

# **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum**

**Interview with Ursula Marx**  
**June 8, 2016**  
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## PREFACE

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## **URSULA MARX**

### **June 8, 2016**

Question: This is a **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum** interview with Mrs. **Ursula Marx**, on June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016, in **Columbia, Maryland**. Thank you very much Mrs. **Marx** for agreeing to meet with us today, and to share your story, and your experiences. I am going to start our interview with – at the very beginning, with the most basic questions, and everything will – will unfold from there. So, my very first question to you is, can you tell me the date of your birth?

Answer: February 5<sup>th</sup>, 1920.

Q: 1920.

A: Correct.

Q: And where were you born?

A: I was born in **Breslau**. [coughs] Excuse me.

Q: **Breslau, Germany**?

A: Yes, **Breslau, Germany**.

Q: Okay. And, is that in the – can you tell me where – what part of **Germany** that's in?

A: Yes, it's in **East Germany**, and is now Polish.

Q: And what's the Polish name, do you know?

A: **Berlotsky**(ph) or something like – I – I don't know. I do not remember.

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Q: You do not know.

A: No.

Q: Okay. But it was in this terri – territory that was kind of contested between the two countries?

A: Yes, it was called the Polish **corrindor** – corridor.

Q: Okay. And what was your name at birth?

A: **Ursula** ma – **Ursula Guthmann**.

Q: **Ursula Guthmann**?

A: **G-u-t-h-m-a-n-n**.

Q: Okay. Did you have brothers and sisters?

A: I had just a sister.

Q: Was she older or younger than you?

A: She's older than I am.

Q: And what is her name?

A: Her name is **Susan** – **Suzanna**(ph).

Q: **Suzanna**(ph) **Guthmann**?

A: Yes.

Q: And her married name, if she's married?

A: Her married name is **Rosenberg**(ph).

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Q: Okay. And when was she born?

A: She was born October 12<sup>th</sup>, 1917.

Q: Oh, that's my daughter's birthday.

A: Oh.

Q: Not 1917, but the October 12<sup>th</sup>. And, tell me a little bit about your parents, starting with their names.

A: My father's name was **Martin Guthmann**. My mother's name was **Elise, e-l-i-s-e Regina Lowey, l-o-w-e-y**.

Q: Uh-huh. And were your parents originally from **Breslau**?

A: My mother was born there, and my father was born in **Frankfurt**, in the **Oder** – at the **Oder**.

Q: So, the other **Frankfurt**.

A: Yes.

Q: The one that's in the east.

A: Exactly.

Q: Okay. Were their families from **Germany**, or were they from another country, on both sides of your family?

A: They were all Germans, as far as I know.

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Q: Okay, okay. In **Breslau**, did you have an extended family that you interacted with, mu – from your mother's side? Aunts and uncles and grandparents and so?

A: I had the two grandmothers living there.

Q: Okay, so your father and your mother's mothers.

A: Right.

Q: Okay. Did your mother have siblings?

A: My mother had two sisters, and they lived in **Glogau, g-l-o-g-a-u**.

Q: Was that far from **Breslau**?

A: No, not too far.

Q: Okay. And, did your father have any relatives living in **Breslau**?

A: No, my father had – my father's sister lived in **Leipzig**.

Q: Okay. And was that his only sibling?

A: Yes, at the time.

Q: Okay. And how is it that you came to be born in **Breslau**, and not someplace else?

A: My parents lived in **Breslau**, my mother was born in **Breslau**, ma –

Q: So did you – uh-huh?

A: – they got married there, I think.

Q: Okay. Your fa – do you know anything about how your parents met?

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A: No, I do not. In those days you didn't ask your – your parents any questions, and I'm forever sorry that I didn't.

Q: Tell me a little bit about how your father – I assume it was your father, supported the family.

A: Supported the family?

Q: Yes.

A: My father had the business, and it's called **Getreide Kaufmann**.

Q: And what's **Getreide Kaufmann** mean?

A: It – he – he bought truckloads of corn, and other –

Q: Grain?

A: Yes, other grains, and sold them. And he had – he had a company, he had a partner, and that's how he supported us.

Q: So was this a wholesale business?

A: I don't know if you would call it that.

Q: Okay. Who were his customers? Who did he usually sell the grain to? You don't know.

A: I do not know.

Q: Okay. Do you know if it was a large business?

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A: I know he had an office with several employees, and I do not know anything else.

Q: From your ti – earliest years, do you have any memories, or episodes of something? Your earliest – earliest things that come to your mind, of yourself as a little child, can you share anything with us?

A: I lo – I know a lot of things, from an early age on. I think I was about – goes back to my age two or three, even.

Q: Okay, so what is your – what is some memory that you have from being two years –

A: One of – one of my first memories is that a cousin of mine was born in **Breslau**, and we went to the hospital to see him. And I know he was only two and a half older – two and a half years older than I.

Q: So, that's when you were two and a half, and you **[indecipherable]**

A: Yes, and I re – that's the first memory I have.

Q: And then afterwards?

A: I remember lots of things. I don't know what you want me to do.

Q: Okay, I know, it's a little bit too open-ended, so I'll – I'll try to be more specific.

Can you tell me a little bit about your home, where you lived –

A: Yes.



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Q: – what it looked like.

A: All right. We lived in an apartment house. My mother never wanted a house.

Q: Okay.

A: We had a la – very large apartment. We had – my sister and I shared a bedroom, and then there was another room, and then there was my parents' bedroom. And there were two bathrooms, kitchen, and an entrance hall. And then there was a dining room, and a salon with a piano and stuff. And then another, like a library.

Q: It sound very spacious.

A: It was.

Q: Was it in an old type of building that was built in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the stone buildings, the f – that had many floors? That kind of an apartment house? Could you describe the outside of it?

A: It was just a – a plain brick building.

Q: Brick building.

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay.

A: I think it was brick.

Q: Was it relatively new, for the time?

A: I don't know.

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Q: Okay, okay. Well, you said you had two bathrooms, that meant you had indoor plumbing.

A: Oh yes, oh yes.

Q: Okay.

A: We had some – there were several floors. There was – in the basement was a washroom. So once a month a washerwoman came, and they had a – all machines down there, and ironing boards and things, and they would wash the laundry down there.

Q: For the whole apartment building?

A: No, for us.

Q: Ah, I see, I see. So, what – was this basement a communal – a communal space that others could use too?

A: I think it was.

Q: Okay.

A: And then on the top floor, was a – a place where we could store things. Like my – my grandmother would – she would cook vegetable things and put them in jars, and they were stored up there.

Q: Okay. Did you know your neighbors?

A: Not too many, no.

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Q: Okay. Were there – was this mostly a Jewish neighborhood, or a mixed neighborhood?

A: I – I think it was mostly Jewish, I'm not sure.

Q: Okay. Okay. And you had – you had indoor plumbing, you had electricity –

A: Yes.

Q: – in the building?

A: Yes.

Q: And how is the building heat – you know, how did you heat the building?

A: We had radiators.

Q: Radiators?

A: Yes.

Q: And coal ovens in the bottom, in the basement, or you have no idea?

A: No.

Q: Okay. I know, these sound like strange questions, but what – the purpose behind them is to try to get a sense of –

A: I understand.

Q: – what was life like?

A: Yes.

Q: You know?

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A: Life was wonderful.

Q: Yeah.

A: We had loving parents, and we had everything we needed.

Q: Were they well-to-do?

A: My parents were what's called middle class, but middle class was, you had the maid and the cook.

Q: Well, that's pretty – for our –

A: Yes.

Q: – for our –

A: Yes.

Q: – understanding, most people can't afford those things here. But you could in Germany – did you have a nanny?

A: Yes, we did. We had a – when we grew a little older, we had a part-time nanny, and in the beginning probably a whole. I don't know.

Q: Okay.

A: We had the nanny.

Q: What language did your parents speak at home?

A: German.

Q: Did they know any other languages?

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A: Not to my knowledge.

Q: Okay, so Yiddish was not part of –

A: I never heard of the word Yiddish.

Q: You never even heard of the word?

A: No.

Q: Okay. And was it –

A: I didn't know what kosher was.

Q: Ah, okay, so they were assimilated.

A: Absolutely. My parents was – my parents were Jewish Germans. And here, I'm an American Jew.

Q: What is the –

A: Difference is that we were a hundred percent Germans.

Q: You never saw yourself as not German.

A: No, never.

Q: That's quite a shock then, when it changes.

A: It was. And my father always said, they didn't mean him, he was in first World War.

Q: Did he ever talk about the first World War to you?

A: No. I have a picture of him.

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Q: Did – were your parents storytellers in any way?

A: No.

Q: Were they – tell me a little bit about their personalities, about your father's personality, your mother's.

A: Happy people.

Q: Were they?

A: Very. Happy people. They were good together.

Q: They liked each other.

A: They loved each other.

Q: Okay.

A: And it was very av – very open, and visible. And we thrived under that –

Q: Of course.

A: – my sister and I.

Q: Of course. And, when you were growing up in the 1920s, what are some of the memories that you'd have from outside the home? You must have started school in the mid-20s.

A: Yes. We went – we went to private school, my sister and I.

Q: Okay.

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A: And that was mostly Jewish. There was a very nice habit in **Germany**; on your first day of school you got what is called a **tsukatute**(ph).

Q: A **tsukatute**(ph)?

A: Have you ever heard of that?

Q: No.

A: It's a cone-shaped piece of cardboard, but they outside is like decorated, and – maybe with wallpaper, or something, and there's candy in there. That's what you get on your first day of school. So it's a very nice habit.

Q: It's a lovely one. It's a lovely one, and you remember your **tsukatute**(ph)?

A: Oh yes.

Q: And do you remember your school?

A: Yes, I do. I – it was coopted by the name of the person who owned it, **Fraulein Vole**(ph).

Q: **Fraulein Vole**(ph).

A: Uh-huh.

Q: And, was it large? Was it a girls' school, or was it a mixed school, boys and –

A: It was a mixed school, but what was – it was – what's interesting is, religious instructions were given to the Jewish students separately from the other students.

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Now, our rabbi would – a rabbi would come in and teach us whatever we needed to know, and the Catholic children were with another pre – it was a priest –

Q: Priest.

A: – and the others with a – you know, they – they were separated.

Q: A pros –

A: Yeah.

Q: A Protestant pastor.

A: Yeah.

Q: Do you know whether or not **Breslau** was a city that was mostly Catholic, or mostly Protestant?

A: I do not know that, but I know they had a Jewish cemetery there.

Q: Okay.

A: N – a semin – seminar.

Q: A seminary?

A: Yeah, a seminary.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And a se – and the cemetery too, of course.

Q: Okay. And was there a large Jewish community?



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A: Yes. Very cultural, they had opera. My mother was singing and playing the piano. And it was – it was a happy community. I had a hap – very happy, very happy childhood.

Q: Did you travel, did you go on vacations?

A: Yes, we did.

Q: Tell me a little bit about those.

A: We went to the ca – mountains, mostly without my father, because he was working, and then he would come up and visit.

Q: In – the mountains in **Germany**?

A: Yes. **Riesengebirge**.

Q: Ah, riesen – so, south of **Leipzig**? Or **Dresden** li – south of – or maybe I'm mixing up my **gebirge**.

A: No. I don't exactly know where now, I have to look that up, where that was.

Q: Okay.

A: Where it was. There's a mountain called the **Schneekoppe**, that would have the snow up on top. We would go to the mou – we had – we had – we – we would walk up, and stop at certain times, and eat a snack and then go on, and vacations were wonderful.

Q: And it was mostly the three of you, and sometimes your father.

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A: Yeah.

Q: Because he was always busy.

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay. Did your father have an automobile?

A: Ah no, the business did.

Q: The business did.

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay. And remind me again, he was in partnership with somebody for the business?

A: Yes.

Q: Who was his partner?

A: It'll probably come to me.

Q: But it wasn't a relative.

A: No.

Q: Okay.

A: And then, when the depression came, the business sa – failed, or went down. So we moved to **Berlin** when I was 10 – nine or 10.

Q: Oh, I see, I see. Before we get there – I wanted to find out about that, but I want – we don't have many interviews from **Breslau**. So I'd like to find out a little bit

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more about what, in your memory, what was the city of your first years, you know, your childhood. What kind of a place was it, what did it look like? What did you know about it? Did you go to – I mean, I'm asking a whole bunch of questions, but that's the basic point.

A: Yeah.

Q: Can you tell me?

A: It was a – a clean, open town, with nice parks, and they ha – I ha – I have a picture of the downtown, and we would go with my mother, we would go shopping.

Q: Did she have her favorite stores to go to?

A: I don't remem – I don't know that. And that's nice stores, and I di – I don't know exactly what you're looking for.

Q: Well, did you have – a-as you said, you had vacations in the mountains, did you have any kind of excursions that were daily – you know, closer to home, in – in

**Breslau** itself, for entertainment?

A: No.

Q: Did you go to the cinema?

A: Yeah, oh, we went to theater a lot.

Q: You went to theater.

A: Yes.

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Q: Okay.

A: And opera. Well no, not then, not until we moved to **Berlin**, we went to the opera, we – you know, that was part of school in **Europe**, all over **Europe**, children grow up with all that stuff. They – you go to museums, and you go to theater. Movies was also, but not as much. And – and you read about it.

Q: Were your parents religious?

A: Not – we – we – we – we went to temple sometimes, but we weren't very observant. We ate pork.

Q: Okay.

A: And we had no – as I say, I didn't know what kosher was.\

Q: Okay.

A: It was – I don't know. I can't find anything unusual about it.

Q: I know. What's – what is un-unusual to us, when you have an – you know, when a person thinks of their own life, it's their life, it's – what's so – what's so special, you know –

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: – to ask about. But to us, it is.

A: Of course.

Q: Yeah.

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A: Now, I met somebody recently, who was in **Breslau** after the war.

Q: Okay.

A: And she said it's completely destroyed.

Q: Is it, yeah.

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah.

A: Of course, they're building it up again.

Q: And today it's part of **Poland**.

A: Yes.

Q: Okay. Was talk of the wider world, while you're still in **Breslau**, whether it would be events in **Germany**, or events in **Europe**, or events just generally, was that part of your household? That is when you'd sit down to dinner, would politics be something your parents would discuss with them – between themselves?

A: No, we a – we actually, when we were little, we gu – we didn't eat with our parents.

Q: You didn't?

A: No.

Q: Okay.

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A: We ate in our rooms, and whoever was taking care of us brought food. Later on, we ate with our parents, when we were a little older.

Q: Do you remember moving from **Breslau** to **Berlin**?

A: I did, yes. Not the moving itself, because I was staying with my grandmother, for two weeks, while they moved.

Q: And – the grandmother in **Breslau**?

A: Yeah. Both my grandmothers were in **Breslau** at the time.

Q: And where in **Berlin** did – did you move to? What part of town?

A: We moved about west – **West Berlin**.

Q: Okay.

A: And we – again, we had a very nice apartment. Not quite as big, but very nice.

And my sister went over, to look at – you know, th-the German – the – **Berlin**, they will pay your fare, and let you come back. I did not want to go, but she went.

Q: Do you remember what part of town your apartment was in?

A: Yes. **Wilmersdorf**.

Q: Ah, in **Wilmersdorf**. Do you remember also the street address?

A: Yes. **Westfälische Strasse, zweiundachtzig**.

Q: **Westfälische Strasse, zweiundachtzig**.

A: **Westfälische Strasse, 82**.

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Q: So that would be **Westphalian**.

A: Yeah.

Q: **Westphalian** Street, 82. And so that's pretty – pretty central.

A: Uh-huh. Well, it was between – I don't know if you know anything about **Berlin**.

Q: I lived there.

A: Oh, you lived there, so –

Q: I lived in **Zehlendorf**.

A: – you know where **Fehrbelliner Platz** is?

Q: Oh, yeah.

A: It was between **Fehrbelliner Platz**, and another **platz**.

Q: I'm sure we'd be able to find it [**indecipherable**] okay. So your father – the business folded, in other words.

A: Yes, and he went – he got another partner in **Berlin**, and started the same business there.

Q: Really?

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay. And how did that seem to go?

A: Went fine until the Nazis came.

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Q: Okay. So, the depression hit. Would have this been 1929 when you moved to **Berlin**? Okay. And so he had a couple of years, when he was able to be successful in this –

A: More than a couple.

Q: How – how long, would you say?

A: Probably more like four or five.

Q: Okay. And you started to go to school in **Berlin**?

A: Yes.

Q: Was that very different from **Breslau**?

A: Well, I had just started high school, so it was – no, wasn't that much different.

Q: Mm-hm. Was it also a private school?

A: No. Well, in **Germany**, at the time, you had to pay for your high school.

Otherwise, you went to element – not – you went to folks – **Volksschule**.

Q: Okay, and what was **Volksschule**? What was that?

A: The – the government pays for that.

Q: And was it a different kind of education?

A: Yes.

Q: And what kind of education was it?

A: A lower education.



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Q: Okay. Was it more like preparing people for trades?

A: Yes.

Q: All right. And the school you went to would prepare you for?

A: For being – to go into college.

Q: Okay. Okay. So, you hadn't gone to high school in **Breslau**, but you did in **Berlin**?

A: I started in **Breslau**, and then I went to **Berlin**.

Q: I see. Okay.

A: Cause I was 10.

Q: Yeah.

A: I must have been 10.

Q: Yeah.

A: So it must have been 1930.

Q: Okay. And, do you have any memories of this second school, that – in – in **Berlin**?

A: Yes.

Q: Can you share any of those with – or what the classroom was like, what the teachers were like?

A: We had very good teachers.

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Q: You did.

A: Yes, most of them were very good. Now, **Germany** has different accents, like here, the south.

Q: Sure.

A: We had a – a math teacher who was from **Bavaria**, it took us two weeks to know what he was – to understand what he was saying. But they were good teachers. It was – now, here when you – when you don't pass a grade, you can repeat it. There, if you pa – if you don't pass one thing, you have to – you have to repeat the whole thing.

Q: So, if you don't pass mathematics, for example, you have to take –

A: The whole –

Q: – history again, English again.

A: Everything, yeah.

Q: Okay.

A: At least that's the way it was then.

Q: Okay. How was your – how did you do?

A: I did pretty good. My sister was always smarter than I.

Q: Older, smarter.

A: She was a goody-goody, and I was a – I was a pest.

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Q: Oh, were you somebody who was mischievous?

A: Mm-hm.

Q: What was some of the mischief you would get into?

A: Oh, I'd just not do what they asked me to do. I wanted my way.

Q: Did you ha – did your mother have help in **Berlin**, as she had had in **Breslau**?

A: Yes, yes. Not as much, but she did.

Q: And describe to me what **Westfälische's zweiundachtzig** looked like.

A: It had an elevator.

Q: Okay.

A: Which the one a – in **Breslau** did not.

Q: Okay.

A: And it had lovely big rooms, with beautiful floors, and –

Q: What floor were you on?

A: I think we were on the fifth, I'm not sure.

Q: So, pretty high up.

A: Yeah.

Q: Pretty, a-and fifth European – by the European count, or by an American count?

Amer – you see, European, the ground floor is not counted as the first floor. The first floor is above the ground floor.

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A: Oh. I don't know –

Q: You don't remember.

A: – maybe – maybe it was lower than that, I'm not sure.

Q: Okay, okay. Did you have balconies, and –

A: Yes, we had two balconies. One in front and one in the back. Now, where we talking about?

Q: **Berlin.**

A: Yeah, I think we also had two. I'm pretty sure.

Q: Okay. Did you father have an office for his –

A: Yes, yes.

Q: – business in **Berlin**?

A: Yes.

Q: And was it close to your home?

A: No, it wasn't too close, and he worked on Saturday, half a day. And on the way home, he would stop at the candy store, and he would buy – come home with a big package, and there was always something special for my sister and for me, and for the maid. And then the rest of it my mother put away, and she would dole it out during the week.

Q: That's a sweet thought.

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A: My father would come home for lunch, and my si – and we – and we were home for lunch t – also. So – and we would run to the door to see who could greet him first.

Q: Oh, that's s – that's so **[indecipherable]**

A: And he was – they were just wonderful.

Q: Okay. Is there – were you closer to one, or to the other, or –

A: I was a momma's girl. I – my mother was very important. My father too, but I don't know – no, they were both equally important.

Q: And did they have any particular interests or hobbies?

A: I don't think my father did, but my mother, music.

Q: Okay.

A: Yeah.

Q: And, personality-wise?

A: They were happy people. I don't remember any depressions, or any dark parts about it. It was just – my sister and I – my sister's still alive at 89 – at 80 – at 98.

Q: Wow.

A: I'm 96.

Q: Wow. I wouldn't have thought it. I really wouldn't have thought it. When you said –

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A: But you saw it.

Q: Yeah, but when you said 1920, I was, whoa.

A: We were just lucky.

Q: Yeah.

A: We talk about my parents a lot.

Q: Yeah? What are some of the things that – that come up again and again?

A: Now, my – my children are – especially my older daughter, remembers my father very well. And we still quote him, most every day.

Q: Really?

A: Yeah.

Q: Well, were s – what were some of the things that he would say?

A: He was just a all-around wonderful, wise person. And they never met my si – my mother, but she was awfully unique.

Q: Okay.

A: My mother could tell jokes, and she was – she was fast in everything she did. It was – it was just a happy life.

Q: When you were in school in **Berlin**, was there – did you feel different from the other kids, because you were Jewish?

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A: No. I had friends on both sides. No, we were full – until **Hitler** came, we were fully accepted, and – I mean, I say now accepted; then, I felt just like everybody else.

Q: Okay. Okay, there was no distinction, there was no difference.

A: No, no.

Q: Was politics talked about at home?

A: No. Oh, poli – some of it, but not much.

Q: Did you have a radio?

A: Yes. The first radio I ever saw, I couldn't figure out who was in there.

Q: How'd they get there? How's that voice come out from there? What were the sort of things that you remember hearing over the radio?

A: By that time, it was about **Hitler**, and stuff like that.

Q: Okay. So, your – in 1931 and '32, you've only been in **Berlin** a few years.

A: Yeah.

Q: And you're still in school.

A: Yes.

Q: And there are elections that are coming up, you know. Was that something that penetrated into your personal world, you know?

A: After a while, yes, of course it did.

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Q: How?

A: It was the radio.

Q: Okay.

A: And then – then we did talk about it. And by that time, we were older.

Q: Yeah. When **Hitler** actually came to power in 1933, did that make itself felt in your father's business, in your experiences in school? Did that make itself felt in your life?

A: Not in '33, a little later than that.

Q: Can you tell me about that?

A: My first awareness of it, is that is that what you're talking about?

Q: Pardon?

A: My first awareness of it.

Q: Yes, yes.

A: I think it was a gradual thing. I don't remember exactly when it started, but of course, we were very much aware of it. They had news films that, you know, you – now you only – now you see it on television. In those days, you had to go to the movies to see it.

Q: Okay.

A: And we saw it. That's how we became aware of it.



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Q: So you would see news films while you were in the cinema?

A: Yes. They were – they were special films just with news.

Q: Okay. And what are some of the things that would stand out to you?

A: Everything was so foreign. This physical thing, this marching, and yelling, and this boasting of how good they were, and – and the sports, and – and then things were forbidden, and then we couldn't go to the movies, we couldn't sit on park benches. We had – have you ever heard in your interviews, about the **Kulturbund**?

Q: Tell me about it.

A: When we couldn't go to the theater any more, or to the concerts, Jewish theater started to come – got into existence.

Q: Okay.

A: And it was called the **Kulturbund**.

Q: I see.

A: Culture **bund**. And my parents, of course, were members of it, and my sister and I would go to all these performances. They were all done by Jews.

Q: And were they in sp – different places –

A: Yes.

Q: – the performances?

A: Yes, they were in theaters, and –

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Q: So they were able to rent out space in different theaters?

A: I don't know the – all the background of those things.

Q: No, no, but you –

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay. And did the behavior of your teachers change, in school?

A: By that time we were out of it. We – we – we couldn't go to school any more.

Q: When did that – when did that happen, that you couldn't go to school any more?

A: I think I was 16.

Q: So, that would have been 1936.

A: Yes.

Q: And what happened with your father's business after 1933?

A: For several years he kept it, and then – then the Nazis took it.

Q: I see, so –

A: And when he – and when he came to this country, they got **Wiedergutmachung**, you know what that is?

Q: Reparations?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay. But that's a lot later, isn't it?

A: Yes, of course.

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Q: Okay. So I still want to get a sense of this life in **Berlin** in the 1930s. Did you see Brownshirts walking down the street?

A: Yeah.

Q: Were they near your home?

A: No.

Q: No. Did you ever feel harassed in school, when you were still in school?

A: No.

Q: Okay.

A: I was out then.

Q: But when you say, I was out, there were still some years after **Hitler** was in power –

A: Yeah.

Q: – before you were out, and th –

A: No, I didn't feel anything particular.

Q: Okay, so your teachers were not cruel?

A: No.

Q: And the fellow students did not –

A: No.

Q: – behave differently?

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A: No, that happens later. Some of my friends wouldn't talk to me any more.

Q: And that was after you had already left school?

A: It's so hard to separate it exactly.

Q: Okay. Then it doesn't matter. It doesn't – in – in that sense, it doesn't matter. It – what I'm after is, the incidents where you experienced them not speaking to you any more, can you tell us more about that?

A: It was just – we didn't – we didn't stay in the same places, we just – they didn't walk where I walked, and –

Q: Would you see th –

A: – they wouldn't make any attempt to contact me.

Q: Okay.

A: As a matter of fact, I was on a business trip with my husband, to **Germany** from here, and I used the bathroom at the bed and breakfast. There was a magazine rack. And one of the girls that had been my friend, and was in school with me, had become a very famous actress.

Q: No kidding?

A: I saw her picture. And so, somebody asked me, did you contact her? It had gone through my mind, and then I decided not to do it, because I didn't want to be rejected. I didn't know how she felt.

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Q: What year was this that you were in **Germany**, and you saw the picture in the magazine rack? Was this several decades after the war?

A: Oh yes.

Q: Seventies, 80s?

A: Probably around that time.

Q: Okay, okay. And so you never did contact her?

A: No.

Q: Did the rejection ever come in a very obvious way?

A: No, it was subtle. But you know, this is part of my upbringing. My parents instilled a spirit in us that, no matter what happens to you, you're still yourself. You don't lose yourself, you don't lose your value. And that's what kept us going.

Q: Those are very important lessons.

A: Yes, very.

Q: You know.

A: And so I'm – you know, we're so fortunate. Not every child has that.

Q: That's right, that's right, th – the – you know, as we grow up, part of our answer to, am I worth anything, is your mirror to the world, and how the world reacts to you.

A: Yeah.

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Q: And at some point, in growth, you have to come to a realization that you have value, despite how the world reacts to you. And that's something –

A: Yeah.

Q: – you're saying your parents stres – stressed.

A: By example. Not by lecturing.

Q: Okay.

A: It – it helped me when I came to this country, which is, of course, much later, and we may come to that.

Q: Yes, yes. So, did your level of living change much in 1933 to '36, those first years of **Hitler** being in power?

A: It did later on, yes, because for instance, you couldn't have a maid any more, that was under 45, because that's when those – when they couldn't have children any more, and they didn't want to work for Jews. So we had a part time maid, over 46.

Q: I see. I see.

A: And our apartment was smaller by then, because my mother couldn't take care of anything big. And I guess the money wasn't there either, I don't know.

Q: Okay. Were your parents less – how was their manor? Did their manor change, as time went on? Were they less happy? Were they more worried?

A: Not to – they didn't show it to us. And it came out when they – when we left.

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Q: Tell me about that.

A: Well, it's a really a long story, I –

Q: Please, please.

A: Okay.

Q: Please.

A: By that time it was later on, and I did not want to stay in **Germany**. I could see what was happening. My father kept saying, you don't have to worry. I'm – I was a – I have the Iron Cross, I was in the army. They're not going to do anything to me. But, course that changed after Crystal Night.

Q: Okay, so you were still in **Berlin** during **Kristallnacht**?

A: I was still in – yes, I was. But before that, what happened – no, th – I don't – happened around that time, I wanted to go – I wanted to leave so badly. And I was a stamp collector at the time. One Sunday afternoon I was looking at my stamps, and I found an envelope that my uncle had given me, that came from **America**, and it had an American stamp on it, addressed to him, and he gave it to me because I – he knew I was collecting stamps. So, he happened to be in our house that Sunday, and I went in there, and I said, who are these people that wrote to you from **America**? And he said, that's my – cousin of mine. And I asked him about the details, this couple, they had no children. He was American, and she came – had come from

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**Germany.** So I said, would you please write to them and see if they would give us an affidavit? And he did write to them, and he did give us an affidavit, my sister – for my sister and me.

Q: And this is in what year?

A: It was probably about – it was around '38.

Q: Okay. Before **Kristallnacht**. Because that's November '38.

A: I know. I know.

Q: Oh, yeah.

A: And I'm – I'm trying to pinpoint it, and I have not been able to – to get the – give the exact date.

Q: Okay.

A: Well, when the affidavit came, you have a quota number. And it was a very high number, there were a lot of people ahead of us. So I said to him – my father, I said, I don't want to stay and wait here and maybe not get out. He had a friend in **London**, and that friend had a friend – an English friend, who was in amer – who was a Quaker, a British Quaker. And he told him – he said to my father's friend, we've been thinking what we can do for German Jews, and maybe this is something we can do. Maybe we can take one of them. And it so happened – you know, life is so strange that way – so happened that an American qua – the head of the American



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Quaker was visiting that friend – that man in **London**, at the time, Dr.

**Balderson**(ph). And he was on the way to **Germany** to find out what was happening. And so Mr. – the English Quaker said to him, would you investigate that family, and see if we can take one of those girls? And he did, and I remember when he came to our house, Dr. **Balderson**(ph) –

Q: Dr. **Borgussen**(ph)?

A: **Balderson**(ph), **b-a-l** –

Q: Oh, **Balderson**(ph).

A: Yeah, **Balderson**(ph).

Q: **Balderson**(ph), mm-hm.

A: And he came on a Sunday, and we – we had already learned English in school, and my mother spoke a little bit. So she made coffee, and we talked. And later on he went back and he told them that our family was fine. So they said they would take one of us.

Q: Did your sister want to go as much as you did?

A: I guess. I think. Well, we were a pair, anyway. So we send – we wrote to them, and we sent our pictures, both of us. And as they told us later one when they saw the picture, they said, we can't take one, we have to take them both. So we got ready to go.

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Q: Okay.

A: And I'd like to tell you the process of what happened.

Q: Please, please.

A: Everything we took – somebody came from the government, and everything we took, he marked down, and we had – my parents had to pay the government the worth of that particular article that we took. In money.

Q: Even when you owned it?

A: We owned.

Q: You owned the article, and yet, if you want –

A: And yet – and yet, they had to pay the amount that article was worth.

Q: What did you – do you remember what it is that you actually took with you?

A: Well, we took all – yes, we took our clothes, of course, and we did manage – my sister took a sewing machine. And we took a few little gadgets. We took, I think a small rug, and – and some vases, you know, few little items.

Q: Household items type things.

A: We – this is another thing that I would like to talk about, is how the process was.

Q: Yes, tell me.

A: And what **[indecipherable]**

Q: Okay, please tell me.

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A: You may have heard this before, but I think it repeats – most people here, Americans, do not know this. You know, it got worse every year.

Q: Yeah.

A: And people are wondering, how do – did they know which stores were Jewish, and how could they know which glasses to break. Well, one year there was a law that all Jews had to take – all female Jews had to take the name **Sarah**, and all male had to take the name ...

Q: **Israel**.

A: Is – I forgot [**indecipherable**] for a minute. Anyway, they had to take these two names. The following year there was a law, all Jewish stores had to write their names on the outside of the windows. You see the connection?

Q: So if your – if your name –

A: If you had a Jewish store, your Jewish name was on the outside, on the window. It was painted on there.

Q: Where were you during **Kristallnacht**?

A: My sister and I were home with my father. My mother was in **Breslau**, visiting her mother.

Q: Okay.

A: And of course, we heard what was happening.

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Q: What is it that you hear – you heard?

A: We heard that the men were taken, put into prison.

Q: Did anyone come to your apartment?

A: I did – I'm going to tell you about that. My father went to somebody's house where they had already been, and taken the man. So he went there.

Q: I see.

A: My father was never taken.

Q: And it was – and you and your sister remained in your apartment?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you hear things out in the streets?

A: No, this is – was not a commercial street.

Q: I see.

A: It was – there were no stores around there.

Q: Did you venture out the following day, or the days afterward?

A: Yes, yes.

Q: What is it that you saw?

A: We saw the broken glass, and the damage – synagogues were ablaze, and –

Q: You saw the burning?

A: Yeah.

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Q: Were you afraid for your own life, at that point?

A: No, I – I – you know, we – when you're that young, you don't think of it. And we were young young. We were quite – you know, we were very protected all our lives.

Q: And so, Mr. **Balderson**(ph) visited you after **Kristallnacht**?

A: I think it was after **Kristallnacht**, I think so. I'm not sure.

Q: And the Quaker couple in – in **London** said –

A: Took us in.

Q: Took both of you. And can you tell me about your leave-taking?

A: Yes.

Q: You say, first of all, there was the inventory of your things.

A: You know, can you imagine parents sending their two daughters away? Not a tear, nothing.

Q: Really?

A: They never – they never showed us anything. But from the minute we left, there was only one thing on our minds, to get them out. That was the only thing we ever wanted.

Q: Did you go by train?

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A: Yeah, my father said flying was too dangerous. So we went – we had to cross a channel, with a boat, and we were so seasick. And then when we got to the station in **England**, I remember the first word Dr. **Balderson**(ph) said to us. Ah, not – not Dr. **Balderson**(ph), the other one. Who's who? Who's who? We lived in **London** for a few more months, and they were building a home in **Sussex**, and that's where we moved then, later. And this we were when war broke out. Then – so we thought we'd never see them again. But we did.

Q: What was the name of the family, the Quaker family?

A: Dr. **Harding**.

Q: Dr. **Harding**?

A: Yes, he invented the fir – the bo – the smokescreen, in the first World War. You think you have some water?

Q: Excuse me, yes, we can cut. **[break]** Okay.

A: Didn't we talk when the war breaking out, and – while we were in **England**?

Q: Yeah. So, you were with the **Hardings**, and he – he developed something called a smokescreen?

A: Yes, he did that in the first World War, he – he was a chemist.

Q: Uh-huh, I see.

A: And he developed the smokescreen.

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Q: Did you – were you able to write letters with your parents?

A: Yes.

Q: – I mean, to your parents –

A: Yes.

Q: – and receive letters from them?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay.

A: And we had secured a position for them to come to **England**, my mother as a maid, and my father as a housekeep – house – oh, my father would – never knew how to drive, learned how to drive, so he could be a chauffeur.

Q: Okay. And this was in between, let's say – before September '39, before the world – war breaks out, you had secured these positions for them.

A: Yes.

Q: Okay. And then –

A: And then, of course, they couldn't come, because war broke out.

Q: Oh my.

A: And then, I continue with them, once we come to **America**.

Q: Okay. So, what happened then with you and your sisters?

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A: Well, the **Hardings**, who were going to keep us until we – the agreement we had with them is that we would leave when we got our affidavit to **America**.

Q: I see, so that transferred. You were able –

A: Oh yes.

Q: – to leave from the –

A: We stayed on that list.

Q: Okay.

A: But then war broke out, and they did not bargain to have us there for a long, long time. So they send me to his sister, to be a maid there.

Q: And where did she live?

A: She lived in northern **England**, in **Manchester**.

Q: Okay.

A: So, I was up there, and then I was a maid. And I don't think I was a very good maid, because I'd never done that stuff before. I did the best I could, and they were very nice to me. And my sister got a job on the same street where they lived in – in their new house. They were two women lived together, and she was a housekeeper there.

Q: In **Sussex**?



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A: Yes. So we were separated. And – and then – then they applied for us to go to **Australia**, because they didn't know what was coming [**indecipherable**]. They did not bargain to keep us forever. And so –

Q: Did you feel unwelcome?

A: No. No, but we understood that, you know, that the – wouldn't do that. We were just grateful that they did what they wa – did. And they were wonderful to us. But then, fortunately, my American visa – our American visa came through first.

Q: Okay.

A: So, for a while I stayed with a relative in **London**, our relative. My sister's cousin – my – my – my mother's cousin. And – and then we came to amer – then, we had a – when we took a boat in **Liverpool**, and that – it was black out, because it was war. So our ship collided with a Canadian troop transport, on the first night out.

Q: Oh my goodness.

A: And we – they sounded the alarm during the night, and we had to go onboard deck, and my sister and I didn't know if we had to go back to **Germany**. We were scared.

Q: You would ha – why would you have to go back to **Germany**?

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A: We didn't know. We – all we knew is that – that there was a – that the boat was damaged, and – but we did go back to **England**. They put us up in the hotel there, until the next boat.

Q: Okay.

A: So –

Q: And about – approximately, when did you leave for the **United States**?

A: We arrived here after a nine day – I think was nine days ami – the voyage. Went over **Canada, Halifax**, and we arrived in this country on January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1940. So we left there in December.

Q: So, this is – the war is about four months in.

A: Yes.

Q: Okay. And it was to – to which place did you arrive?

A: **New York**.

Q: Right.

A: And then I lived in **New York** for 17 years, and loved every minute of it.

Q: I can understand that. Who met you at the pier?

A: One of my father's friends, who had already immigrated. Took us to his house on **Washington Heights**, on **Thayer** Street, and we spend three nights there, and then we both started jobs in the same building, as maids. And that's what I'm ta –

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maid – we knew who we were wor – who we were. We did not act like that, we – we – we did what we supposed to do as maids, but we remained the same inside.

Q: Was it hard to do that?

A: No. It was hard in a way, yes, but we were happy that we were here, and that we maybe could do something to get our parents out.

Q: Were you well treated in the places you worked?

A: I was treated like a maid. My sister was not.

Q: Okay. And did you know what was going on with your parents?

A: Oh, yes.

Q: How?

A: Occasionally, a letter would come, and we were in touch, we were trying to ge – we were trying everything to get them out. What finally happened is – oh, my father had somehow managed to send us some money, not much, but few dollars here and there. And we made 35 dollars a month. Thirty dollars went in the bank, so that's 60 for the two of us, and five dollars we kept.

Q: So, it was 35 dollars each, per month, or – or –

A: Each, yeah.

Q: Each.

A: But she worked for different people.

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Q: Okay. And – and you banked half of it –

A: We banked more than half, we banked 30 dollars each.

Q: Thirty dollars each, okay.

A: Yeah.

Q: Thirty dollars each, and you kept five.

A: Yeah.

Q: And what was going on with your parents at the time?

A: All right. They were – they didn't tell us too much, but they were alive, and they were still in their apartment. And we tried everything.

Q: What does that mean, everything?

A: We tried to get them out, t-talked to different people, and finally ended up buying a visa for **Santo Domingo**, which they told us was illegal, but we couldn't get anything else, and we were able to pay for it. Then they – they ha-had to get there. So they were able to buy a ticket to – through **Russia**, in a closed train, they couldn't get out, and into **Yokohama**. So that's a long trip.

Q: So they – from **Berlin** –

A: Yes.

Q: – they had to go eastwards.

A: Yes.

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Q: And this must have been still before 1941, when the **Soviet Union** and **Germany** were allied.

A: Yes.

Q: Okay, do you know where they went? Where the stops of their vary – from **Berlin** –

A: I do not.

Q: Okay.

A: I do not. But then, when they got to **Yokohama**, they had to take a small boat to go over **Panama**, and **San Domingo**. Stopped up in **America** on – on the west coast there. And when they got to **Panama**, there was a shipping strike, and they couldn't go any further. And my sister and I went – we went – we ever – went all over, to try and get some money to buy a plane ticket, and finally got some from a Jewish mi – organization. We send them the money, and they flew to the – they flew to **Santo Domingo**.

Q: And then – so they flew from **Panama** to **Santo Domingo**, and then what happened?

A: And then they stayed there for a few weeks, few months, and then they came here.

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Q: And there was no difficulty visa-wise from them, to go from **Santo Domingo** to

–

A: No, we had bought that – we had bought that entrance.

Q: Oh, I see, so you bought the entrance visa –

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: – from **Santo Domingo**, to the **United States**.

A: No. We had bought the – we had given the money to go from **Panama** to **San Domingo**.

Q: Okay.

A: How they got the money to go – come here, I do not know.

Q: Oh, okay. But they flew here? Or they took –

A: No, they came by boat.

Q: They came by boat. Do you remember when they ar – the date they arrived?

A: I don't know the exact date, no. It was in '41.

Q: Okay. So you had been in the **United States** already a year.

A: Yeah.

Q: More than a year.

A: We had accomplished a lot.

Q: Absolutely.

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A: Yeah.

Q: Absolutely.

A: But that was all – that was the only thing I – I later changed my job. She remained where she was.

Q: What job did you then change to?

A: I – I still was a maid, but I had some terrible experiences there, too, but anyway, that wasn't – that's not too important. And then, when they ge – got here, I quit.

Q: Okay. So, how did your parents get on their feet? Were they able to take anything out of **Germany** with them?

A: My – my mother only – she'd arrived only six months here when she died. She picked up something on the way. And her luggage never came until she – after she had gone.

Q: Oh, I'm so sad.

A: Yeah.

Q: Sorry. It must have been quite a blow.

A: Yeah, I used – I used to have nightmares until – until I had a child, and then she was named after her, and then I didn't have any more nightmares.

Q: What a loss.

A: Yeah.

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Q: Were you with her during the time when she was sick?

A: She was in the hospital. And by that time, I had rented a furnished room when they called me there.

Q: What was her disease?

A: She had some kind of kidney failure. Some blood disease that affected the kidneys.

Q: And what did your father then do?

A: My father – my father remarried, and he was married another 24 years.

Q: Wow.

A: Yeah.

Q: And di –

A: My father never looked back. He never looked back, he was always – never said he – this was better there, and this better there, no, he was just – he – he – the first money he made in **America** is – he'd never done any physical work before. He's – he shoveled a car out of the snow. That was the first dollar he ever made here.

Q: In his first months here, before losing your mother, and before remarrying, did he live with you, did he live with your sister?

A: No, they were on their own.

Q: They were on their own.



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A: Yeah.

Q: Okay. Did you move back in with them?

A: No, I moved back with my father when my husband went to the service.

Q: Okay.

A: And whe – he was – at that time, he was not remarried, and I – we moved in together.

Q: So, explain to me, you – when you first arrive, you live in **Washington Heights**?

A: Yes.

Q: And when your parents arrive, you still continue living in **Washington Heights**.

A: No.

Q: Okay, what happened?

A: I – I had two other jobs in between. I moved out first to **Forest Hills** – to **Jamaica**.

Q: Okay.

A: And – and that didn't work out, there was a – a – a man whose wife was in **Florida**, and they had two children. And one of them wet the bed, and the other one was stealing money from the newspaperman, and so I quit that one. And then the – then I had a job on **Central Park West** with a wonderful family, and – until my parents came.

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Q: Okay. And so, you lived with that family?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay. And when your parents came, where did they live?

A: I know the first night they spent at a hotel, and then they – they took a furnished room. My father worked.

Q: And he had enough money to be able to pay the furnished room for a little bit?

A: Well, he – he bought stuff and sold it, and he managed.

Q: And your mother soon went into the hospital, after –

A: Not right away, no. My sister got married in the meantime, and then on the way home – she got married in **Philadelphia**, and lived there all the time. And on the way home, my mother got sick.

Q: What was the – do you remember the date of her death?

A: Oh yes.

Q: What is it?

A: December 18<sup>th</sup>, 1941.

Q: She wasn't even here a year.

A: No.

Q: And –

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A: The 1a – her last day that she was conscious, was December 7<sup>th</sup>, and you know what that date is.

Q: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah ...

A: Yeah.

Q: When you say your father never looked back, was that hard for you, when he remarried?

A: It was hard for me, I was stupid. But –

Q: Why do you say that?

A: Because he – it was good for him. And she was a good per-person.

Q: Did you come to like her?

A: Yeah, I liked her.

Q: Okay. Where did they live?

A: They lived in the 80s.

Q: West side?

A: On the west side. I don't know, 86, or 84 street, I don't know for sure. And – and they were happy together.

Q: Did you – aside from the time when you lived with your father, did – were you always then on your own, after that?

A: Yeah. Well, I got married, too.

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Q: What – what year did you get married?

A: I got married in '42.

Q: To who?

A: As – somebody that I already knew in **Germany**.

Q: And who was that? What was his name?

A: His name was **Klein**. His German name was **Helmut Klein**, and then he became **Eddie Klein**.

Q: Became **Eddie Klein**?

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay. And was he from **Berlin** as well?

A: Yes.

Q: All right. So you married quite early.

A: Yes.

Q: And where did that take you? Where did your married life take you? Out of **New York**, still in **New York**?

A: No, I lived in **New York**.

Q: Okay.

A: Until I got married the second time. Then I moved to **New Jersey**, then to **Buffalo**, and then to **Tennessee**, and then here.

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Q: Okay. Let's go back a little bit, though.

A: Okay.

Q: Did your husband, your first husband, serve in the war?

A: Yes. He gets a medical discharge.

Q: Okay. What was his – what was his experience, serving in the war? Was he a **Ritchie** boy, like your second husband?

A: No, no, no. He was – he was only in several months, and he became sick.

Q: Okay.

A: And he had been going to school, he was – he became an accountant, afterwards, on the **G.I.** bill.

Q: Okay.

A: And he eventually died of that – he had **Hodgkin's** disease.

Q: I see.

A: He got it in the army, and he eventually died of it.

Q: How many years were you married?

A: Twelve.

Q: Did you have children together?

A: Yes, I had a child.

Q: A daughter, a son?

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A: A daughter, and then with my second husband, had another daughter.

Q: And when did you marry your second husband, what year was –

A: In '59.

Q: In 1959.

A: Mm-hm.

Q: And his name?

A: That's **Harry Marx**.

Q: **Harry Marx**. And he was also from **Germany**?

A: Yes.

Q: What part of **Germany** was he from?

A: He was from **Frankfurt am Main**.

Q: Okay.

A: Near there, not – he – then – the name of the town is **Zantenberg**(ph).

Q: Okay. But near there, near –

A: Yes –

Q: – **Frankfurt am Main**.

A: – it's near, yes.

Q: Okay. Can you briefly describe his – his story, coming to the **United States**, and then joining the military?

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A: He was only 16 when he came here.

Q: Okay. Was he older than you, younger than you?

A: He was two years younger, and the other one was four years older than I.

Q: Okay. So, he came here in 1938.

A: Yes. He had the – he already had some siblings here.

Q: Okay. And did he – was he drafted into the military, did he join up?

A: I think he joined, I'm not sure. I wasn't married to him at that time.

Q: Did he ever talk about his experiences of being in –

A: Some of it.

Q: Okay.

A: Not too much.

Q: Did he describe working in intelligence?

A: Yes, he did. And he was stationed right near where he came from. So he met some of the people that he knew.

Q: Germans?

A: Yes, he met somebody that he went in school with. And he found out that a friend had been killed by the Russians. So he was very, you know, mixed feelings.

Q: Yeah, yeah.

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A: He almost got shot once. He had gotten lost, and when he was going back to his American troop, they asked him about a sports person. And he had never heard of him, because he was new in **America**, and they almost shot him because he had a German accent.

Q: Oh my goodness. The kinds of adventures people have, you know? Unexpected ones. And he happened to then be part of the liberating force of –

A: Outho – **Mauthausen**.

Q: The sub-camp of **Mauthausen**.

A: Yeah.

Q: And **Flossenbürg** –

A: Yeah.

Q: – I think you – you –

A: Right.

Q: – mentioned before. Did you ever go back to **Berlin**?

A: No. I –

Q: Did you ever go back to **Breslau**?

A: No.

Q: Or **Germany**?



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A: Yes. I didn't want to go. My husband always took me on his business trips. But when he said he was going to **Germany**, I said I'm not going. But two weeks before he left, I changed my mind, and I went.

Q: And what was it like for you?

A: It wasn't easy.

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

A: We were in southern **Germany**. You know, I had the hate. But I went to a lecture once, somebody who had also been in **Germany**, and he said he had that hate, and it destroyed him, and so he became – he – he changed. And so, I changed. Every once in a while it would come through, but I – I was a happier person after that.

Q: How do you change this?

A: I reasoned with myself. People who are alive now, were not Nazis, they weren't even born yet. So how could I hate them?

Q: It worked?

A: It worked. Most of the time, let me put it that way. Sometimes still came through. But not – I wasn't unreasonable any more.

Q: When you came to the **United States**, did you ever still speak German with anybody?

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A: My sister.

Q: Do you still today?

A: And my – my d – my older daughter speaks it. No, not to – not too much. But my in-laws were from **Germany**, my first in-laws, and my second ones, too. And – and we would speak German when **Elaine** wasn't supposed to hear what we were saying. So she went to her grandma, and she said, Mom, will you teach me German? And she – my mother-in-law, who was an angel, she said – she said, I don't know how to teach, but I'll only speak German to you from now on. And she did, and that's how she learned German. Then, when this daughter got married – was getting married, she took her a-and her future husband to meet my mother-in-law. And my mother-in-law started speaking German – speaking English with him. So **Elaine** said, Mama, I thought you – you always spoke German with me, I didn't know you could speak English. And she said, what do you think, I'm an idiot?

Q: What a crusty lady. Wonderful.

A: She was wonderful.

Q: Okay.

A: She was wonderful.

Q: You mentioned before, that in **Germany**, you were a Jewish German, and here, you're an American Jew.

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A: Uh-huh.

Q: Okay. Was there a certain point where that German part was taken away, or you threw it away, or was it something that was gradual?

A: No, it was instant.

Q: It was instant?

A: Yes.

Q: And when was that?

A: I didn't want to be German any more, as soon as I cro-crossed that border.

Q: When you were in **England** –

A: Yeah.

Q: – in other words. When you crossed the boat, or you crossed the border from – from **Germany** into another –

A: Yeah, I wasn't – I was – didn't want anything German any more. By the way, crossing that border wasn't easy.

Q: Tell me about it.

A: We were on the train, going through **Holland**. And as we came to the border of **Germany** and **Holland**, they took us out of the train, and they investigated us, and they talked at us, and they – the pictures – little picture of us we had in our

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pocketbooks – we had a little suitcase, overnight suitcase between us, and they kept asking questions, and being nasty.

Q: This is the German side?

A: Yes. And – and of course, the train left. So here we were, in a small, little town, and no place will – we didn't know anybody. There was one family that took in some Jews, but they were already sleeping on the floor, there were so many of them. So finally they got us into an old, rickety hotel on the back stairs, going up to some room, and there were mice there, it was terrible. Every time my sister was going to go to sleep, I said, there's a mice. So, it was –

Q: Was the rest of your luggage on that train that left, or were –

A: They had sent it ahead of us.

Q: I see.

A: Yeah.

Q: I see. And eventually, you were able to get on another train?

A: Yes.

Q: So, it was harassment.

A: It was. I was scared.

Q: Of course, of course. Did you have relatives who were left behind in **Germany**?

A: Yes, yes.

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Q: Who was that?

A: My mother's sister and husband. And –

Q: Do you know what happened to them?

A: No. Because, their children had gone to **Israel**, and they did not do what we did.

Q: Is there anything I haven't asked today that you'd like to – that you'd like to add to what we've talked about?

A: I can't think of it now, probably think of it later.

Q: It always happens that way. It always happens that way.

A: Now, I feel very lucky. I came to wonderful country, and I feel very blessed and thankful. And I love this country.

Q: Did your children ask about your experiences?

A: Not at first, because they knew I didn't want to talk about it. But then –

Q: And was it a long time before you did talk about things?

A: Yeah, it was quite a while.

Q: When did you start?

A: This was a gradual process.

Q: I'm asking for the exact date, and time and year.

A: Yeah, you are.

Q: I – was it March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1978?

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A: At four **a.m.**

Q: At four **a.m.**

A: I feel very lucky. I feel very fortunate, and I – I feel very positive.

Q: Well, we're very grateful that you shared your story with us today.

A: Well, thank you.

Q: Thank you very much. And I will say that this then concludes the **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum** interview with Mrs. **Ursula Marx**, on June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

A: And I thank you for listening to me.

Q: Oh, it was an honor.

A: Thank you.

Q: Thank you very much.

**Conclusion of Interview**