

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Interview with Henry Stern
June 8, 2016
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PREFACE

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HENRY STERN

June 8, 2016

Question: This is a **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum** interview with Mr. **Henry Stern**, on June 8th, 2016, in **Columbia, Maryland**. Thank you, Mr. **Stern**, for agreeing to meet with us today, and to share your life story.

Answer: I appreciate your coming.

Q: Thank you. I will start at the beginning, and with the simplest questions, and from that, our conversation will develop, and I hope that your story unfolds. So, here we go. Can you tell me the date of your birth?

A: The 28th of April, 1929.

Q: And where were you born?

A: In **Rohrbach**, by **Bietingen**, in **Germany**.

Q: And where is that in **Germany**, what part of **Germany** would that be?

A: That's a good question. It's near **Frankfurt am Main**.

Q: Okay, okay. Was it a village, or a town?

A: Small village –

Q: Okay.

A: – of approximately five, maybe 600 inhabitants.

Q: Was it the kind of place where everybody knew each other?

A: As far as I know, yes.

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Q: Okay.

A: I was rather young at the time.

Q: Of course. And what was your name at birth?

A: **Benno(ph) Heinz(ph) Stern.**

Q: **Benno(ph) Heinz(ph) Stern.**

A: Yes.

Q: And when did you change it to **Henry**?

A: When the family moved to the **United States**, when we emigrated.

Q: So that would have been when you were still a youngster?

A: Oh yes.

Q: Okay.

A: Less than seven years old.

Q: Okay. Tell me a little bit about your mother and your father, starting with their names.

A: My father's name was **Siegfried Stern**. My mother was **Rachel**, alway – always called **Reshe(ph) Morganstern(ph) Stern.**

Q: And did you have any siblings?

A: I had a brother, **Walter**.

Q: Was he –

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A: He was a year and a half older than I.

Q: Okay. That was my question. So you were the younger of the two children?

A: Yes.

Q: All right. At home, what language did your parents speak with one another?

A: German.

Q: German. Any Yiddish?

A: I don't think so, but of course, Yiddish and German are quite similar.

Q: Uh-huh. But German speaking –

A: Yes.

Q: – at any rate. Were they from the village? Can you repeat the village name, because I didn't quite catch it.

A: **Rohrbach**.

Q: **Rohrbach, Rohrbach**.

A: Yes. And there are actually, I believe, four **Rohrbachs** in German –

Q: Okay.

A: – **Germany**. Which is why I mention by bid – **Bietingen**.

Q: By **Bietingen**.

A: Yes.

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Q: Okay, so **Rohrbach** by **Bietingen**, that's why it didn't rem – it didn't stay in my mind.

A: Right.

Q: So, were they originally from **Rohrbach** by **Bietingen**?

A: I'm sorry?

Q: Your – your parents, were they originally from the village **Rohrbach** by **Bietingen**?

A: My father was.

Q: Okay.

A: My mother was not.

Q: Do you know where she was – her family was from?

A: You know, I really don't know.

Q: Okay.

A: But apparently not too far away from **Rohrbach**.

Q: And your father's family, do you know about how many generations would have been in **Rohrbach** by **Bietingen**?

A: As far as I have found out, approximately four or five grandfathers.

Q: That's quite a bit.

A: Yes.

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Q: That takes us back into the 18th century.

A: Oh yes.

Q: You know, and maybe even the 17th.

A: Yes. There was a family business –

Q: Okay.

A: – that was passed on from eldest son to eldest son.

Q: And what was that business?

A: Butcher shop. Butcher, handling of cows, cattle.

Q: Was it a kosher butcher shop, or was it a regular butcher shop that everybody would shop at?

A: I think – I think everybody. There was –

Q: Okay. So, gentiles and Jews.

A: Yes. The village was too small to take care of a kosher business.

Q: Okay. Were your parents religious?

A: I would have to say yes. We – there was a synagogue.

Q: That was my question, my next one.

A: And apparently my father served as cantor. And his brother, his older brother, with whom he was in business, was president of the congregation, such as it was. It

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was a small congregation, of course. And they were un – the village was unable, or the Jews were unable to hire any rabbi, so the men took turns conducting services.

Q: Oh, I see. And do you remember going to the synagogue?

A: I have a vague memory of it.

Q: Okay.

A: And apparently, there was a mikveh, and the cemetery right outside the building.

Q: About how many Jewish families do you think were there, of the 500, or 600 or so, inhabitants?

A: From what I have gathered from the internet, maybe 15 families. Maybe 15.

Q: Okay, so if we even put four people per family, we'd be saying 60 people.

A: At the most.

Q: At the most, okay. Was it a well-integrated community?

A: It must have been at one time, but of course, as time came on, it – it changed.

Q: Okay. Did – did your mother help out in the butcher shop, or no?

A: No.

Q: Okay.

A: She took care of the house.

Q: All right. Can you describe to me where you lived?

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A: I been trying to find the house on the internet, going onto **Google** search. I've not been successful, but I do have a memory of it.

Q: Please de – what is in your memory of the house?

A: Well, let me explain that, closer to this time, my daughter, my eldest daughter, and her husband, who was serving in **Germany** – he was with the n – **ASA**.

Q: The **ASA**?

A: Yes.

Q: What is the **ASA**?

A: The es – the – out of **Fort Meade**.

Q: Oh, so he's with the American military?

A: No, not the military.

Q: Okay, so **A** – I don't know what **ASA** is.

A: It's a security –

Q: Okay, okay.

A: At – at one point, we decided to visit them, but I was reluctant to go at first, but we did go. And they took us all over, showing us places. At one point they asked whether I wanted to go back to **Rohrbach**, and I said no. Until just the day before we were to come back to the **States**. It was too late. But, at a later time, maybe a year or so later, my younger daughter and her husband visited the elder daughter

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and her husband. And I described the house that we had lived in, and they decided to go.

Q: And look for it.

A: And they found it.

Q: Did they?

A: And they told the story of how they walked around looking at the building from different angles, taking pictures. And a woman who – came out, and wanted to know what they were doing there. And she explained that this the house their father and family had lived in. And she said, I often wondered what happened to those boys. My folks told us about it. She invited them into the house and served them tea, coffee, refreshments, and they looked throughout the house. The house itself was very unusual, because my father had it built.

Q: Okay.

A: And it was the first house in the village that had running water, and a running toilet.

Q: Well, you know, that's what – you anticipated some of the questions that I have.

A: Yes.

Q: Because I always ask people, what kind of modern conveniences did you have in your –

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A: It was – it was the first building, or first house in **Rohrbach** that had a pull chain for the toilet, and the villagers would come in to experience this phenomenon.

Q: You have a museum piece there.

A: I been trying to find that house on the internet, I've not been successful. But I understand that the synagogue has changed hands several times. And I think at one time it was a bakery, and a grocery. I have no idea what it is now.

Q: So the building remained, but it no longer was a place of worship.

A: No.

Q: Okay. What is the address of the house that your father built?

A: That's what I've been trying to determine. As close as I can come to it, it's at the corner of **Herm(ph) gassen** and **Bunder(ph) gassen**.

Q: So **Herm(ph) gassen** and **Bunder(ph) gassen**.

A: Yes.

Q: Okay. And was it in the center of town, or was it on the outskirts?

A: That I don't know.

Q: You don't know. In your mind's eye, can you paint a picture for me of what did the house look like? Was it two story, one story?

A: I'd say, I think three story.

Q: Okay.

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A: It was a very big house, on a very large lot. There was a side yard, there was a backyard, which was a garden. And –

Q: Was it stone?

A: Yeah, brick building, yes.

Q: Okay.

A: And the family had a farm – let's say a garden, full of planted vegetables and such.

Q: When you say you had running water, does that also mean you had a bathroom with a bathtub in it?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay.

A: Yes.

Q: And did you have electricity?

A: Yes.

Q: And how did you heat the home?

A: I don't recall.

Q: What – do you think it might have been coal?

A: It could have been.

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Q: Would you have coal ovens? You know there's these very sometimes, ornate and glazed type of tile. Does that ring a bell in your memory?

A: No.

Q: Okay.

A: No. As I say, I was very young.

Q: Okay. And was it the nicest looking house in **Rohrbach** by **Bietingen**?

A: I think I'm prejudiced. I really don't know whether the – probably – it was probably the most modern house, at the time.

Q: Does that mean that your father was well-to-do?

A: I wouldn't say that he was rich by any means, but the family was comfortable.

Q: Okay. Did you have an automobile?

A: No, no. That's interesting. The first automobile that I saw, was when a cousin, who had just gotten married, she and her husband drove into the village on their honeymoon. And I remember vaguely, a night trip we took to visit an au – an au – aunt in, oh, in bent – **Bensheim**.

Q: **Bensheim**, mm-hm.

A: Yes. And I don't even know where **Bensheim** is in **Germany**.

Q: Al – it's near **Rohrbach** by **Bietingen**. I don't know either.

A: No.

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Q: So, it was a rarity to see an automobile –

A: Yes.

Q: – in the village.

A: Very unusual.

Q: Okay. So what was the mode of transportation for most people, aside from their feet?

A: I'd say probably horse cart, that type.

Q: Okay. Was there a railway station?

A: Not that I know of, no, but the –

Q: And was the travel between towns in, let's say, to **Frankfurt**, which is a large city, were there buses?

A: No. In fact, one of the things I read is that if youngsters wanted to go beyond an eighth grade, which was the only education in **Rohrbach**, a one school – one room schoolhouse – but if they wanted to go beyond eighth grade, they had to go to **Bietingen**, and the only way they could go is to walk, bicycle, horseback –

Q: I see.

A: – or a cart.

Q: Okay. So, it was – it was isolated, in some ways?

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A: Yes. They estimated the – I say, the information I have gotten from the internet is that it was about a one hour walk –

Q: The eight kilometers, yeah.

A: – to – to **Bietingen**.

Q: Yeah. Was it an agricultural community, in general?

A: I would say yes.

Q: Okay. And tell me a little bit about your parents' personalities, as you remember them, being a small child.

A: Well, we saw very little of my father, for the most part, because he did a lot of traveling. His main job is to buy cattle for the butcher shop, and he would have to go from village to village, and to market to market to buy the cattle.

Q: So, a horse and cart.

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay. You had a horse at home?

A: I don't recall one, no.

Q: Okay. Okay, so he would – that – it wasn't that he was standing in the butcher shop, and –

A: No.

Q: Okay.

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A: That was his brother. His brother was the butcher, and at one point my father became an apprentice butcher, which he later used once, after emigrating.

Q: Okay. Did they have any other employees?

A: Not that I know of.

Q: So it was really a family – small family business.

A: Right.

Q: And did your mother have any help at home, or was she running the household entirely?

A: She was running the household.

Q: And you said your father was from the village.

A: Yes.

Q: And he had one older brother. Did he have any other siblings?

A: Yes, he did, but I don't know where they were. I – I know there was a brother by the name of **Joseph** –

Q: Okay.

A: – who also emigrated.

Q: Okay. And did you know your grandparents?

A: Just vaguely.

Q: Okay.

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A: I remember – I don't remember my grandfather, but I have a sl – slight memory of my grandmother, because she lived with the aunt that we visited at **Bensheim**.

Q: I see. I see. And did your mother have relatives that were nearby, that you knew?

A: Well, it's a strange family mixture.

Q: Okay.

A: So it's hard to say ye – for me to say yes or no, because we – the **Morgenstern** branch of the family intermarried with the **Stern** family.

Q: So this was not the only **Morgenstern-Stern** marriage?

A: Oh no, no. **William Morgenstern**, who was responsible for bringing us to **America**, was originally married to **Elsie Stern**, who was the sister of my father.

Q: So, he had a sister, too.

A: Yeah. Now, she died at a young age, and then **Bill** remarried. So, there's that one connection. Trying to think of the other connections, cause it gets confusing. When **Siegfried** married **Bill's** sister, **Reshe(ph)**, **Rachel** –

Q: So that's your father.

A: My father.

Q: Okay.

A: Married the **Morgenstern** – **Reshe(ph) Morgenstern**. So that is –

Q: Another connection.

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A: – another connection. We can go even further, the – there's another inter-marriage with the **Moritz** family. Another family that was brought over to the **States**.

Q: Okay.

A: It just goes on and on, and –

Q: Are they all from about the same place, the same area in **Germany**?

A: I'm not sure.

Q: Okay.

A: But they have to be nearby, because travel was a bit difficult.

Q: And, aside from **William Morgenstern** and **Elsie**, where there others who had come to the **United States** before?

A: Yes. **Bill** ha-had a brother, **Saul Morgenstern**, and at one point **William – Bill** and **Saul** were prospecting in the west.

Q: In the 19th century?

A: Yes. Apparently they came over as young men. Don't ask me when, but they were young. Eventually **William** moved to **Newport News, Virginia**. **Saul** stayed out west, in **Texas**, and he opened several businesses, but he ended up in **Borger, Texas**, running a clothing store.

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Q: Okay. And back in **Germany**, the **Morgenstern** family, was it also involved in businesses, as far as you know?

A: I – I don't know.

Q: You don't know.

A: A lot of history, unfortunately, has disappeared because our parents never talked – discussed things like that.

Q: Okay.

A: They really didn't tell us about the family, and what we have been able to gather is memories from different members of the family. And it's all hearsay, actually.

Q: I understand. Sometimes that hearsay is unbelievably accurate, and sometimes it's not, but you need more verification to determine whether it is, you know. And that's sometimes not so easy to come by.

A: Right. And that's one reason I've been going on the internet, getting information. In fact, I utilized the local Mormon church to get on the internet. And I was able to retrieve the manifest of the ship that we came over on.

Q: And what was that man – ma – ship name?

A: The **SS Manhattan**.

Q: Okay. We'll come to that part.

A: Okay.

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Q: But, by asking you questions about your larger family, I have many purposes in mind. I guess the primary purpose is, still through the eyes of a young child, to kind of get a – a sense and a picture of what – how large was your world, and how many people populated it, you know.

A: Very small, but –

Q: And so, you don't have a memory of aunts and uncles coming through, and – and sort of being there for family celebrations, or things like that?

A: No. The only memory like that is s-say when a cousin, cousin **Ruth** –

Q: Right.

A: – and her husband drove into town on their honeymoon.

Q: Okay.

A: The only other thing is the time, once or twice, that we visited my aunt in **Bensheim**, cause I have a memory of that. We used to tease our cousin, cousin **Ruth**.

Q: Okay.

A: They had a piano, and they had a stool, which rotated. And both **Walter** and I used to irritate cousin **Ruth** by sitting on that stool, and just turning and turning.

Q: Well, that's fun.

A: It was fun for us –

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Q: Yeah.

A: – but not for her. That's one memory I have.

Q: Okay. So cousin **Ruth** sounds like she was rather comfortable, too.

A: Oh yes.

Q: If you have a piano, and you have a car –

A: Oh yes.

Q: Do you know how that came about?

A: No, I don't.

Q: Okay. Do you have any picture of **Bensheim** in your mind?

A: No.

Q: Okay. Tell me – you say your father was away a lot –

A: Mm-hm.

Q: – you know, so was it that your m – your m – your mother, the person that – the adult that was the one who was the most significant, that you would see daily –

A: Oh yes.

Q: Okay. Tell me about her, a little bit.

A: What can I say?

Q: What kind of person was she? Was she shy, was she outgoing? Did she have –

A: She was – she was rather shy.

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Q: Was she?

A: Yes.

Q: A quieter type of person.

A: Very much so. In those days, especially in **Germany**, women didn't speak up very much.

Q: Okay. Does that mean that, even though he was absent, your father was the dominant influence at home?

A: Oh yes.

Q: Okay. Did they get on? Did they get on?

A: As a lot of marriages do, yeah. They tolerated each other.

Q: Okay. Was it an arranged marriage?

A: Yes.

Q: Oh, okay.

A: Which is why there was so much intermarriage in the families.

Q: And who would have done the arranging?

A: I don't know.

Q: Okay. Do you have any earliest memories of your own life? Like glimpses, or episodes, or things like that, while you're still there?

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A: Well, our house was on a corner lot. If you go beyond that – if you take a right turn at the corner, there was a bakery, a community bake-house, where all the women gathered, to bake the bread for the week. And beyond that is where **Ludwig**, the brother, had his home. That was the family estate, where the butcher shop was [indecipherable]

Q: So **Ludwig** was the elder brother?

A: Yes. Now, I remember – one thing I do remember as a youngster. Turning right on that corner, there was a big hay wagon that sat there all the time, empty.

Q: Who did it belong to?

A: I have no idea, but I used to play on that, and I fell off that wagon, and I have a little scar here, because of that. That's one memory I have.

Q: That would do it, you know. Di – wa – did this mean, when the women would go and bake bread at this communal bakery, that this was for the entire village?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay. And so, they didn't do it at home?

A: No.

Q: All right. Was your mother a good housekeeper?

A: Yes, I'd say so.

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Q: Okay. Did you have any – did she prepare any particular dishes that you remember, that you liked?

A: The only one I can remember – first of all, my father being in the butcher business, we always ate meat. We never knew about fish. Vegetables, whatever grew in the garden. But the one dish that I recall, that I've never had since, at a Passover, at a Seder, there was one dish intermingled with all the others, and it was **kastanien und kvetchin(ph)**.

Q: **Kastanien und kvetchin(ph)**.

A: Chestnuts and prunes mixed together.

Q: Sounds like it could be tasty.

A: That's one thing. That's one I remember.

Q: Was he a strict father?

A: Yes.

Q: Were you close to him?

A: Not at the time, no.

Q: Were you and your brother buddies, or did he have his own life?

A: I guess we were.

Q: Okay. Did you have – did you have any childhood friends that you recall?

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A: No, the only one that would come close to it, would be my cousin **Ruth**. That was **Ludwig**'s daughter.

Q: Ah, was **Ludwig** –

A: So, there are two **Ruths** now, we're talking about. **Ruth Stern** –

Q: Okay.

A: – and the other cousin, **Ruth Sherch**(ph). She was a **Loeb**(ph), she married a **Sherch**(ph).

Q: Okay. When did things change?

A: Sometime, I would say, in the early 30s.

Q: Before **Hitler** came to power?

A: No, no, that was before. I have no recollection of –

Q: He came to power in '33.

A: Yes, so after '33, and before we emigrated in '36 –

Q: Okay.

A: – things changed. Cause, as I mentioned, we had a garden –

Q: Yes.

A: – in the back of the house.

Q: Yes.

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A: Somebody threw salt all over the vegetables that were growing, and ruined the crop. At one point, a gang invaded the house, broke into the house.

Q: Why?

A: And my recollection of it was being awakened, and someone with face paint, as Halloween, gruesome paint, shone a flashlight on his face, and woke me up.

Q: Oh my goodness. That is terrifying for a little child.

A: Yeah. That was the idea.

Q: Did they loot, when they broke into the house?

A: I don't think so, because my father chased them out. He carried a walking stick and he started thrashing around.

Q: Okay. Did you ever know who it was?

A: No.

Q: Did you assume it was – or did your parents assume it was someone from the village that knew y – that they knew, generally.

A: I don't know. Could have been somebody out of **Bietingen**, a larger area, just – they had the – **Hitler** had the gangs –

Q: Of course.

A: – working throughout the area. It was the beginning – as I mentioned, I'm pre-Holocaust.

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Q: That's right. I understand.

A: We just saw the beginning of it.

Q: Yeah. But that beginning is also part of the story, part of the larger story.

A: Mm-hm, right.

Q: And one of the – you know, what were the first steps that were taken, that people experienced.

A: Yeah, well, harassing the Jews.

Q: Did you feel that, when you would go outside the house, as a little boy?

A: Only one recollection of it, and that was when I was in school.

Q: Ah.

A: I was in school only about a half a year.

Q: Okay.

A: I was just – had just turned six. And it – so I'd mentioned it was a one room schoolhouse, eight grades.

Q: Okay.

A: And I remember three of us, because I don't remember anybody else, any other Jewish people. But **Walter**, **Ruth** and I were called together by the teacher, and said, get out, and don't ever come back.

Q: Really? The teacher?

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A: I remember sitting on the steps, before we decided to go home, and we never went back to school, in **Germany**.

Q: Do you remember telling your parents about this?

A: Oh yes.

Q: And do you remember their reaction?

A: They said, that's what's going on. And shortly thereafter, my mother decided it was time to leave, at the prompting of **Bill Morgenstern**, who was aware of what was going on, and suggested that we all get out.

Q: Okay. So this must have been 1935 or 1936.

A: Right. Well, late '35, cause we emigrated in February of 1936.

Q: Okay. What about your father and your uncle's butcher shop? Was that affected, at the time?

A: I had no recollection of it, but it had to have some effect. My father was reluctant to leave.

Q: Why?

A: Like so many other Jews in **Germany**, this will pass. You know, how they thought.

Q: So –

A: E-Everyone thought that **Hitler** could be controlled.

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Q: What about your uncle? Do you know what – what his thinking was?

A: No, but he was – he left when the time came, too, cause shortly after we arrived, maybe within a half a year, **Ludwig, Emma**, his wife, and daughter **Ruth**, also emigrated –

Q: Okay.

A: – through the efforts of **Bill** and **Roselyn**(ph).

Q: Okay. So it was really be – your mother's connection.

A: Yes.

Q: And your mother's desire.

A: Insistence.

Q: Okay. Do you remember her – I mean, for a shy person, to be that firm?

A: Well, at that time, I think she got to be protective.

Q: Yeah. Well, I mean I – wer – there are several mothers in this room.

A: Okay.

Q: And I can't imagine, but – but I know how difficult it would be for me to hear, when my six year old would come home, and have something to say like that, you know, and children are so vulnerable. And that's the – the first thing you want to do is – is safeguard them from that.

A: Mm-hm.

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Q: Do you remember your journey out of **Rohrbach**, how you left?

A: Well, we had to go to **Hamburg**, that's where we boarded the ship. And we sailed from **Hamburg**. And we had one stop, and that was in **LaHavre, France**.

Q: Were your parents able to take any of their assets out of **Germany**?

A: Nothing to speak of.

Q: Okay. Some people reported that they were able to send their furniture abroad, that they were able to get some of their money, even, into other bank accounts. Or they – they tran – they – they bought jewelry, and they took the jewelry with them.

A: I know nothing like that.

Q: Okay.

A: Basically, we came over with nothing.

Q: Okay.

A: I think the limit was around 50 dollars a person.

Q: Okay. Do you remember the leave-taking, from your relatives in **Rohrbach**, or –

A: No.

Q: – or the trip to **Hamburg**, and how you did it?

A: No, I don't.

Q: Okay. Do you remember the boat?

A: I remember a little bit about it.

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Q: Okay.

A: The – the only incident I recall is, apparently I had something like a penny, **ein pfennig**.

Q: **Ein pfennig**, yeah.

A: And I put it in the slot machine, and it ended up, got a dime. And I felt rich.

Q: A dime, U.S.?

A: Yes.

Q: U.S. dollars? On the boat?

A: Yes.

Q: Not bad. That's a profit.

A: I think that was the beginning of – what, the gambling places on ships. They added slot machines.

Q: Oh my goodness. Was this a passenger –

A: Yes.

Q: – ship, okay. And who paid for the passage?

A: I assume my parents.

Q: Do you remember what the – whether it was a large passenger ship, whether there were –

A: Very large.

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Q: Okay.

A: I mean, I have a picture of it.

Q: But I'm thinking more from your own memories. Were there other German Jews on the boat?

A: Not that I know of.

Q: Okay. Did any of the other passengers make an impression on you?

A: No.

Q: When you were told to leave school, by that German teacher, how did that affect you?

A: I was just bewildered. I didn't know what to think, or what to do. This was an auth – authority figure, says go, don't come back. What does a six and a half year old boy do to that?

Q: Yeah. So, i – you're more – you're, you know, sort of like you lost your moorings.

A: Yeah.

Q: And your brother and **Ruth**, how did they respond?

A: Pretty much the same way.

Q: Okay. Okay. Do you know how long it took for the boat to come to the – the ship to come to the U.S.?

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A: Let's see, I think about 10 - 11 days.

Q: Okay. And where did you dock?

A: In **New York**.

Q: Ah.

A: And **Bill Morgenstern** met us at the ship.

Q: And so you saw the Statue of Liberty?

A: Yes.

Q: Do you remember that?

A: Vaguely, yes.

Q: Vaguely, okay. And do you remember meeting him?

A: Oh, I remember that, yes.

Q: Can you describe that for me?

A: This was a man da – I didn't understand that he was responsible, but I remember
j – walking down the gangplank, and meeting him there.

Q: What did he look like?

A: **Bill Morgenstern**, with the wavy hair, dark hair. About five – eight, nine. He
was an impressive man, dressed in overcoat, as I recall.

Q: Was he alone?

A: Mm-hm, yeah.

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Q: And –

A: He had to be. He had a business in **Newport News**, he couldn't leave it for long. Somebody had to take care of it, so I guess **Roselyn(ph)** took care of it.

Q: Okay. And remind me again, he had come over with his brother?

A: Not with his brother, but they had come over as young pe – young men.

Q: Young men, okay. And he had been then, in the **States** for several decades?

A: Several years, at least. Had to have been at least 10 years.

Q: Okay. What was his business?

A: He owned the **China Palace and Gift Shop**.

Q: In **Newport News**.

A: Right.

Q: Okay. **Porzellanba(ph)** in **Germany** – in German, it would be, you know, china shop.

A: That's right.

Q: When did you stop speaking German?

A: Almost immediately. That was one rule that [**indecipherable**] set forth. We speak only English.

Q: Okay. Your parents as well?

A: That's right.

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Q: Okay. Do you remember the journey from **New York** to **Newport News**?

A: No.

Q: Whether it was by train, or by car, or anything like that?

A: I have no recollection.

Q: Okay. So tell me a little bit more about **William Morgenstern**. Did you get to know him?

A: Somewhat, yes.

Q: He's a relative, after all.

A: Oh yes, a very important relative that – and he had a nice house, small house, that we lived in for a while. One bedroom, one bathroom – not one bedroom, a one bathroom house, that took care of his family, and ours, and – and others as well, eventually.

Q: Well then, tell us about what that – as I asked you to paint a picture of your house in **[indecipherable]** can you paint one for me, in words, of this house?

A: All right, that I may be able to do. I know the house was on **61st Street**, near **Virginia** – just off **Virginia Avenue**, the second house off **Virginia Avenue**. And across the highway was a big structure, which was a water tower for the area. The house itself was wood. It was the – coal heated. And I remember many times **Bill**

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would go down in the basement and stroked the furnace. And the coal truck would empty the coal down the chute, to the basement.

Q: Two story house, three story?

A: Two story.

Q: Okay. About how many bedrooms?

A: Either two or three, I don't recall exactly.

Q: And so you say – so, it was modest house.

A: Yes.

Q: And his own family, you say it was **Rosalie**, his wife. And did they have children?

A: **Roselyn**(ph).

Q: **Roselyn**(ph), excuse me.

A: **Ernestine**.

Q: Okay.

A: And her younger brother **Jules**.

Q: Okay. So, two boy – two boys in your family, and a girl and a boy in theirs.

A: Right.

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Q: And what kind of impression did they make on you, when you first arrived? You were European kids, and they're American. Was there – did you sense any difference?

A: No, no. We got along.

Q: So didn't – that – that was seamless?

A: Right.

Q: Okay.

A: I guess youngsters find it much easier to integrate.

Q: Youngsters can play when they don't speak each other's languages.

A: Right.

Q: It's amazing. How long did you stay with him in the – in this way?

A: Less than six months.

Q: Okay.

A: I remember we moved into the shipyard apartments, which as I recall, were three separate buildings, large buildings. Rothe – roas – roach infested buildings. I mean, big.

Q: The southern kind.

A: Never could get rid of them.

Q: Oh my goodness. Oh my goodness.

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A: I remember that. And before long, we moved to a house on **26th Street**, just off **Huntington Avenue**.

Q: Did you – did any – did your family get any help from any agency?

A: I don't know.

Q: Okay. So this sounds like entirely a private enterprise. Nothing that would have involved a community agency, a Jewish agency, a government agency.

A: Not that I know of. Remember, in order to bring immigrants into the country, the sponsor had to sign a paper, they would be responsible.

Q: Yeah.

A: The government didn't want – couldn't do anything, th – the government at the time, was handicapped. We were in a depression.

Q: That's true.

A: And in addition to that, you had the American firsters – isolationists. They didn't want to get involved with other people. And of course – and before Father **Coughlin**, and so on, they were quite influential, at the time. So, what could the government do? The politicians were scared, they wanted to stay in power. As we have right now.

Q: Politicians have always wanted to stay in power.

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A: Right. So it was up to individuals, and **Bill** and **Roselyn(ph)** were granted permission to support 125 people.

Q: That's amazing.

A: And when they filled that quota, they persuaded other people to sponsor immigrants.

Q: Well, this i – this is not inconsequential, you know. Can you tell me a little bit about your memories of who – what they were like, what were their personalities? Like I asked about your father and your mother, what can you tell me about them?

A: Well, **Roselyn(ph)** was a beautiful lady. She was outgoing, and just friendly with everybody. **Bill** was a doer. He served many terms as president of the congregation, **Rodef Sholom**. As a businessman, he was friendly to everybody.

Q: Was he particularly well-off?

A: No, far from it. In fact, **Ernie – Ernestine**, his daughter, tells the story of coming downstairs one morning, and found her father with his head in his hands, on the table, worried that he didn't have money to buy food that day.

Q: Wow.

A: We were coming out of the depression at the time. How many pieces of china and gifts were – were being bought at the time?

Q: Not many, cause that's not a necessity.

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A: That's right. So, he was struggling.

Q: But that just underscores the unusual part of the story.

A: Right.

Q: That despite that – did he talk about his own family in **Germany**, did he talk about **Germany**, did he talk about getting people out, did he –

A: No, not – not to me, no, not that I'm aware of.

Q: Okay. Were you the first ones that came over?

A: We were the first that they brought over.

Q: Okay. And so, how did your father get on his feet financially, and your mother?

A: My father took a job, the only job he could get, I assume, in a warehouse, at five dollars a week. My mother would bake cakes, that she would sell on order, from people in the community. In addition to that, she became the janitor of **Rodef Sholom** temple. And many is the time, after a rain, she had to go down to the temple and bail water out of the basement.

Q: That's not easy.

A: No.

Q: Did they find it hard to adjust here?

A: My father did, yeah. My mother, not too much. But eventually –

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Q: What was – excuse me for interrupting, but what was hard for him, in the adjustment?

A: He was used to the German way, what he had been doing. He was his own boss all those years, and suddenly he was working for someone in a warehouse in a – a business he knew nothing about.

Q: Had they – had he had higher education, your father?

A: I don't think so.

Q: And your mother?

A: I doubt it. I don't think women at the time, or girls at time –

Q: It was unusual.

A: Yeah.

Q: It was unusual.

A: But I would say within a year or so, he opened up a grocery, again on **26th Street**, just a half a block up from where we were living. And if I remember correctly, the store was opened after sundown on s – on Saturday, first day. And **Bill Morgenstern** came to the house afterwards, and said, how did – asked how he did, and the answer was, we took in eight dollars. And **Bill** said, that's great. I remember that much, because we were coming out of a rep – depression. Eight dollars was a lot of money then.

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Q: Yeah, particularly if it was five dollars a week that he was earning –

A: Right.

Q: – you know, in the warehouse.

A: Right.

Q: And did – did that become a family affair?

A: Yes. When lud – **Ludwig** and his family were brought over, he entered the business. He wa – he was the butcher in the family anyway.

Q: Okay.

A: Again, my father did more of the physical work of going to the slaughterhouse, and bringing sides of beef into the business, and so on.

Q: Okay, so he went back to what he knew.

A: Yes.

Q: But now, instead of just a butcher shop, it was a grocery store.

A: Right, small grocery, neighborhood.

Q: Did you help out in it?

A: When they bought a vehicle, which was a quarter ton panel truck – they don't make them anymore – I became the driver. And I had to drive my father to the slaughterhouse and back, and so on.

Q: So this would have been in the 40s, already.

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A: Yes.

Q: Okay. And how many years was your mother the janitor at the temple?

A: I'd say a couple of years.

Q: Okay. Did this have strains at home, this adjustment? You know, the crossing over from – from **Europe**, you know, getting on your feet here, and so on?

A: Well, a certain amount of strains adjusting, and of course, earning a living, so yes. But we managed. They managed. **Walter** and I, besides selling newspapers – delivering newspapers, when, while were still in the shipyard apartments –

Q: With the roaches.

A: Hm?

Q: With the roaches.

A: Yes. Farmers would bring their trucks by with their produce. He and I would take stuff, and run up and down the stairs, hawking [**indecipherable**] a penny. And we used to sell extras, those days there were a lot of extras. Saturday nights, after football games, the papers would put out an extra with the scores. And somehow my brother found what was called, **Peninsula News Company**. It was a newspaper – magazine distributorship. And he started working there. And he became quite proficient in that, almost managing the operation after a while, as a young kid going to high school.

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Q: So this is again, 30 – late 30s, 40s.

A: Yes.

Q: Okay, the war years.

A: Yes.

Q: Okay, so it's a very hardworking family.

A: I'd say.

Q: Okay. What was school like for you?

A: Interesting.

Q: In what way?

A: Well, we started out at **Stonewall Jackson** elementary school.

Q: That name would be controversial today.

A: Probably. Not in my mind, but yes. I could go into my political beliefs, but –

Q: No, that [indecipherable]

A: – that's beside this point.

Q: No – I – the only reason I mention it is that it really – there is a – a school right near my home in **Virginia** that recently had the name of a confederate general –

A: Yeah. I know.

Q: – that was – **Jeb Stuart**, I think it was –

A: Yeah.

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Q: – that there's been calls to change it.

A: How do you think I feel? I'm a graduate of **Washington and Lee University**.

Q: Yeah. Yeah.

A: But almost immediately after entering school, **Walter** was promoted from first to second grade, within a week or so. Cause he had been at school for a year –

Q: In **Germany**.

A: – in **Germany**.

Q: Okay.

A: He was ahead of the cl-class. But we did well, and when we finally moved to **26th Street**, we attended **John W. Daniels** school.

Q: Okay.

A: Which was just a stone's throw from the high school. We ki – finished elementary school, which was through the seventh grade, and then we entered high school. We didn't have a middle school or junior high in those days, we only went 11 years, and not 12.

Q: Oh really?

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay.

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A: That was the norm at that time. And **Walter** became editor of the school paper. He won a prize, I forget whether it was the American Legion, or the **VFW**, city-wide contest, essay contest. And he graduated with honors from high school. I took a different tack in high school. I joined too many organizations. Now, I can realize that. Glee club, chorus, newspaper, athletics, those things. I graduated with honors.

Q: Also with honors.

A: Yeah.

Q: So why would that be something where you'd say it was too much?

A: I joined too many organizations, I spread myself out too thin. Couldn't concentrate on anything.

Q: But nevertheless, you graduated with honors.

A: Yeah, oh yeah.

Q: Okay.

A: So, school went well. He –

Q: It sound – okay, mm-hm?

A: He is a graduate of **William and Mary**. I'm a graduate of **Washington and Lee**, so I guess we did well.

Q: Yeah. During the years, the first years in the 30s, and through the war years, was your family following what was going on in **Europe**, at –

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A: Oh yes.

Q: What kind of conversations do you recall, from home?

A: They were concerned, especially about the family.

Q: Well, that was a question: who was left behind?

A: Excuse me.

Q: Sure, no problem.

A: I have what I call a running nose, an Olympic nose.

Q: Me too.

A: The only one that was left in **Germany** was Mother's sister, **Rosa**, and her husband, and their mother.

Q: So, your grandmother.

A: Yes. They had a chance to leave **Germany**, but they refused, because the grandmother had diabetes, and she could not enter the **United States**. So they stayed, to take care of her.

Q: Would the **Morgensterns** have brought them over?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay.

A: The grandmother died, cause she couldn't get insulin.

Q: Yeah.

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A: And **Rosa** and **Ferdinand** disappeared. It's interesting that their son, who was also brought over, **Max**, **Max Loeb(ph)**, or **Lieb(ph)**, served in the army, and he was in intelligence.

Q: Okay.

A: And when the war ended, he stayed over, and he looked for his fa – parents. Couldn't find them.

Q: Oh dear. So they just vanished?

A: Yeah.

Q: Vanished from the horizon. Tell me a little bit more about the other people that were brought over.

A: Well, I've mentioned **Ludwig**, **Emma**, and **Ruth**, cousins.

Q: All by **Morgenstern**.

A: Yes.

Q: Okay.

A: And there was **Ruth** and **Eddie Sherch(ph)** –

Q: Okay.

A: – cousins. And their daughter, **Elayne(ph)**, who eventually settled in **Providence, Rhode Island**.

Q: Okay. Do they all live in **Newport News**, in that one little house before –

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A: Well, they started –

Q: That's where they started.

A: There was **Paul Morgenstern**, **Bill's** brother, and he set them up in a similar business, in neighboring **Hilton Village**.

Q: Similar to his own?

A: Yes. Just three, four miles from **Newport News**, down the road, on route 60. He didn't like it, so he and his wife and daughter **Edith**, they moved to – I think it was **Brooklyn**.

Q: Okay.

A: And he got a job in a silversmith company, I can't think, it was **Gorham(ph)**, or somebody up here. And he became quite well-to-do. There was a **Max Loeb(ph)**, as I mentioned. There was **Ludwig Moritz(ph)**, who had married a **Stern** sister, and their daughters, **Margo(ph)** and **Beatrice**. There was my father's brother **Joseph**, and his wife **Tilly(ph)**, and **Joe – Joseph**, who I remember, whenever you met him, as a kid, he always reached in his pocket and brought out a piece of candy he offered you. He opened up a small hardware business in **Newport News**.

Q: And this sounds phenom – for somebody who is not well-to-do, who himself had the worry of how do I put food on the table, the more you mention names, the more I think, what an amazing person he must have been.

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A: I understand that he discussed law with a friend who was a lawyer, and he became quite adept at th – not – not that he practiced it –

Q: Okay.

A: – but he was quite familiar with the laws.

Q: So he knew it.

A: Yes.

Q: In order to be able to get people over.

A: Right.

Q: Was – did he ever have any help from anybody? Did the congregation help?

A: Not that I know of as, you know, handing him money, no. Not that I'm –

Q: Or taking people in, let's say, letting them – letting them –

A: I'm sure – I'm sure there were people that did, not that I can tell you who they were, or anything like that.

Q: Okay.

A: I mean, he was quite influential in the congregation.

Q: Was there a large Jewish community in **Newport News**?

A: A decent size community. At that time, the shipbuilding industry, th – because of the war, brought in a lot of people. And, of course, the army and the air f – corps – we're near by **Langley Field**, **Fort Eustis**, which we know is **Fort Useless**. Fact,

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just since we moved here, I met a family, and they were stationed in the area, and he worked at **Fort Eustis**, and when I said **Fort Useless**, he laughed.

Q: He knew what you were talking about.

A: Right.

Q: Yeah. Was it all extended family members? Were there others?

A: Probably others as well, because while I'm familiar with the family members that were brought over, he had gotten other people to sponsor other immigrants, and I'm not familiar who they would have been. Either the sponsors, or the immigrants.

Q: Did – did you maintain sort of like, social relations with him? Did you visit him at his home often, or when s – once your family left, was it a rare thing that you saw them?

A: The – we mixed quite a bit. And there was another family, another member of the **Stern** family lived in **Newport News**. She had married **Ike Spiegel**(ph).

Q: Okay.

A: And **Ike Spiegel**(ph) has a business, appliances, right around the corner from where my father had a bi – his grocery store.

Q: Okay.

A: And it was tradition that on Sunday we visited **Ike** and **Bertha** and her family, for dinner. And it was always southern fried chicken.

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Q: No **kastanien und kvetchin**(ph).

A: No.

Q: Did you socialize also with his children? Now, you mention **Ernestine**, and a son –

A: Somewhat, yes.

Q: Somewhat. Was he ever recognized in any public way, for having sponsored so many people over?

A: No, not that I know of.

Q: Okay.

A: As – remember, I left **Newport News** when I went to college.

Q: Okay, that would have been in 1940 –

A: Seven.

Q: Okay. The war had ended.

A: Yes. And after – right after that, and when I graduated, I was inducted into the army –

Q: Okay.

A: And when I was discharged from the army, I went to **Fairmont, West Virginia**.

Q: Got it.

A: So, at that point, my associations in **Newport News** were extremely limited.

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Q: When did you learn of what had really happened to the Jews of **Germany**, and the Jews of **Europe**?

A: Well, as we – we followed the war, you couldn't help but be aware of what was going on. My mother constantly talked about it. In fact, at one point, **William** cautioned her not to be so public – public about it.

Q: Why?

A: Because the influences of **Henry Ford**, Father **Coughlin**, and so on, were also felt in **Newport News**, and didn't want to bring anything to bear on the Jewish fa – congregation.

Q: Let's talk about this a little bit. Did you have a social life outside of a Jewish community?

A: Not really.

Q: Okay. And did you experience any kind of – I mean, the common word would be anti-Semitism, but –

A: Oh, yes.

Q: You did?

A: Oh yes.

Q: How did it express itself?

A: Well, when you're called a kike, Christ killer, you know what's going on.

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Q: Was this at school, or is this in the streets?

A: Yeah, it was in school.

Q: It was in school.

A: I'll mention a couple of things. I played football. At one assembly in high school, the coach was passing out the letters and so on, and I remember him saying, I knew we would have a winning season, because I have a Jew on the team.

Q: And how'd you take that comment?

A: Pass it over.

Q: So this is the second time someone – it's not a kid, it's someone in authority.

A: Mm-hm. And yet, probably at the time, the most successful basketball coach in **Virginia** was **Julie Kahn**(ph). As we called him, Madman **Julie**. During games he would get so worked up, he would actually froth at the mouth. But he was athletic director, as – was basketball and track coach.

Q: Did your father experience this in his business, as far as you know?

A: He never mentioned it.

Q: Okay. But **William Morgenstern** tells your mother, don't talk so much?

A: Right. It's not unusual. We have – I've experienced a few incidents. For instance, when we first moved into **Vantage House** –

Q: Here, where you're living now.

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A: Yeah. I was asked whether I would conduct some services, and I started. And at one point one of the residents, a Jewish, said we don't want so many services. We don't want to call attention to ourselves.

Q: Still.

A: I can recall back in **Fairmont**, I was conducting a campaign – I think it was for **Israel** bonds. It was either **Israel** bonds, or **JNF**. I forget which, cause I did both. But the person that had been running the campaign, was approached by the fellow that came from **Pittsburgh** to oversee the campaign, to have a public event. He said no, I won't do it. Well, I was president of **B'nai Brith** at the time, and he asked me to do it. So I said, okay. And we set up a dinner meeting in a hotel.

Q: This is **West Virginia**, mm-hm.

A: And, in addition to the Jewish people, I invited the presidents of the local banks, cause we were trying to sell – it was bonds, now that I remember putting it together, we were approaching the banks to buy bonds. And we had a young man playing the guitar and singing, as entertainment. So he did his shtick, and he started to talk, and the most influential – one of the most influential people in the community, a Jewish doctor, got up and came to table; I was sitting with a friend. And he said, stop him. And my friend got up, and went up to the entertainment, said, no pitch. And the reason was, he didn't want to make a big deal of Jews. And after that, when I met

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with the – the representative of the campaign, I said, this will never happen again.

And we had open campaigns throughout, afterwards. Not only for **JNF**, but also for **Israel** bonds. And we invited – members of the family brought members of the family to all the events.

Q: These last two incidences that you mention to me, sound like internalized responses, rather than an external –

A: Right.

Q: – manifestation.

A: Haven't you her – haven't you heard of the camp – in the current campaign, we don't want **Sanders** as president, because he'll think that anything goes wrong, it'll fall back, they'll accuse the Jews? I've heard it many times. There is a certain insecurity that manifests itself at times.

Q: How do you react to that?

A: I said forget it. Let's go on. We have services twice a month here now, and it's publicized, well publicized. Every time we have a service, it's in the newsletter. It's in a sign in the elevators, when we have services. We have the afternoon group of the **NCJW** meeting here.

Q: Going back to your younger years in **Newport News**, many people from **Europe**, refugees, would say that when they came over, before the war, and they

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ended up in the south, they were taken aback by what they saw as racial discrimination, when they would arrive and see that there are different facilities for white Americans and African Americans. Did things like that exist in **Newport News** that collided, let's say, with your life, with your world down there?

A: There was definitely segregation, there was discrimination, and it got to the point, especially the further south – well, we – there were reports, when the civil rights movement was going on, that Jews didn't want the young people – Jewish young people coming down. We have to live here, they would say. I'm sure you're aware of that.

Q: The community that you lived in, the neighborhood or so, was it a homogenous neighborhood, or was it gentile as well as Jewish?

A: Mostly gentile.

Q: Mostly gentile. And mostly white?

A: Yes, all white.

Q: All white.

A: We were in the south.

Q: Okay.

A: For instance, I mentioned that the – the grammar school was right down from the high school. There were separate high schools. There was **Newport News** high

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school, and I forget what they call it, but the blacks had their own. And the days were separate but equal – so called.

Q: Did you e – did you ever go back to your – you mentioned earlier, a trip that sounds more recent, but before then, did you ever go back to **Europe**, after having moved here to the **States**?

A: Well, we went to **Paris** once, and **London**.

Q: Okay. But not **Germany**?

A: No.

Q: And the first time you set foot in **Germany** again, was in what year?

A: Actual year, I don't recall the actual year, but it had to be in the 70s, 80s.

Q: Oh, I see, so that far back?

A: Yes.

Q: So – but is that when you – you went with your daughter, or is that more recent?

A: Yes.

Q: Uh-huh, you went with your daughter in the 70s or 80s?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay. And – and then later, she went back, or another child went back –

A: Yes.

Q: – and found the house.

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A: Right.

Q: And was it – did they maintain any kind of tie with the people who now live there?

A: Not that I know of.

Q: Okay. Did you af – did you see the pictures of the house?

A: I have seen pictures of the house, yes.

Q: Okay. But you yourself, after the 70s or 80s, never went back?

A: No. I had decided I was going back, very recently. **Rita** and I had planned a river cruise from **Frankfurt** to **Amsterdam**. We had our tickets, everything was planned. And I had contacted a person from the tourist bureau in **Frankfurt**. And I'm – told what I was thinking about, and I would like to go back to see **Rohrbach**. And asked him whether there was transportation available, of any kind. Replied that he would meet me, and he would drive me. He was very friendly, very solicitous. But unfortunately, something happened, and I had to cancel the trip.

Q: Oh.

A: So that's gone.

Q: When you – so you've been back one time to **Germany**.

A: Yes.

Q: And you were there for how long? A week, two weeks?

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A: Well, I think, about a week.

Q: Okay. Did you feel – did you feel comfortable, or uncomfortable? Not in your environment? I want to get a sense of what was it like for you when you did go back.

A: It was all right unt – except for one incident. We had put up one night, I forget where, in a – I guess you would call it, almost a bed and breakfast type of affair, an apartment building. And I had con – talked to the man about paying the next day with my credit card, and he said, fine. So the next morning, when I went to pay pare – and I talked to his wife to take my credit card, he said oh, no, no, no, we can't take it, you ha – you have to do that in advance. And so quickly I sprouted some German. Where it came from, I don't know. She said okay, okay. She took it.

Q: So you re – you still could recall it?

A: Yes.

Q: You still could recall German.

A: Some, I – I can recall words at times.

Q: Okay. Is there anything else that you could tell me about Mr. **Morgenstern** and his efforts? And when you say he was given permission to sponsor 125 people – or was it 120?

A: Hundred and twenty-five.

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Q: Hundred twenty-five. Was – does that mean that the U.S. government allowed him to sponsor the 125?

A: Yes.

Q: Over time.

A: Yes.

Q: Okay.

A: There's some things I might mention, that we haven't gone into.

Q: Yeah, please do.

A: Directly across the street from our house in **Rohrbach**, was the synagogue.

Q: Okay.

A: From the information I've gotten on the internet, there were three tourists, they disappeared. The building was sold at auction for around 500 marks – 560 marks, I think it said.

Q: When?

A: It was a forced sale, and there are no records of that money ever having been paid. I thought that was interesting.

Q: It is interesting. It is interesting. So this was clearly in the 1930s.

A: This was in '39 – '38, '39.

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Q: And you have not found any re – any document talking of any restitution to anyone, for that building?

A: No.

Q: Okay.

A: The Jews had disappeared. And apparently they made no effort to try to locate any that may have emigrated.

Q: Who would be the rightful owner? Which legal body would be the rightful owner of that synagogue?

A: Well, depending on – I see there you're getting to a legal matter – depending on the validity of the auction sale, who – who bought it – there's no record of who the buyer was. As far as any Jews – well, the Jewish congregation –

Q: Yeah, that's what I mean – I meant.

A: – family, who's left? I'm the only one from my family left.

Q: From all of these people who were brought over, you're the last one?

A: Yeah.

Q: You're the last Mohican?

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay. Is there something you'd want the people of **Rohrbach** to know, or to –

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A: Well, the people in **Rohrbach** now, have no recollection of this. They re – they weren't born then. But they have – the community has a history, their parents or grandparents, they share in a responsibility for what happened. They can say if they want to, that they didn't know, but God, who do they think they're kidding? They had to know. Just as the Poles say they didn't know that we had concentration camps around the corner. They had to know.

Q: Well, they were in them, too. There were millions of Poles in those concentration camps as well.

A: Yes.

Q: How did Mr. **Morgenstern** – how was her – his final years? Do you know? Did he continue working, and retire from his china shop? Do you know what happened to him?

A: Well, I remember that from the **61st Street** house, they bought another house, overlooking the **James** river, which was just a mile or so away. Was a nice, small house, well taken care of. And he used to sit out on his back lawn, looking at the sunset, as it disappeared – the sun disappeared over the **James** river bridge, and so on. He died, I think, in '56, or '57. He had retired. His son **Jules** had taken over the business.

Q: Did the kids know of all of his activities, and what he had done?

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A: I think so. **Ernestine** certainly knew quite a bit about it.

Q: Are they both a-alive still, the children?

A: **Ernestine** is alive. In fact, we're going to see her next week.

Q: Ah, okay. Okay. Is there anything else you'd like to add to our interview today?

A: I really can't think of anything else, no.

Q: Okay. In that case –

A: I'm just glad to be here.

Q: Thank you. And thank you for sharing all of this with us. And I'll say that that concludes the **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum** interview with Mr.

Henry Stern, on June 8th, 2016. Thanks again.

A: Thank you.

Conclusion of Interview