed a questionnaire of all the questions he had to have answered, in order to be able to answer the letters he got from the concentration camps, internment camps, whatever. And I got a letter, which I have. I was charged with going to the American consulate.

Q: Before we get there – before we get to the American consulate, I want to find out a little bit more about the office. You know, you mentioned a number of people; the local French hire Dr. **Chalmers**, I think, yes, the **Kirschners**. How large was the office in general? How many employees did it have, approximately?

A: Oh, at least 25. I have a picture of it in – you have the picture tho –

Q: Yeah.

A: The – the – the – there was – there was **Howard Kirschner** and his wife, and she was not in the chain of command, but she had a function.

Q: Sure.

A: And **Herbert Lagler**, who was a deputy. And then there were about four or five people who were principles, who had different assignments. **Chalmers**, there was a gentleman by the name of **Stevenson**(ph), that only worked with refugees, and how to help refugees. And I am convinced that there were a couple people in the office who worked for the underground. There was a guy with a wig, wi-with a cape –

Q: No.

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A: Yeah, that came in all the time. He had a red wig, and with this cape. His name was **Jean-Julien Chapenoire**(ph). He was French, and I am sure he was part of the underground. I just never figured that he could be anything else. He didn't ha – he – he didn't have a office in the office, but he was there, a lot of the time. Then they had subsidiaries near the camps, at **Toulouse** and a couple place. But, I have a picture I'll show you, after we get off the air here, of a meeting of the Quakers that – where they took a picture of everybody. And there were secretaries, of course. Everybody had a secretary, an assistant, to do all the paperwork, because most of what they did was paperwork.

Q: And were most of the – aside from the secretary who – the receptionist, were most everybody American?

A: Most were American, but there were some British, there were some – a Swede or two. There – there were some pretty famous names in there. There – there were people from western **Europe** who were in that sphere of social activity, support, whatever.

Q: Were they all Quaker?

A: I doubt it.

Q: Okay. Tell me – you mentioned earlier that you found them remarkable. What was – what were – what were some of the things that struck you that way, about the Quakers?

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A: Well, they – they were all very kind people.

Q: Okay.

A: They had a – they had a – I'm not convinced that they were all Quakers. The – some of them were Unitarians, Mennonites, and so on. And – but they had a meeting every Sunday morning – a Quaker meeting every Sunday morning. I'm not sure that **Howard Kirschner** was a Quaker, but he was a religious person, very religious.

They had a meeting every Sunday morning in the – in the conference room, where – that I was privileged to attend. Where I didn't understand half of what was going on, but because that was – we were now at a higher intellectual level. And they did – the meeting room were about twice as big as this, and – and it consisted of chairs along the wall. No table. All the way on the outside. And people would come in and sit down, and nobody would say anything, until somebody would speak up, and present some thoughts about some issue. Very highly philosophical, or – or what they saw that week, or whatever. And then they'd sit down – not sit down, they never got up – and they would stop, and then be a silence, and then somebody else would pick up, and so that –

Q: Did they talk – would they respond to the first statement, or would they then say their own?

A: Yeah. I don't remember all the details, but they – they – it was not – it was not coordinated any way, it was all on the spur of the moment, the spirit of it. And it

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was, you know, because it was a high level English, I – some of that I didn't understand. That was not my level. My level was somewhere here. But it was very inspiring, it was very beautiful.

Q: I – I – I'd like to understand – make sure that I understand it better.

Q2: Now might be a good time to pause for lunch.

Q: I – I – I know, but I want to finish this one question, is – if it's possible. Okay.

When somebody would say something, and they finished, would then there be a discussion from others, that would revolve around that topic, or – or not?

A: I can't answer that any more.

Q: Okay.

A: I – I don't think so, but it may have been. It may be the next one who spoke took off from where the first one left off.

Q: Okay.

A: But it was – it was not a discussion across the room.

Q: That's one of the question –

A: It was just a presentation of thoughts, which may have been, or may not have been related to what the first person said.

Q: Okay, okay. Let's pause here, and we'll come back. Thank you.

A: Thank you.

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Q: Thank you very – **[break]** Okay, before the break, we were talking about your work, the work that you were starting to – to do with the Quaker organization in **Marseilles**, and how you ended up working with Dr. **Chalmers**. And tell me now how that developed, and what – how it took you from their offices to the offices of the **U.S.** consulate in **Marseilles**. Describe that to me.

A: Yeah, the – a-as Dr. **Chalmers** and I got to know each other better, and he was overwhelmed, because the number of people in these camps that wrote to him, was very, very large. And so he got a great number of – of letters every day, with people pleading for assistance to save their life by getting an American visa, if they could. The – he felt that I knew enough about things, and – so that he appointed me to be his leg-man, his messenger, if you wish – it was more than a messenger, a messenger is an understatement – to the American consulate, to answer the question, which basically amounted to, what's the status of my papers, and pos-possibility to get a visa to the **United States**, from every one of these people that wrote. So he and I devised a questionnaire so I could quickly go through files and – and fill out the blanks, and so he could answer the letters.

Q: Okay.

A: So they – they – they – they gave me – they gave me a letter, which I – to present to the guard at the American consulate. After a few times, the guard knew me, so I didn't need the letter, but initially saying that I was the representative of the

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Quakers, and I could have access to the consulate. And so I started going to the consulate, I would say twice a week, to do this. Number one, it wasn't – it wasn't easy to get into the consulate, for normal human beings. There was a line of people around the block to get into the American consulate, to see a representative of the consulate, to find out the status of their papers, if they were able to do this. What I was handling is the people who weren't able to come to the consulate.

Q: Can you describe the consulate building physically, like you did the Quaker building, next to **Hotel Splendide**? What did – where was it, and so –

A: It's – it's – it's – it's one block from the police prefecture, which – in the middle of town, which is a mammoth building. And there's a square, I don't remember the name of the square. I can tell you that today, the – which is not your question, but today the consulate's moved up about 10 buildings, and has a square, and the address of the square is **Place Varian Fry**, which I think is an interesting little thing that nobody'll tell you, unless you go there and you see it. But they were on a middle of a block, with mammoth oak door, it was an old office building. Or it could have been a private home, with a fairly large number of rooms in it, then you went in from the street, up some steps, and then you were inside the consulate.

Q: So there was no – it wasn't such that it was a building that had a yard around it, and then a wall, or a gate, and you were –

A: No.

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Q: No, it was actually a building –

A: At that time –

Q: Okay.

A: – it was part of a – because it came out of peace time, it was still the same thing it had been before, in peacetime, where people just went to a consulate, like you go to any office building. Well, there was a sm – relatively small building, but it was attached on both sides, to other buildings.

Q: And did the U.S. consulate have the entire building to itself, or only certain floors?

A: To this – to this building, yes.

Q: The whole building?

A: Yeah.

Q: And about how li – how many stories did it have?

A: I believe not more than two.

Q: Oh, I see.

A: It was not a – it was more a spread out building, and deep building, than it was a high building.

Q: Did you have a sense of how many – how large a place it was, how many people worked there, at the time?

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A: No, I don't – I can't tell you that. I – because I only related with certain people. I related to the people in the consulate division. A consulate has other functions. Like the con – I never saw the consul general, not that I would – I wanted to. He was not a very nice guy, I'm told. But I only dealt with the consular staff, the people that handed – handled the people applying for visa, or it could have been Americans who came in, to have a stamp put in their passport. But that was the one section of the – the consulate, overall, that I dealt with.

Q: Okay. Again, to – for – for me to be able to get a picture of this, there are people who are standing outside with a line winding around a square, or you know, they're waiting for a long time. And – and if they're coming on their own to see – to find out the status of their application. When you go in, do you go to the same window that they would go, except that yours is streamlined, that is you are able to not have to wait in line? Or, is it that you don't have to stand by a window, you're actually admitted to a place beyond a counter, that normal people wouldn't be able to get to?

A: The latter. I – once I got past the guard, I was on my own.

Q: Oh, okay.

A: I went in the building to the section where the consular department was, and they had this mammoth file room. You could call it a conference room. It had a big, big, long oaken table in the middle, and the rest of the room were file cabinets, all the way again – against the wall, all the way around –

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Q: So around the – around the perimeter.

A: – around the table. And so, I went in there, I didn't ask anybody for anything, I just went in, and I put my briefcase and my files on the table. And the files were organized alphabetically. So I started at A, and worked my way around. And you know, I had my – my request letters also in alphabetical order, so I could work my way in some kind of orderly fashion, to look up the files of the people whose requests I had.

Q: Was there anybody else from the consular office in the room at the time?

A: No.

Q: Wow.

A: It was me in charge.

Q: Wow.

A: It's – it's – when you think about it, especially nowadays, you know, I worked in embassies and consulates later in life, it – it was totally inconceivable. It was that I – and you know, as I say, I was a 15 year old boy – that I was – I had this access. Once I was inside, I was free to in – within the consular section, not the whole consulate –

Q: Yeah, yeah.

A: – I don't – didn't get involved there. But I just went in there and did my job.

Q: But nevertheless though, I mean, these are important files –

A: Of course.

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Q: – you know, and very vital to the people who are requesting.

A: Life and death.

Q: Yeah.

A: And the – the – you know, and every time I went in there, I also looked under **Hockenheimer**.

Q: I wanted to ask you that.

A: And see oh, has anything come in from the last time, you know, from our relatives.

Q: Now, when your family put together your request, who did you approach to be your sponsors in the **United States**?

A: Oh, in the **United States**? Well, there were two. There was my mother's sister, **Elsa(ph)** and **Charlie Heiman(ph)**, who had only been in the **United States** since 1939, I believe, so they weren't that well established in 1940 – '41. But he was a businessman, and so he gave us what was required, probably still is, an affidavit. And then my mother's brother **Walter, Walter Lowen(ph)**, he changed his name from **Lowenthal** to **Lowen(ph)**, he lived in **Seattle**, and he gave us another statement. What they wanted is a statement saying we would not become wards of the state. That's really what it amounted to. And so we had these, and the – the – the – the consulate ha – the consul, in charge of consul affairs had to – had to decide whether it was enough, or not, semicolon; the policy in **Washington** was not to give

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any visas. **Cordell Hull** was Secretary of State, and he had a sidekick who was worse, and their policy was not to give visas to refugees. Jewish refugees, I can't tell you exactly, but that was the policy. The – the consul general in **Marseilles**, whose name just came to my mind, was **Fullerton**. Mr. **Fullerton** was abiding by these instructions, and on his staff he had vice-consul **Hiram Bingham**, and who had a sidekick whose name was **Miles Standish**. If you want to be American, you can't get more American than **Hiram Bingham** and **Miles Standish**. And they were on their own. They, on their own, decided. They met the refugees. **Miles Standish** and **Bingham** went to **Saint Nicolas** camp, and – and got the **Lion Feuchtwanger** out while he was washing himself at the creek, a-and they – they – they had a taxi standing nearby. They – they quickly changed him into a woman, and had him sit in the back of the seat. And when the police stopped the taxi, they said, who is that in the back? Oh, that's my mother-in-law from **Georgia**, and the taxi waved them on. He was an American consul, so they thought he had some authority. And that's how they got him out of there, but you could have access to – to **Saint Nicolas**, in **Niemes**. But anyway, it – **Hiram Bingham** worked with **Varian Fry**, they met secretly in places, to exchange information on getting the people that **Eleanor Roosevelt** wanted out. How to figure out how to get them passport, and get them on a boat, or another boat, over the mountains, into **Spain**, or whatever. There were –

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Q: So, I mean – I mean – of course, **Eleanor Roosevelt** was not part of the – formally a part of the **U.S.** government. However, as the wife of the president, she's clearly has interests that are in contradiction to Mr. **Hull**, you know –

A: Oh yeah.

Q: – at the State department.

A: Yeah.

Q: So it sounds –

A: But she was a power.

Q: Yes.

A: **Eleanor Roosevelt** was a power unto herself, and nobody would have challenged – **Cordell Hull** – **Hull** would not have challenged **Eleanor Roosevelt**. So this is the kind of stuff that you – you know, put a blind eye on it. But – but what **Hiram Bingham** did, you know, was spectacular, because he issued 2,500 visas to people without permission from – from **Washing** –

Q: Now, wasn't that risking getting into a lot of hot water?

A: Oh yeah, he did. He got into a lot of hot water. He – we left in May of '41, in June of '41, they – they canned him. They pulled him out. Some people knew about him, and complained to **Vichy**. We had an American ambassador in **Vichy**, Admiral **Leahy**, and somebody got at him. He was no particular wonderful person, and they – they put pressure on him, and they – they pulled him out and send him first to

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Lisbon for a few months, and then to south **Montevideo**. And then, I don't remem – I don't know what they did exactly, but they – he retired, or quit the foreign service because they made life so miserable for him, and never got another job.

Q: Within the government, or –

A: Yes.

Q: So he did pay a stiff price.

A: Yeah, he – he was – as a result, he was kicked out of the government. But he sa – had saved 2,500 people. He was a very tall man, he had 11 children. He – he followed his conscience.

Q: Did you have interaction with him?

A: Yes. One time, I – maybe more, but I remember one time, the – in – in March, approximately, of '41, Mr. **Chalmers** – Dr. **Chalmers** said to me one day, I have – had you – as you know, I live with **Hiram Bingham** – which I didn't know – and we spoke last night, and he said next time you are at the consulate, drop in to see him. And as you can well imagine, I went to the consulate the next day. I didn't let any grass grow under my feet. And there I had to, you know, ask – there was a Miss **Houligan**(ph), who was kind of the administrative person there, she was a nice person. And I told her that **Hiram Bingham** wanted to see me, and so she took me in to see him. And he said to me, you know, th-the Quakers highly recommend you and your family. I – I know your dad is at **Gurs**, and we're ready to issue you visas.

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But if you issue a visa, it's only good for 90 days, and – but your dad is at **Gurs**, so we first have to get your dad out of **Gurs** before I advise that you get a vise, otherwise, it might run out before you get to the **United States**, and you have to start from scratch. And so he – he – he said, I'm giving you a letter, addressed to the commandant at – at **Gurs**, whoever's in charge, and saying – on American si – consulate stationery, saying that we're prepared to issue your family a visa, and the chances are 50-50 that they'll let him go. And so – and then, you come back. And so we – we – he gave me the letter, we sent it to Dad, they let him out.

Q: But I want to stop right here. I can't imagine what you must have felt like when you heard those words. I mean, out of so many years of uncertainty.

A: You have to remember, I was 15 years old. At 15, you don't go into all the possible angles. All that mattered to me is that the American consulate was going to give us a visa to get out. That – th-that, you know. And you can imagine how my mother felt. And so, you know, and that came –

Q: How did she – how did she react when you told her?

A: Well, she was – well, you – honestly, you didn't believe any of it until after it happened. That – you know, I'll give you an example in a second. The – the – so we get – Dad came back, so we had to get out, okay? So the debate became, how do you get out? You could – you had two options; you could go through **Spain**. There was a guy by the name of **Francisco Franco** there, who could have caused you a hard

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time, you didn't know. Or, you could take a ship from **Marseilles** to the **West Indies**. Now, there weren't that many ships, but th-they – there were some. And so we decided okay, so we worked, from the point of view, when was our ship going? And so, there was a ship on the sixth of May, the **Winnipeg**, and there was a ship on the 10th of May, the **Wyoming**. And so, you had to get ship's passage, which wasn't a given. You needed an exit visa from **France**, and you needed a transit visa for the French **West Indies**, and you needed ship's passage. And so we started working on that. The Quakers, the – **Herbert Lagler**, the number two guy at the Quakers, called the president of the French line, and said, we have four members of our staff – note the – the wording – who are ready to go to the **States**, we need four bunks, passages, whatever. And the president – they didn't start at the bottom, they went to the president of the French line. And the president of the French line said, we – we have no more cabins. And **Herbert Lagler** said, well, our staff members will take any accommodation. Which meant the hold of the ship, because these ships were not passenger ships, they had ca – they were freighters with some cabins. And so they had turned the – the hold into receptacles for human beings. And say – our quo – our members will – will take whatever you got. So, okay. So – I'm stepping si-sideaway here.

Q: That's okay.

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A: And we – they sent me as a messenger from the Quakers, to the French line, called the **Messageries Maritimes**, to pick up the tickets and give him a check. And – and I got the tickets, and he said, who are you? I'm the messenger of the Quakers, okay? So I had my four tickets, which turned out to – well, I'll get to that. And then we had to get the papers from the French police prefecture, for exit visa and the transit visa. And this is where the story always gets me, is that we knew that on the second floor of the house, the apartment house we lived in, there was a lady, middle-aged lady, who lived with her aunt and uncle, they were Corsicans. They were called **Giglielmi(ph) Morachini(ph)**. And we knew her – them – we didn't know her aunt and uncle at all, but – and I can't tell you whether her name was **Giglielmi(ph)**, or **Morachini(ph)**. But, be that as it may. And – but we knew she worked for the French police prefecture. So my mother and I went, rang her doorbell. And all we knew about her was from saying, **bonjour Madame**, as we went higher up than she lived, as she came out the door. And we said, Madame, we understand that you work at the police prefecture, and this is our situation. We have visa for the **United States**, we're leaving, we need a French exit visa, and transit visa, and can you help us with that? She said yes. And she said, I will bring you the papers tomorrow, to fill out. So, she – next day we saw her, and she – she gave us some questionnaires to fill out, and we filled them out. Rang her doorbell, and said, here are the papers. Okay, I will let you know when I get the answer. Few days later she contacted us, and she said, the

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papers are ready, and – but you have to go pick them up yourself, because you have to get a stamp, and they – they put – paste the stamp on there, like a postage stamp, but it's a fee, or whatever. So I went there, and I picked up the papers, and again they asked me who I was, and I said, I'm the messenger. And I gave them the money they wanted, and you know, they don't ask 15 year old kids much. You – you've – if I had been 25, it would have been different, but I wasn't.

Q: Sometimes that's lucky.

A: Yeah. Well, that's what – my whole life has been like that. And I – I – I – I ga – so I wound up with the – with the French exit visas, and with the transit visa for the – for the **Martinique**. And – and you have to ask yourself the question, is why did she do that?

Q: Yeah.

A: She was a nice lady, she knew us for years, she knew whe – we were nice people, good neighbors. She didn't know any – a thing about us, otherwise. And she spoke from her conscience. And every time I tell this story, I have a hard time telling it, because it was such a unexpected thing, that came out of – you know. It's just – it's a human – it was a human gesture that – that just transcends anything you can say about anything. And so we had all that, and then we – we had a – we had to get rid of all our furniture. And so we did that, I don't remember how, my parents did that. And my mother – my dad said, before we got the tickets, my dad said, **Winnipeg** on

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the sixth of May, **Wyoming** on the 10th of May. We ought to take the **Wyoming**, it'll give us four more days to get everything taken care of. And that's the one time in my life that I heard my mother said, over my dead body. I don't know how you say that in German, but she said, over my dead body, we're leaving on the sixth of May. And so, on the sixth of May – now, we did take some things along. My sister and I don't know how there's – if you go around the corner here, there's a mammoth oil painting of the Bavarian **Alps** in there. That came out with us. We have no idea how they did that, absolutely no idea.

Q: Maybe they rolled it up.

A: They're free – their – no.

Q: No.

A: It was – it was like this.

Q: In a frame?

A: There were three di – there are three more paintings. There's a naked lady down the hall, she was part of it, and my sister has two oil paintings, and – and then a bunch of books, that was it. **Kultur**.

Q: **Kultur**.

A: Germans believe in culture, and that – furniture be damned, you know.

Q: You can always get furniture.

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A: You can always get furniture, but paintings and – and so – anyway, so **Winnipeg** it was, and the Quakers picked us up in the staff car, American Friend Service Committee on it. They took us to the pier, to the – to the gangplank, and there was the German with the swastika. You know, it – it always just to keep you from whatever.

Q: Just from being too sure.

A: And he checked everybody that got up there. They were looking for people that were on their list. Wi – thank God, we were not important enough, so we were not on their list, so we got up there. But they did arrest a – a few people there. The wife of a former member of Parliament, and a few people like that. And so then, **Winnipeg** took off, sixth of May. We went from **Marseilles** to **Oran** in **Algeria**, did not dock. Then we turned west, to **Gibraltar**, we went through **Gibraltar** to **Casablanca**. We stopped in **Casablanca**. We were able to touch the soil, I've – I've touched the soil of **Africa**. And –

Q: Did you see **Humphrey Bogart**?

A: No, he wasn't there. Even **Sam** the piano player wasn't there.

Q: Wasn't there.

A: And we – it was my sister's birthday, the 14th of May, 1940. And my dad had connections in – in **Casa**, and because it was her birthday, he got a message to them, and the guy came on a motorcycle, to bring her some strawberries. She was

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supposed to get whipped cream, but he said it was too hot, and the whipped cream would be sour. So I've been giving my sister strawberries and whipped cream ever since then, every year. But, so then we left –

Q: How lovely.

A: – we left **Casa**, and went down along **North Africa**, down to **Dakar**, but did not touch. **Dakar** is right on the equator. And we went across the equator to the **West Indies**. Now, the day before we got to **Martinique** – actually, a night and a half before we got to **Martinique**, it was so damn hot in the ship – there are lots of things about the ship that I'll spare you, but it was so hot, there was no way I could stay down – down in the – in the hold. I mean, you – you just – you suffocated. And I – about midnight I went up on deck, and I – just to get some air, just to breathe. And I became aware of several things. One of them was that it was pitch black. The sea was totally calm, there was no wave going on. But then I dis-discovered, or decided that the ship wasn't really moving. I said oh, what's going on here? And I went and I looked and talked to some people, and we were just sitting there. And then all of a sudden, from all sides, we were lit up in – in lights, as the focal point, and some – some rope ladders were thrown up on the ship, and a bunch of characters came up, and we couldn't tell who they were. They had no uniform on, they wore blue jeans, or whatever, and they all had weapons. And they spoke a language which I didn't

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understand, which you know, I – I was pretty good at languages, but I didn't know what they were talking. And so they took us over, they cap –

Q: But what did they look like?

A: – they captured us. And –

Q: Pirates?

A: No. They – they were – they were – they were Dutch, of the wild Dutch army in exile, the – the free Dutch, who had gone to **England**, and they captured us on behalf of the – on behalf of the British, and they took us to the French – to the British to trade that, at the British **West Indies**.

Q: Well, so what flag was the **Winnipeg** flying under?

A: Well, that – that – that is very cogent question, because we didn't know who they were, but in the morning when we got daylight, I looked at the flag, and the flag wasn't tricolor any more, it was orange, which represented the House of **Orange-Nassau** of the **Netherlands**. And so they took us in, they took us to **Port of Spain, Trinidad**, and they had captured us. Of course, we had some French soldiers aboard, going to **Martinique** as replacements, or whatever. And then the – the – the radio operator barricaded himself in the thing, and he called in the French for whatever, and the – one ef – one airplane came, and somebody – they didn't do anything, they just took us to **Trinidad**.

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Q: But what a footnote. I mean, everything that we know about World War II is that the French, and the British were allies. And here –

A: Not after **Vichy**, this was **Vichy**.

Q: Uh-huh, okay. These were **Vichy** –

A: This was a **Vichy** ship.

Q: A **Vichy** ship.

A: I'm sorry I didn't say that. A **Vichy** ship, it was flying under the **Vichy** flag, going to **Martinique**, which was under the con – control of **Vichy**. Now, the reason I understand they did it – [phone ringing, break]

Q: So, **Vichy**.

A: Yeah.

Q: **Vichy** and **Martinique**.

A: Yeah. And they – they took us to **Trinidad**, which was British, and the reason they did it, I'm told, is that the Germans, **Rommel** in **North Africa** had – had given the Nazis the rights to use airports in **Syria**. Haven't you heard of **Syria** before? And as a countermeasure, the – the British decided a – hey, you think we can't do anything? So the British decided to – okay, as punishment, they decided to sh – decided to seize a **Vichy** French ship. The – we happened to be on board. The reason this is so important about the – the – the **Winnipeg** and the **Wyoming**, is because when the **Winnipeg** was captured, the **Wyoming**, four days behind us, was off the

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coast of **Africa**, coming across the equator. And when – and when this happened, when the **Winnipeg** was captured, the **Wyoming** was turned around, back to **Africa**, so he wouldn't be captured, and the people who were in the **Wyoming** spent the rest of the war in – in – in **Senegal**, some of them working on the **Trans-Sahara** rail line.

Q: Your mother was so right.

A: Not one more day.

Q: Wow.

A: Every day – when you get in a situation like this, don't delay anything, because you never know what's changing tomorrow.

Q: Wow.

A: And so that's – that's why the **Winnipeg**, **Wyoming** story is important, because the alternative would have been, we wa – would have wound up in **Africa**.

Q: Now, **Winnipeg** and **Wyoming** are not French names.

A: No, but ships can have –

Q: Okay.

A: – any name. The **Winnipeg** was sunk during World War II, in – in the **Atlantic**, when it was working for the allies.

Q: Was it?

A: Yeah. Yeah, you can look up that kind of stuff –

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Q: Okay.

A: – on the web nowadays.

Q: Okay. So what happened to you when you were in **Trinidad**? How did things develop?

A: Well, the – the people of **Trinidad** had – were told that the British had captured the German warship, which we were not. And so half of **Trinidad** was out on the pier, trying to see what these Germans looked like, and of course, it was women and children. And the British were very nice. They put us in a camp, but the camp was nicely organized. They fed us, and whatever. And to the extent that they even produced buses to take us on a tour of **Port of Spain**.

Q: Really.

A: So it – it was no hardship post. And so what we – but what we needed to do, you see, because our trip was arranged for us to take a ship out of **Martinique** to **New York**, it was all paid for. And we weren't in **Martinique**, so we couldn't take a ship from **Martinique** to **New York**. So we had to start from scratch on that, but we were safe.

Q: Yeah.

A: And so my mother contacted her sister, **Elsie**(ph) and **Charlie Heiman**(ph) in **Cincinnati**, and they – they booked passages for us from **Trinidad** to – to **New York** on the luxury liner called the **SS Uruguay**, which came from **South America**,

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to **New York**. And after being on that – on the **Winnipeg**, in the hold, being a guest like a first class passenger on the **Uruguay**, was another world. It – it was, you know, we – dining – air conditioned dining room, waiters with gloves, silver trays. I mean, how – how can – you know, you have to ask yourself, where the hell did that come from, you know?

Q: Yeah.

A: It was a little difficult, because there was a tropical storm –

Q: Okay.

A: – that hit us. When my mother and my sister went on the – on the **Uruguay** without a problem, then my dad and I were behind, getting the luggage, and accompanying the luggage. And when we went from – from **Port of Spain**, that – the **Uruguay** was too big to come into the harbor. It had to sit outside. And –

Q: So you had to go by boat?

A: And – or a little boat, one puff-pu-pu-pu – little one-horsepower motor. And there were about, I don't know, 20 people on this thing. It was a little cabin with a – with the guy in charge, the pilot. And we didn't all fit in. There was a young doctor, by the name of Dr. **Hirschberg**(ph) – I just saw his name yesterday, somewhere. He and I were outside, and our job was, when the cyclone hit us, to – you know, these little boats have tires on the side, so that when they hit something else –

Q: Right.

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A: – they don't fall apart.

Q: Right.

A: And so every time a wave came, he would throw the tire on – on the deck, and **Hirschberg**(ph) or I would throw the tire back out in the water, you know. So when we got to the – to the **Uruguay**, they had a platform at the bottom, with a gangplank, and this thing would come to the gangplank, and they – they said jump. I says, I'm not gonna jump. I was soaking wet, I had water in my shoes. I was soaked, you know? Every wave had gone over my head. Said, I'm not jumping, because if I slip, the thing'll come back and I'll fall between, it'll crush me. I said, I – I'm not jumping. My mother was up there looking down. She recognized me. And the captain was standing next to her, and she started screaming, and the captain said, what's going on. She said, that's my son, that's my son. And he sent down some sailors on the platform, and one of them jumped on our little boat, and the other one held the rope, and the one held me until I was on the –

Q: Other side.

A: – on the other side, and I went up – I wa – I was seasick for a while because – from that – from the little boat, you know?

Q: Oh yeah.

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A: The **Uruguay** was sitting there like it was a mountain in the water, wasn't moving. But that was the last part of trip. We had to – you know, we had to get a touch of everything. So then we came to **New York**, and –

Q: But from that – from that point of – of – of risk, of getting from the small boat into there, you go into air conditioned spaces, with white gloves and silverware, and first class, and all of that.

A: Yep.

Q: My God, what an adventure.

A: I – you know, it was – it's beyond – we didn't have the proper clothes, you know.

Q: Yeah.

A: In – in that dining room, you're supposed to dress up with a tie, and so on. I didn't have anything like that.

Q: Okay.

A: So – but there is – it went fine, I just – I got over my seasickness by go – jumping in a swimming pool.

Q: They had a swimming pool?

A: Oh, they had several swimming pool. This was first class.

Q: And just a question, that painting must have been spent – sent other ways. I can't imagine you bringing a painting on a boat, a little boat, going up to the **Uruguay**.

A: Same way.

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Q: Same way?

A: Yeah, it was on – oh, mean to the **Uruguay**?

Q: Yeah. How could you get a big –

A: You know, nobody's ever asked me that question. It must have gone with us. I – I don't know how else, I pa – I don't know the answer.

Q: I mean, but how would you go from a small boat to the – anyway, it's just a detail.

A: Yeah.

Q: What was it like when you got to **New York**? What did you see?

A: Well, I – I – I – we decided to – we stayed with relatives, I don't remember exactly whom, but –

Q: I'm talking about the harbor. Did you see Lady Liberty?

A: Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, I – in – in my book it says that twice in my life I ha – have had this experience. The first one when – when we passed the Statue of Liberty, the feeling that this brings out in you. And just to have arrived somewhere where they won't kill you. And the second time that happened to me is on the other side of the country, when I ca – as a lieutenant, I came back from 14 months in **Korea**, and we went under the Golden Gate bridge, and I almost went apart, because, you know, I feel the same way about the Golden Gate bridge as I feel about the Statue of Liberty. It's just a – you know, this feeling of, whew, I made it again, you know, kind of –

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Q: Home. Safety.

A: Yeah, it – it – you know, it was – it – it just – it's – you can't even describe it, you know, it's such a weight, just a – a weight off of you that you – I said gee, I've been given another life, is what it amounts to. So –

Q: Well, I think this is a point where it's the right point to take a break. Thank you.

A: Thank you.

Q: Okay. [break] So, you come into **New York** harbor, and you're met by family, relatives there. Tell me how – what happened then. Where did you folks go, where did you settle?

A: Well, the – basically, my family settled in **New York**. However, the same aunt and uncle in **Cincinnati** I've talked about, **Elsa(ph)** and **Charlie Heiman(ph)**, invited me to come stay with them for a while, until my parents got settled. And so, I moved to – to **Cincinnati**. My mother and sister went with me, and dropped me off where – and stayed a little bit. My grandmother was there. They all lived in the same little court. And I spent 15 months, approximately, in **Cincinnati**. I graduated high school, at 16, in **Cincinnati**. Decided I'd learned everything I would ever learn. The only thing they made me take is a course in civics. I had to be in a – good American, so I – I took that, and American history, two courses. Then I graduated high school, and then I – I started at the University of **Cincinnati**. I – I worked during the day, I had to – you know, that was part of the –

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Q: What were you doing?

A: Pardon?

Q: What were you doing?

A: Oh, I was working as a si – first I was working as an errand boy for an optical company on a bicycle. And I went over from **Cincinnati** to **Covington** and **Newport, Kentucky** every day. And then I decided that was too cold in winter, or something, and I got a job as a stock clerk in a – in a textile company. When I got bored of that, I got a job as a stock boy in a toy company. Those were the three jobs I had, and I went to school at night, while I was there. And then, in October of '42, a re – the connection there was that my – my aunt and uncle had a son who was – who was nine months younger than I am, and so he and I were buddies, and he taught me all about **America**. He'd been there all of two years. A-And the – and he and I are great friends to this day. Then I went to **New York**, and my uncle was always sure I needed a job to earn money. You know, that's the way he operated. He was no big intellectual, he was – and kind of frowned upon by that part of the family, because all we wanted to do, my sister and I, was go to college. And that wasn't necessary, in order to make money. So – but in **New York** I worked first for a textile company, that he probably got me the job. And then – and then I decided I could do better things. I went to school at night. I went to city college in **New York** at night, and played soccer on the weekends, in the French sporting club, and became quickly –

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well, from the beginning, even in **Cincinnati**, I was totally – you have to understand, that having had the experience that I had with the Quakers, I was not a normal kid. I had the war – the war weighed very heavily on my – on my personality, and I couldn't see where all these people were – people were sitting around and having a good time, when there were people dying in – in **Europe** and nobody was helping them. And so I was getti – got involved in – in – even in **Cincinnati** I joined the **Alliance Française**, and tried to get people interested in what's going on in **Europe**, and we can't just –

Q: What is the **Alliance Française**?

A: It's – it's a cultural – it's a cultural –

Q: French?

A: But French. And they had speakers. And since there were a lot of Frenchmen in exile at that point, they had speakers relating to the – to the war. The – **Ron** sent me a bunch of – of documents from the Quakers, which – which – that – which included letters that I wrote from **Cincinnati** to the Quakers, asking them for certain actions, and do that, and do this, and do that. And – you know, normally no organization would pay attention to what a 15 year old has to say, but I – I just was – I couldn't get that out of my system. So when I got to **New York**, besides everything else, I quickly got involved politically in the – with the f – free French youth, the – the **de Gaulle's** youth. That was a great **de Gaulle's** – anything to fight the Nazis.

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Q: Did you see –

A: If I could have strangled **Hitler** myself tomorrow morning, I would have done it.

Q: Did you see yourself at that point, as no more German, but now French? Or did you know – did you have time to have questions of who am I, what – what is my identity?

A: I was French.

Q: You were French, okay.

A: I did the – I became the secretary general of the free French youth in the **United States**, at 17.

Q: Okay.

A: And – and I was very involved in – in raising money for the free French forces, stuff like that. I – until – until I went into the army, which was basically right after my 18th birthday.

Q: Did you sign up, were you drafted? How did that occur?

A: It worked like this, that I couldn't – I couldn't volunteer before I was 18, because I was not a citizen. That's the way I remember it. But on my 18th birthday, I went to the draft board and say hey, here I am. And they took only six weeks to –

Q: Call you up?

A: – call me up. I had wanted, in – the year before – you know, this stuff tortured me. I mean, I wasn't necessarily always a happy camper, because I was tortured by

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what was going on, and here I was free, and now the other people were dying over there. So that really was – it really worked on me. I wanted to join the free French forces, and my dad said, if you do, you never have to come back to my house. And of course, you have to understand, he had been – what he had gone through, between the jail and the – and **Les Milles** and **Gurs**, there were part of his – part of his brain didn't like the French, because they hadn't been nice to him.

Q: They hadn't been.

A: They hadn't been.

Q: They hadn't.

A: And so I understand that, but s – but I – I joined the army, basically right after I was 18, and went to basic training, **Fort Bragg, North Carolina**, and then they send me to – I was a radio operator – they send me to radio school in **Oklahoma** for four months, because I was so good at that, they were going to use me. And then they send me back to – then they assign me to an artillery outfit back in **Fort Bragg, North Carolina**. And that's when I decided enough was enough, this was stupid, the army didn't know what it was doing, and I – I was fluent in French and German, I wasn't doing anybody any good in the **South Pacific** as – as a radio operator in a heavy artillery outfit. And so on – I – after **Oklahoma** they gave me a leave, on the way to **North Carolina**. And as only, you know, you have to be determined, but what could they do to me? I was a private, they couldn't demote me. So I – when I –

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I went to **Washington**, I got off the train, I went to the Pentagon, and I asked to speak to somebody in intelligence, and I – I got to si – it was the day after a holiday – I got to see a lieutenant colonel who was very, very nice, and I told him my story, told him what I just told you, and I said, you know, this is absolutely a waste in time. He said, well – he went somewhere, then he came back, said well, you know, the – the boss isn't here today, he has the day off. But don't worry about it, I'll take care of it. And you just go to **North Carolina**, and just don't say anything to anybody, just do what you're told to do, and you'll hear from us. And boy did – he was as good as his word.

Q: How long did it take?

A: Oh, four, six weeks at the most. I was on duty at night – duty, on guard duty at night, and the first sergeant ne – had never paid any attention to me, came to my post in the middle of nowhere somewhere. And he said, **Ho-Hockley**, I – you gotta come with me, I got a little place for you. I said, oh? I acted very innocent. And he said – then he said, well, we got classified orders from **Washington** that you have to leave right away. And of course, I knew what it was all about, but I didn't admit it. And so then they shipped me to **Camp Ritchie, Maryland**. That's how I got to **Camp Ritchie, Maryland**.

Q: Okay, let's pause for a few minute –

A: As a result of –

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Q: Of that visit.

A: – that. I ha – one thing I want to interject is that they had a policy then – when I finished basic training, which was in May of '44, as I finished basic training, I became an American citizen. There was a policy there that they wouldn't send you – they couldn't send you overseas, like **Germany** especially, if you weren't an American citizen, because if the Germans caught you, they could string you up, you know. Which, I wish they had that policy now, because they don't do it. They – they have guys get who killed fighting for the **United States** that are not citizens, which is totally unacceptable in my book.

Q: So when did you go from **Hockenheimer** to **Hockley**?

A: When I became a citizen.

Q: And –

A: And that was before the su – the super – Superior court, **Cumberland** county, **North Carolina**. And there was an application that I wanted to change my name. Because my nickname had always been **Rudy**, **r-u-d-i** or **y**, depending where I was – **I** initially, and **Y** in **France**. They – which they pronounce, **Ru-dee**(ph). And I decided, you know, I might as well change my name from **Rudolf**. **Martin** was the middle name, **Martin Hockley**. I mean hock – **Rudolf Martin Hockenheimer** to – my application was to **Rudy Martin Hockley**. And the judge looked down over his glasses at me and said, we can't have that. **Rudy** is a nickname. Take something

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else. And just like that, out of – you know, like there was something up there, you know, I went like this, and I said okay, call me **Ralph**. This how major steps are taken in life. But so I – in May of – of '44, I became an American citizen.

Q: Ah, with as – and now known as **Ralph**.

A: **Martin Hockley**.

Q: **Ralph** mart – **Martin Hockley**. Okay, di – how do friends call you now, **Ralph**, **Rudy**?

A: Depends. Until I married this woman, I was **Ralph**.

Q: Okay.

A: My first wife called me **Ralph**.

Q: Really?

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah.

A: But **Caroline** doesn't like **Ralph**, and women have the tendency of not liking what other women – what for-former wives wanted. And so she decided I wasn't a **Ralph** to her, and she calls me **Rudy**.

Q: Okay.

A: I can't pronounce either, so it doesn't make any difference.

Q: Okay, so you're a citizen. May 1944, you're a citizen. You get these classified orders, and you end up in **Camp Ritchie**. Tell us, what is **Camp Ritchie**?

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A: **Camp Ritchie, Maryland** was established, I believe in 1942, when they found that the army in – in **Europe** – of course, we hadn't landed yet, but we were in **North Africa**, that they – that they needed linguists very bad. Do you mind if I – I – I can lean my leg down here.

Q: Okay.

A: I – and so, they developed this forum, cal-called the intelligence training center, **Camp Ritchie, Maryland**, which is 65 miles north of **Washington**, and 65 miles west of **Baltimore**.

Q: Okay.

A: In the mountains up there. And they – they taught – well, languages you knew, but they had all kinds of odd characters there, from **PhDs** to privates like me. Anybody who knew any languages, they – they got there, and they trained them in such things as prisoner of war interrogation, just military intelligence analysis, order of battle. Order of battle is try to get complete records of the organization of the enemy military, so that if you knew that the second **Panzer** division was coming at you, you knew that the commanding general had to be so and so, and you n – you built up records to know the weaknesses and the strengths of the commanders, and things like that. And then the big one, prisoner of war interrogation was a very big one. They they –

Q: Did you have training in all of those different topics?

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A: Not in all. Well, there's some ge-generalized yes, but specifically I was – well, they first started me in French. They decided, you know, that came first. **Germany** was afterwards. So they trained me in French **MII**, French Military Intelligence Interrogation. And then they – they shifted me to – when we didn't need people in **France** any more, they shifted me to – to German. And they – and then they – they put me through – yeah, first they – when the French was over, they put me in the aerial photo interpretation, which didn't make any sense, because that's not what I was there for. And so then they – they made me work in the officers' mess for – after I graduated the basic course, which is general in nature, they – they had me work in the officers' mess for a few months. I'm very good at pots and pans. And I – and then they suddenly – somebody pushed a button and they say oh, but he knows German. **[indecipherable]** So they gave me a two week blitz course, we called it, in – in German interrogation stuff.

Q: Was that different than French?

A: No.

Q: Okay.

A: But just –

Q: It was in German.

A: It was in German. And they – you know, they had – they had – on the post they had – I forget what they were called, but they had an enemy force that they had, that

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wore German uniforms for the – us to recognize the uniforms, and the ranks and things like that. The aggressor, it was called. And so they had some exercises where we had to do certain things, they – they also send us out at night for a whole week, through **Maryland** and **Pennsylvania** pig farms, where if you went over the fence at night, you stepped on a pig, and then it ran away squealing. And – and they – they gave us – they gave us a map, which was not in English, and they made us find our way back, which was interesting. But, so there was general kind of training of what you might encounter in a combat situation. Then in – they – I've – I stayed there forever, and March of '45, which was two months before the end of the war, they finally shipped us overseas, and –

Q: Before we go there, a question at two different periods of time. Before you joined the army, you said you were – you were very engaged, and wanted to know what was going on, you – you know, your – your mind was over with the people who were in **Europe**, who were under threat, and who were suffering. And so, were – was there news of what was happening to the Jews? Was there re – were there reports of what was going on?

A: Well, we knew what was going on, but the question of at what point we knew about death camps –

Q: And deportations to them, yeah.

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A: – well, we knew about deportation, but not necessarily that when they got there –
I mean, there were Frenchmen, when the – in '42, when the Germans took over all of
France, a lot of Frenchmen were shipped to – not Jew –

Q: Yeah, yeah.

A: – just Frenchmen –

Q: Okay.

A: – were shipped to **Germany** for – to – labor forces.

Q: Forced labor.

A: Forced labor.

Q: Okay.

A: And they were put in the factories, and all kinds of places to carry out the – just
about anything. So that was known, and there – there also was an element in **France**
that cooperated with – with the – the Nazis, that they had some kind of function, the
[**indecipherable**] in **France**, they were not very nice people. But I cannot tell you of
– I cannot tell you when exactly we learned about death camps. We knew all about
concentration camps, and how bad they were, and all that, but the angle of when it
became really known that they were gassing people, I – I – I can't tell you from my
personal knowledge. There – there were –

Q: I mean like when you knew. I guess it's when you knew.

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A: Yeah, well, we didn't – we didn't – well, we knew – we knew in '42, for example, at the latter part of '42, that my Aunt **Clara**(ph) and **Annie**(ph), my cousin, were deported from **Gurs** to –

Q: Somewhere.

A: – somewhere.

Q: Okay.

A: But, the detail of where to, and what it was like there, that they were being killed, that, at that point, was not known.

Q: In your training in **Camp Ritchie**, was any kind of – you know, was any kind of news, from what was going on in **Germany**, part of the training? News that you wouldn't read in the "**New York Times**."

A: I don't think so.

Q: Okay.

A: Because the training was all from military. What do you do to defeat the German military.

Q: Okay.

A: That was the focus.

Q: Okay. So let's go back. Remind me again, when did you go over? When were you shipped over?

A: In March of '45.

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Q: Forty-five. All right, so two months left – are left of it – for the war. Where were you first sent?

A: Well, the ship – the ship docked in **Scotland**, and they put – we were – went on the **Île de France**, which was the largest ship floating around, which outraced any submarine, so that we went without escort. And we never saw the ship until we got off it. It was so big, they made us go in the side of the hold in **New York**, and you never saw where you are in this thing. You couldn't see the front or the back of it. But once we got off in – in **Scotland** – come back – then you could see the whole ship, and then they set – put us on the train, and they took us to **Southampton**, all the way down to the bottom. And then they took us over to **France**. And in **France** they first send us to some replacement depot for a short time. And then – I was – I and my group of people, there were a few of us, were sent to a villa outside of **Paris**, in **Le Vésinet**, which was, for **Europe**, the – the intelligence assignment center. And I was – I was picked up from there by a colonel who was part of the staff of the **Bremen** port command. They were planning to open the port of **Bremerhaven** for allied troops, when the war was over. And so that's where that started. I was in **Paris** – I mean, you know, that's not – that wasn't my plan, but I was in **Paris** on – on eight May, '45 –

Q: No kidding.

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A: – when the war ended, and you know – when the punishment for being in **Paris** on eight of May '45, and you were in American uniform, and you walked down the **Champs Élysée**, I got caught in a – it's just funny – I got caught in a circle of French women, with a lieutenant colonel of the air force, who was 23 years old, and the two of us could only escape after we kissed them all. I mean, what duty –

Q: Oh, what a punishment.

A: – what duty. But then immediately thereafter, I guide – I guided a bunch to go up to – to **Bremen**, because I spoke French and German.

Q: Okay.

A: And that was the purpose of that exercise.

Q: So was this the – when you went there, that's the first time you're back on German soil, for a decade.

A: About – about 10 th – yeah, about – about a decade. Probably 11 years. I – I got there about the 10th of May, '45.

Q: So, do you recall any kind of feelings that were running through you at that time, or were there – was it, I got a job, I'm gonna go do this job, and –

A: Interesting question. I had feelings. I hated all Germans at the point – at that point. **Germany** was basically on its knees. It was 65 percent destroyed in most places, not in all places, but we drove up to **Bremen**, all the way through **Germany**, west – **West Germany**. And every city we came to was as flat as a pancake. In order

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to get a truck to get through **Kassel, Germany**, you had to have a bulldozer in front of you to push the rubble aside, so that the truck could go through. And **Bremen** was – we went to, was 65 percent destroyed. And the Germans that were there, they kicked them out of the houses, so they could house us. And I don't know where they went. Some – sometimes they stayed in the basement. But the – I – my motto was to keep my distance. They had a fraternization – non-fraternization order that you couldn't associate socially with **G.I.s**, which didn't last very long. The order lasted, but the factual part of it didn't last very long. And – but I personally, you know, there are a few things that happened that – or some – I was pretty well known, because every German that worked for us had to go by me to get a security clearance, and a security pass. So everybody who worked for the Americans, knew me. And so they established a – we established for the **G.I.s**, you had to do something, in their spare time, whatever that was, they established a club called the **Shangri-La**, and – which was – and you were permitted to take girls there, because they had music, you could dance.

Q: But you can't fraternize with them.

A: Yeah. And I – I was approached there by – it wasn't immediately, but a few months later by one young lady that knew me, and she came over to my table, and she said – I don't know what she called me, Mr. **Hockley**, or Corporal **Hockley** – I

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was a corporal by then. The – I noticed that you never sit with anybody else except **G.I.s**, and you don't dance, and so on.

Q: In other words, you don't fraternize.

A: And I said, look, I don't want to discuss it. I – I – my family – you know, there was the whole story, my family was treated very badly by the Germans, and I don't – I don't have to associate socially. And so she broke out in tears. Then her boyfriend came over and – and chewed me out for making his girlfriend cry. But th – you know, every German you met in 1945 had a cousin in the **United States**.

Q: Is that so?

A: The – that was the way of getting – there are a lot of people that fraternized, all the way up the line. Not just the privates, and so on, the officers, too. It was a policy condemned to failure. But for me, it was fine. I didn't go there to become friends with anybody. I was very fair in everything I did. I didn't mistreat anybody, I just did my job, and that was it. But I didn't want to – there's no way that I could socially be active with Germans, if I didn't know who they were. And that –

Q: What was your job? Besa – you said you had to –

A: Well –

Q: – they had to clear – you were the first point of security?

A: Well, the first thing is the colonel – the colonel that picked me up was the fellow in charge of intelligence for the **Bremen** port command. So he was the **G2**

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intelligence officer, and I was on his staff. And the intelligence office had to issue security passes, as much as you could check anybody. We had a big headquarters that was in the middle of town. The air force didn't bomb it, so we'd have a nice place to stay. I'm sure that's true, by the way, and – because everything else was flat, except this wonderful building – it became our headquarters. And so everybody that worked in that headquarters, because we needed German – we couldn't do everything ourselves, we needed clerical staff, and so on. We, in our office, we had no German clerks, because it was security. But everybody else did. And so our office was – had the job of – of getting them the passes. Since I was the only person in the office who spoke German, it's – I was the contact guy. And they also – they send me up to **Bremerhaven** for a couple weeks to – to handle the security office at the – at the port up there. And I did that for, I would say until October, give or take. And then, I had, at **Ritchie**, I had the – **Ritchie** was a weird place. When you finished your course – I was in the 24th class, if that's of any interest – that up to the 24th class, when you graduated from **Ritchie**, you – they either prom – they promoted you to corporal, sergeant, or second lieutenant. And they promoted me to nothing. Starting with the 24th class, no more promotions. So, what they – they took some people, and – who wanted to be officers, and they sent them – they send them to **Fort Benning, Georgia**, on – to take the quick course, the 90 day wonder – I don't know if you ever heard that expression – the –

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Q: I have something similar, but I don't remember it – the – what it was called. It's something –

A: Yeah, 90 day wonder. They – they – they take these guys, they send them to **Fort Benning**, make them infantry officers in 90 days, which usually it took six months, or whatever. And so you could go from **Ritchie** to **Benning** to become a 90 day wonder, and then come back as a second lieutenant, they had that, too. With the 24th class, because of the – how far the war had progressed, they didn't do that any more. So I went in the war as a private. But then, once I was over there, they – they – well, they promoted me to corporal, and I – I had also applied at **Ritchie** to join the counter-intelligence corps, because that's what I wanted. I wanted to catch Nazis. That's what they were doing. But they told me I was too young, so I didn't get into the **CIC**, you had to be older. But then, once I was in **Bremen**, and I applied again to get into the counter-intelligence corps, and they accepted me. So, in the last six months I was over there, I became a special agent of the counter-intelligence corps, no insignia of rank, just two **U.S.s**, so that you could go to see some colonel, and chew him about what somebody in his outfit was doing, and without him knowing what your rank was, even though if you were 20 years old, they knew that you weren't a general. So, I sa – I – I did that. And it's actually as a result of that, that I – ultimately when I was in **Syracuse** University, I got a commission military intelligence, because the gentleman that – before I left, when my time wa – came to

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go home, I was interviewed by a colonel from intelligence headquarters in the **States**, asked me if I wouldn't stay as a warrant officer, or as an officer. And I said no, I – I – I'd like to, but I – I – I want to go to college, I got to finish college, that's my first thing. But when I was at **Syracuse** in '48, I got a letter from the same colonel, he didn't know the c – the con – the connection, but he said, we're interested, if you would like to become a second lieutenant, military intelligence reserve, and he gave me the conditions. And you had to have been a staff sergeant, when I was a sergeant, which is one rank below the staff sergeant. So I wrote him back and I say, well, colonel, I appreciate, but I'm only a sergeant, I'm not a staff sergeant, so I don't qualify. But, if you are interested in knowing whether you think that I am qualified, if you're the same Colonel **Stevens** that came to **Bremen, Germany** and interviewed me in '46, and asked me to accept a commission, then you must know that I am qualified, otherwise you wouldn't have interviewed me. And he send me the same paper back, handwritten on there, I'm the same guy, you'll hear from me. And about three or four weeks later, I got a handwritten note from him, and says, apply under army regulation so and so, so and so. I did, and within six months I was a second lieutenant, military intelligence reserve.

Q: I see. I see, so that's – that's the progression of – of your career, and – and – and going up in rank.

A: Yeah.

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Q: Let's go back still to **Bremerhaven**. Did you take part in any denazification processes?

A: Oh yeah. It was lots of fun.

Q: Tell me, what was involved with that?

A: Well, they – they had – they had the allies put out a – an order at the end of the war, they – they had – first of all, they had an automatic arrest category, that meant if a German, a Nazi was more than something in the Nazi movement, it required that if you found him, that you arrest him.

Q: Okay.

A: And – and then they had a category of the next ones down were – they couldn't get certain jobs. And then you do – there were the ones that you exonerated, and so the **CIC** had the job of denazification. They had to – they got all the records of people who applied for – for something, or that came across our – for one thing, across our path, and they had to have them fill out the famous **fragebogen**, which every German had to fill out, in which he said, you know, where he had been, when, where he went to school, did he join the Nazi party, didn't he join the Nazi party, and etcetera.

Q: And did most of them ever, never join the Nazi party [**indecipherable**]

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A: Well, most of them joined the Nazi party, but they were unimportant. They were not functionaries, they were just members, because they had to maintain their job, or something. There's some truth to that.

Q: Okay.

A: A – a – if you wanted to be a teacher, probably, you had to be a member of the party. Now, that da – didn't mean how – how active you were or not, you just – it was just a ticket that you had to punch. There are people who never did it, and survived, but it just depended how much they – they trusted the system, or they needed to eat. So they were not all – if they joined the Nazi party, they – we determined they weren't all bad people. We – we found all kinds of people, you know, it – it – you never quite knew what was going to hit you next. There are two things I might mention, wi – part of that period. I – they – my office was right next to the jail there, we had a jail, American jail. And – which a friend of mine was the commandant. And so I – I went to that jail all the time, to interrogate people. And somebody brought to my attention that there was a guy – denunciation was the order of the day. I devised my own questionnaire, and then I made people fill out that were brought into my office. And I made them fill that out before I would talk to them. And the first question was, what's your name, date of birth, and profession. And who – who do you want to talk to me about? And if the guy was a butcher, and he wanted

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to talk to me about a butcher, I knew that he was trying to get the competition out of the way.

Q: That's – that's very clever, you know, because didn't – it's an ugly thing –

A: Yeah.

Q: – denunciation. It –

A: Oh yeah, it – it was a big deal. Because people had nothing, so they – they used denunciation in order to get themselves in a better position. So – but there was this one guy, I found out – you know, I – I was given a tip, there was a guy who was there, and he was – had the rank of so and so, which made him part of your automatic arrest category. And so – but then – then I – yeah, so I – he had just been released from our prison. So I figured out that they didn't know who he was, so they released him. So, I decided to arrest him. But being a nice guy, I decided that he'd been in jail for, I don't know how long, and he was spending the night with his girlfriend, so I decided, well, let him have one night, and a – they had a curfew, from si – 10 in the – 10 in the evening til six in the morning. So I – we didn't do the arresting ourselves, we charged the German police with that. So I gave orders to have him arrested at 5:30. And – and they brought him to the prison, and then they brought him over to my office. And in the meantime I found out – I didn't find out at first, but I found out that he had – we had had him, and we released him. And I say,

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well, there's something wrong here. So I – I said to myself, how do I address this?

We released him yesterday, and –

Q: We're re-arresting him now.

A: – we're re-arresting him. And so, when he came in my office, I mean, I never forgot this, because up to this point, nobody had ever said to me that they had been a Nazi of any consequence. And this guy, when he walked in, he sat down in my office. The first question I ask him – don't ask me why, I – you know, you do things in life, you don't know why you do them. You think you know why you do them. I said to him, until when were you a Nazi? I did this because of the information I had in front of me. And his answer was, oh, I'm still a Nazi. And I have to tell you, I almost fell off my chair, because nobody had ever said they were a Nazi, you know? And so I said, oh, I said to myself, well that's interesting, I gotta – this one I want to hear. And he was there, I had him in there about two, three hours. I just wanted to – I wanted to figure this out, what – what's the deal? And he told me, you know, I can spare you the details, but he told me that – that hitl – what **Hitler** wanted for **Germany** was important because the Germans needed a leader, they needed a fuehrer to lead them, etcetera, but he made mistakes, like he should never have touched the Jews, and a few other things like that, and – but, in principle he still believed in the philosophical principle of the fuehrer, the leader running the country, the people don't know, otherwise, what to do.

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Q: They need a strong hand.

A: And so, I finally, you know, I remanded him to prison, because it said on paper that I had to, but –

Q: Did you learn anything from him?

A: Oh yeah, I th – I learned a lot from him. That there's one person in **Germany** that was honest. There were others who were. And then, I mentioned before that the – the thing, the other thing that I found fascinating is that we – we were involved in – you know, there were all kinds of stories about there are still Nazis around, and we have to watch them, you can't – you know, if you drive down the street in a **Jeep**, they're liable to shoot at you, or kill you, or put up a wire. The – I don't know whether you even noticed, but the **Jeeps** all had a – a metal rod in the front of the – of the hood, and if you were driving down the street, if somebody put a wire across the street, the – this thing would cut the wire, so it wouldn't kill you. Otherwise, because you couldn't put the roof down, the darn thing would decapitate you. And so they – they –

Q: Were there such instances?

A: If there were, they were so far, that – you know.

Q: But this was anticipation. In case.

A: Prep – you have to be prepared –

Q: Yeah.

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A: – for anything. But I – I had my own **Jeep**, and I drove around everywhere, I never – never was worried about somebody doing anything nasty to me. They – they – there – so there was the story that the **Hitler** youth – and this was, I think, inquiry, investigation, that the **Hitler** youth still had a hard core of **Hitler** youth, who were waiting for the moment to – and you talked about werewolves. Well, we – we got a tip that there was a – in – in our area, there was a farmhouse which was headquarters for these guys.

Q: So they – known that they were called the werewolves, or something?

A: Well, that's what the legend called them.

Q: Okay, okay.

A: And I'll tell you a few words about that, in a – afterwards, we'll – so we went out there, and we – because the Germans kept such good records, you know, we went to the – to this farmhouse to arrest some of these guys. Well, there was only one guy there. And so we went through the farmhouse, but we found all the records of the **Hitler** youth for the whole northern **Germany**, and we, of course, took them with us. And we left the guy alone, we figured he – with the – we had gotten enough out of this deal. And ba – the bottom line was, there was no resistance to speak of. These were guys who were dreamers, and they had been set up, you know, before **Hitler** collapsed, they say well, when – if we give up, we will fight to the end, you know, but there was nobody to fight to the end. We totally dis – if there was anything

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strong, we disarmed them, and that was the end of that. I'm saying this because it's very interesting today, because Secretary **Rice** – what's her first name? **Condoleezza Rice** made a famous speech, **Iraq** connection, that the – that the terrorists in **Iraq** were just like the werewolves in **Germany**. And I had that thrown at me at a couple of conferences I attended, or gave, and – and you know, I never make anybody feel bad in public, but I went to color – to **Camp Carson, Colorado**, and some si – command sergeant major just back from **Iraq** made this speech, and yes, there – there are the – the – the – the terrorists in **Iraq** is like the werewolves in **Germany**, and when it was over, I took him aside and said, look, Command Sergeant Major, there were no werewolves in **Germany**. I can tell you, I was there, and I was involved in this. And there was a co – marine colonel at a meeting in **Houston**, came up with the werewolves, the – the guys in **Iraq** being like the werewolves, and I said, it's just – let me stand up here and tell you, it's a damn lie. There were no werewolves in **Germany**. I have the only book that was ever written about the werewolves. There was one guy, who killed the mayor of **Aachen, Germany**, in – before the war was over, and he was called a werewolf. And after that, there were no werewolves. So it's a – it's a legend, that this existed. So, I'm still alive to tell that the history is being misused.

Q: But a fascinating footnote, because it would be something that, you know, is a logical question. The war is just lost, this had been such a powerful enemy, a

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thorough enemy, and a ruthless enemy. And – and one could expect resistance. It wouldn't be out of the realms of, you know, possibility.

A: **Germany** was so destroyed. They were – the people had nothing to eat, the survival was the only thing that they had going for them. And the women were made to clean up all the –

Q: The rubble.

A: – the rubble. The **trümmerfrauen**, and the rubble, and they – just to exist, was a burden. So you know, it kind of –

Q: You have – you know, you – I'm going to step aside a little bit here. I mean, you have a history and experience that is so unique, with German Jews, who escaped, left, fled. You know, whatever verb we would choose, who left **Germany**, and then came back. There are some, but very few, who came back to have such thorough knowledge of the country in their postwar years. Yours starts now, right after World War II, but then later goes on to have a – a career in – in intelligence with the Americans, for several decades. What did – what did you learn in those decades? I mean, there has to be a process, through which a – a human being goes, when they – and – or they see someone they love, like their father, who suffered so much from the hands of a system, that was adopted by a country. Was there a time in this process where your feelings and your thoughts about **Germany** changed?

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A: Well, my initial reaction – initial initial, in **Bremen**, was exemplified by the following; I walked down the street in **Bremen** one day, and there was a man beating his kid. And I was in American uniform. And I walked up to him and said, stop it. We're bringing democracy to you, in a democracy you don't beat your kid on the street. That was my immediate reaction. How do you get to the Germans? How do you get them away from this business of – of punishment, of – of beating, of harshness, and so on? So, all I could do at that moment was that. Gradually, the young generation, you – you know, there – you had to wait for a while. **Germany** was rebuilt amazingly fast, thanks to the **Marshall Plan**, and many other things. And the Germans are, undoubtedly, very astute, and – what's the word I'm trying to think of – people. They – they work very hard, to this day. There are always exceptions, but generally speaking. They're well organized, they – they keep their nose to the grindstone, and – and they were lucky with the initial governments they got, you – you know, when you get a **Konrad Adenauer**, who was no pansy, who – who – who ran **Germany** pretty harshly, but that built everything up, and then he was followed by **Erhard** to fix the economy, and then of course, you had **Willy Brandt**, who was a socialist, and brought a lot of social things to **Germany**. They – they had some very good leaders. I can't think of one chancellor of **Germany** that was really bad. They had a couple of presidents, but presidents don't matter. They're – they were figureheads, like the queen of **England**. It's the chancellors who run the show.

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So, gradually the young generations there, they went through all kinds of stuff. The universities tended to be very liberal, to use a kind word. And so a lot of the students got pretty left-wingish. But gradually, this stuff was drummed into them, what it is like to be in democracy, and what – what happened is they – they – because there's been such a tremendous change in the way the world operates, that all they want – the young people want to do is go – come to **America**, or **France**, or – you know, they been – they were locked up in **Germany**, they couldn't get out of **Germany**, under **Hitler**. And so it – suddenly, there was some freedom of travel, and they saw that there were other societies, that weren't as bad as they were made out to be. And the people went to **Brittany** on vacation, instead of staying in **Germany**, saw that it was nice in **Brittany**, or wherever they went. Half of **Germany's** been to – to the **Canary Islands**, and to **Spain**, because – because they love the sun, primarily, but that's another – another world down there. So they – they – they passed a constitution, which is very democracy oriented, and they have a Supreme Court that is enforcing it. And it's not always to our liking, but it doesn't have to be. I – I always try to take people for who – the individual qualities, and what they were like, and their – I said, I met a lot of nice people. There are a lot of nice people in **Germany**. There are certain things that – at – at my farewell party, by the German – by the **BND**, the German **CIA**.

Q: **BND**? Can you tell me what that is in German?

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A: **Bundesnachrichtendienst.**

Q: Okay.

A: It was – the Americans, basically, established it.

Q: Okay.

A: The – I was asked the question, would you consider retiring in **Germany**? And – and you know, I didn't want to be impolite, so I thought about it for 10 seconds, and I said, no, I – no, I would not retire in **Germany**. I said, I will visit **Germany** and **France**, which are my main two countries of interest, as frequently as possible, but I w – I – I'm a citizen of the **United States**, and as a citizen of **United States**, I only feel free, totally free, in the **United States**. For example, in **Germany**, if you're a foreigner, you have to have – you have to go to the **Einwohnermeldeamt**, which is a registry office, you had to – well, you have to let them know where you are. In the u – in – in **Germany** and **France**, you may not be able to get employment, because they are protecting the young people from the old people, and they – they – they – as a matter of fact, they kick you out of work when you're 50 or something, so that you have – they have jobs for the young people. So, in the **United States**, there's only one thing that can keep you – that they can go after you for. It's that – you can have five jobs at the same time, as long as you pay your income tax, you're always – you're home free. That's the only thing they'll ever get after you. No police

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authority is going to go after you for anything else, except that. And – and I – for me to live, I need that freedom. And so they were satisfied, I hope.

Q: It's a very diplom – it is a very diplomatic answer, you know?

A: Yeah, you – you know. There are good people everywhere. I know some good people everywhere. I know some bad people everywhere too, but –

Q: But from that I extrapolate that – that despite your deep knowledge, there was still something always there – no, this is not my place any more. This is –

A: I don't think it ever was, but – because as a kid, as a small kid, you don't know where – you know.

Q: Yeah. Could it – hang on a second. Now, how – I want to turn the question around a little bit. Have you met other German Jews who left **Germany**, and never went back, because they wouldn't go back. It's a choice. And, have you shared with them what you think, or what you learned when you were there in the post-war years? Or, let me put it this way, what would you tell such people, about the **Germany** you came to know?

A: Well, one of the things I came ta – would tell them is that, of course, my situation was different, because – because I was there as a **United States** government representative. I did not live in **Germany** as an American living in **Germany**, I lived in **Germany** as a government representative of the **United States**. And so, all of my relations were based on that. If a policeman would stop me on the street, there's

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nothing he could do to me, because I had a semi-diplomatic passport. They have a status between the private passport, and the diplomatic passport, and it's – it's called a official passport? Do you remember what it's called? Official passport. And I had one of those. And you know, therefore I never f – I was never dependent on the German economy. I used it, but I was never dependent on it.

Q: There's a difference there.

A: We got – we – we went to **PX**, the commissary, to go shopping. That didn't mean we couldn't go to German stores, and we did. But I was never – I was never in the position that a person would have been who was not with the government, who was a German Jew, and went back a-as a private person, and reintegrated in a German system. I was not dependent on the German health system, the German anything. So, you know, to answer you – the first part of your question, I know a lot of people who never went back. I also know some people who went back and liked it, but they were there only as visitors, and some people who said they wouldn't – **[phone ringing]**

Q: Let's cut. **[break]** Okay, who –

A: The – the – lot of people that said they would never go back. My Uncle **Charlie Heiman**(ph), he did go back, because he had lots of friends there, and he liked to go in **Munich** to have a sausage and a – and a beer, and you know, so he went back, but just as a tourist, and to see old p – go to the cemetery. Lot of people have gone back to take care of the cemeteries, of their parents, or family, whatever. I – oh, on – I –

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you might want to check this out. I have a cousin – I had a cousin, who died within the last few months. Her name is **Ruth Hockley**. **Ruth Hockley** was married to my cousin **Frank**, who was one of my first cousins, and **Ruth Hockley** is the only person that I've ever known, who spent the entire war in ger – in **Berlin**, and survived. And she's been interviewed by the – her son told me that she's been interviewed by you. And – and she must have a – it might be an interesting story, because there are very few people who survived. Her mother's name was **Heynemann, h-e-y-n-e-m-a** – double **n**. That's her maiden name. And so – but she never went back. I mean, having spent the entire war in **Berlin**, that was enough for anybody. So there – there are a few people, a handful of people who survived. I – she's the only one I've ever known that – that did. And I – I asked her son recently, after she passed away, I said, the – is there a story, what's the story, you know, how did she survive? And she was interviewed by the Holocaust Museum, and he doesn't know the answer, but you apparently have the answer somewhere. It would be nice to – to know that story. It – it sheds some light as how – but she never went back.

Q: Well see, the – my question is a post-war question, it's a question of –

A: Yeah.

Q: – of – I'm very glad you made the distinction that when you were there, you were a representative of the **U.S.** government. That makes a difference.

A: Yeah.

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Q: And I was going at it from the point of view that in that position, you had such an opportunity to learn more than the average person would, about this country, from a very wide perspective. So –

A: I went – I went occasionally – I went occasionally to a German synagogue.

Q: Did you become religious at any time?

A: No.

Q: Okay.

A: My son **Clifford** was Bar Mitzvah in **Bonn**. We first went – we were from **Alameda** cal – from **Alameda** county, from **Oakland, California**, and we went to **Oakland** and say, can we arrange for him to be Bar Mitzvah? And my wife was reasonably religious. Not overly religious, but ch – and they gave her such a hard time – oh, you have to do this, you have to do that, and you know, I finally said, yeah, I guess you guys don't want us in **Oakland, California**. They couldn't be bothered, in the synagogue where she and I got married. And so I said well, we'll do it in **Bonn**, it'll be a great favor to them. Because there's hardly anybody in **Germany** who is Bar Mitzvah any more. As a matter of fact, in the year that he was Bar Mitzvah, there were only two; him, and the son of the Israeli ambassador, and that was it. And so it was a big deal. And this lady was there. We were neighbors, we lived in the same apartment house at the embassy, and they had just moved in

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recently, and we invited her to – to come to this, since she was a neighbor. But, the – they have – the German government has put a lot of money into reviving religious –

Q: Right.

A: – opportunities for people, but not too many of them take advantage of it. The old people do, but there's not that much of a – there are not enough people around, you know.

Q: Well, I think that we've come to pretty much the end of our interview, but it – before we end it, I would like to ask you a – sort of like a general question; is there something that you think we ought to know, that we haven't covered? Something that you would want, you know, your interview to contain, for others to also find that – find out about?

A: Nothing comes to mind, just –

Q: I know. I know, it's –

A: – it's – it's a – we've covered the, you know, the – the odyssey.

Q: And we haven't covered even so much of your – of your life.

A: Yeah. The – the – there are – there have been – **Germany**, the – the so-called **Bundesrepublik Deutschland**, the Federal Republic of **Germany**, which is now –

Q: All of **Germany**.

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A: – all of **Germany**, and was, for a long time, only **West Germany**. They've made a tremendous effort to – to – generally speaking, to atone, if you wish, for what they did to millions of people. Jews, but not only Jews.

Q: Yeah.

A: A lot of others. And there are really not enough people left. You're going through this cycle right now where Mrs. **Merkel** is letting in a million refugees, which my analysis would tell me that it's a mistake. But she – she – it is bigger than what she predicted. She did it in the spirit of – of making up for **Germany's** name in the past. Of course, she was born in **East Germany**, and she didn't come to **Germany** until after the wall came down, and it became one **Germany**. She's probably very good at her job, but in this case, I would, as a former intelligence official, I would say that taking in a million Muslims, or foreigners – doesn't have to be Muslims – at one time, is something which a democracy can't handle. It's just sheer numbers. You have to be able – you – if you charge your – your security officials, counterintelligence officials, with keeping the country safe, you can't expect them to handle a hundred thousand people at once. You know, it's just – it's an overwhelming task. If you do it slowly, that's a different thing. And so, I think that – and this could co-cost her – her – her – her chancellorship, cause she's running again. But there's enough people in **Germany** who feel that – who feel endangered. Because when that many people come in, you don't know who they are. And – and

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that's – so – but you know, the fact that they are that welcoming to so many people has to be, at least philosophically be taken as a plus, not a minus from the – you know, they're – they're not – they're trying to be nice people.

Q: Yeah.

A: They're trying to be humane, and – but, you know, you – you can – when you think about the Nazi period, you've got to come to the conclusion that it's very hard to visualize that that many people participated in so many nasty things, period. That – you know, their – I mean, you couldn't have had concentration camps without concentration camp guards. There are doctors who participated in medical experiments, which were deadly to people.

Q: Yes.

A: Just to test them. Who – who – where do the – these people come from? Is it possible – this is always the question, is it possible in the **United States**? And you know, I used to say it wasn't, but there are – there are bad people, whatever that means, people who have no conscience, in every country. I used to say that it used to be that 10 percent are far right, 10 percent are far left, and the other 80 percent try to get along. I hope the figures never get any higher than that. I am not sure of that.

Q: Well, sometimes it is – if the 10 percent on the far right, or far left stay on those margins, and never come to power.

A: Right, but –

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Q: Because minorities can –

A: – I would say this thing, I must say this thing. In **Germany**, in 19 – seven – in the 1970s, they had an organization known as the **Baader-Meinhof Gang**. You probably remember them, you were there. The **Baader-Meinhof Gang** was very dangerous, and when people talk about terrorists in the **Middle East**, for example, I always – my answer always is, look, **Germany** is a very well organized country, from the point of view of police, and security services. My guess is – I didn't count them individually, but my guess is, because I was involved in it, that there were about 30 members in the **Baader-Meinhof Gang**. They were absolute nuts. You – I read their manifesto, I didn't understand a word of it. I mean, they were so way out, you know, it didn't make any sense. They killed people. They killed bankers, they tried to kill the commander of the American forces in **Europe** with a mortar shell, when he went to work in the morning. They, for the sake of – were they **Nihilists**? I don't know. They were – they were crackpots. But it took the German intelligence services approximately 10 years to catch – catch them one by one. Ten years for 30 guys. If you assume that in the **Middle East**, you have one-tenth of one percent of bad guys – **Iraq** was 27 million, that's 27,000. You'll never find them all 27,000, especially when they're [indecipherable] somewhere out there teaching young kids

–

Q: The same.

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A: – to do the same. So anyway, that’s from an analysis of the world as it is. The Germans got them, but it took them a long time. One by one.

Q: Mr. **Hockley**, thank you.

A: You’re welcome.

Q: Thank you very, very much.

A: I hope I haven’t worn you out.

Q: No, not at all, it’s been fascinating. It’s been a wonderful day, and absolutely fascinating.

A: Thank you.

Q: Thank you. And with that, this concludes the **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum** interview with Mr. **Ralph Hockley**, on January 12th, 2016, in **Carrollton, Texas**. Thanks again.

A: Thank you.

Q: Okay.

A: It’s been a privilege.

Conclusion of Interview

Q: This is **Ron Coleman**, from the **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum**.

I’m with **Ralph Hockley** in Carrollton – **Addison, Texas**?

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A: **Carrollton.**

Q: **Carrollton, Texas.** We are – this is January 12th, 2016, continuing his oral history, this is the donation of materials to the museum's archives. Before we get to the actual donation materials, I did want to ask Mr. **Hockley** to talk a little bit about this photograph. This is a – a printout of a blown-up photograph. There's actually a third photograph that goes here, and I didn't have that. But I wanted to give him the opportunity to talk about anybody in the photograph, this is from the Quaker staff in **France**, in 1940, correct? I just wanted to give him the chance to talk about people. All the names are identified in his book, so we don't have to identify everyone, but there are a couple of people that I know that you had mentioned to me, in passing, and I wanted to make sure that were – were recorded. First off, this is you, correct?

A: Yes.

Q: Do you remember when this photograph was taken?

A: Well, it had to have been taken at the turn – at the turn of 1940 to '41.

Q: Okay.

A: Give or take a month. December, January, something like that.

Q: Okay. And this is in the Quaker offices?

A: In the Quaker office in **Marseilles, France.**

Q: In **Marseilles, France.**

A: 29 **Boulevard d'Athènes.**

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Q: Okay. Was this – was it one op – one room, and this is just – was in that room?

A: Yes.

Q: This – this is a very –

A: It was a big room.

Q: – big room, okay. Now, was this a m – central meeting that everybody came in?

Cause I think there are some people who didn't work in the **Marseilles** offices.

A: I think what it was, is that this **James Vale**(ph), and Mr. **Evans**, I believe –

Q: Okay.

A: – were visiting from the **United States**, and they brought everybody together to meet with them, conference with them, etcetera.

Q: Okay.

A: That's got to be close to what happened.

Q: That would – that would make sense.

A: Otherwise there was no reason for everybody being there.

Q: Mm-hm, okay. Now, just a couple people, just to – to highlight specifically.

Howard Kirschner.

A: Yes.

Q: Is behind you in the middle.

A: Yep.

Q: So he was –

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A: And his wife –

Q: And his wife, **Gertrude**.

A: – in front of him.

Q: Yeah. And then, you talked about him a bit during the – the oral history, so we don't give them the history. Was there anything else that you wanted to – to mention about him, and his work? Your impressions of him?

A: He was a very serious person. He didn't smile too often. That's what I mean by serious.

Q: Okay.

A: He was a man on a mission. He was afraid of nobody. He went to see **Marshal Pétain** several times, to plead for the children of – under his tutelage, if you wish. He didn't take no for an answer, he was not afraid of authority. He was an American, he was a wealthy American, and – though he lived very Spartan life. To s – underline that, he never drank coffee, he didn't drink tea, he didn't drink anything like **Coke**. My mother occasionally would come in in the afternoon and – and make hot water for him, with sugar. He would have, in the afternoon, a cup or two of hot wat – hot water with sugar, and he would have a piece of toast with it, that my mother prepared for him. And he got to be 98, I think, and for years I didn't drink any coffee, because if **Howard Kirschner** got to be 98 by that kind of a diet – they did not eat rich food, of any kind, he and his wife. He was a – as I said, the best way

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to say it is, he was a man with a mission, and he had he had a large staff all over **Europe**. He had to keep track of many operations, and from what I could see as a kid, he did it with great flair and ability, and – and dedication, would be the word. I saw him a number of times, years later, when he was not – I – I believe he may have had a falling out with the Quakers.

Q: Okay.

A: On – on authority, or something. Whether this had anything to do with it, I don't know, but he – when I saw him in later years, he was a – working for religious, philosophical organizations, and – but he was always doing good things for other people.

Q: Was there anyone else in particular that you wanted to –

A: Well, the – the –

Q: – highlight? Again, I'm missing the last – the s – the side where **Burns Chalmers** on that I'm – I'm actually missing from the photograph.

A: Yeah.

Q: But it is in the book.

A: This was Mr. **Weems**(ph), this was **Josiah Mar-Marvel**(ph). They – they all had special missions, some of which I didn't know what they were. I was very friendly with Mr. **Marvel**(ph), as a matter of fact, I even corresponded with him, after I was

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back in – after I was in **United States**. This was Mr. **Benjamin**, I believe, and her name was [**indecipherable**], she was a secretary. You said this was **Eva Goyen**(ph)?

Q: Yeah.

A: After you mentioned –

Q: So these are the –

A: After you mentioned the name

Q: – the originals that you mentioned. So this is the left.

A: Okay.

Q: This is actually that side of

A: Yeah.

Q: Keep that separate from this picture.

A: Do you have that?

Q: We have it digitally, we don't have the original.

A: Okay.

Q: You mentioned earlier there was somebody who functioned as like a bodyguard?

A: Yeah, well, he was – that's my perception.

Q: Yeah.

A: This guy, **Alberto**. **Alberto** – who, I know his name. It may be in the book. Is it on the back? You might – if you turn around – **Carrion**, **c-a-** double **r** – **i-o-n**. He – he was **Kirschner**'s chauffeur, but he also, when I went with people, he would – he

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would drive us around. And in this picture here – in this picture, which is in the book, this is him. And so I went out with Mrs. **Loissen**(ph), to deliver food to the sisters, and you can tell I wasn't over-nourished. He was always there, always keeping an eye that I was okay.

Q: Okay.

A: That was not a function of his, that was his personal – personal mission.

Q: How often did you travel to – for distributions like that?

A: Not very often.

Q: Okay.

A: You know what it had to do with? This was Mrs. **Loisson**(ph). The reason I'm there, is for k – because I spoke French.

Q: Ah, okay.

A: And the sisters – the sisters only spoke French, so –

Q: Okay.

A: – so when somebody got in that situation, they say oh, we'll take **Rudy** – **Rudee**(ph) along, he can interpret. So, he did.

Q: Yeah, some of these I have not seen. I don't think the **AFSE** even has that
[indecipherable]

A: You can – you know, you can have copies of any of them. You can have the original if you – if you make a copy for ourselves.

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Q: Yes, we will make high resolution scans of anything. Was there anyone else that you wanted to – to highlight –

A: Well, you have ois –

Q: – in the picture. This is the last – this is the – sort of the **[indecipherable]**

A: – this – my savior is right here in the corner. It's **Andel(ph) Burns Chalmers**, and he is the one that I worked with very much, you know, send me to the consulate and talked to the – who arranged with the consul that my family would get out of **France**. So –

Q: He's the one who lived with –

A: With – with **Bingham**.

Q: **Bingham**, oh yeah, **Hiram Bingham**, yeah. Do you remember **David Blickenstaff**?

A: Yes.

Q: At all?

A: Yes.

Q: What do you remember? **Blickenstaff** had worked with **Kirschner** in **Spain**, and then –

A: Oh, blicken – he was – that he was a very nice guy. He was a very friendly guy, and always was interested in me and my welfare, and whatever, and they kept me alive. You know, there was not – I told you, there was nothing to eat, and the

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Quakers didn't pay me, but they had food that they gave out. And every once in a while they – they would give me a piece of Swiss cheese about this big, to take home, or a big container of honey. Stuff that had some good, strong nutrients in them, and – which was worth a – more than anything you could buy in the store, which didn't have in the first place, but **Blickenstaff** was nice. These la – I knew them all, but I – this is Miss **Leaven**(ph). She was a very effective lady. This is Mrs. **Burnell**(ph). She is the wife of – of him. And this guy's name is **Benjamin**. I think he was the financial guy. I think he was Jewish, as a matter of fact.

Q: I know they had people from across **Europe**, an-and **Ireland**, and **Norway**, and like you said, many Americans [**indecipherable**] for them.

A: I mean, they – they – they did stuff. Everything they did was legal, but they obviously, some of them – and you never knew who, but some of them, in order to do what they had to do, they had to make side agreements with – just like – like **Varian Fry**. You know, he – he'd go down and negotiate a deal with the guy who owned the boat, in order to get somebody from point **A** to point **B**, you had to take certain steps – and I'm sure there were a few people in there that the word legal was – I mean, what did it mean in occupied **France**, or in – in **Vichy, France**, if you had to reach a certain goal, you had to do what it took to get to the goal, which didn't make it not illegal, but on a margin, you know. It's like **Hiram Bingham** meeting

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with **Varian Fry** in the mountains, to discuss how to get **Feuchtwanger**, or – or **Chagall** or somebody out of – out of **France**, you know, that was these side deals.

Q: Did you have the impression – and again, I – we want to get to the main part of this as the donation, but did you have the impression that when you – the access that you were given to the consulate, to the – to the office, where – the visa office, was that because of the Quakers' name –

A: Yes.

Q: – or was it – do you – do you get the feeling that somebody, like **Varian Fry's** group could have shown up and had the same kind of access, or the Mennonites, or the Unitarians?

A: Well, I don't know whether **Varian Fry** – I suspect – well, I don't know. But **Varian Fry** was so close with – with **Hiram Bingham**, that he didn't have to go there, because **Hiram Bingham** could have gotten him anything he wanted.

Q: Okay.

A: In my case, it was – it was kind of an administrative thing, that it was too time consuming for somebody like – like **Chalmers** to do, and I was there – it was – he was more – it was kind of a clerical thing, you know, except there was a very high level clerical thing, you know, it was – cause it was confidential. But you've seen my – the letter that I suspect introduced me to the consulate?

Q: Well, I saw – do you – do you have it?

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A: I think it –

Q: I've seen it in the –

A: – it's in the book.

Q: Okay.

A: It would be – it would be Quakers, Quakers, what did I do with it? It must be in there. **[indecipherable]** cover. Multicolor.

A2: Is it in a **[indecipherable]**?

A: Yes. It was signed by **Howard Kirschner**, as you notice.

Q: This is a remarkable – so this is the letter that you took with you to – to gain access to –

A: Yep. To the consulate.

Q: – to the consulate.

A: That's what introduced me to the consulate.

Q: That is a – now, are you interested as – are you donating this to the museum?

A: I'll donate it, as long as I have a copy of it.

Q: We will get – again, we will make a very high resolution scan for you, I promise, I promise you, **Caroline**. I promise you.

A2: I may – you may see me in **Washington**.

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Q: You will have – I can get these – I can get at least very good scans for you, you will have them next week. They may not be the officials, that will go on the website, but I – I – you – you have my word.

A2. Okay. All right.

Q: That is pretty special yeah.

A: That's the letter that did it. As I said, after a few times – what did this one say? I mean, I don't remember everything.

Q: Something from **Burns Chalmers**.

A: Now, this is the letter, okay.

Q: Oh, this is the – yeah, the right to –

A: That's the – who signed that?

Q: This is **Ch-Chalmers**.

A: **Chalmers**.

Q: That looks like it's more the letter introduction, that you're saying. This is more of a general, to whom it may concern. This is a – a representative demands that **Rudy Hockenheimer** – well, this is for a specific person, without an urgent matter, this is [indecipherable]

A: Oh yeah, this is – this is the letter of [indecipherable] to go –

Q: Okay.

A: – for this – when we left for the **United States**.

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Q: Okay. I can talk to you about the [indecipherable] family, but I – we have a case file for the [indecipherable]. I've – I recognize that name. Why do I recognize that name very clearly about something? Oh, that's right, she was in – in **Geneva**, at this point, I think, wasn't she? Yes, in **Geneva**.

A: Let me see this, I don't remember that.

Q: Letter from January 20th, 1941.

A: [indecipherable]

Q: So some of these are examples of letters to Mr. **Hockley – Rudolf Hockenheimer** in **Cincinnati**, after he arrived in August, about specific people.

A: See, I don't know – I didn't remember that.

Q: Okay. Yeah –

A: That – it's –

Q: – her – **Violet** and her husband **Felix** ran the Quaker center in **Geneva** for several years before – before they left. So this – again, after you'd arrived, this is from **Cincinnati**.

A: Yeah, yeah [indecipherable] send me – she's the one who said, I don't know why in every letter he says, I hope this letter finds you in good health.

Q: Yes.

A: My English was such that I thought that was proper.

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Q: Well, you ha – that's how you wrote a letter, when you – did you ever visit the Quaker office in **Philadelphia** –

A: No.

Q: – after you saw – when you got here, you –

A: I send them money every year, but –

Q: Okay.

A: – outside of that, no.

Q: Yeah, I think that's another – just another copy of – is this your visa, and your – well, this is your safe conduct pass. This is reproduced in – in the book

[indecipherable] original.

A: Get me out.

A2: The original is there, right?

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah. And is this your actual **[indecipherable]** the affidavit, in lieu of passport.

This is for –

A: That's my dad.

Q: – your – your father, yeah.

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah, I have envelopes, I'm – I'll put in a larger envelope, cause it's sticking out a little bit aro – off the top, so I'll put that in a larger envelope for you.

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A: Yeah.

Q: Okay, so the photographs – you had a binder that you had prepared?

A: Yeah. Oh, you have it. Let me – I mean, are we going to the next thing?

Q: It's – yes, whatever – whatever you –

A: Okay. I – I – let me ask you, do you want these – you don't want these, right?

Q: We – actually, I would. At least to make digital copies of things.

A: See what you want.

Q: Yeah. In fact, I'll – I'll –

A: Just as a question.

Q: Yes?

A: Do you know whether you have these books in **Washington**?

Q: In Russian?

A: In **Washington**?

Q: Oh, in **Washington**, I'm sorry. I'm certain that we do. In fact, I can –

A: Because in a – in a study of this subject, this book is – I'm not taking sides on how well it's written, but it contains – this one is not as important, but it's got a lot of information in it.

Q: I'm certain we do. We have pretty comprehensive library. I'm searching our online catalog now, to –

A: Yeah.

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Q: Yes, we do have [**indecipherable**] yeah, we do have – we do have that.

A: Okay. That's the most important.

Q: I'm certain that we have – yes, yes, we have –

A: Okay.

Q: – actually a couple of different editions of –

A: There's one more. Can you look up whether you have a book [**speaks German**]

It's a miserable job of editing.

Q: Okay.

A: But it's a book that he wrote at the request of the German Minister of Defense, to show how many Jews, through the ages, served in the German military.

Q: Okay.

A: And it has all kinds of stuff in it. For example, the speech that the grand rabbi of **Berlin** –

Q: That you mentioned during your oral history, yes.

A: – g-gave in – you know, at the beginning of World War I, which you know, when – if you want to think about it from the present perspective, you can't believe it, how German they wanted –

Q: They believed them to be one of them.

A: – the Jews to be, yeah. So, I can put these away.

Q: Yes.

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A: Because I –

Q: If you want to set that on –

A: Don't need it. Okay, I – I – just as a general thing here, just sh – so you know what we have in here, there are several families, and the documents I have for you are from these several families.

Q: Okay.

A: So this is me, and this is my late wife. You got the family tree of the **Hockenheimers**, which goes to the **Suss(ph)** family, my grandmother.

Q: Okay.

A: And – and I – there's still pieces missing on that, but I'll try to get them. And my grandfather, and then it goes up all the way to 1775, or '80, or something. Then you have my wife, whose name was – maiden name was **Frankel**.

Q: And then, **f-r-a-n-k-e-l**, correct?

A: Well –

Q: I know that some generations –

A: It's got an umlaut –

Q: Okay.

A: It started with an umlaut, then in the **States**, because umlauts don't exist, they made it **Frankel**. In German, it could have two dots on the **a**, or an **ae**. All of it would be accurate. The – and her mother's maiden name was **Broch(ph)**. Her father

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was a **Willem(ph) Broch(ph)**, and yeah, th-they – they came from the east, but not initially. She was born in **Hamburg**, he was born in **Drohobych**, which is – could be in any country you want it to be.

Q: Yeah, I get it.

A: So we – I – I have a lot of information in the **Frankel** department. I have less here. And the information – I have a lot of information about her – her – can we close the door? Is there – it – it's really cold.

Q: I think they're moving things out to the truck, but I wonder –

A: Is the – th-thank you. The – there are a lot of documents on her Uncle **Moritz(ph)**, or **Moses**, or **Maurice** –

Q: Okay.

A: – a-as you'll see, that – I'm the only one who has them, because when he died – he died in the – her uncle died in **Brussels** in 1963.

Q: Okay.

A: And **Eva** and I were the only ones who were close to him that were in **Europe**, and so whatever he had in his apartment, we got.

Q: Okay.

A: And so you'll see some interesting documents, how things worked –

Q: Okay.

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A: – in the 1850s, or thereabouts. And then, that's a – me and **Eva** – what's this?
Same thing. And then, on my mother's side of the family, I have the family tree of
the **Lowenthals(ph)**.

Q: Okay.

A: And the thing that is very dangerous there, I think I told you, is that she was
married to a **Lowenthal(ph)**, and her bir – maiden name was a **Lowenthal(ph)**, so
you have to really be careful you don't get the two mixed up. I have the last
postcards we'll get to – I'll show them to you.

Q: Okay.

A: That's **Jonah(ph) Frankel**, who was another brother of **Eva's** father –

Q: Okay.

A: – who wrote from **Hamburg**, as they were being shipped off to the east.

Q: Okay.

A: And there's some documents of my mother's. And then I've got this thing I'll
take up last [**indecipherable**]. There is a guy by the name of **Edward**
Lowenthal(ph), Dr. **Edward Lowenthal(ph)**. I have a whole file on him. I – I can't
quite put my finger on, as to whether he – because of this weird thing about a
Lowenthal(ph) being married to a **Lowenthal(ph)**, I – I'm not quite sure whether
he's over here, or whether he's over there. He was nominated for the **Nobel** Prize of
Peace in 1912, which **Teddy Roosevelt** got.

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Q: Okay.

A: And there is a guy, I just found out, there's a guy in **Germany** who's written a doctor thesis about movem – movements for peace in the last century, and he's got six or seven pages about – about **Edward Lowenthal**(ph), which still doesn't answer my question, is ta – is he related to this side of the family, or that side of the family. And I've got newspapers from – from **Paris**, in which he wrote articles, or he's written about, or – etcetera, etcetera, etcetera. There's a whole folder on that, that you might be interested in. If you're not, you're not. Okay. Let's see. Well, I'll take this first, or last, I don't know. Okay.

Q: Well, we did – we do have the film also, in our collection.

A: Okay. All right. This – these are these two Boy Scouts I just mentioned. This is **Bayoda**(ph) **Frankel**, a brother of my – of **Eva's** father, from **Hamburg**, dated 1941.

Q: Okay.

A: 23 October, '41, in which he says, my dear – my dear, all – I say to you all goodbye. On Friday morning, nine o'clock, we're starting out from here, where to – question mark. Yes, my dear, my very dear ones, I will haf – hope of – to reach – to be able to join our children, or – or – ended. Many greetings, and kisses for yu – all of you, **Jorna**(ph). And his wife writes on the flip side, more or less the same thing.

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This is, I guess, what she wrote, her name was **Jenny**. We're – we're leaving tomorrow at nine o'clock, **höchstwahrscheinlich** – most probably ... **Lodz** maybe?

Q: Oh, that could be, yeah, that's – yeah.

A: We will write you – we – we were writing short – in a short fashion, because there's so much we have to do yet. The **[indecipherable]** I think they have friends called **Mueller(ph)**, so the whole **Mueller(ph)** family and us, send us our best wishes, stay well. So I think that's – that that'll fit under **Frankel**.

Q: And back – this is the original letter – postcard, right? And that's a photocopy that's behind, was making sure.

A: Yeah, it's a copy, photocopy over there.

Q: And this are – these are things you found in **Brussels**?

A: Yeah.

Q: When that line of the family –

A: Yes, it – it was addressed to the uncle in **Brussels**.

Q: Okay.

A: **Moritz(ph)**. See, I was a stamp collector, so some of it wound up in the stamp collection.

Q: Okay.

A: There are two envelopes from my Aunt **Clara** –

Q: Okay.

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A: – from **Gurs**. They're – they're – they're from – she was in **Gurs**. It – it says here, **con(ph) de Gurs** –

Q: Yes.

A: – **bas Pyrenees**. And – and here, too. It did have a postcard, but I don't know where it is, where she said, we're leaving.

Q: Okay, so that's just the envelope that the – the postcard arrived?

A: No, the postcard was separate, but what – I'm trying to see what's inside. There's something dark in here. Don't do that.

Q: Nope.

A: No, it's part of the – part of the lining

Q: Might be it's part of the – of the envelope, yeah, the lining, yeah.

A: Yeah. So that was – that was before the – that was in '41, so they – they – they were not being sent to anywhere yet. So, if you want those –

Q: Absolutely, yes. Again, anything that helps to document –

A: This is under **Hockenheimer**.

Q: Yes.

A: In order to keep it apart.

Q: Yeah. So that's exactly what I –

A: I corresponded with one of your colleagues, by the – by the name of **Stephen Goodell**, you probably know him.

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Q: Yes, **Stephen Goodell** worked on our exhibitions department, and **Steve Vito(ph)** works in our – **Steve Vito(ph)** [indecipherable], **Bill Carlo** work in our – that's the department that I – researches deportation lists, survivor lists – death lists –

A: Okay.

Q: – rece – anything about individuals, yes.

A: Okay.

Q: So that's what that looks like.

A: I think we gotta talk about that later, because it's gotta fit in with something else, otherwise it doesn't make any sense.

Q: Okay. So this we'll talk – we'll talk about –

A: This is – this is complicated. This is just for your files. My cousin wrote this. It's called, the fate of the Jews from **Hockenheim**.

Q: Okay. So this is something that your cousin –

A: **Eric Hockley** wrote it.

Q: Okay.

A: That tells about **Hockenheim**. This I'll take as the last item. I don't know what that is – whether I – I think I need – ah, okay.

Q: Is that a reunion of – like a family reunion of some sort, or –

A: No, I don't know anybody. This is me, and this my wife.

Q: Maybe embassy staff?

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A: You know who this is? You have any idea? What's this file? I don't know what I'm doing here. Oh, okay. Is that my school buddies? I don't know whether you're interested in this, but these are guys I went to the lycée with.

Q: Oh, yes, anybody –

A: They – we had two meetings, one –

A2: This must be the –

A: School guys?

A2: This must be the dinner that you had, where **Eva** was the only woman there.

A: Okay, all right, luncheon. Yeah, thank you. These – you're right. In 1979, I went to a congress of **NATO** reserve officers in **Avignon, France**, and then I went to **Marseilles**, and these guys were all my classmates at the lycée. The guys that, they protected me from – because I was –

Q: [indecipherable]

A: Yeah. I – there are not too many of them I can tell you where they are. I know who this guy is, I know who this guy is, I know who this guy is. And I think I know who this guy is. And the rest of them, I can't tell you any more. Yeah, this is

[indecipherable]

A2: And – and his wife – his wife was present, but she didn't get to sit down at the table, because she bu – she didn't have the right dress.

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A: Yeah, the wives, they didn't invite wives, but they had to invite mine, because I came from **Germany**.

Q: Okay.

A: For this luncheon, so they couldn't tell her to go to – get lost. So I ask a question, is why – why aren't the wives included? Say well, some of them, the men became famous and prosperous and others didn't. And so, they would have to wear clothes that the ones couldn't afford the clothes that the wives who had the money could, so they didn't invite the wives, so there would be no jealousy. But this was my wife and – and this is the owner of the restaurant. That was in '79. If you're interested, I'll have to write something on there. I can probably send that to you separately.

Q: You can send it separately, we are recording it, so we have –

A: Okay.

Q: – what it is, right now.

A: All right. And this was years later. There weren't as many any more, because some of them had died. And this was in '02, yeah.

A2: 2002.

Q: Okay.

A: Yeah, that was in the summer of [**indecipherable**] '02, in **Marseilles**, right?

A2: In **Marseilles**.

A: Yeah. Yeah, this guy organized it.

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Q: So these are their names at the top, correct?

A: Yeah, yeah. Yeah. This – this guy –

A2: [indecipherable] were married in December – on December the 30th, 1984. So we've now been married 31 years. Yeah, and he and **Eva** were married 26 years before –

A: Seven.

A2: Twenty-seven years before she passed away.

A: And the – this guy was big wheel, he was head of bridges and highways for –

A2: [indecipherable] was an English professor, right?

A: Yeah, he – that's him. And he was a priest.

A2: What's his name?

A: This was –

Q: [indecipherable]

A: – **Ambou**(ph), yeah, yeah. I got all their first names in – in my school. Oh, I have here the names.

Q: Okay, so this is – all right.

A: I don't know which – when this is.

A2: But if their names are here –

Q: Yeah, you can probably match it, I guess.

A2: – the first name's on – on there.

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A: Do you want this?

Q: I – we can do – again **[indecipherable]**

A: Or you want me to do the work?

Q: This, again, helps to capture your story.

A: This is a li – this is a list that –

Q: Okay. So are these things for the book?

A: I don't know. You know, you're bringing up stuff now I haven't looked at, and I

–

A2: No, this is what – this is your speech.

Q: Ah, okay.

A: Okay, should I – I think I should go into this book.

Q: Yeah, let's –

A: Cause the rest of it is – I – I know everything that's in here.

Q: Okay. So this is a book that you prepared recently, over the –

A: Yeah, just –

Q: Okay.

A: – last week.

Q: Okay, but – yeah, family trees, you – you mentioned earlier, and they

[indecipherable] explanatory.

A: What is the front?

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A2: Fa-Family trees. You don't –

A: Oh. There are family tree is in the front.

Q: Yeah, and that – that's – should be explanatory.

A: Explanatory.

Q: Yeah.

A: Within reason.

Q: As – as all family trees.

A: These are the tombstones of my great-grandparents –

Q: Okay.

A: – in – in – there are in – in –

Q: **Hockenheim**?

A: – **Hockenheim**, yeah.

Q: Okay.

A: He was the – the – the **Isaac** –

Q: Okay, of the **Isaac Hockenheim** and sons, okay.

A: – was the – he was the head of the – of that –

Q: Okay.

A: – a-and sons, and this is his wife.

A2: So, every document has a translation.

Q: Okay.

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A2: All right? It's the way this book is set up.

A: So this is – this is a ca – certificate of citizenship you had to have. This is for my grandfather, that he has been granted into – entry into his birthright of citizenship, and enter – entered into the citizen registry book, in 1869. Okay? That's what this is.

Q: Okay.

A: And what's – no, this is – it says community **Hockenheim**. Some of them say – every one of these things were written by hand, can you imagine how many people they had to hire to – to do that? I mean –

A2: Well, they all had a job.

A: They all had a job. This is a certification. This certified that my father was veri – verified, or certified as being a citizen of the state of **Baden**, and – and that he was certified to be a citizen of the city of **Hockenheim**. And this is the original document here.

Q: Okay.

A2: That's what I told you [**indecipherable**] folded up.

Q: Yeah, we'll leave it folded right now, and then when we get back, then we'll carefully undo everything.

A: And – take this first. This is the – this is the birth certificate of my grandfather.

Q: Wow.

A: Who was born in – in 40 – in – in – no –

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Q: Well, the date –

A: – sorry, it's not true. It's the bir – birth certificate of my father's sister, **Bella**.

Q: Okay.

A: Right here. And – she is – she's the daughter of **Maier Hockenheimer**, my grandfather. It's just, I ge – give it to you because a document that I happen to have, I don't know.

Q: Well again, they – they document the family, and this is – the entire family was affected by the war. So, anything that documents them is –

A: Her son was my first cousin **Joseph Wolf(ph)**. **Joseph Wolf(ph)** lived in **Strasbourg**, they lived in **France**. And he, in 1939, because **Alsace** was in danger, he came to **Marseilles** and – and said, I am enlisting in the French Foreign Legion. And he enlisted the French Foreign Legion, went to **Africa**. He tried to talk my dad into doing it –

Q: Okay. It's a common story.

A: – but my dad turned down. He came back from the war – he moved over from the French Foreign Legion to the British army.

Q: British Pioneers, probably, yeah.

A: And then he came back, he got married, and had three children at a late age. And the – one of them, the boy, died, **Pierre**. And his daughter **Sylvia** lives in **Montreal**,

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and his daughter **Claudine** lives in **Luxembourg** with her husband, **Claude** – **Claude Marks**(ph), who is now the head of the Jewish community of **Luxembourg**.

Q: Okay.

A: And – and his son – we adopted his son, kind of, he's now a young doctor in **Strasbourg**, and – I mean, it goes on and on. We know – then sa – a little branch of the family you know particularly well, and the rest of them you don't know at all.

Okay, we're jumping. This is the letter that this **Joseph Wolf**(ph) I just talked about, he wrote to the principle commissioner of **Gurs**, and asked what happened to my Aunt **Clara**.

Q: So this happened in '44, after –

A: After –

Q: – **France** has been liberated, okay.

A: – it was over, and he was still in **Algiers**.

Q: Okay.

A: But he hadn't come back from **Africa** yet. But – and this is the answer that he got.

Q: This is a response saying that they had been sent to a unknown destination.

A: Left the camp on 6th of August, '42, for an unknown destination. It's in there twice, so you can have your pick.

Q: And that's the original letter?

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A: Either –

Q: Okay, [indecipherable] one looks like it's marked [indecipherable]

A: Yeah, well, there's a copy here.

Q: A photocopy, yeah.

A: Yeah, this the original.

A2: This letter explains these –

A: Yeah, I – I show him those, I show –

Q: Yes, we saw those, yeah.

A: – I show him those already. So do we –

A2: Those are the originals.

Q: Yes.

A: Do we leave these in here?

Q: Well, we'll leave it in for now.

A: Yeah, okay.

A2: Will be a good explanation.

A: These are copies of what you got over there. This is marri – Jewish marriage
certificate of – of the – the brother of **Eva's** father. The – the one in – in **Belgium** –

Q: Okay.

A: – [indecipherable] **Belgium**. The original is in here. Translation is here. This is
the – the free city of **Hamburg** saying that this is the birth certificate of his wife.

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A2: And look at the stamp.

Q: Yeah [**indecipherable**]

A: That's where the swasti – the swastika – and, I figured out, for whatever it's worth – I'm not a hundred percent sure, but I'm almost, that the purpose of this birth – it's not a certificate, it's a **urkunde**, it's a document, was to indicate – you know, the Germans, the Nazis, changed people's names. This says her name – no, that's the mother. Where is it?

Q: It – probably behind, it specifies that it's **Sarah** or **Israel**.

A: Yes.

Q: Yeah.

A: Yeah. So that's what that is.

Q: I wonder if that was – was that from – oh, it – it may have been prepared in preparation of applying for a visa, cause you had to go back and get all of your original –

A: It probably was –

Q: – documenta – so that might explain why it was done.

A: Yeah. Yeah, at that time.

Q: Yeah.

A2: That's the envelope that –

A: That's the envelope –

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Q: I've got that [indecipherable] okay.

A2: But it's the real envelope.

Q: Yeah.

A: This is – well, okay.

A2: [indecipherable] but he's only got a little bit more to –

A: I – I know. How fast you want me to talk?

Q: Mainly if there's anything you want to make absolutely certain you get – I'm recording also, the audio.

A: Yeah.

Q: So, it – it – so, and we – obviously you've done a tremendous amount of work that gives us background information.

A2: A start.

Q: This is far more than what many people – many people just come in with a box that they – well, here, I don't know, you tell me what it is. So, we appreciate this tremendously.

A: Well, my father had a cousin by the name of **Albert Suss**(ph), and he lived in southern **France**, and when I was stationed in **Berlin** and **Frankfurt**, we went to – when we went – we went to the French **Riviera** a lot, so I always went to see him. And he – this is a translation of that. I said to him one day, I said look, I know nothing about the **Suss**'s(ph), who was my grandmother, and – and his grandmother.

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And now – so he goes back to 1760, and tells me how the family came together, who is its founder and so on, and – which is here – and what I haven't figured out yet, because he says here, his co – grandmother was **Josephine**, the – the wife of **Aaron**, and – and – and she was also – her – her – her parent – father was also **Aaron**. Something like that. I figured out five times, I forget it five times. But I'm trying to figure out who **Aaron's** kids were, which is nowhere in there. So there's a – one generation missing here. I'll get back to you on that. I'm determined to find them. This is my dad. Now, we're getting into – this is his birth certificate.

Q: Okay.

A: Grand Duchy of **Baden**. This was his driver's license. I didn't translate that.

A2: 1913.

A: Yeah.

A2: I mean, it's like they just invented the car, almost.

Q: Yeah.

A: He had a car. He al – I won't waste your time. He – he always had a car and a – and a chauffeur.

Q: Then why did he need the driver's license?

A2: Yeah, I was going to say the same thing. For fun.

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A: Cause every once in a while he got rid of the driver, the – the chauffeur, so that he could drive the car himself. This is, he went for one year to the univers – University of **Munich**, this is the original document.

Q: Okay.

A: This is the translation of it. This is his affidavit –

Q: Yeah [**indecipherable**] passport, which we saw the original, it's in the –

A: Which is in there, yeah. This is that. And the back is interesting.

A2: It's just stamped.

Q: Oh, really?

A2: Yes. Just a few minutes ago.

Q: Oh, really?

A2: The one that the –

Q: [**indecipherable**] that's in there –

A: Okay. This is the – where am I?

A2: Yeah, you – you can skip this.

Q: Yeah, in fact, all of the – yeah.

A2: The trees.

A: The trees. You – you'll figure them out. This is the birth certificate of my mother.

Q: Okay.

A: That's the original.

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A2: And it's not in good shape.

A: The – there it's in better shape, but it's not the original.

A2: Well, this is a scan, you see.

Q: Yeah.

A2: The front and back.

A: This is the – my mother's Jewish marriage certificate.

Q: Okay.

A: The original. And this is the translation. That's the one time in his life my dad was **[indecipherable]**. This is – th-their marriage, their – their legal, German marriage certificate. Same thing as the other one, but that's very interesting. This is public. This is the letter of commendation that my mother got for being a leader of the Jewish youth in **Munich**.

Q: Okay.

A2: Right before she got married.

A: Just before she got married. This is her naturalization.

A2: And we made a copy, the naturalization papers have all of this on the back.

Q: Yes.

A2: Okay.

A: This, vaccination certificates.

Q: Okay.

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A: Just in case you don't have anything else that says vaccination. This is it. This I'll come back to. What are we got to –

Q: The **Frankel** family of – oh, and **Broch**(ph) family trees.

A: Yeah, the **Frankel** was – was my late wife, and –

Q: And **Broch**(ph) was her –

A: Her mother's –

Q: – her mother's side, yeah.

A: – family. So, we got the family trees of both the **Brochs**(ph), and the **Frankels**.

Q: Okay.

A: This is her dad's. He was born **Aaron**, but in **Germany** he called himself **Adolf**, and that – this – that's the paper, that's a very interesting paper, that has on it what country are you from, and said – and before 1919, you know, because after the war, it changed.

Q: Yeah.

A: So that's different from anything I've ever seen before. This is in Polish. This is the birth certificate of, probably, Uncle **Moe**(ph).

A2: Here's **Aaron Frankel**.

A: Okay, this is the – in the birth certificate, in – in Polish, of my late wife's father.

Q: Okay.

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A: Now, you could argue that in – in 1897, that they wrote the thing in Polish, so that must have meant something. But I didn't get far enough to figure out why it was Polish, at that particular time.

Q: Well, I have – one of my colleagues is fluent in Polish, and has done a tremendous amount of research into family history with – in – in **Poland**, so he may be able to – to look into that, yes. Is that the original? That might be the original of –

A2: It is, yes. It's the birth certificate for his uncle.

Q: Okay. Okay, in **Drohobych** also, it looks like.

A: Yes, this is the Uncle **Moe(ph)**. We call him Uncle **Moe(ph)**.

Q: **Moses Frankel**.

A: He is – was – he was born **Moses**, then he changed it to **Moritz(ph)** in **Germany**. Then he moved to **Belgium** and became **Maurice**, the French version of **Moritz(ph)**.

A2: But they always call him Uncle **Moe(ph)**.

A: Uncle **Moe(ph)**. This is his birth certificate. This is the birth certificate of who?

This is also him, yeah.

Q: **Moses**, yeah.

A: This is an original in there. And this [**indecipherable**] I call it the home right certificate for Uncle **Moe(ph)**, in – in – it's got a – it's got the Austrian can –

Q: Okay.

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A: – [indecipherable] on it. M-Morality certificate. Ni – 1900, for – for **Moe(ph)**, probably. Yeah, Uncle **Moe(ph)**. I – I just give you this because that's something you – nobody knows about any more, what people had to go through.

A2: About morality, or that certificate –

A: Ah, certificate.

A2: – existed?

A: This is the marriage certificate of **Moe(ph)** with **Fanny(ph) David(ph)**. This – this in principle I wouldn't give you, but my wife said I should show it to you, and since I'm a good husband, I comply. My wife – my wife – my – yeah, my wife **Eva** –

Q: **Eva**.

A: – had a brother who was 13 years – 15 years older than she was. And they send him to **England** in 1939, to get him out of **Germany**.

Q: Was that part of the **Kindertransports**?

A: And he got a job – his grandparents were in – in **England**, so he had somebody to hook onto.

Q: Okay.

A: And he was there a short time. He – they send him to work on the – for a landscape guy in town called **Grimsby**, and he got a boil on his lip, and he died in – in a few days, and – because there was no penicillin yet, you know.

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Q: Okay.

A: And so, this is the letter from the grandfather, to Uncle **Moe**(ph) and explaining everything that happened in utter detail.

Q: Okay.

A: I doubt that you're interested in this. It's a personal, family thing.

Q: It – it's – again, it helps to document that side of the family, and their experiences, and what – what happened to him, and what happened to everyone. We would be interested –

A2: Well, let me tell you the reason I think it's pertinent, is that **Eva**, **Rudy**'s wife, was left in **Berlin**, and the parents went to see the dying son.

Q: Oh.

A2: And when **Eva** was left –

A: And the war started.

A2: – and the war started, and they could not get back to **Eva**. And so she lived for how long with the aunt?

A: Well, she was – she got out in '41, this was '39, two years.

Q: So, for years of –

A2: Yes. So she didn't see her mom and dad –

A: And she was –

Q: Okay.

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A: And she was only three years old.

Q: Okay.

A2: Because they were caught in **England**, they couldn't go back, and she couldn't go over, and so the aunt –

Q: So yes, this is a very interesting – I'm very glad that we – we got that part of the story captured, yeah.

A2: And so, you know, I just think it's very pertinent because – and **Eva** did come out on the – isn't it – wasn't it called the **kinder** train?

A: Well, she came on the **seal** train, through **France**, to – to – to –

A2: She came with her aunt.

Q: To **Lisbon**?

A: – to **Lisbon**.

Q: One of the **seal** trains, okay. I know a little bit about that. There's not that much that's actually been written about it, so – okay.

A2: Nobody translated those letters.

Q: Okay, so that's the letters.

A: I – I don't – I don't know whether what you just said is in there. Yeah, it says here, she remained in **Berlin** on the **Frankels**, flew to **England** until September '41, when she was taken [**indecipherable**] **Spain** [**indecipherable**] and son **Peter**. Okay.

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Q: Okay, so that is – that detail is captured. And the letter from **London** looks like, cause it's –

A: Yeah, this is –

A2: The day he died.

Q: The day – okay.

A: This is the – what her father wrote to his brother in **Brussels**.

Q: Okay.

A2: Again, Uncle **Moe**(ph).

Q: Uncle **Moe**(ph).

A: Un-Un-Un – Uncle **Moe**(ph) when – the day he died. Birth certificate of **Eva**, that's my wife, that's her birth certificate.

Q: And naturalization certificates, yeah.

A: Yeah. And some – this stuff is pretty self-explanatory. Okay, this – she got to – she – she got to – to **Lisbon**, and she needed th – well, where's the first one? Did you ti – turn around? Now, she had to see a doctor, to certify that she had measles vaccination.

Q: Okay.

A: Smallpox. Smallpox. And so this is certificate, which I translated from the – from the Portuguese. You'll have to give me credit. I don't know a word of Portuguese, but I cou – I could read it, so I translated it.

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Q: Well, I did want to – to pause her just to say for the – for the camera, that we are about out of time, so in case this cuts off, and when this cuts off, this is intentional.

So, I just wanted to thank on camera, officially, Mr. and Mrs. **Hockley** for their time.

We'll continue with the discussion, this is being recorded **audio-ly**, but for the video purposes, it will end right now.