

INTERVIEW WITH EVA ROTH

FEBRUARY 12, 1992

Today is Wednesday, February 12th, 1992 and we are talking with Mrs. Eva Roth. Mrs. Roth

You say Ava and not Eva -- the Germans called me Ava and in Polish is Eva.

Mrs. Roth, can you tell me your date of birth and where you are from?

I'm from Poland, the city of Lodz and four or five children, 4 daughters and one son, and thanks God, all survived the war but my

parents ...

Can you tell me your date of birth?

This was July 6, 1916.

And what was it like growing up in Lodz?

For us we were wealthy people, we went to private schools, and Jewish schools, where we took a little Hebrew; later on my parents wanted us to take more Hebrew, that way too late, you know, we didn't so much Hebrew so we had to go to _____ [13] schools and we graduated and in Poland to graduate to go to university and not everything you could start, you could start in _____ [14] pharmacy and law.

Because you were Jews

Because we were Jews, yes, no medicine, no dentistry. My older sister studied dentistry in France for two years but then my parents were afraid she fell in love, not Jew you know, so my father, I don't remember, met her in Berlin, in Prague, Czechoslovakia and took her to a beautiful resort in Czechoslovakia in Marienbad so was a time I wasn't even born when my mother, my

older sister stayed with the grandparents, she went too.

What was her name?

My mother's name?

Your older sister?

My older sister, Lena.

What was your father's occupation?

Occupation - businessman and then real estate.

Do you want to tell, do you know anything about his business you can talk about?

Sure, sure, sure like I said, we had one old apartment house and maybe you heard about, he was an artist Arthur Shick.

His parents lived in our, the other apartment house. We had a beautiful picture when the Jews going out from Egypt and one of the

women in the picture was his wife. We left everything, you know,

because my parents ran away, I will tell you later what happened

so his wife survived here and when I came here I read about in the

Times magazine she showed me _____[29] all his art you know how beautiful he was painting. His parents used to be very wealthy but then I read not long ago during the revolution in Russia in 1905 they burned his father's eyes. I saw him when he was an elderly man, you know. The Polish workers, maybe Germans,

because there were many Germans in our city and during the war they

named our city Littsmanstadt. Did you know about

Right, right.

Did you talk some people from Lodz that you know about?

Yes, yes we've worked with a number of people. Could we go back a little bit to your childhood. So you completed high school, you went to high school?

Yes to high school. Our grades were different. Till 8th grade, then we graduated to get Matura, Polish Maturan came from the government, sent two men and we had written and oral tests. Otherwise we couldn't go to university, anyway we couldn't go for everything so it was a very hard thing from all the subjects they asked questions. My older sister was very bright and my younger sister too. She is now in the Jewish home. I'll tell you later. So from there then my sister married the doctor and after school I was a secretary for my father Olov hashalom "may he rest in peace" and because we had 2 apartment houses in Poland everybody had to be registered special books and if someone came from other country, how many papers had to be filled out so I helped my father, you know, till I met my husband. We had for a while a business like electric bulbs and like when you build apartment houses all those, you know, pipes, everything, we had for this for about, till the end of 1938. Until I met my late husband. He came around to our business and I was there and I used to know his uncle. His uncle used to have a business for dentists and technicians. Everything they brought from Germany, you know to bring, because was the best from Germany. And my father sent me to business something to pay. In Poland there were no checks, _____[60] but this was not for _____[60] immediately, it took months to get the money and on the way I met again my future husband and he recognized me and _____[63] and my father sent me to this businessman and the same evening we went, this was in the summer, and the beautiful - we had dancing outdoors and shows and I met him late _____[66] and became acquainted and you know, today is the same.

Can you describe a little bit how Lodz, how it looked there?

Lodz, it wasn't as though like trees and this, yeah we had parks but every summer we used to go to the country, not far, and we were there in 1939, the men used to come on Friday afternoon, like I read about here from New York, and stay until Sunday. My husband came to pick up our things, I still lived with my parents for the summer, they gave me a beautiful apartment in our apartment house. In 1938 they sent from Germany, Hitler, Polish Jews, who were not citizens of Germany, I just read about too, so 17,000 came back and one family came, young people from Germany, rented an apartment house in our building and he told us his wife used to go to Switzerland and smuggle money out, I don't know, so they had some money and the Jews in Poland who helped him a lot, my parents - my father was very active Zionist, they opened even a clinic, you know. My brother-in-

law was the main doctor, a few doctors, a dentist so for a \$1.50 they could get a doctor and prescriptions. They had small stores you know, they not so poor and one time, one time from Germany, Berlin, he came outside on the street and came running up, I think they had one child, and said the Gestapo was looking for my father, Olov hashalom. We had two entrances, so he came from the back and my father ran to the fifth floor, the 4th floor had, you know, the water pipes; I was only with my mother. I think my sisters and my brother went to a smaller town. You know, the Gestapo came every day and we didn't know what they wanted. My late father had his own study and there was a big desk and they went and looked and looked and didn't tell us what and we had a big safe and they told my mother to open up and my mother was shaking. But I knew the secret and I opened up and they looked and looked and we didn't know for what they looked. They said the next day, my father would have to come to the Gestapo so you can imagine what we went through.

Before we get into that, can we back up just a little bit. Were you involved also in the Zionist organization?

Not so much, no.

Did you have any other interests, sports?

In school yes, we had a gym, this was a private Jewish school. We had a horse, but I was _____[104]. I saw my grandson, how he jumped, he could go up, he was 7 years old; we had a gym, then we had arrhythmic [ph] [107] dances with a teacher playing the piano, you know, and in the summer we could play basketball, outside we had a special place and it was 1/2 block from where we lived so we

all went, only my brother and my older sister started to go to the other school, the best schools. It was expensive but my parents could afford to pay for 5 children not at once, my younger sister was only 13 years old. Can you imagine what we went through until my father came back. The Germans told us to give back all our radios, we could hear from Russia, from Budapest, we had to give them; I don't think the Poles gave them away because when I ran away from Warsaw we used to know what's going from the Poles - we didn't know nothing.

What language did you speak at home?

Mostly Polish.

Not Yiddish?

No, I didn't know much Yiddish but after the war in the camp Lithuania Jews eating in the kitchen getting the food because we didn't have nothing, they heard us speaking Polish they said no, only Yiddish. But in Miami Beach, many people been coming on the beach, my husband (not my first husband) he knew Russian because they lived in Russia so I learned to speak Yiddish. I speak German because from school I speak German. My late brother-in-law _____[127] he was from Vienna, so when I came he spoke only German, didn't know English at all, I never went to school here, none of us. My younger sister went to high school, then went to Maryland University and worked for almost 20 years Social Security here. She stayed with my brother-in-law's uncle. They were Viennese. He was a dentist in Vienna and she stayed with them; she didn't have where to stay and through them she met her future husband. He was in the war too. He was in India and Salaam [ph] [134], my brother-in-law. He worked for the Labor Department here and he been teaching in Montgomery College in Takoma Park I think twice a week, I don't remember. I think it was business administration. One son's a professor in New York University. The other works for the Government. He was for a while in Israel - can I tell you the story?

Sure, maybe we can do it later. I'd like to now back up and maybe you'd like to tell what year did you get married for the first time?

Almost 1939.

Do you remember when the Germans invaded?

Oh, sure. Like I said, my two sisters and my brother went out in the city, I had an apartment in our apartment house, we heard on the radio, at that time we had a radio, that the Germans are on the way to our city because we had so many Germans in factories, the Germans had factories, so my mother sent me and my younger sister to a store to buy whatever we can buy; not to a Jewish store because we know everything is sold out so we had half a block we crossed to a Polish store we heard conversation, the Poles, and we were standing in line, it was so close to where we lived, a women with dark hair wearing big cross the Polish women said to her, "you

get out" and she was wearing a cross and they didn't touch my sister and not me and we were so close leaving but we came to the store and not much was left.

Was this because you had Aryan features?

Yes, because my sister, she was tall, blond and blue eyes and we were so close and this women said I am not Jewish and they wouldn't let her stay and throw her out and when the Germans came they were not far from us, some Jews they hung them and who would go there to look at it, you know. And then, when my father went to the Gestapo

they had statues of the organization, so my late father sent me to the lawyer in a nice neighborhood - I walked when two Germans grabbed me, this was already cold, maybe November, 1939, to go to work. I was wearing a fur coat but in fact I was wearing a rain coat over it and took me to a school for Germans they brought from the Russian part of Poland to clean for them. The Russians brought us some bread and I started to clean and then I went to one of the

Germans, a civilian, and I said "listen, (in German) I have a little baby home, please let me go, let me go." But my younger

sister, she was still 10 years, she was grabbed, she had to sign she would come every day to clean the apartments for the Germans. But then they went away. And then my parents, my late father-in-law was in business with his brother, they sold merchandise for dentists, he was arrested, the older brother. They came to the store; it wasn't a store, it was in an apartment they had the business, they asked the maid, the Polish maid "where are the tepia". Tepia are carpets, rugs. So she sent them to us, to my father because she knows that he lives with us because he run away and they came, two military men, we had two doors on both sides, locked so no one would run away and they slapped my father-in-law until we knew what they wanted. I showed them where they

lived. They lived on the second floor and I said "come, I show you we don't have the tepia, the rugs, the carpets because we're going away". You know, we had to duck, you know, in case there were no rights, and I grabbed the soldier, I don't know maybe he was Gestapo, and I said see I'm telling you the truth in German. I thought now he will hit me in the face what I did, I grabbed him, but he believed him because we had the suitcase. I said, we need the carpets? Go to the maid, she took them." So my father was responsible for my father-in-law he wouldn't run away. So we ran away. Because every day, like I say, the Germans came to us because the owners of the apartment house and we had a picture maybe of the grandfather, the little boy and the Rabbi asking questions and they looked and looked and we left everything. We had a typewriter, I remember my father put it on the 5th floor because we thought the war would go only 6 months. Because my parents remember the Germans from WWI. It was all different, the Germans, were nice to the Jews, were friendly, but we had to run away.

Do you remember what month that was and where did you go?

To Warsaw.

Was this in the Fall of 1939?

Yes, in the end of this and in the border we had to show them - we couldn't go, we could go only by bus, we had to go in our city bus and the busses were there going to Warsaw and we took somethings with us and my late first husband he did manufacturing of machinery but we didn't take it. I didn't know we could write letters and my father-in-law knew, he came later to Warsaw then we and he brought this and they been looking and everybody had machines and you know they needed this, from cotton made; they used live before the war, WWI, in the same building. When we came to Warsaw, we were wearing

white - no we were wearing golattas, here and here, in Warsaw, the Jews saw it and they tore off from us.

The yellow star?

Yes, the yellow star. Because in Warsaw, they wore armbands, the Mogen Duvid, but not in Lodz because this was a German - they called Vitmanstack {ph} {143}, they changed the name. This was a German city because so many Germans lived in this. So we stayed a few days with my father's aunt, used to be very wealthy in a beautiful neighborhood, but at that time still wasn't the ghetto. Another cousin came too with the children, you know, ran away from Lodz, so we had to look for an apartment. We could get a room, for

4 people. Because then the Germans took everybody from the small towns they sent to Lodz and to some close to Warsaw because it was easier then to send to Treblinka, you know. And it was so bad. My father-in-law, he didn't look like a Jew, like a Polish aristocrat. And that time no ghetto, he was making business with Polish companies so he was selling to the dentists and technicians what he thought he could buy some food and there was nothing to buy. Yes, the Poles been showing in the streetcars who is a Jew; never touched him. You know, he was tall, with moustache so he didn't look like a Jew so he used to bring food there. I remember something from Russia he brought, olives, but I couldn't eat it. The Russian Jews, they liked them, green olives. My late husband he spoke with them Russian. He didn't know Yiddish. _____{166}. When one broke out, they went back to Russia. Why? Because my late father-in-law had money in a bank and they came after the war in 1970 and lived for a while in the same apartment house later lived there and then they moved to Lodz because to get at the business. So it was in November, I don't remember the date, we decided to go to Warsaw. And then my father-in-law came too and 4 people lived in one room.

So, what was it like in Warsaw and were you there when they started putting up the ghetto?

Yes. Was so bad. One time, before the Ghetto was closed and this was the ghetto where we lived. One time was no ghetto, a gypsy came up, we were standing in the kitchen, she took my hand and said Jacob is thinking about you - she could say other Jewish name - can you imagine. So I was his _____{176}, I used to work with him, you know was secretary. So then, we decided to get out. It was so bad, we didn't want to leave them, you know, but for one thing we couldn't stay

anymore and then it was still not ghetto in the smaller towns. My brother-in-law the doctor ran away with his wife and two children, two sons like I said one is the brain surgeon and one is an architect. And so we found a woman, dressed like a peasant, a Jewish women, and she said she has papers and showed us something and we had to pay her. We went and the ghetto was closed

This was just you and your husband?

Yes, me and my husband and we went, a Polish policeman was standing there we said we would give you money, open the wooden was closed, the ghetto. She did, gave her money and I was the first to go out. This was May. The first days of May, I don't remember exactly and I was taking some winter clothes because I knew how will I get this from Warsaw and a rucksack carrying on my back and a Polish young man stays there and said "if you won't give me money, I'm going to the Germans". "We will give you money, bring duriska"

this means horse drawn like carriage. I said yes, we gave him money, we came to the train station and the women, the peasant, she

bought the tickets. This was in the evening. Jews and Poles were not allowed after 8 o'clock to be on the street. Did you hear about, a year before I went to see my parents from Warsaw. The ghetto wasn't closed. My late cousin was killed. She was from Switzerland, married in Lodz. She went with me to the Germans because she spoke, to get me like a visa to go by train I was wearing a armband, I took off my coat and no one recognized me and this was during the day and I found where my parents lived.

In the train, I was standing - nowhere to sit - so many Poles, you know they were making business running around from Warsaw. So I was standing and my late husband didn't look like a Jew, he looked like a tall, skinny, light complexioned, and the Germans, the military came to me and asked me something. Even if I know _____{286}, only the Jews know German and the Germans who lived in Poland. The Poles when they went to highschool, it was public but the Jews couldn't go, seldom, so they took French so I didn't answer and we came and it was maybe 10 o'clock at night and we didn't know where to go because this was at night and we heard the Germans walking, you know, with those boots, how they go walking. And I don't know, intuition, I went home and I told this story and she said GOD must

have brought me to this street where my parents lived - tiny - after six rooms. We had 2 maids, a Polish and a cook, Jewish. So I called out and my father came down, it wasn't so late and so we stayed there. We found a room in some place and not long they closed the ghetto and was very bad there too. We found a man because we didn't have money to live we had to live on - - - ,

who had Turkish passport. He was a Jew. He was going to Warsaw. We gave him address and he brought some clothes from us and he brought for the dentist too. You know, we paid him. For a while he could go. One time he said, they robbed him on the street, I don't know the Poles, the Turks are dark and he was dark and he had papers. So he used to bring but then it stopped. And then

they sent us to the city, I think it was 1941, to the city of _____ {324}, my late brother-in-law, the doctor, he was born there. We went from Warsaw to this town where my parents were too. My late husband became semi-retired policeman because typhus was terrible you know what was going on in the summer but things got better. We lived in the same place where the Germans took over the offices. Dentists had to move out somewhere else and there were the Jewish offices and we had two rooms. And my younger sister meantime got married and her husband, his mother and his niece, we had two rooms, 8 people maybe. And one time the Germans came to the Jewish offices and they been looking to get the Jews to send out from the city but we were hiding with some of the people. They thought that this belonged to the Jewish offices and they didn't come to our apartment. Otherwise we would be sent out and killed. So we saw them. But before, I will tell you, my late husband, my second husband told me, he was my second cousin; his mother was spechenleh {ph} {346} and my mother spechenleh {ph} {346}. After the war, I did know him in Lodz but not so much, he found me in the same; someone told him that me and my sister were under the British; he was in a sanitorium - he was sick. So he told me that in Lodz they took out the young women, children to the outskirts of the town - they killed them, in Lodz. But he couldn't do nothing and he was by himself in the sanitorium. He found me and we got married in 1947 and my son was born in 1948. He was 10 months old when we came here to the United States and we sent him to the Hebrew Academy. I worked and I paid. Here, the Russian Jews, they don't pay for 2 years. After 2 years they take out the children from the Charles Smith School (I heard about) but I worked and I paid for his school because we wanted him to have a Jewish education. He went to Blair High School because Hebrew Academy goes only to 10th grade. So he had to go to a public school if we lived in Washington. I remember when I started to work and he went to Hebrew Academy they came from the public school, he went to kindergarten, and asked me why I'm not sending him. I said I have to work and I have to send him to a private school and we have to move there and after school, he went to Ohr Kodesh and took more Hebrew. I have to ask him how many times a week, I don't remember. He is teaching Hebrew now in Bowie and my daughter-in-law too, in Sunday school.

Can we go back then? We've skipped now over between now and after Warsaw.

Yes. After Warsaw they sent us to _____ {373}.

Can you spell the name of that town?

I will write down. There are 2 _____ {375} but one time they took us out

The Nazis?

Yes, sure, they took us out. We had to throw all the clothes we had they took away from us. My husband and me and my brother, we were sent to a factory. Part went to a glass factory, I have _____{383} I have the paper here, the book. My brother, during the war he write and her father was the like the president of the gemeinde for the Jews. And I read here, I didn't know, he said his son, my sister-in-law's brother, he was a Communist. He went to Russia before the war. But during the war, he parachuted but the Germans caught him. But he wanted _____ {391} they were Jews working but they shot him, killed him. My sister-in-law, all gone. My brother had only one son, graduated Harvard University, worked for international company. Business administration too, like my brother started in Germany. _____{395}

26 years old, 3 years later he lost his wife. He lives in Wheaton, he works for Morton, since he came here before 1950, he still works. What will he do? My brother doesn't look like a Jew, too, he was tall, blond. So what was I going to say --- they took us out, we went to one factory (this was before, I just read because I didn't know) clothes, materials they were making, now the Germans opened, wood they needed, for instance airplanes in the summer outside standing women connecting like all when it was colder made boxes for ammunition they needed. The director, he was a German, you know, Gestapo, he lived in a place was house of the Jews, even I read the names, and he had a dog and I read the dog's name, and the toilets were outside. We walked with Poles and you know, they looked at us Jews what we had to do. On one side the men had the toilets and we had primitive toilets. He told the dog "Mensch, nem den hunt" which means, like "men, take the dog". He said this to the dog. The dog was like the man and they were the dogs, the Jews. And sometimes by mistake, we were scared because we went out to rest for a few minutes and they were biting, I read about, - terrible, terrible. The young man, what he did, he took from the kitchen from the bone so we thought the dog would bite them to give them the bone. So we went there until 1944.

So where did you live?

It was _____{432}. We had bunks, everybody, in one room, the husbands and wives.

It wasn't a concentration camp?

Not yet. But it was, listen. One time they said, it was on a Saturday, if we will wash the floor, we would go _____{436}, so I decided. You should have seen the Poles, the women, standing and looking at us - saying what the Jews are now, washing the floors. I'm telling you. My late husband used to bring me, I used to work from 2 until 10 o'clock in the evening. They needed it. He didn't want to go to fight so he took work there and we saw one time came

_____ {443} and there was a big place where they sold the horses

and they came to the factory and they allowed them to work, elderly

women, Russian, so he talked with some Russian. We still had with my brother and sister-in-law one room, we stayed there. They wanted to attack. They saw young women, they want to rape them. Cossacks, I don't know who they were. Luckily, Jewish police who were standing would not allow them to go. This was in the factory, yes. Then they sent us to Germany. They said to take everything because we were going to work.

This is still 1944?

1944, yes. They said we would work. Then they sent my mother from the other factory, my parents came. Yes, one time I could see my parents. My late brother-in-law, I have to get the papers. He saved so many Jews, should be in the Holocaust here, saved_____ {468}. So, he came like a horse strong, this was the factory the last belonged before the war to a German company but they treated them bad already too, so he took me one time to my parents and my father had a stroke that time and I don't know where he was took but they took us at the same time and we had to walk to the train and my mother and my father but they separated us from the men and took us by train in how many days, nothing to eat, nothing and they brought us to Ravensbrück. One woman told me she walked, she didn't have railroad. She was from Lodz. I met her in Miami Beach. They took us there, in a field. Everything they took away from us. And you know what? The women who were there before us, they were looking we don't have gold or diamonds, you hear. We have to give them everything and they gave us like, winter coats, a schmata, you know what a schmata is? The next day they took us to work. There were hundreds of pieces of clothing, whatever, they took away, and we had to sort. In Poland, in Pershka {ph} {496}, we had the same because they sent to Germany, those good things. And here too, we had to sort. In the beginning. And then we had to carry from the kitchen, coal or potatoes, two women, one in front. From this I don't have tissues in my spine. From hot. Only maybe once he allowed us to stop. We had to go to the kitchen. I had this coat and the pockets were so low so sometimes I could take a potato but they were looking, they were checking us but those they didn't check or something. I now asked to rest. So one time I couldn't do it, my hands, you know. It was 3-4 years of war, we didn't have to eat for a week, especially we came from Warsaw, you know how bad it was in Warsaw. In the smaller towns, they still went out before the ghetto to the Poles in the country they could exchange, not money they didn't want, for other things, get some food. So I found some from iron, so I put this to carry, maybe this made me {?} {519}. It was terrible. Till one day came, my younger sister worked in like a hospital, HOSPITAL! so I had to help her to get out the dead persons so the Germans started to ran away. So what did they do? They took the women, strong, I mean, tall ones. They didn't touch me because I'm short but my younger sister, wanted to take to take care of their luggage but I told them she worked in the hospital so they let her go. And we went and were sitting in this stone floor, wet, we had to wash this, and we noticed that the Germans were running away. I didn't tell my sister nothing. I went out by myself, I couldn't walk anymore, and sit down on the ground when the British came, and announced in German "no more war". So I went back. I thought I would They went to get cattle for food. You know, they were Hungarians went on the Germans side so if someone came by themselves, not with the cattle, they been shooting them. The Hungarians. I

came back and one of the liberators was today's President _____{546} Herzl {?}. He went in 1987 back there to _____{547}. I didn't see him.

Let me stop for a minute and I'm going to switch the tape.

Side B started with counter started at zero.

Ok, so you were just telling me, you were in Ravensbruck, so where did you go from Ravensbruck?

To Bergen-Belsen.

You were taken to Bergen-Belsen?

Yes. We were taken to Bergen-Belsen. There we didn't work. But I'm telling you there were French - - my older sister knew French so she was DeGault's niece, she told her and they treated them even worse than other French women and sometimes they did something, stole something, I don't know, how they were beating the French women, terrible, terrible, in Bergen-Belsen.

Did you ever experience any - -Beating? No, only in Pietrocv where I worked, because I am short. It was 10 o'clock so maybe we were standing, not working, talking, a German, not military, who lived there with a big stick, he came and he wanted to hit so I, you know, I never got hit otherwise, sure we were beaten, terrible.

How long were you in Bergen-Belsen then?

Till we came - I don't remember, it was already maybe in the Spring of 1945. I think so, I don't remember exactly. Or maybe still it was winter, I think, yes. And then we didn't work, we just were dying there. We were lying on the wet floor, you know. And the food, the food.

Did you have any food?

Nah! One time I went out and someone gave me some food so I had for my mother, you know to give her something. I saw pictures. They were beating the men, Jews beat other Jews. The Germans forced them to beat the other Jews, for what I don't know. We saw this.

This was in Bergen-Belsen? And your parents were there as well?

Bergen-Belsen. I don't know when I find _____{62}.

When did you lose track of your parents?

My mother died - She was with us two days after the liberation.

So she was with you during all of these deportations?

Yes, yes. And in Ravensbruck {ph} {64}, we were not there, my older sister, they wanted to take us to carry, you know, this _____{65}

I don't know, I wasn't there, but my older sister said she would work for my mother so let her go. In Ravensbruck we had to work -

yes. They said the Polish women were young. It was a big place.

We had to dig the sand. How the Polish women, the young women, how they treated us and for what, I don't know for what they made a big

hole, that time in Ravensbruck. This was the oven - I saw the oven

in Bergen-Belsen; after the war we went there and I don't know I wasn't on the list the I survived, my younger sister too. Because they took me after the war like a hospital. They took me to the kitchen and a nurse washed me and powdered and I kept my eyes closed. I opened my eyes and I saw a German military man with a monocle. I thought it was still war. The British took me and they

wiped me and took me back to the place. My sisters were not there. Later I found out where they were, you know, in a room in Bergen-Belsen. Then we found out, there was a list, that my late brother, the doctor, survived and his two sons. The little one worked as a shoemaker and the other too. One time my brother-in-law told us after the _____{81} in Buchenwald, he was liberated, he had to work like any other worker, came a German military man and asked who was the doctor. Everybody was quiet, because they thought it was the intelligence to kill. But finally my brother-in-law said he was the doctor. So he had a girl from the ward, he took him there, he helped and so he

didn't work no more because of this. He survived in a way. After the war we found out and we found him in Buchenwald and he worked as a doctor there and thanks GOD the two sons survived and then he went _____{89} with his family to Switzerland because they opened. At first they wouldn't allow the Jews, they had a hard time to come to Switzerland, you know. I read that the Orthodox Jews in Switzerland got some Jews to Switzerland because when they came to the border they sent them back. My sister, she was in the nursing home, she lost her husband. He was from Vienna. During the war he ran away. He wanted to go to Portugal, no, so he went to the Alps. He helped other people. He came to France. They caught him there, they sent him to Auschwitz. Thanks GOD he survived, he was never married and he fell in love with my sister, got married. My nephew is here. He works for Merrill-Lynch. He went to Maryland University and the same like my son in 1970 he received \$10,000. A good student but he went to Israel and worked for a while in Israel. He sold his car, what he had, but he came back. I always say his father is watching; he was six years old when his father died.

So you lost your first husband during this -- in Bergen-Belsen?

We don't know nothing about, we don't know.

After Ravensbruck.

After Ravensbruck we went to Bergen-Belsen.

And he wasn't - - ?

No, No. Maybe he was with us but then the men they took away but we don't know. My father, he had a stroke immediately. My older sister in New York, she established what date the Rabbi told her for Yahrzeit Zeidt, you know. For my mother we know because 2 days after the liberation on the 17th of April she died. So we know. My second husband found me in the camp. We didn't have no one. In 1947. He was in a sanitorium, he was sick.

In Europe?

He was close where I was, not far, _____{115}, I was living there and you know what, Hitler was there sitting in jail when he wrote "Mein Kampf". My younger sister and her husband one evening, we lived in one room - I wasn't married yet - a policeman came said they were arrested because they

weren't allowed to be outside at that time after the war and they were taken to the jail in Landsberg-Amersbach {ph} {115} so I didn't have food and I went to them and got from them food and I went to the jail and I had to walk there and then I found out later that Hitler was there. There were 2 other friends there after the war but they came back and my brother-in-law was there too. _____{124, I wasn't out with them, otherwise I brought them some food to jail and then I found out Hitler was there in jail, he wrote "Mein Kampf".

Once you were liberated and recuperated, you lived in this town in Germany, what did you do there?

I started to learn how to do sewing, you know, because I knew maybe we go to the United States, before I even got married because I could work in an office but I wanted to learn a trade, you know. I met my husband. He lived in a smaller town, this was like a resort, Bad Reichenhagen (ph),{131} so my son was born there. When my son was born, I used to go to the doctor there. It was like a hospital. It was close. My husband was standing all the time till my son was born. Luckily, we heard that they were killing the mothers or the children, the Germans because we were Jewish. How

many Jewish doctors survived? So luckily, he was standing all the time, luckily the doctor allowed him to stay in the room. So that's my husband, after the war I married him.

Mr. Roth.

Yes - No. His name was Rothkopf like Schwartzkopf. But it was a German name because the Jews, you know, lived in Germany but in the 12th century or the 14th century, a Polish king, Casimir the Great {ph} {142}, heard how the Jews were doing very well for the Germans, he invited them and you know how many Jews lived in Poland? Not even 5,000. Only the elderly people, the young left. We had an apartment house in Warsaw from my grandparents but my cousin's wife after the war was sent to Sweden so he came back and he sold it. He's dead too.

When did you come to the United States?

1949.

How did you arrange your passage?

Passage - When President Truman -- We don't have any relatives, only my late husband, he had an uncle in New York. He told me, he came here in 1911, he didn't like it, went back, got married and I don't remember exactly what, came back here and lived in Brooklyn because we used to go to _____{154} later on and his daughter she wrote something about President Kennedy because she went to school here, maybe she was born here - I don't remember - so he sent her a letter, I saw the letter, he thanked her how nice she wrote about him. So we came here to Washington, my younger sister and my other sister, he had a uncle so he sent in the papers. My sister came from Switzerland, my younger sister. I have a picture of her.

Through them, the uncle of - - - he was a dentist in Vienna, she met her future husband. See I know, in Florida, she sent me a letter, a card, because he had quadruple heart surgery. They go now every year. He was very, very sick.

So we came here and in the beginning the Jewish -----{166} helped us some money, you know, till my husband got a job, you know. He had ten jobs. I couldn't work, my son was ten months old. Not all jobs he could have because he was sick after the war and the doctor said not with paint, he wasn't allowed and Mrs. --the one here he was her husbands relative. We used to go to the doctor, he told me one time a women sitting and she said, I was in the office, she brought many relatives here. We didn't have no relatives. Sometimes, his uncle sent him a suit, a few dollars, you know, so we could make it because it was very, very hard when we came here like I said no relatives. He was not a wealthy man. So my brother-in-law told him to go to the Washington Post Saturday night to put, you know, all those papers in for Sunday and in night he was coming very late and finally he got the job with the Giant. And he worked in so bad neighborhoods, you know, Washington. Finally in 1961, we were already here 12 years, he learned to drive and we bought an old junk car, we had only problems. So in the Giant he used to come 10 o'clock, eat dinner 10 o'clock but when my son went to Hebrew Academy, I went myself, in Washington I knew where to go, and filled out for social security card and went and got a job in the Hecht Company. I had to fill out in housewares. This was the hardest job - sending the address, you know how many kinds of bills I had to fill out beside cash. Like banks, they throw in the metal. But 8 hours and my husband worked too. Next to us in another building a Christian family, they had a girl, a little older than my son but they played together and when I was home giving lunch I'd give lunch. I used to pay her \$2.00 a week. Her husband in a coffee house as a baker and every day he waited for my son when the cab brought him home from school but I had a hard time. Why? Because -----{197 - 199} (the tape fades out with nothing on it) the -----{201} wouldn't let me in.

I had to run the next block and I was afraid, 9:30 I had to be at work.

This is very interesting but for our purposes I wonder if there is anything else you remember from the war period that made an tremendous impression, any incident or any episode that you haven't told me about?

About the Germans came twice to our house with my father-in-law and hit him in the cheek. My father was responsible so he wouldn't run away, so I went with the Germans downstairs. Our apartment had 6 rooms that time and I showed him, "see _____ {210} the carpets?"

I grabbed him by the lapels and I said, now he will hit me, what I did, a Jewish women, but he behaved nice to me. He came up, my father was responsible. My parents left because every day the Gestapo, the Germans, used to come because of the _____ {214} and because my father was the president of this organization for the poor Jews, doctors, dentists, this was a secret organization so

they wanted the papers so they grabbed me on the street when I went to the lawyer so everybody had to run away, we couldn't stay. But my brother had hidden like the pictures we got from the janitor hidden some in gold. I had a gold heart when I was a teenager. My initial E.B. In Polish they gave me a remembrance and a bracelet I had and whatever, some things. And I had a beautiful handbag but I don't have it here, you know, that my late first husband gave me. And the diamond ring we had to sell it in Warsaw. We were eating horse meat, you know. The Jews were selling horse meat.

Unless there is anything else you wanted to say, I think we can stop.

Yes, I come from a very wealthy family, you know. Money was not a problem. We used to go to resort. We used to go to resort in the mountains and the Jews from Krakoff, they spoke only Polish and had payes {ph} {233} and it was in 1936, we went there and I found in a book about this town, Krakoff, a Pole who had a big drugstore still in the ghetto, in Krakoff, he knew many Jews. I don't see the book, maybe someday I'll find the book. I want someone to read about how the Jews spoke Polish, not Yiddish, you know, beautiful. He said what he wrote the book.

My late husband, my second, he had dreams sometimes, he screamed at night, you know. He had terrible dreams. And me, when I think - -,

My younger sister who was in the camp - - the Jews who had real estate in our city, we had Jewish banks, we had organizations. So in Poland, people who live in apartment house gave us like wechsel like here ---

Like a promisor note?

No, like checks, but we couldn't get and we needed the money so we paid some my father showed me how to do it. You had to pay and we could get cash from people, Jewish people were doing it

too. Then one time, my younger sister to a friend of mine whose parents had too real estate, she got the job in the bank. When one time came and so he said, "what, you will work?" "People who need to work, have to work". In Poland, people didn't work, I mean the women. Only the women, we had a Jewish drugstore - pharmacist, so Jewish women but otherwise, Jewish women, well off, didn't work. He said, what my daughter will work? I'm ashamed. You don't have to work.

What I would like to do now is I'd like to stop and then we can go back and you can tell me about some of the other members of your family. Is that alright?

Yes, sure.

Thank you very much, this have been very useful.