United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Interview with Rochelle Blackman Slivka
June 15, 1990
RG-50.030*0216

PREFACE

The following oral history testimony is the result of a videotaped interview with Rochelle Blackman Slivka, conducted by Linda Kuzmack on June 15, 1990 on behalf of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The interview took place in Washington, DC and is part of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's collection of oral testimonies.

The reader should bear in mind that this is a verbatim transcript of spoken, rather than written prose. This transcript has been neither checked for spelling nor verified for accuracy, and therefore, it is possible that there are errors. As a result, nothing should be quoted or used from this transcript without first checking it against the taped interview.

ROCHELLE BLACKMAN SLIVKA
June 15, 1990

Q: Could you tell us your name please?

A: My name is Rochelle Blackman Slivka. I was born in Vilno on April 18th in 1922.

Q: What was life like?

A: Well, my father worked in Vilno in the Jewish Kehilla in the social services department. My mother was a housewife. We we were growing up, my sister and myself. We had nice happy family. We went to a private elementary school and then we went to a Hebrew-speaking high school. They didn't accept too many Jews, not at all any Jews to public high schools. They had to go to private schools, Yiddish-speaking, or Polish-speaking, or Hebrew-speaking schools. My father was a Zionist. He sent us to a Hebrew-speaking high school. And life in Poland for us wasn't easy. We went to different schools from the non-Jewish kids. Sometimes the non-Jewish children used to beat us up while we were going to school and we had to wear different uniforms. We were with different numbers than the non-Jewish kids. But life was not bad except the anti-Semitism in Poland. We had a normal life. Our family wasn't orthodox. We were more conservative and I'm sorry

_____

[Pause]

Q: What about friends....?

A: We had a lot of friends. We socialized a lot with [friends]...we had; My parents had a lot of friends in the city and our social life was quite active in town, until the war broke out between, in 1939 between Germany and Poland. We we were at the time at our summer home in outskirts of Vilno, but we heard that Germany attacked Poland in September 1st, 1939. And we they bombed the cities, but we, with help with other relatives from other relatives, we came back to the city and and a couple 01:04: of days later the Russians came into our city. The war only lasted seventeen days between Poland and Germany because Poland wasn't prepared for the war at all and at the same time Germany and the Soviet Union decided to divide Poland in two halves. We were lucky enough to fall to the Russians, and when the Russians came in to our city, life stabilized a little. We went back to school for a while. People went back to work. My father still worked at the Vilno Kehilla and life was going on pretty normal at this time. But it didn't last too long, because the Germans, the Russians decided to give Vilno back to the Lithuanians because the Lithuanians always claimed that Vilno was the capital city of Lithuania and the Polish government took [it] away from Lithuania in the 1st World War. And then they gave back Vilno to the Lithuanians and when the Lithuanians came in the first day there was a pogrom on the Jews but after the pogrom, a couple of days later, it quieted down....

Q:

A: I beg your pardon?

Q: Can you describe the progrom?

A: Yes they beat up quite quite a few Jews. They killed some some Jews and it was quite a scare. We didn't know what will happen to us, because we didn't know about Lithuania too much. We didn't know...even[though] I had an uncle in Lithuania but I still didn't know what to expect from the Lithuanians. But after a while it quieted down and the city came to normal again and we went back to work, our parents. My father went back to work and we went back to school in Vilno to the Hebrew school and we learned a new language. It wasn't easy but we had to learn. And life was going normal and I, we had an uncle in Lithuania because my mother came from Lithuania, Vilkaviskis in Lithuania and she had a brother there and she hadn't seen him for over twenty years and for the first time she met him. She saw him. And it was quite an excitement in the house to meet my uncle that we never knew and my cousins that we never knew and we didn't know what to think about them, didn't know what to expect from our uncle and aunt and cousins. But they were very nice to us. They brought us a lot of food to eat, because we had a shortage in Vilno for a while, and then we went back to school learn, life was going on normally, but after a while the Russians decided to take away all the Baltic lands to incorporate it to Russia. Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia and then the Russians came in again. Then it was a little bit different. We went back to school but we couldn't learn any more any Hebrew. We didn't have any Hebrew schools anymore. We had to learn more Russian and nothing Hebrew. Then the people went back to work again. My father worked still in the Kehilla, but some other people they round[ed] up, a lot of Zionists, Zionist people and sent them away to Russia, to Siberia. They sent away a lot of Poles and a lot of Jews, rich Jews they took away from the city and sent away. But it but it wasn't bad. The situation wasn't too bad. We weren't threatened with our lives. We had all the time we had not enough food but we could survive because the Russians whatever they saw they used to take away everything from the stores. They never saw so much stuff in the stores. Whatever they saw they grabbed it and they used to send away to Russia. And but we lived somehow and we were happy. We had our families and all our relatives. We had a lot of relatives in the city of Vilno. My mother had a lot of cousins there. And we used to get together all the time and naturally talk about old times but this lasted like that until June 22nd, 1941 when Germany attacked Russia. And Vilno was, the city of Vilno was bombed. They destroyed quite a bit of the city and a couple days later the Germans came in to our city and then our troubles started. (Pause) When the Germans came in it was still...we didn't know what to expect. We didn't know even when people, refugees were coming in from from the other side, from the German occupied Poland, from Poland occupied by the Germans, they used to come in and they used to tell us stories how the Germans used to take away Jews and they never came back and all kinds of stories about the German, SS

Germany but we didn't believe them. We said it couldn't happen to us. They couldn't be so mean. It's such a civilized country. It couldn't be so bad. But after a while we did find out that it happen to us too, because when the Germans came in, in the beginning they didn't know who is a Jew and who is not a Jew, and but our non-Jewish neighbors used to point out the Jewish people. The kids with whom we used to play outside in the yard or on the street, they used to point point out a Jew, because we lived altogether in the same section and they used to take away the Jews. The SS with the help of the Ukrainian police or the Lithuanian police, they used to take away the Jews. Whenever we used to stand in line, they used to point out a Jew and they used to drag us out of the lines and every once in a while they used to come in to our houses and take away some people and...it was a very scary time for us, especially for the young people, because we didn't know what [they would do]...we were afraid they'll come and take our parents away always, every time we saw a German, and we had to walk around [them] [and] we had a curfew. Until five o'clock in the evening we were allowed to walk and we weren't allowed to walk on the sidewalk. We had to walk in the middle of the street and bow for every German. It it was a very scary time. We didn't know who is going to be next and what's going to happen to us and we we weren't allowed to go to school anymore and life was going on like that until '41 right before the Jewish holidays. They...the SS decided to make a ghetto in our town, in Vilno and there a poor section where a lot of Jews used to live there and the Jewish home for the aged was there. The biggest synagogue of the city of Vilno was there. The orphanage. The Jewish hospital was there, and a lot of poor Jews lived around this section and one night the SS, with the help of the Ukrainian police and the Lithuanians, they came in and took out all the Jews from there and they drove them to a place, Ponary [in the] outskirts of Vilno there and they shot them all there. We heard screaming and yelling and crying during the night, but we weren't allowed to look of the window because those who looked out were shot. We didn't know what was going on anyway until the next day our neighbors told us what was going on. We had a lot of relatives there. My mother's cousins, all of my mother's relatives lived there and couple of weeks later they round up all the Jews from the city and the suburbs and they put us all in this ghetto, and surrounded us with walls and with guards and we had to live in one apartment, two to three families in a two room apartment. When we came in those apartments, we saw some of the beds were still made still where people were still asleep. They were disturbed. They took them out in the middle of the night from the beds. Some the tables were still set. People evidently were still eating, and this made a very bad impression of us, for us because our relatives, our our families were taken away. They were killed. We had the Judenrat, Kehilla changed the name to Judenrat and my father was still working in the Judenrat there. We had our own police there. They organized police, fire department. They had stores in the ghetto. We had even schools for children. The little kids used to go to school. I personally was too old to go to school already. When the war started I was seventeen years old and we had to have a permit to live. At first they gave us yellow cards. Those who didn't get a yellow card were taken away from the ghetto and we never saw those people. (and a couple months..) We used to, people used to go out from the ghetto to work in factories or in railroad station, wherever they

needed some help, workers, they sent out our Jews there. And couple months later they decided to change those cards again for different kind of cards. Pink cards, and then they took away those that didn't have any pink cards and we never saw those people again. And it was pretty frightening all the time. Every time they used to give us a little more bread or horse meat we knew that's it's going to be a roundup of Jews the next couple days. They even came in one day, the SS, with the help of the Ukrainian police and the Lithuanian police and took away all the children from school, and those little kids never had a chance to say goodbye to their parents. The parents, when they came home from work they didn't find their kids anymore. We we lived all the time in fright; we were frightened all the time. We didn't know what was going to be next or who is going to be next. One time they caught my father walking on a street. They round him [up] too, but he escaped from there somehow. I don't remember how, but he did escape. My mother was sick at the time in the ghetto and she died. She was in the hospital and we didn't have enough medication to help her, and she died in the ghetto. We weren't allowed to go to the cemetery even to see where she was buried. My father went because he helped to dig the grave in the cemetery and he knew exactly where, but the children weren't allowed to go out of the ghetto. We lived in fear all the time. And every day was about the same thing as the previous day. We didn't know...then right before the holidays in 1943, right before the Jewish holidays, the New Year, the SS decided to liquidate the ghetto and they told us over the loudspeaker that the ghetto is going to be liquidated and we are going to be resettled. They didn't tell us where, and and we can take only what we can carry with us, no more. Naturally we didn't have much what to carry, only our clothes. That's all we could take. And the next day we all congregated at the gate and they took us to a field in right outskirts of Vilno. I don't remember the name where it was, but when we came to the field we saw three people hanging, a young woman, and two young men and they told us over the loudspeaker that in case somebody has in mind to run away, to escape from this field, will be shot or hanged right in front of us. Men were taken away separately from the women. The men were taken to a concentration camp in Estonia and there they were killed. They were all burned alive for...they put logs and people and logs and burned and brought gasoline in and burned them and couple a years ago when we were in Israel, we went to visit the kibbutz Lokhamei haGettaoth and I saw the picture how they put up the people and I saw my father's name and his number and it was very emotional to see. Then how thorough the Germans were to record all what was happening to these Jews and we had to stay the whole night in the field, the women. Only my sister and myself. It was a very cold, miserable, rainy evening. When a child was crying or baby was crying, our guards used to take away the child from the mother and take it for (by?) their feet and tear it in half and throw it back to the mother. Some mothers, from fright, even choked their own children. (Pause) It was going on like this the whole night. The next morning, we stayed in line and we were sorted. Those who went left went to extermination camps like Majdanek or Treblinka or some other camps, and I was fortunate enough with my sister went to the right. I was lucky enough that they put us...they sorted us the same... they didn't separate us, and we went to the right. Then they put us in cattle cars, about a hundred women to a car, and no bathrooms, no food, no

water. We had to ride for a couple of days in the cattle cars until we came to Latvia, to Kaiserwald. That's a suburb of Riga, and we were met by SS men and they told us that this concentration camp is built on Jewish graves. All the Jews from Riga were concentrated there. They were shot and they buried them and they built the concentration camp there. We had to go through the showers. They shaved our heads in case somebody will run away they should find [her], they should know that we are the Jews from the concentration camp, recognize us. They gave us stripped clothes with numbers. From then on we never were called by the name, only by the number. Then they put us in barracks. We had to sleep on boards. No blankets, no pillows. We used to get up five o'clock in the morning and be counted and sometimes our kapo made a mistake in counting us, [then] we had to stay for another couple of hours and for punishment. Then they used to give us a piece of bread and some black water that they called coffee and we used to go out to work from the concentration camp to dig ditches or at the railroad or in factories. Some people were lucky enough worked in the concentration camp sorting the clothes that they took away from us and while I was working digging ditches, there was a guard who asked me from where I was and I told him that I was from Vilno. Then I asked him where ...and he told me is from Lithuania. I said oh, I told him that my mother comes from Lithuania. He asked me from where, and I told him from where, from Vilkoviskis. He says oh he comes from there too, and he knew my uncle. They were friends before the war. They went to school together and they were very good friends, and he told me how my uncle was killed in Vilkoviskis. They shot them all there. They didn't take them in any concentration camps or in any ghettos, nothing. They shot them all there. And then we used to come back to the concentration camp and be counted again and then they took us and then they gave us some coffee and bread again and we used to retire to our barracks. In the barracks we used to sit and talk, talk about old times, talk about our parents and the schools that we went to and every once in a while, couple times a week, a German SS woman used to come in with a big whip and beat us up without any reason. Used to curse us. Used to yell at us. It was very frightening. We never knew what time it was. We never knew what day it was, because we didn't have any clocks. We didn't have any watches. We didn't have any calendars. We didn't know anything what was going on in this world. Then one day, beginning of 1944 or so or in the middle, somewhere around there, they told us that the next day they are going to take us to another concentration camp and they took us again by cattle cars to a concentration camp in east Germany somewhere, called Stuthof. When we came there they took away everything what we had again and they shaved our heads again. They gave us different numbers, but it was much worse in this concentration camp. It was much bigger and we weren't allowed to go out from the camp. We had to stay in the camp all the time. We weren't allowed to go to the bathroom by ourselves. We had to have permission. If our kapo felt like taking us, it was alright. If not, it's too bad. We couldn't wash ourselves. We couldn't go to to clean up, to wash our hands or faces. We were filthy there. We were hungry. We looked like skeletons all the time. And I was sick with typhoid and my sister was sick with typhoid and we weren't allowed to go to see a doctor. But we had to nurse ourselves. We did...I helped my sister. My sister helped me and women were dying there like flies. We were

treated very badly there. The German SS treated us very very bad there. Some women couldn't take it any longer. They used to sneak out at night and go to the barbed wire and touch the barbed wire and kill themselves. We used to get up early in the morning. We used to get our rations, bread and black coffee and once in a while they used to give us soup. It was called soup. It was from rotten potato peels or rotten cabbage soup, and then at the evening again they used to get the same thing...bread and coffee, and whenever we all sat around there and talked all the time or we were quiet. We couldn't do anything. We were so sick and we were so tired there. We were, we looked like skeletons. We were dirty. Our faces were black from dirt and in 1944, at the end, it was in December, end of December, right before Christmas, they decided to liquidate this concentration camp I guess and because the war was going on...getting bad and they told us and the next day they took us out of the concentration camp, but this time we had to walk. We didn't have any warm clothes, only that what we had on ourselves and we didn't have any shoes. We had to cover our feet with rags and when somebody, a woman died we used to take away her rags from her feet and cover our feet with with more rags to keep our feet warm. We used to take away her clothes to keep ourselves warm, to put on something else on us. While we were walking we saw some people lying on the ground, frozen, men frozen dead. We knew that a transport of Jews went by there. We used to start out about six o'clock to walk, in the morning, six o'clock in the morning to walk with a piece of bread and the black coffee and walk the whole day until we find a place at night where to stay. There was a barn somewhere, or a church...wherever they could find a place for us. Then they used to give us again a piece of bread and coffee and we used to go to sleep. We walked like that for six weeks. We weren't allowed to to bend over to take some snow to wet our lips. Those who did went over to take, they were shot by the guards. Those who helped each other to walk were shot. We weren't allowed to do that either. We walked like that for six weeks. Then we came to a barn and when we woke up the next day, we didn't see our guards anymore. We saw some old German SS men. They took away the young ones because they needed them on the front, and they substituted with old SS men. They were even worse than the young ones. They used to beat us up. Used to curse us. We were so sick in this barn that we couldn't do anything. We were lying around all day long in the barn. We didn't have bathroom facilities. We had to go right behind in back of the barn. We used to get coffee in the morning with a piece of bread and sometimes noontime they used to give us a little soup and then in the evening again the same bread and that was our food for the day. We were in this barn for a couple of months and women were dying all day, every single day. We started out with five thousand women. About two hundred and fifty survived. And one night, one day one SS man told us that the next day we are going to be digging ditches for ourselves, because the war is going very badly and they don't want us to fall in anybody's hands, and we're going to be shot and buried there, not to fall into anybody's hands. But the next day...during the night we heard some shelling and bombing and we didn't know what was going on, but when we got up in the morning we didn't see any guards. We didn't see anybody. And we were afraid to go anywhere and we didn't have the strength to go anywhere. But a couple hours later we saw a jeep full with soldiers came, Russian soldiers...and they told us that the

war was over right here in this part of Germany and we can go wherever we want to. We couldn't go anywhere. We didn't have the strength and we were so filthy. We full of lice. Our bodies were beaten up. We were dirty. Lot of people have frozen hands and their feet were frozen. Couple hours later a truck came and took us in to the village and we came in to the village. We didn't see any Germans there, because the people retreated with the German army and they let us loose and we started to grab food, whatever we could find. We ate whatever we found, whatever we could. Some people overate too much. They they didn't eat the right food. They didn't eat normally. They took sick and died. Some had to have their feet amputated because they were so frozen they couldn't walk anymore on them. We had to bathe ourselves in kerosene every day to get rid of the lice. Burn our clothes every day until we got rid rid of all the dirt and all the lice. We were in this village for a couple of months. Then after we started to feel better, my sister and myself decided to go back to Vilno. We knew that our mother is dead and we heard in Struthof that my father was killed in Estonia, but we still wanted to go back to our city because we left a lot of household goods and some personal stuff with our non-Jewish neighbors, and we thought maybe we can get back from them and sell it and use the money for clothes or other things. It wasn't easy to go back because we didn't have any transportation. We had to hitch hike by truck or by...they didn't have any cars at that time, or by train...whichever we could. [It]took us a long time to get back and when we came to the border between Poland and the Soviet Union, we met some people coming out of the city and they told us not to go back to Vilno because the situation is very bad there. There is not enough food and not enough work..not to go back to the city, but my sister decided she is going back to get some stuff back from our non-Jewish neighbors, but when she came to their houses to ask for our clothes and other stuff, nobody gave her back anything. They threw her out of their houses. I was in Byalistok, on the border between Poland and Russia, and I registered in the Jewish community there and I put an ad in the Jewish paper here in the United States. I had a grandmother here, my mother's mother and four uncles, my mother's four brothers, and two sisters in this country. And but I didn't remember their addresses. I knew only my uncle's last name and my grandmother's last name I knew...and I put an ad and my grandmother used to read every day the Jewish paper and she found my name and she contacted all my aunts and uncles that I am alive, and couple of months later I received a letter from a one of my uncles and he urged me to go back to the American zone, to west Germany and from there he will try to bring me to the United States. It wasn't easy to go back from one country to another country. I lived in Poland and I moved from Byalistok to Lodz and I lived there for a couple of months until I got acquainted with another organization, with other people, and I tried to cross the border with them, with another kibbutz organization and from there I tried to to cross the border to Czechoslovakia, but it wasn't easy. The first time we were caught by the Polish guards and they sent us back, back to Poland. We couldn't cross. But after a couple of weeks later we tried to cross again, and we succeeded. We crossed to Czechoslovakia. We stayed in Czechoslovakia a couple weeks and from there we crossed again to West Germany, through the Alps, but this time we had warm clothes. We had boots and we had enough food to eat. It wasn't so bad the walking and in 1946 I came to the West

Germany, Munich, West Germany. And there I took sick and I was in a hospital in Sankt Cecilien (?). That's not far from Munich that hospital there and at the same hospital one of my cousins was a doctor in this hospital, but he didn't know I was there and I didn't know he was there and a couple months later I received another letter from another uncle from Dover, New Hampshire, that his son was in this camp as a doctor, but he left a day before I got the letter. I got the letter a day after he left and I couldn't get in touch with him anymore. And then I got in touch with all my uncles and my aunts. They helped me a lot. When I got better I went back to school there. I learned a profession... I learned nursing. I went to nursing school and I learned to be a nurse. Then I moved to Landsburg and there I worked in a DP hospital, in a displaced person hospital. We lived in displaced persons camp, they were camps, but we lived...we had our own rooms and we had normal beds and bedding. We lived like normal people, only in a camp. And we had enough food there. We had enough clothing. We were supported by the UNRRA and by the Jewish, by Joint Distribution Committee here from the United States. My aunts and uncles, they used to send me help, bundles for help me out with clothes and other things. Then after a while I went back to Munich. I lived in Munich for a while. I worked there in the office and then my uncles started to work on for me to come to this country. It wasn't easy in the beginning to come to this country. The State Department didn't open the gates yet to come in to this country. They didn't let in anybody yet. And no country wanted us except Palestine at the time but Palestine...we couldn't because they were under the British rule and they didn't let in Jews to come in there and those who went illegally were caught and sent to Cypress to camps there. And I was sitting in Germany and waiting and in 1948, when Truman was President, they passed a law that all the DP people, displaced persons, can come in, to to be admitted to this country, and my uncle from Brookline, Massachusetts, sent me a contract that I won't be a burden to the United States Government and he is taking full responsibility to help me and to support me, and then I got a visa, permit to come to this country, and while I was sitting in, and while I was waiting to be interviewed by the CIA...they interviewed me and everything went fine. They told that in a couple of days to a week I'll be called to the immigration office and be going to the United States. I was waiting and waiting and waiting and nobody called me and nobody said anything. I went to find out what happened, and they looked [me] up. I was crossed off the list that I am in the United States already. Somebody on my papers went to the United States, but I showed them my identification card who I was. Then right away the same day I went through the doctors and all the preliminary things and in two days I had to get ready and go to Bremerhaven and from there I have to take a boat to the United States and I came to Bremerhaven. I waited there. They they couldn't decide if I am a Polish citizen or a Lithuanian citizen, which papers which papers to send me...you are Polish citizen or a Lithuanian citizen. They they waited and they waited. They didn't know what to do. Then I wrote to my uncle...I sent a telegram to my uncle that they don't let me out from Germany because they don't know which papers to let me go and if I can't come I'll go to Israel, because I can't wait any longer. Couple days later they called me from Joint Distribution that the next day I'm going to go to the United States. My uncle was very active in the Joint Distribution and they probably called the Consulate

here and they made up mind what to do with me and the next day I took the boat. One went to Massachusetts, to Boston, and one went to New York, and I took the boat to Massachusetts, to Boston. While I was on the boat they asked me if I am going to Massachusetts. I says no, I am not going to Massachusetts. I am going to Boston, because I didn't know the difference between state or whatever it was...I didn't know...well, anyway I came on May 18th, 1949 I came to this country. And I was met at the boat. One of my uncles from Pittsfield from ...not from Pittsfield...from Dover, New Hampshire, met me. He was at the boat and my aunt and my uncle from Boston, from Brookline, and one aunt from Portland, Maine met me at the boat. I didn't know my relatives at all. I didn't know what to expect. I didn't know what's what. But when I came to this country and I got off the boat, they all greeted me very nicely and they opened their homes for me. They were very very good to me. And then the same evening I met some other uncles came to visit me (pause - crying?)...it was very emotional, and my cousins were sitting in front of the house and waiting for me to come. They were excited. (Crying?) And then my life changed completely, for the best. After all we came to a normal country. We were the not normal people. We didn't know what to expect and what without a language, not knowing anybody, and I had a wonderful welcome from my relatives, from all my relatives, they welcomed me beautifully. All my aunts and uncles, they're very good. One uncle was dead already but his daughter was very nice to me. We were very good friends, and I took sick here. I was operated for a while...I was operated and after I got well, I went back...I went to work. I worked at the Beth Israel hospital, not as a nurse because I couldn't...I didn't know the language well and I didn't know too much about the nursing here in the United States, and I worked as a nurses' aid in the Beth Israel Hospital for a couple of years. When I...then I met my husband in 1951 and in 1952...it's a funny thing...on June 22nd, the same day when the war broke out between Germany and Russia, and we are in 1952 on June 22nd, we got married. At the time we didn't realize that it was the same date. And we lived in Boston for a while. My husband graduated Bentley (?) College and then we had a daughter who was, my older daughter, was born in Massach...in Brookline, in Boston and in 1953 we moved to Portland, Maine. That's it. Now we live in Portland, Maine.

Q: How do you summarize the effect of war on your life?

A: Well, it's affected a lot, my life was affected from the Holocaust. It wasn't easy to bring up my daughter, my daughters. I was edgy. I was nervous. I didn't have the patience, the patience. Now I have more patience with my grandchildren than I had with my children. And it's not easy to adjust. But we had to do the best...we had to adjust. We had to make the best of it and try to be live normal as other normal people.

BLANK IN TAPE

End of Tape #1

Tape #2

Q: Could you tell us about how you and your sister helped each other _____?

A: Well, we supported each other morally and we supported each other physically too. When she was sick, I was helping her and when I was sick she was helping me to get better and we were trying to console each other, that someday maybe we will be lucky enough to survive and be together again. And while we were in Stuthof we met another girl who was all alone. She came from the same city. She was a neighbor of ours and she lost all her family. She was all alone, and she asked us if she can be a sister, a third Blechman, and we told her yes. If two, might as well be three sisters, and we kept each other. We we kept all the time together, to be together all the time wherever we went, to to stick together and to survive together and we did. We we lived through the war together and we were in Poland. My sister wasn't with us but she and I, we used to meet in Poland. She got married in Poland and she moved to Israel and I went my way to the United States, but every once in a while I used to meet her but lately we didn't see each other for a long time. I don't know what happened to her. I don't know. My sister doesn't know either what happened to her. She couldn't get in touch with her.

Q: What was the reason you mention that it was eighteen years before you saw your sister again. What was the reunion like?

A: Well, we met in New York at the boat to and she came by boat with her two children and we were standing and waiting. I was nervous and to meet my sister and see how, how it will work out and I couldn't see her, because I couldn't...I I pictured her entirely different. And and then my cousin...she was with us...she came to the boat with us, and she saw her and she pointed out to her. It was very emotional to meet her and to get acquainted again. But after all, after eighteen years, we'd changed. Both of us changed, and we lived we lived different lives altogether. But we got used to each other. She stayed with us for two months in Portland with the children. The children went to went to the center day camp. They all adored her. The older daughter. The younger daughter was too little to go to camp. She stayed at home with us. And we had a good time. It was good to spend with a sister again. And since then we meet, we meet each other every, practically every year we see each other. We go to Israel every year to see our daughter with the grandchildren and naturally we spend our time with my sister too, because they live not far from each other.

Q: Thank you. Is there anything else you'd like to add on _____?

A: What did I want to say before. I meant to say something and I forgot what. No, I guess not. I hope it.....

End of Tape #2
Conclusion of Interview