

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

**Interview with Dora Kramen Dimitro
July 18, 1996
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PREFACE

The following oral history testimony is the result of a videotaped interview with Dora Kramen Dimitro, conducted by Randy Goldman on July 18, 1996 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. Rights to the interview are held by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

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.

DORA KRAMEN DIMITRO
July 18, 1996

Q: Dora, I'd like you to begin by telling me your full name, your date of birth, and where you were born.

A: My name is Dora Kramen Dimitro. I was born in Ashoshok (ph), Poland at that time, in January 22, 1922. My father's name was Hierr (ph) Shavival (ph), my mother's name was Ibella (ph). I was born in Ashoshok (ph) and raised there until the war, I was staying there. Then when the war start.

Q: Let's talk a little bit about your family life, your memories before the war, what was it like living in Ashoshok (ph)?

A: The town was a small town but we had a big family from both sides, from my mother's side and from my father's side. We was very devoted to each other and personally, my own family, my mother was born, there was four children, one boy and three girls. My father was a tailor, he used to work in the house and we had a nice life, a quiet life. We enjoyed our life and this was all a part of, I went to school when I was six years old, with my sister Pegilla (ph), we went to Wonklis (ph) and we went to a Hebrew school and we went to a Polish school. I learned Polish, I had seven grades, Polish language, and then Hebrew I learned too. When I finished the seven class school, public school, there wasn't high school in this time, we had to go in a bigger town, like to Vilna, this was the nearest town near Ashoshok (ph). But we couldn't afford all this, to go there. After a little while, that was not really, I finished 36 or 37, I don't remember exactly, this school. And I used to help my father, I learned how to sew, and then the war start.

Q: Do you have fond memories of living in this small town?

A: Yes, we belonged to organizations they used to call Betar (ph) and we used to come all the young people, there was dancing there, and we have a nice time.

Q: What was the overall focus of Betar, why did you join it?

A: This what we planned to go someday to Israel. This was our organization what was working for Israel and we were planning someday to go there. That's why we belonged, and we used to come the young people, we used to come in one place, singing and dancing and that's all. This was the all the entertainment what we had there. Sometimes we used to have movies. They used to come from another town and we used to see a picture.

A: The organization though is politically oriented, did they teach you certain things?

A: Yeah, they used to talk about this all the time, to teach us about Israel, what kind of life is there, how it's going on.

Q: I know that the lifestyle there was very different than the lifestyle here so I'm trying to get a sense of, I'm trying to picture it, maybe you can help me.

A: Well it was much, how can I say, it's much different how they're raising here the youngsters and by us. It was a family, a big family lay, we used to do everything by ourselves, you know because my mother didn't have too much time. There you have to shop and cook and clean, everything by yourself, to take care for yourself. When we grow up, we use to, like teenagers we used to help the mother, everything in the house. We used to cook, it's not like here, you go out and you buy ready whatever you want, too lazy to cook, you don't want to shop, you don't want to cook, you don't want to clean, you're doing something, you're idling somebody, but this wasn't by us, this was complicated. We had to do everything by ourselves and let's say it used to come, here whatever they want, whatever they need, they're going shopping for clothes. We used to have clothes only on the holidays twice a year. Whatever we need, shoes, a dress, a coat. Not really like things what people buying here, let's be, lay there, for occasions, no such a thing this occasions. This is the way. When I went to school I had a uniform, you know what I used to where everytime to school, when I used to come at home I used to change for our plain dress. Maybe I had three or four dresses, that's all. We didn't wear pants or sneakers or something like this. Very plain. But with the food, we had our own home, we had a garden we used to plant, you know, like potatoes, onions, cucumbers, everything we had for ourself. This was the life but we were very happy. We had a family, we enjoyed this. We used to go on Shabbos (ph), we used to go to a temple, not a temple, a congregation, a Shabbos (ph) type. And it was a very religious place, orthodox place, we didn't know no other things. We enjoy our lives, I miss the life. Used to come in the Shabbos (ph), Friday night, we had our dinner Friday Shabbos (ph), you know, the whole family used to sit around the table and we enjoyed the meal, with playing, with everything. It was wonderful. I wish this wouldn't happen. Alright, people are dying, they wouldn't be alive already by this time but still the years what we spent for the Holocaust in the woods, all over, in the ghettos, people had a life, they could live with their parents, they could live with their family to enjoy. When I got married we didn't have nobody, no mother, no father. When I gave birth to my children, nobody was with me like I was with my daughter. Sorry. My husband is coming.

Q: Why don't we stop to take a moment. I'm not sure you mentioned how many brothers and sisters you had.

A: I had one brother, he was the oldest, and we was three sisters, that's all, this was our whole family. Then I had uncles, aunts, they had children, a lot of them, from both sides. I can't even remember exactly how many there was, but they can't think about this, to tell you if you needed exactly the amount, no. Then the community was most a Jewish community and it was very nice, the people. We was living like a quiet life in the community. When I went to the Polish school, there was anti semites, there was. They used to say all the time to us, go to Palestine, at that time it wasn't Israel it was Palestine. Every Jew should go to Palestine, not to stay here. Naturally they used to come with sandwiches, they used to come with non

kosher food, so they wanted all the time, we should taste their food, and they knew that we're not allowed. They always start with us, you know, about this. They used to teach on Saturdays too. The Jewish people, the Jewish girls and the boys, we didn't go there. We used to take by them the lessons after, you know, on Sunday. Sunday was off for everybody but not for us. We used to keep Saturday all the time. That was the life. We had our Saturdays all the time, everything was closed by us, we didn't cook, we didn't clean, we didn't work all day, we didn't do nothing, this was a quiet day. Naturally we didn't have no telephones, no air conditions, no nothing, nothing at all, so it wasn't, to disconnect something or prepare, it was prepared. We cooked for Saturday, we didn't warm up, we didn't do nothing, just a quiet day, just the men, just everybody used to go the synagogue to play and doing nothing. At night after Shabbos, we used to go _____, like in the days when it was nice we used to go walking and like this we used to come to a warm place, everybody, like the organizations, we used to come and to sing and to dance, that's all, this was life. We used to go to school, naturally to make homework so the days in the middle of the week, it was occupied, we didn't do nothing. Only on Sunday, so Sunday we used to work, we used to do things in the house to help the parents, to help do things. This was the look of the life, can't compare here. First of all this was 50 years ago, more than 50 years. So everything was not everything goes, like medication, everything goes ahead, at that time they didn't know nothing. Who knew about hearts, about heart attacks, about the applications. A person died, he died, we didn't know from what or when. You see it was one hospital in town and one doctor, and this doctor was on everything. So you can imagine what kind of life it was, but we were healthy, everybody was healthy. And we used to eat everything, whatever it was. You couldn't pick. And that's all, that was the life, until the war start.

Q: Did you have Polish friends, did your family have contact with Polish people?

A: Yes. It used to, first of all we had school. We had to get the homework for Saturday to prepare for Monday. So we was with them, in contact. They used to live, they were all neighbors, not far from us. And the parents, my father used to make work for the people, for the Polish people, so he knew them, a lot of them. In fact, when the war start, we used to hire by them, a few of them, it wasn't too many.

Q: So you had decent relationships?

A: Yes, yes, I wouldn't say no, yes. They used to come, every place was like a market, they used to come, the Polish people, to sell things like eggs, butter, cheeses, food, all kinds of things and we used to buy from them, a lot of things.

Q: So you weren't afraid of them?

A: No, no, no. We used to live with them fairly, you know, I would say, close with them.

Q: One more question, do you remember, certain things your parents taught you, values, or when you were being abused in school, what did they teach you, how did they help you?

A: Well it wasn't really abuse like in the school, they never talked about it, they never talked about it. In the beginning we was going to a Hebrew school, so it was only Jewish people, you know, and they teach us with everybody. But then when I went to the Polish school, they was nice too, the Polish teachers, they were nice. They didn't never see the difference between a Jew or a Polish student, we was the same by them. What else?

Q: I was just wondering if there was anything you could remember that really stuck with you in terms of things your parents taught you?

A: I don't remember such a thing, only one thing when we used to go out let's say, they used to say, "you are coming and this and this time you have to be home, not later". If we have to come home sometimes later, they used to take off the shoes, they shouldn't here, we open up the door and then we walk in there. Otherwise everything was, whatever they used to say, it was dinner Shabbos, we have to be by the table, the whole family. You never can say, "no", to them, or "I wanted to do this", or "I wanted to come late", or "I want to do this or that".

Q: Were you a good kid?

A: I would say, not a bad. I used to listen to the parents, whatever they used to say, and I did whatever they used to say. It wasn't broke by us, it wasn't such a thing, like to move out from the house when you are a teenager, or are growing up. You move out from the house when you got married. So this way also, we used to live together in one place.

Q: Now when did life begin to change for you?

A: When the war start, what kind of changes could be?

Q: Up until that point, had you heard about what was going on in Germany, did you know who Hitler was?

A: Yeah, we find out when it start in Germany in 1939, we knew already that he's killing, that he's doing things, but we couldn't believe, why you should come to us to do this, why? What we did to him? Why you should do this? Then when they start to come in, you know, the people from Germany, they pass by our town and they told us, but still we couldn't believe, till they came to us and it start, the killing. When we saw with our eyes, why you should do this? Why? What we did wrong in our lives? Why he's going to kill the small children, the little babies and they didn't grow up? Why? Till the last minute, till they start to kill, we saw what he's going to do. And he said to the people that when they start to take out, for Ashoshok (ph), for the men, and they did the graves for themselves, and they said to us, to the women, to the children, that he's taking them at war, really he did the nice war. They dig the graves for themselves, so they lied to us, we didn't, we couldn't believe. Then when they killed everybody in Ashoshok (ph), and it was left very little people, when we went to London.

Q: Okay, I need to stop you because I think we're jumping ahead a little bit. You say, "when the war started in 1939". Initially the Germans didn't come in, did they, first didn't you go under Russian?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay, maybe you can tell me a little bit what happened and how your life maybe was different with the Russians.

A: Well first of all, the Russians came and whatever they saw by us, they was wondering, like things what we had, they didn't had. They had a miserable life too, there in the Russia. You know, they belonged to the government, they wasn't like a boss for himself, for themselves. They're working for them, and whatever they used to give him, clothes, to eat, they had to do this. And when they came to us everything was, we had, you know, normal life, they was wondering. They start to buy and to take things what they didn't have, like watches, they didn't saw. We did not buy ourself really expensive things. But they changed first of all the language, we didn't know. My father knew, he was in the first war in 1914, he was at the war, so he knew how to speak Russia, French. Of course, he was with those people there so he spoke to them, he used to do things for them. Really we didn't have, we couldn't go like to buy things what we want, not food, not like we had for the Polish people. Really for the Polish people, we was our own boss. My father worked in the house and everything we had for ourselves. And they changed all that, they took over everything. All the, you know, the stores, we didn't have no more stores for ourselves, they took all that. So this was a lot of change.

Q: Did your father continue his work?

A: Yes.

Q: Did they allow you to go to synagogue?

A: Yeah, the first time, yeah. We didn't know about this in the first time. But later on, later on we found out that it's going to go down everything for them. In fact, some people, they was afraid, I mean whoever had, by them, maybe you know about this, about communism by them. This means they belonged to the government, they couldn't say about something about the government or something for themselves, nothing. This was like they were occupied, they were like in a jail. So we didn't feel comfortable to live and I almost felt like this, but we had to get used to it. They put up, right away they made the stores should belong, they took from the owners and that they belonged to the government, everything, and they put up their own people to work. So it was different but we had to get used to it, to this life. It wasn't that for long.

A: Did you have to learn Russian?

Q: I haven't got the time for this, but soon the Germans came.

A: Do you remember what happened when the Germans came, can you describe that to me?

A: What happened? Before they occupied our town, we weren't, like the killing, the shouting, and then they came on the motorcycles in our town. We was very scared, we was all of us was in the houses, we was afraid to go out. They came and they start to talk I think, in German. My father understood German. It's a little bit similar to Yiddish. But not too much, a little bit, you can understand what they are talking about. That it's going to be a normal life they start to say, and we're all going to work together, everything is going to be alright. In fact my father worked for them for a little while, until they killed him. So when they, I don't remember, a few months later they started killing. We didn't have no ghetto at that time.

Q: What was the life like in the interim, did they make you do certain things differently, were there all kinds of new rules?

A: I don't think so.

Q: Did you have to walk on the street, did you have to wear a yellow star?

A: Yes, yes.

Q: That's what I'm trying to get.

A: Yeah, we wore yellow stars so they should know who is a Jew, and we walked on the street too, not on the sidewalk, between the street and the sidewalk. This was different, because they had to know that we are Jewish.

Q: Were the schools closed? Were the synagogues closed?

A: No, not at that time, no they didn't close yet.

Q: And what about the local people, the Polish, Lithuanian, any of that?

A: They start right away to put them to work with the Germans. They are brothers, they are not Jews.

Q: Let's stop and change the tape. When we begin I want you to tell me a little bit more about what your life was like when the Germans came in, and this is now we know as summer of 1941. We're not starting yet, but also what year, before you knew Polish?

A: Why you have to change?

Q: He has to put in a new tape and then when you put in a new tape you have to set it up, the first one was over.

End of Tape #1

Tape #2

Q: I'm trying to get a sense of what your life was like when the Germans came in, how you spent your time, whether they were nasty, whether they treated you okay, whether people were being beaten, if your former school friends or people you did business with, the Polish people, did they still talk to you? What was it like?

A: It was different. They try and, I mean they wasn't so friendly like it used to be, they knew about this, that we're going to get killed, they knew about this. And all the time, before the war they didn't want us, they send us to Palestine, especially now they want us to be killed. To take away everything what we had, to get rid of us, to take our houses, to take the clothes, to take jewelry, to take everything. We had our jewelry to hide in a place in our house. Before the war when they came they didn't find nothing. They dig it out. And they took away everything. They knew about this and they used to say, "you're going to get killed anyway, the Germans will kill you". And they did, they knew about this. They hurried and they saw the digging, when they dig the graves, they saw how they getting killed. We hide the knives.

Q: And how did the Germans treat you, how did you spend your time in this few months?

A: We didn't go no place, we were sitting home most of the time. We was afraid to go, to get killed. They could kill us any place and any part of the day. Let's say, I walked, you would say something to them, if they didn't like, they could kill you. Who could stop them, they came for this. So what kind of life, we was happy that we had something to eat. The Polish people they used to come and that time, in the morning was a change with everything. We used to give them something, you know, like a dress or material or something for food. We was starving for food already, to survive, that was the life.

Q: So some of the Polish people were sort of helping you?

A: Yeah, they helped in some things, they brought food for us but it's not for nothing, we pay them, it's not with money so we paid with something else, or with jewelry, or with something, clothes, stuff.

Q: But they were also taking your things?

A: Oh yeah, oh yeah. When the Germans throwed us out from the houses, right away they took everything. They didn't take nothing what we could take.

Q: Were people being beaten or killed on the streets during this time?

A: Yeah, it was a few people they killed. It was one person alive, homeless person, so they killed him right away. And this what I remember. Maybe they killed other people too. But it wasn't already interested to find out because we were thinking about our lifes, that we're

going to get killed soon. So it wasn't to ask who was killed or who was going to get killed because I was, we was already on the line to get killed.

Q: Do you remember what your family talked about, if you had any plans?

A: What kind plans? Not lives at all. We was thinking only that they were going to make a ghetto and we were going to be in ghetto, but by us it was not ghetto, right away they killed the people. Like we went later to Radun and we was there living for ten months so we was living there in ghetto but not like by us. We was the first one to kill. I don't know why this happened right away, I have no idea.

Q: Tell me what happened.

A: What happened in Ashoshok (ph) you want? When they throwed us out from the house, my older sister, this one which was alive, she was alive at that time, it was before the holidays, she was married shortly, and she went with her husband to his parents there for the holidays, so we was home, me and my sister and my mother, my father. My father went away because everybody said that, "they going to take the men, first the men, and the women, we'll see what's going to be later". So he went away and he wasn't with us together so I was only with my mother, with my sister, the younger one. And then came my husband, he was my boyfriend there, he was from the same town. He came and the Lithuanians with the, together with the Germans, they throwed us out and they took us, they beat up my mother because she wanted to take something, I don't remember, and we went there to the synagogue. From the other street was my mother's family, we met them all that day there in the synagogue, we was all together, we was there for two days I think, two days and two nights. They took a lot of people from our end of town, this calls Alkinique (ph), if you need the name, I don't think so, if you need the name, came people too, and we were all brought together until they took us on the big place, you know, on the marketplace, and from there they started shooting. So first they took the men, again, all the men, and they said that they taking them to work but my father wasn't there, so they took all the men and they killed them, naturally. Then they came for the women, it was like afternoon, late afternoon, and they took us all and they put us in parts, like I was with my mother, with my sister, with my grandmother, with my aunt. I had three or four aunts. _____ And soon we was starting to walk already, came this man, the Lithuanian man. He was a policeman. He came over to me, my husband, he wasn't my husband that time, he took him also from the line from the men and he made sure that he killed him. He said that he's taking him to kill him, and he let him go. So before he said to him, take my girl. So he knew me because he used to come to my father, he used to do work for him. So he took, because I'd be from my head, and he said, "what are you doing here, come with me". And he took me out and he put me again on the place, on the marketplace, and he said to me, "soon it's going to get dark, go away, run away from here, go wherever you want to go". He said, "your boyfriend went away to Aladarin (ph), go also". So when it was dark, and they went away and they killed them. The whole family. So I didn't have nobody from my family, I took one girl, a neighbor girl, and she went with me. She left with her sister, mother, but then they went away too, at night. So we was walking the whole night

and we came back to the same time. Instead to go there to Radun, we came back to Ashoshok (ph). So one Pollack was walking in a field, you know. So I came to him and I said, "where to go", and he said, "where are you going, they killed everybody in Ashoshok (ph), why are you going there back"? I said, "I don't know where to go". He said, "go to this area, go to that area". So I was walking, both of us, and we came to Radun, we came to my sister there where she was. What I could do? What we can do? Always sit and play and clap, we lost that. Oh god. Then my father came there, we met him, and we was all together for the ten months.

Q: Where was your brother?

A: My brother was by the Germans, he was at war, when the war start, they took him to Damnia (ph).

Q: The Polish army.

A: Yes. Then he was, the Polish army was nothing for them, so the Germans, the Germans took him to Germany to our concentration camp and he was there, we was survived, he was liberated by the English army.

Q: At the time of this massacre, you were hiding, did you hear the shots or anything?

A: In Ashoshok (ph)? No, we wasn't hiding, we was on the market, we hide everything, where we could go? We couldn't go no place, and we didn't know what was going on. It was so stupid to believe them, that they are working. You understand, we couldn't believe that they were going to kill us. Till they killed, till they killed _____.

Q: Who were the people responsible, were they Germans, were they Lithuanians?

A: They was working together. The Lithuanians, they helped them. The Germans was maybe two or three people all together for them. But the rest was the Lithuanians, and they was very bad, very bad people.

Q: And some of them were people you knew before?

A: No. No. They were Lithuanians, they came from Lithuania, we was Polish, we had the Pollacks.

Q: Were they involved in this also?

A: The Pollacks, yes, yes. Some of them, they was working together with them too.

Q: And when the women were all shot, could you hear the noises and everything?

A: No, I didn't hear nothing and I didn't understand nothing that time. You know, like I was, I don't know from where, from another world.

Q: So you met your sister, your father, in Radun?

A: Yeah.

Q: And was your boyfriend there as well?

A: Yes.

Q: So maybe you can describe for me, well let me just clarify one thing. This took place, you said, on the holidays. Can you give me, this is Rosh Hashanah?

A: Yeah, Rosh Hashanah night, they took us, supposed to be start the holidays, then they took us from the houses and they put us in Eshule (ph).

Q: This is 1941?

A: 1941. After Rosh Hashanah, it's supposed to be Monday, Tuesday; Wednesday we was on the place, on the marketplace, and Thursday they start killing, and Friday they finished the women. That's all, and this was the end.

Q: Now maybe you can tell me about what was happening in Radun?

A: Well in Radun, we, what we did, we didn't do nothing, well the men they used to go to work for the Germans, but there was a ghetto. And some of the women they used to take to work too. I didn't work, no. Then after ten months, somebody told us that this and this night, they were going to start to kill the people. They were going to close up the ghetto, altogether, and they were going to start to kill. So we knew about this already and at night, at night we run away.

Q: Can you tell me a little bit about life in the ghetto in Radun, the conditions? One second.

A: Well it was, how can I told you. We was one, two.

Q: If you can tell me a little bit about life in the ghetto, what the conditions?

A: Well there was four families in one house, and the house had I think, one bedroom or two bedrooms. We were sleeping on the floors, we were sleeping, you know, we was cooking together. It was terrible, but we were happy that we are alive. Who thought about us, who think about this, that I haven't got what to eat, or it's not comfortable, or to wash ourself, to take a shower. What kind of showers? What kind of baths? We washed up and that's all in our part, and that's it. We was happy with this what we had. As long as giving us life, we had

the life. It's not going to happen like in Ashoshok (ph), right away to kill. You see, we had time a little bit here, to think about things. We knew about this, that they were going to kill here too, but we had no choice. As long they give us life here, so we lived here, where is to go? We had no place where to go. In the woods? How can you live in the woods at night, in day? I mean when it's cold, it's raining. We lived there, we lived like this, we went through this. So we had no choice, we had to live, till it came the time when we find out that it's going to make like he was doing, he did in Ashoshok (ph), so that time we ran away. We ran away, our family, what there was. My father, my sister with a husband, me, my boyfriend. And we ran away, that's all. We went away to the woods and we was by Pollacks. And then we came back to Radun, it's still got left a few. But we wasn't there, we was afraid to stay there. And we want to hide, some day by one Pollack, by another, whoever want to keep us, we stay there. We didn't have nothing, we were suffering very much. Not to have to eat, not to have where to sleep, so when it was warm, like in the summer time, it was okay. We was in the woods. We hide by the Polish people, you know, where they used to keep the horses, the cows, we used to. They used to not see us, we used to come at night and go away at night, otherwise they wouldn't let us stay, they were afraid, but they used to keep people too, whoever paid them, whoever had a lot of money, you know, like gold. They used to take only gold. So one family got killed too, they, the Pollacks killed them. He thought about this, why you have to keep them and to give them the food and to think maybe the Germans will come and they will kill me, so he killed the whole family, took away everything what they had, the gold, everything. And he buried them. This was a family from our town, from Ashoshok (ph), so we was afraid too, to stay by them. But sometimes we had no choice, we had to, in the winter time, what to do in the winter time? We had no clothes, we had nothing. But we used to go, the men used to go to the Polish people wherever we knew them, they used to ask for a coat, something to wear and something to eat, they used to give us to eat, because they was afraid. They could burn him too, they did for them what they did for the Germans, did to us. Or what they did to us, they could do this. What we got to lose? Our life was ending anyway, every minute, every minute we was thinking, not that we was thinking, we was already to kill. Like it was, we was hiding by one Pollack and he knew about this, that we are there. So one day the Germans came there not far away from there, came over to us and he said, "you have to leave right away, in the middle of the day". If somebody will see us, right away they're going to kill us. But he said, "you have to leave with no questions". So we went in the middle of the day, we was going, where to go? One side the Germans, there the Pollacks, they were going to give us out. But we had no choice, to go. We went to the woods, it was not far away.

Q: Let's stop the tape.

End of Tape #2

Tape #3

A: We stopped when we went . . .

Q: I'll let you continue.

A: We went to Radun and we was hiding every day in another place, it was a terrible time. Nobody wants to keep us. They were afraid and they didn't want. We haven't got no money, we haven't got no clothes, we haven't got nothing. So it was a very bad time, that was that time. It wasn't so bad with hiding because it was warm. It was summer time because it was when we went out from Radun was in May, so we had the whole summer, so it wasn't bad, to stay in the woods, to go out then, like at night. But the most important was the winter, what to do for the winter, where to go, if we were going to be alive. And sure enough, we decide, somebody told us, "but in Grodno, they called the Third Reich (ph)", that was the Germans called this, there the people are living a normal life, they are in the ghettos, but they are working and they are living in the houses, you know, they have a normal life. So we thought about this and we decided to go there.

Q: How far was that?

A: Far away. Far away from us. Like I would say from Radun to, I don't know exactly, I'd say like to Washington, maybe, maybe farther away. But I can't tell you exactly, I don't know. If my husband, he would tell you exactly. Well anyway, we decide to go there and so me, my husband, he was a boyfriend that time, with my father, we went to Grodno, with his sister, my husband's sister was with, because her husband was from Grodno. So he decided, and he said, "we're going to go there", and he had family there. My sister went with her husband to Lida, it's a bigger town from Radun, they went there and we went there, so we decided like also, it was in fall, fall we went there to Grodno, and we was there and warm from the ghettos. So we was there, really they had a normal life.

Q: How did you get there?

A: Oh, we walked a lot. Then we went by, no taxis. The most by well we went from this town, I don't know. Oh, we hired a horse with a Pollack, he took us for a short time, to another town what is nearer Grodno, so he took us there. We came there, we find another one and we walked a lot, and that's how we came to Grodno.

Q: What was Grodno like?

A: What I saw in Grodno, I saw a little town, the ghetto, but it was a big town, it was a very big town, in fact there was two ghettos, in one ghetto they couldn't put all the jews. So like let's say, in the beginning of the town was a ghetto, and then nearer Tanko (ph), nearer Shull (ph), was the other one. I never was in it, I was only in this one, in the one ghetto where we came, I was there all the time, with my father and then with mine boyfriend. He was mostly with

his sister, with the family, and we was put in a house also from the family, from their side. So we was there for two months, I think, if not more a little bit, I can't give you exactly the time, how long we was there. It was a good time, we had there not bad. The men, they used to go to work out of the ghetto, and the women, some women used to work for the Germans, but I never went to work there by them, by the Germans. I was in ghetto, my father was too, he didn't go to work. My boyfriend, he went, he used to go to work. And we had food, we had where to sleep, alright we used to sleep on the floor because how many families in one house. But it wasn't bad, if he wouldn't start to shoot, to take it out. But there was different already, there was the Jewish people was the, how they called. Well they used to organize, I mean with the people, to send them out to work, the Jewish people, like the Jewish policemen, they had a name.

Q: The Huguenots.

A: Huguenot, right. They used to come to the Germans and ask them, we need so many and so many people for work, so they used to send the people. Then when they start already, the liquidation in the ghetto, they used to come and they used to say, we need for today, 2000 people. And they used to take them to the gas chambers.

Q: How did you know that?

A: Well we find out. We knew about this. So we find places in the ghetto where they used to hide. They had like bunkers, you know bunker. So one day before we find out, when my boyfriend went to work, they took like seven or eight people and they didn't come back to the ghetto, they run away. They run away to go to the woods. But there was far away from the woods, the Grodno ghetto was far away, it's not like in Ashoshok (ph), so they run away, they didn't come back. So we knew already that it's time. So I find out, a bunker, and I went with my father, and some of them, they didn't let us go in because they had plenty people there. So I said, you must let me. If I'm going to get killed, you're going to get killed too. So they had no choice, we was one and another, a bunker, how big it was. So this was one night, then it was a week later, again, the Huguenot, they came, and they had to give them the people, how many they wanted. And this was going on for a few weeks. So one time, we didn't go to the same bunker every day. One time I find out another place where they hiding, so I said to my father, we're not going to this place, it's like I felt like it's no good to go. I said, "we're going to another place". He said to me, "what is the difference, what makes a difference, a bunker is a bunker to hide someplace". So we went, sure enough, everybody got killed in this bunker.

Q: Did they get killed by the local population, by the Nazis, do you know? Who?

A: By the Nazis. And the local helped them too. They helped them a lot.

Q: Were the Nazis inside the ghetto often?

- A: Yeah, yeah. They used to stay in by the gate, there was a gate all around, you know, where the people had to go to work, and where they had to come back. So there was one boy, a very nice looking, very nice, beautiful looking boy. He came from work and they shot him when he had to come in, for no reason at all. You can talk to nobody, you can ask nobody why. Why is a crooked letter here, no questions. They took him, they killed him, that's it.
- Q: What about the Jewish police, were they good guys or bad guys?
- A: Well they thought that they were going to be alive, they were going to let them leave. So whenever they had to take the people, you know, the people used to cry, nobody wants to go. We knew already that they take them to the gas chambers, not like here, they kill them, you know, right away in the graves. They took them there. But they didn't help, they wasn't so good either. Well they was fighting for their own lives, but they were wrong, they kept them till they need them. What they don't need they kill, they killed everybody. So then there came to a point when we was in Grodno, it was one morning, I was still sleeping, and my father went out, he used to get up early in the morning. He came back, and I heard already the shots, already. He said to me, "my daughter", he said, "my child, get dressed, they killing already, on the streets, they don't take like, you know, like they used to take, they're killing on the streets". Get dressed, that's it, this was the last word for him, and when I saw him, I never saw him again. He went out through the door, that's all. I got dressed and I went out, and I heard people out screaming, and the shots. So I figured, where shall I go, where to go? Before the war, it was a big place like near there, and they used to keep bread, bread and bagels, all kinds of things in a big box, like a very big box, like this, a big box. So I saw the box and I figured, I'm going to go in there. I went in without anything, it was cold already, it was winter, fall. But in Europe comes winter very hard, it's not like here. And there is fall and winter. Here is winter, summer, there is no fall. So I went in without, just in a dress, without anything, and I was sitting there. I didn't know what to do, my brains didn't work already. Where was my father, I didn't see him, nobody's there. I heard all those screams and cry, that's it. This was in the day time in the morning and this was going until it got a little dark, it got darker, it's came the night. And it was already quiet, so I figured, everybody got killed. I was the only one. What I'm going to do there? What I'm going to do, without food, without clothes, where to go? I'm afraid to go in ghetto, I'm afraid to walk, they're going to kill me like everybody they killed. And it was so quiet, and I don't know where to turn. The town is not familiar to me, it's not like Ashoshok (ph) or Radun, where I grow up. It's everything is to me like, I don't know nobody and I don't know where to go. But then it was start to be already the day time, I was there a whole day and a whole night sitting. And I heard like somebody's crying, so I figure, I have to get up, go out anyway sometimes, I can't stay here all the time, till I die there? So I went out and I saw one woman and I said to ask, "from where are you coming"? She said, everybody got killed, nobody's there. "What are you doing here"? "I don't know myself", she said. I said, "you saw somebody, some Jews"? She said, "they're in a house, I saw a few people, they're still alive". I went there and I met the people, I met a few there, a brother and a sister. I don't remember already, there was a brother and a sister, and another couple. So I went to them and they said, "When it's going to get dark, very dark at night, we're going to go in", this was still in ghetto, "we're going to go

in outside to Livendore (ph), we were going to get dressed. So I got dressed there, I didn't have nothing, without clothes, without shoes, without anything. I wore boots I find there, you know, what the people that are not there already, with a coat, with a pocketbook. And I got dressed and they got dressed and we was waiting till it get dark, and as soon it get dark, we was through the window, going in couples, you know. To go through the window, to go outside the ghetto, and to reach where to go. To go out from the ghetto, and to go out from the town. So as soon, I think I got the third or the fourth, I don't remember exactly, and right away I got caught. I got caught, he was a policeman working for the Germans, a Pollack, a Polish man. And he said, "I have to take you to the gestapo". I said, "why, why you have to take me? They should kill me, why? What you going to have from this? Listen, I don't have nothing, just this what I have on me. I have the coat and I have the boots, and that's all what I got". I said, "no money, no clothes, no nothing". I'm going to leave", I said, "you know what's going on, maybe you did the same thing to them, but what you going to have for this? If they're going to kill me, you going to have on your mind your whole life because you personally took me there. When they took all of them, it's different than when you're taking one person. I am still so young, what can I give you. If you want I can take off my boots to give you, my coat, and let me go. Let me live, let me go, think about this". So I don't know, maybe, and I spoke rather nice Polish, and maybe he realized, I don't know, he had a pity on me, whatever. I don't know what to say. And Polish he said to me, "_____". This means, run away. "Run away _____, quick, I shouldn't see you". I start to run but then I figure it's no good to run, people going to think, it's going to be, maybe it's a Jew. I put on a kerchief, they shouldn't see right away, maybe. They recognized when I talked, they couldn't recognize that I'm a Jewish girl. But you can think about this, you know, you never know, and there was very bad people, the Pollacks and the Germans, very bad. Right away, as soon as they saw a Jewish person, they give to the Germans, to the gestapo. And I was walking, and I don't know where I'm going, where I'm going, I'm still in the town. I have to leave the town, it's night time. So I was going and it start like to snow a little bit, snowing. So I figured it's snowing, it's dark, maybe they wouldn't recognize me if I stop to talk to them, to ask them. And I had idea how to go out from the town but I didn't know which way. So I stopped one Polish woman and I asked her where to go to this place. She told me and I went there. And I went and I was walking a whole night not knowing where to go and where I'm going to go.

Q: What happened to the other people who . . .

A: They got killed. They all got killed, nobody was alive. I was the only one. There was, I think three couples, yeah. I was the only one. I don't know why and I'll never know.

Q: Did they get killed right there or were they taken to the gestapo?

A: I don't know because I can't tell you because I left. I think not, they didn't got killed right away because I knew for myself because he wanted to take me, he didn't kill me right away. He wanted to take me to the gestapo. So I figure that somebody took them too, to the gestapo. They didn't kill them right away, on the place. And then I was going and thinking to

myself, what to do? God, where shall I go? What to do? If to go to a Pollack, some on the way where I walk, they were going to kill me right away because there was bad people. I didn't sleep, I was tired. I was hungry, I wanted to have a little bit water. Where to go, what to think. And I was thinking that where I was going, and this time I saw how far away I was, with a slight, because there was snow already, it was winter. And there was going by the both sides, two people, three people. So I was thinking, this can't be the Germans, this is all the Pollacks, probably the Pollacks. But I had no choice, I had to go, I had to walk. And I see they coming to me, they coming, they coming. So I took more the kerchief around my head and then they was so near to me, they stopped, and they stopped me. And they asking me, they couldn't think that this was a Jewish girl, they thought maybe it's a Polish going from one house to the other one, to somebody. And they said in Polish, they asking me "where are you going"? So the other man came over and he said to me, called me my name. "You're alive, you going from Grodno ghetto"? So I said, "yes". They was going, they are the partisans, they had a rifle with them, they had two, in fact they had two rifles. And they were going to Grodno, to ghetto, to take out one person, they was going to take out his mother and the sister.

Q: I'll let you begin again. Do you have a sense of when this was in time? When this took place when you left?

A: From Grodno ghetto? When? This was probably in the beginning of '43, early '43. Early '43 and it was winter time, that makes sense.

Q: I just have one other question before you continue. You told me that your boyfriend, the last time you saw him he was leaving with a work group to go outside the ghetto. Did you know his plans?

A: I knew his plans, he told me from before. That they were planning on running away from work, they were going to go out from ghetto, they were going to go to work, and from there they were going to run away, to go to the partisans, to meet him, but it's a long way they have to go. "I don't know what you are going to do, try, try". "How, and when", I said, "I don't know, this we're going to see". I think that's all.

Q: Alright, I'll let you continue your story. Met up with these people who were coming to find their family in Grodno, these partisans, yes?

A: If I knew them?

Q: No, you met up with them?

A: Yes.

Q: So I'll let you continue.

A: They recognized me and then I recognized them because I had my head down, I was afraid to keep up my head and to look at them. And when they recognized me, then I pick up my head and I saw them, and I recognized them too. And they ask me where I was going. They knew that I was in Grodno ghetto. I said, "I don't know where I'm going, where you are going"? They said, "we was planning on going to the ghetto and take out my mother, my sister, and other people". I said, "It's no use to go to the ghetto, nobody's there already, I was probably the last one". So they figured, and one, a sister with a brother was with me, but they had to, when I went out from the ghetto, there were two in the group with me, but where they are now, I said, "I don't know, they probably went, they took them to the gestapo". I had luck, I don't know how. I had this luck, what I'm now alive. So they recognized and they knew that I'm so tired and hungry.

End of Tape #3

Tape #4

- Q: Well I think when we stopped the tape you were talking about that, you told these people their family wasn't there. Let me ask you one question before we continue since we had to stop anyway. To your knowledge, when you said, "nobody was in the ghetto anymore", are you talking about both of the ghettos in Grodno or just your ghetto?
- A: No, I'm talking about this ghetto where I was, I don't know nothing about the other ghetto, nothing at all.
- Q: Okay, I'll let you continue.
- A: So when I met the people, and they was going to the Grodno ghetto to take out the family. So I told them that I was probably the last one, I was with a sister and brother together, with them, and they supposed to go also, to run away because in ghetto, nobody was left around, only a few people, these people what I met, and I was lucky that I met them because otherwise I wouldn't know where to turn and probably I would be killed, some place or in ghetto, whatever. So I told them what happened with me, with this policeman, what he was working for the gestapo and he wanted to take me. I told them the whole story and I said, "they let me go", and the rest ones, I said, "they probably not out". If they would be out from there, if they would be alive, they would be on the same place where I start to walk, on the same way, to walk I mean, on the same way. But nobody showed up. And then we heard that the people there, the Pollacks, they was talking, that nobody's in ghetto already, and there is no ghetto. So we went with Pollack to a house and with them, they took me. They occupied like the house, they didn't let nobody, they knew that these is partisans, they didn't let nobody to go out, whoever came, a neighbor or somebody, whoever came to the house, they let them in, but they didn't let them out. They supposed to stay till the night, till we're going to leave, then they can leave. So the first thing what I had was food because I was hungry, for two days and two nights I didn't eat. I didn't sleep, and they said, "you got to sleep", and they was staying, you know, all the time watching. Because if they would let them out, we would be already by the Germans, they would kill us.
- Q: What did they tell these neighbors, they told them you were there?
- A: Which neighbors? The neighbor, when they came in, one person came in so he saw already, he knew who we were, that's all. They said to him, "you sit down or lay down, do whatever you want, but you're not opening up the door and you're not going out, until we're going to leave". So sure enough, I went to sleep and they were standing the whole day watching if somebody's coming, or the Germans, you never know. Alright, they didn't have no telephones, they had no communication with them, what to do. They had to go by themselves, you know, to tell that this and this happened and there is partisans, whatever. When it came at night we left from there, we left to go back, they didn't go already to the ghetto because they heard from the Polish people too. We went to go to the woods, you know, it wasn't so easy to go because on the way was like Germans standing and Pollacks. It

was a separation between Grodno and the other towns. So they had to go all alone, they knew already, they were partisans, and they knew how to go and they took me, you know, they were walking and I was on the sled with the horse. We walked a lot too. And the whole night we was traveling like this, and when it start to be already, we was near the pusha (ph), natcha (ph) pusha (ph), this is the name. A pusha (ph) means the woods there. We came there and I met my boyfriend, my husband and I met other people, what I knew them, everybody what I knew, but they weren't in the Grodno ghetto.

Q: Well that must have been a surprise to meet your boyfriend again.

A: Well I knew, when I met these people they told me that he's there. So it started another life, a new life. So we start there and it was winter time. They had already a place what they built by themselves, you know, a place for winter because winter time you can't go out, right away you can see that people are walking in the woods and from the woods, and they had to prepare food. They prepared food and they prepared everything. And when it came, it was already spring time. And we heard about, that the Germans, they are planning to look for the partisans in the pusha (ph), so we had to leave. We had to leave the hiding place, the bunker where we was all winter. We had to leave this and we went far away from there from this place, but we went to the pusha (ph), to the natcha (ph) pusha (ph) for the _____ where it's more like woods.

Q: I wanted to ask you a few questions about this. You were living in this bunker in the woods for many months in the winter. You stayed inside all the time?

A: Yes, most of the time, yeah.

Q: Stop tape. I'm just trying to get a sense of what it was like in that bunker, what did you eat, what did people talk about, how did you occupy your minds, what were you thinking? How did you live?

A: It's hard to explain but in my own words I'll try to explain to you. Those people where they were before me, they prepared for the winter, food. They prepared like potatoes, let's say, meat. It was cold, you know, outside, freezing, snow up to here. So they prepared food because we couldn't go out, if we would go out, right away you can see the footsteps, you know. That's why we was afraid to go out for something. We was living there, whatever we had, it was okay, good, good enough. As long we can survive.

Q: Did you cook in the bunker?

A: Yeah, we cooked.

Q: How big was it?

A: It was very small, how can I?

Q: How many people were in there?

A: It was there, maybe 20 people, ten couples for sure.

Q: Any children?

A: No, no children.

Q: Did you ever go up for air?

A: At night we used to go out, but not far from the place, say near the place because we was afraid for the footsteps.

Q: So even the men, everybody stayed inside for most of that time?

A: Yes. At night we used to go out, to fresh up a little bit.

Q: Go to the bathroom?

A: What kind bathroom? The woods, we was living in the woods.

Q: What did you talk about, how did you occupy yourselves?

A: We talk about what to do later on. To go out, to go to the woods or to stay, what to do. We didn't have to think about what to do, we did it, we have to leave the bunker, but it was already spring time, it was nice. As soon as we find out that they are planning to search, to look for us, for the partisans, we left the bunker and we went to the woods.

Q: Did you know whether there were other groups of partisans nearby?

A: There was another group partisans, there was what I told you, the men.

Q: I need you to start that over, it was too noisy, please. Were there other partisans nearby?

A: Yes. This was the other group, without women, only men. And there was Russian people too. Russian and our people. But they knew too, about us. They had a lot of guns and rifles, those people. We had too, but very little, you know. So they went too, there to the pusha (ph), the same thing. But what they did, the Germans, they had other plans to look over, and then they had like a chain like, you know, a lot of Germans with Pollacks, with Lithuanians, all of them. And they used to go through the pusha (ph) to find, to look for the people, to look for us. We had no choice where to go. We was sitting near, it was woods, a lot, very close one to another. We was sitting there, me, my husband, my boyfriend that's my husband, my sister, and my brother-in-law. We were sitting like from one side and from the

other side was another group, three people. Woman with a husband, with a sister. Three people. And we heard that the Germans are there, and they killed them, and we were sitting here. It was like now, I'm talking like an electric storm goes through my body and we was only praying, God help us. They got killed and they went away. They figure that no more is in this side, they went, they killed a lot of people that time.

Q: How did your sister, how did you reconnect with your sister, how did she get there?

A: Well she came also, she came also from Lida ghetto, have you heard of Lida? She came there too to the partisan. Yeah. You ask me how my sister came? So she came also from, somebody took her out from the group, from our group, and took her too, there to the partisan and we was together. So then we picked up ourselves, where to go again, we had no place where to go. The partisans, they was only the men. They wouldn't take us. We went again to the partisan, they had, you know, rifles, they had guns, they had everything and there was a _____ but they didn't want us. So we went far away, we was going again to the Pollacks, maybe they were going to take us for a day or two or something, you know. And this was going on for the whole summer, until the winter came. Then we was thinking what to do, where to go. We had a Pollack, this was my brother _____, but he knew him. We went to him, we went to him and he ask him, he said to him, "listen, you have to do something, let us go in, it's winter time, we have no place where to go". So it was like, he said, "alright, you can stay by me for a little while, then I'm going to build for you a place in the woods not far from my house and you're going to stay there for winter". And he was already belonged to the White Pollacks and he was together with them working. By then they was looking for Jews, to kill them because they wanted, they knew that a lot of Jews survived after the war from the Nazis, but they don't want should be Jews by the Polish.

Q: When you say, "white Pollacks", are you talking about the Polish home army?

A: No, no, this wasn't an army, this was an organization. After the war they made the organization, calling themselves White Pollacks.

Q: So it's not the army of _____.

A: No, I don't think so. They wanted a clean Poland. Poland should be cleaned without Jews, and they looked only for the Jewish people. So we was by then, I don't remember exactly how long, but we was by him a short time, and one night he came over and he said, "you know what, I feel like you should go out". This was winter time, we didn't go out, he used to bring us food. And he used to come, so he came for us and he said, "let's go to my house, I have prepared a dinner for you, for all of you". We was so happy to go out and to go to a home, to a house. And really he prepared a dinner for us and we was sitting around the table and we just start to eat and we heard the door got so opened up like this, and they start to shoot. They start to shoot, we got so scared. I don't know how many people there were, the Polish people but right away one of us, we was in this bunker by this Pollack, we was six people, other boys. So one boy probably, he took from him, how was it I don't know because

it got dark right away. When he shoot, he probably shoot both of them.

Q: Sorry, airplane. Sorry.

A: I don't know where I left.

Q: Well you said that they were knocking on the door.

A: Yeah, the open the door, I'm getting lost when I start to talk like this. And they started shooting. And both of them, probably one boy, I don't remember. I think we had a gun or something we had in the bunker. And he shoot somebody, one of the White Pollacks, and he start to be quiet. It was quiet and nobody was there, they ran away. They got scared and they ran away. So my husband and my brother-in-law and the other two, they went away. So only me with my sister, what to do, we was staying there, we didn't know what to do. So there was the Polish, the Pollacks, they had big stoves, like a oven, a big oven, and under the oven they used to have chickens there to raise them. So I said to my sister, "let's go there". And we went there where the chickens was, and it was so high, and we were staying there until we didn't hear nothing, it was so quiet. So I said to my sister, "what are we going to do there, let's run". This was in the middle of the night. It was a frosty night, it was so cold. I was only in one dress, my sister too. And I said, "we have to run". We open up a window and we went out. We saw, you know, it was a winter night, a frosty night and it was so light, like we saw them from far away. So I said to my sister, "let's run there, probably this was our people". We ran away, we met my brother-in-law with my husband and here was the cloth by him, the blood, you know, was egging, like somebody hit him over the head with a rifle, hit him over the head hear and the blood was coming, it was freezing, you know, on him. What are we going to do, where were we going to go, who knows that you're going to leave? Nobody knows, you know, knew about this because he had the open head in the back. So he said, my husband said, "let's go to this and this Pollack, he's more richer one, maybe he going to let us in for the time being, for the night". So we went in to him and he saw what the blood is running from him, and we went away from the White Pollacks, he let us in. He didn't let us in the house, God forbid. He let us in where the horses are standing with the cows, but we were happy. We was laying around, you know, my husband, because he was so hurt and the blood was running from him. The blood got freezed on him. And take a look, nothing happened to him and nothing happened to us. As long they didn't kill us, didn't happen, nothing. We had no sickness, nothing at all. So it came in the day time and he said, "you know I can't keep you, I would keep you, I'm not sending you now, I know what it is in the daytime, but at night you have to go away". So where to go? Alright, food he gave us there in the place. He gave us an old smock to wear, he sold us. And we went away to another Pollack, he was living with a sister and with a nephew. They weren't married, they had no family, only three of them. We went to them and he saw us and he knew us, he knew my brother-in-law more than us because my brother-in-law, they had a store in Radun and he used to come there.

Q: We need to change the tape.

End of Tape #4

Tape #5

Q: You were telling me that you had found this Polish person who knew your brother-in-law.

A: Yeah, we went to him, this was already at night. We went to him and we asked him, we stopped to talk to him and he promised him, he knew him, that he had a store. That if he had a store, he must have money, he must have clothes, he must have a lot of things. But he told him, "we have nothing now". He told us that, "it's near the war, we're going to finish soon". He said, "let us go into you, take us". He had like a PD (ph), and he took us there, he took us in. So he let us in, from the beginning we was by him also, in the, I don't know how they call, where the horses, where the cows are staying. So we was there for a short time. Then he took us and he make us a place upstairs his house, there. It was like a room, a little room, and we were six people there in the room. But he gave us food, he was good to us and every day he used to tell us that nobody knew about us, nobody knows, nobody knows nothing.

Q: We're going to have this constantly, how bad is the sound? You tell me. So he made your room, he fed you.

A: Yeah, and he used to tell us all the time, he used to go to the church and there you listen to the people what they saying, that it's going to be the end of the war, soon, soon it's going to be the end. He used to come and tell us everything. And then one day he came and he said, "they saying", we was by him probably two or three months. He kept us and he feed us everything. So he came and he said, somebody told him in church that he has Jewish people. So he came and he told us, he said, "you know what, I kept you all the time, I can't keep you all the time now. From now on, you have to leave. Because what is the use if people know already, they find out, so I'm going to get killed, and you're going to get killed. You better find a place and go away. Find a place, where is the place? But thank God it was already spring time. It was already warm, so we had one way, to go to the woods, and this what we did. At night time we left him and we went away. We went away to the woods. And there already it was May, I think. In May it was warm already. Went away in the woods and we was staying there. At night we used to go out to take for food nearby, you know. Not nearby but far away. And there we met other people where they was staying, you know, with families. So we were happy already, we met other people. And we used to have, you know, a connection with the Pollacks. They used to say, they used to talk to us saying that the war is near, near to the end, and this was the end really. On July the Russian came in and we was free after this. We was free where to go. We went to Ashoshok (ph).

Q: Can you describe to me what happened when you say, "the Russians came in".

A: We was in the woods, came in, the Russian on a horse, on the horses. We recognized them that they were Russians. But we were scared, we didn't know who are these. So they start to talk to us, "we are Russian, you're going to be free now, the war has ended, you come out. Come out. Don't be afraid, come out, go home. Go wherever you want to go, you are free". That's what he's saying. But we was in the beginning when we saw them, we recognized

them that they are Russians, but still we didn't know, you know. They fright in us, the scared was in us, we was afraid. But when they start to talk like this, "go out, don't be afraid, nobody they will do to you something, nobody. We have freed you, go on, go". We went and we went right over to Ashoshok to our town, nobody was there, the houses was there. I went to my house. There was Pollacks leaving, and I was afraid to go in. You know, it was a big house, and our big table was standing. My father was a tailor, he was a heavy man.

_____ was a wooden floor, and he was standing on one place. So he was like, how to say to, like dan (ph), it was the woodan (ph), and I saw the place, you know. I went away from there, and I never wanted to go to my house where I was born and raised and I lost the family. So we was a few couples. So we was a few couples, and there was, we find out, Yaffa's (ph) family came.

Q: Yaffa (ph)?

A: Yaffa (ph) Helia (ph), she was there with the family, with her family, and they was living in their house, in their own house. So we went to a house nearby, not far away, to my husband's cousin, he had a big house, because I didn't want to go to his house and I didn't want to go to my house. So we went there, and we was staying there until we, you know, we met the Polish people and they start to talk about everything, what they saw, how all of them got killed, and how they robbed everything, and now they sitting in our houses. And then we start to think what to do, you know, we have to start to work. So my husband went to work, he was as a baker. By then was, they had, his mother used to bake. So he went to a Pollack to work for him, and he worked for a little. Then we was living there, we was thinking what to do, where to go, how to establish our lives. In meantime we heard that the White Pollacks, they are coming to our town. So my husband and the other couple said, "what they going to do, what? It's after the war, what they going to do"? So I said, "they are coming, they said the White Pollacks are coming, they're going to kill us". And sure enough. So before this night, this has to happen before the _____, I said to my husband, "I'm going there to Yaffialia (ph), to this family, I'm afraid to stay there, after all there is a family and he knows where are the people". But I went with another of the couples, what we are staying together with another person. We went there, we came to them, to this family. And we was waiting, they are coming or not? We wasn't sure, but the Pollacks, they said that they are going to come. And sure enough, they came. It was at night time and they came and they open up like this, the door, and they came in and I heard, and we was on the second floor. There was a house, a two-family house. It's not really a two family, but they had bedrooms upstairs, and downstairs they had a kitchen, they had everything, you know, in the house. "We heard", I said to the other person, Esther, "you heard, I heard the shotting there", and sure enough, they shot her mother, the baby she had on her hands, and they shot them. So I said to her, "they're going to shot us too". I opened up the door and I jumped from the second floor and I said, "it's no use to stay there because they're going to kill us, and we're going to run away, we have a choice". And sure enough, we run away. I said, "so I'm going to break a leg, I'm going to break something, but I'm going to be alive still". But they didn't come upstairs. We ran away. They killed the mother with the baby and they went away.

- Q: Now I need to ask you a few questions about this. Do you remember when this was?
- A: This was October, 1944, October the 20th, I think.
- Q: How did you know that Yaffa's (ph) mother and baby brother were killed, how die you know that's who it was?
- A: After, after we find out. How do I know, I run away, I didn't know nothing. I thought that they going to, they killed everybody, the whole family.
- Q: So you heard the noise and you heard shouting, and you heard shots?
- A: Yes.
- Q: Could you understand, and these were Polish, could you understand what they were saying, did you hear them talking?
- A: No, I didn't hear them talking. First of all, we was on second floor, I couldn't hear talking them. But we ran away, I ran, I don't know. I don't know where really. But I heard already that it's quiet. I went home, there to my husband, and he find out already, he came there to the house to find out, because I was there, that they killed the mother and the baby. And this was, that's all, this was the end. After the war, after getting through so much in their lives, and she had the baby there in a bunker, maybe you know about this? No, she didn't tell you Yaffialia (ph)?
- A: You tell me.
- Q: Yes, she had the baby there, and they came with the baby, and they had to start a new life, and to live. And take a look what happened. They killed them and the father got crazy. He went crazy. From there on we start to look where to go again. I went to my sister in Radun, and then we didn't know what to do. We said, "maybe we'll go". We went back to Ashoshok (ph), we was there for a little while, then we went to Vilna.
- Q: I need to ask you this, is there anything else that you can remember or you can tell me about, any more details about that night at Yaffa's (ph) house, when the Polish people came in, how did you know that they were Polish. Do you have any sense of how many of them there were.
- A: What do you mean, "how do I know are they Polish"? Who could come to kill, who could come in the middle of the night to kill people? Only the White Pollacks. We knew already, somebody from the Pollacks told us, they are planning to come to kill us. We didn't think about this, why they should come to kill us, why, what for? They took away everything already from us, we didn't have nothing, why they should kill us? You see, if we would take, we believed them, the Pollacks what they was saying, we would run away, naturally. But we

couldn't believe them, why they should do this? We didn't take nothing from them, why they should do this?

Q: So some of the people in your town were nice to you and they warned you, but there was this other group who wanted to get rid of you?

A: Yeah, and just some little people, what they were nice. But the most, the most were bad. They took our houses right away, they took everything, whatever have got left. You know, living there for generations, for generations. I had a grandfather, a grandmother, a mother. You know, so there must be something, they had something. So how can be, how can they be nice to us, and be polite to us, and help us, they didn't want us. So these few people, what they've got left, they wanted to kill too, and they killed. And you heard what had happened in Kent, so that happened there too, and they killed a lot of people.

Q: Did you see any of these people?

A: No.

Q: You just heard them, and you heard the shouting.

A: That's all.

Q: So you decided to go to Vilna.

A: So we went there and we tried to find work, it was very hard to. It was Russian people, and Lithuania. We didn't know the language, not none of them. But we tried, you know. My husband went to work, he was a tailor, so he find work. And I went to work as a waiter, but I didn't know the language. I used to, they used to come to order, a order, I used to write in Polish. But the sentence that came out, Polish words but they came out in Russian, you understand? I used to go in the kitchen to order the food, and this way I start to learn the language. I used to come home and read and, you know, I tried the best only through. And in the beginning it was very hard but they liked me there, and I learned. And then I worked as a, later on already I worked as a, what do you say, as I gave orders already. You know, and I learned the language and I start to work, and it wasn't so bad, I had good. And I got pregnant, in 1950 I gave birth to my daughter and I had in the house always there, you know, a woman. Until they start to talk to go away from Russia. You know, it was a hard life, but in Lithuania it was easier, the life. They start to take out people, you know, where they used to work, where they had, where they was reached. But they come out to bring them on the Siberia, you know. This was a killing too, on the Siberia. Till they opened up with the Polish, they wanted all the Polish people what they've got left, they want them in Poland. And the Russian, they let them out, so right away, soon it was this, you know. But then in the papers, on the radio I heard this. So right away, I said to my husband, "we have to leave, there's no future in here".

Q: Were the Lithuanian people nice to you?

A: I don't know really, not bad. I worked with a Lithuanian, one person, a few of them. They wasn't so bad, no I wouldn't say.

Q: And was there any threat that you or your husband would have to go to Siberia?

A: That could be. Could be, they can find all the time, any time. And this was why we were afraid. That's why we wanted to get out of there. But usually we was, it wasn't so bad to live there. I was working, my husband worked. We made a lot, I didn't have to stand in line for bread, for other things. I used to get easy where I worked, you know. So it wasn't so hard. So it wasn't so bad. This was the only thing what I was afraid, they shouldn't send us to Siberia.

Q: Now were you working in a place where there were a lot of Russian officials?

A: Yes.

Q: So you got to know them?

A: The director, he was a Jew too, but they didn't speak no Yiddish. He understood, he knew what I went through and a lot of things I learned from him. He was very nice, in fact when I left, I came and I said to him, "I have to leave, I'm going away, I'm going to Poland". I didn't say that I'm going to Israel, I want to go to America. This I couldn't mention, God forbid. So I said, "I'm going away, there is, got left from the war, from the family". I have to go there. He used to say to me, "why? Take a look you have a good position, you're working, you have everything, whatever you need, why you should go away? Why"? All the time. "You're never going to find a life like this". Sure, I'm never going to find a life like this. To live, to go to sleep and to think that maybe somebody knocks on door to take us out and to take us to Siberia. For no reason at all. And if I worked, I was afraid at work too. They could put you in jail for a little nothing. For the littlest nothing. Maybe somebody could say one word on you, that's it. This would be enough.

Q: Even though you had this good relationship?

A: Doesn't matter.

Q: And yet you were going to go to Poland, the Poles had been very bad to you.

A: Yeah, I'm going to go into Poland just to go through to Poland, not to stay there, not to live there. I was in Poland, in Russia, for two months I think, then I left for Israel.

Q: How did you arrange this, did someone help you?

A: What?

Q: To get to Warsaw to get to Israel?

A: Sure. There was first of all, to Russia to go because we was born and raised, so we could go. They let us go. Understand, we was born, and we had to go to Moscow to take out some papers. But we are, we are really Polish people, we was born there and raised there, so they let us go, the Russians. And we think in Poland, we could stay there, they didn't throw us out. They gave us food too. They was very nice there, but we was afraid to stay there. And we was trying to go away.

Q: Who gave you food there?

A: The government.

Q: Polish government?

A: Yes.

Q: As displaced people, they just helped you?

A: Yeah, they helped us.

Q: Did they give you an apartment?

A: We was in a hotel, staying in a hotel.

Q: And the Polish government took care of this?

A: Yeah. They helped us, they helped us. That time was very nice, pleasant. It was a very nice guy.

Q: I'm sorry, I want to ask you, when you got to Warsaw, did you meet people there or maybe in Vilna who would come out of the camps?

A: Yes. Yes, a lot of them.

Q: Was that shocking to you?

A: It wasn't shocking, why was shocking?

Q: You knew what had happened?

A: Sure. I was in contact with my, when I was in Vilna, my sister left earlier and she was already in America, United States. She was writing to me letters but not through the house, I

was afraid. They could take me to Siberia because I have . . .

Q: Is that a dog? [tape cuts off]

End of tape #5

Tape #6

- A: We had a cats. They used to eat together with us, they used to sleep together. The cats with a dog used to sleep together.
- Q: Jason? It's on the next door porch. Can we drug him? What's he barking at? Okay. You left off, you said your sister was beginning to write you letters.
- A: I couldn't have the letters by me, so she used to write in the postal center, they used to call, if you're familiar with this. So I used to come in the post office and I used to take out a letter. I was afraid to read there in the building, I used to go around where I didn't see people. And I used to read and cry a lot. And I used to tear it in little, little pieces, that's all. And I couldn't answer her, I was afraid because they can come at night and take me out, that's all, take away. You know, before Stalin died, he had a plan to take out all the Jews, to take them to Siberia and to freeze them there. Not to kill them like the Germans did, but he would freeze them. Because there it's so cold that you can't go out. And he would keep us in a place like this where there's no eat, no nothing, and he would kill all the Jews. So I was all the time, you know, my daughter was born in 1950 and this was in 1953 before he died. So he had this plan and they had to start already. And we didn't know what to do, again. It was worse, but like this we had a good life, but we had no future and we was afraid for tomorrow. So when he died he didn't have too much time because he died in 1953 and there was, then was other people took over and the other people was very good, very good to everybody, and we had a good life. Till then I start to write letters to my sister, and she start to write to me, to answer me. But to go out it was out of the question, we couldn't go out never, never in life. But then when they changed, when came the other people in Stalin's place, so they letted out the Polish people to go to Poland. This way we went to Poland. And from Poland I wrote already my sister, she knew already that I'm there. I called her, I made a call on her telephone, you know, she should pay. And then she start to take us from Poland to America, to United States. But after a little while she find out that she can't take us all, it has to be one person and this is going to take a long, long time until we're going to get the visa. So I said to her, and that time they said, "whoever wants to go to Israel can go free". So I said to my husband, "whether it's going plane or it's going a ship, we are going, we are not staying here in Poland with the Polish people". And this what we did. So I didn't wait for my sister till she was going to do everything. We went to Israel, at least I'm safe there, I have got a life. It was a hard time. It was after a war, we had seen, it was a war, it was very hard. Everything was like you had to get, like for food, you know. It was hard to get to work, everything was hard. Anyway my sister helped me, she send me money, she send me packages, and she helped me a lot. Till she's _____ this was in '57 when we came to Israel, 1957. So it was till 1959, till my sister made out the papers for us, for all of us. In the beginning she could only take one person, me with my daughter or my husband. I didn't want to leave my husband. Or he didn't want to leave me. So I said to her, I was _____ that we're not going to leave. If to go, to come to you, only all of us. Otherwise we're going to stay in Israel. Now is a bad time but we're going to get through this. We had hard times a lot in our lives, we get through this too. But the only thing, that we are free, we are with Jews, I'm not afraid that they're

going to kill me, that I'm a Jew. Everybody's there, the Jews, but the Arabs, nobody was afraid for the Arabs there, that time. Even now, they're not afraid for them. Whatever's going to happen's going to happen. But it's our land, it's our place, it's our home. And the biggest mistake what I did in my life is when I came here to this country. Maybe God punished me for this. What I went through here, a lot of trouble. And there maybe I would avoid everything and wouldn't come to me so much trouble as it came here. I left because I wasn't afraid that it was a hard time. My husband went to work, and he work, he could work. He went, he never had this, he never worked on this work what he went on, construction. Anything. We went there to the people, they're called Sokinote (ph), where they're giving specialty places, you know, office where they're giving fair to work. So they said, on person was sitting, like a heavy man, he said, "I have all of this work, I can't give you no other one, I don't have it". So this is the only thing, my husband took the work and the only thing what I said to him, I said, "how many times we have to get through everything, to start from the beginning". And that's what start. We had our home, like they gave us, the government, we had to pay a certain amount money, and they build specially homes for the new come in, and we had already established. I had two bedrooms, and I was so happy, and I was planning to go to work because I couldn't, then my daughter went to school and I was planning to go to work. I could work in these places, you know, as a waiter, I knew already the work. And the language, it wasn't for me like it was here, I knew a little bit but I forgot, you know, when I was a child I was. But my daughter went to school and she start to talk right away in Hebrew, in fact she went to the second grade, and they were happy and I was happy with them. Then all of a sudden came the visa with my sister. I was so unhappy to leave. I left only because I had my sister here, otherwise I would never, never in my life. Here start again, you know. All those with hard times, with everything. Alright, I came to my sister and I had by her, I was by her for 11 months, not quite a whole year. I gave birth to my son, and was blessed by her in the house, you know, in 1959. And I wasn't happy, I was unhappy. I didn't have my place. When I start to look for my own place, for apartment, where I used to go, nobody wants me. With two children nobody wants. Nobody wants me. Till I find an apartment, and my sister used to say, "why you want to go out"? It was no good, she was our family. Like, she had one child only. She had a brand new house, just bought it. When I came, she just moved in. And I didn't feel like to stay there, you know, with a baby. So I used to go to find an apartment. One day I went and I find apartment there, it wasn't so nice apartment. From there she moved out, she left me her apartment, when I'm going to come? And she paid for a month rent, that time it was \$50 rent, you know, in 1959. So I came and I was pregnant, and this was on the third floor or on the fourth floor, I don't remember. And I went there, you know, with my big belly and I saw and there was already Shlowtsy (ph), you know, the blanket people around. And as soon I came out. So my sister said, she saw already I mean, I started crying. I said, "I left a beautiful home, my beautiful house and I was so happy there, why I came here, to climb on the fourth floor"? I said, "with a, is going to be born a little baby"? So she said, "you don't have to take, you don't have to, you have a place. We're going to find another place, don't worry".

Q: This was in New York?

A: So then I was looking and looking. Finally I find a place where they let me in, and I said to my sister, she didn't know about this place and I gave the deposits right away. She went away and took our deposits, she didn't like the apartment. I had to put in money there, it wasn't so nice, she didn't like it. So then we start to look around her. And I find apartment, this was a walk-in apartment. In the beginning she didn't want it also, my sister. But she said, "alright, this one is more like it, okay, you're near me and you'll be with the children, whatever". She took my daughter to school, you know.

Q: Stop? Not yet. "You stopped", you said, "your sister helped you", she took your daughter to school, and you started getting adjusted or it was tough?

A: Well I was with a little baby. I couldn't go to work, I couldn't help my husband. He was working for three years day and night, you know, to, he saw that nobody wants us in apartment, we have to buy something for ourselves. So it was a hard time, I can't say it was light. But thank God, I find an apartment by older people, in a walk-in. They let me in with the two children, and that time I didn't have no television, no nothing. You know, my sister gave me a bed and she gave me, you know, I didn't have nothing. Like a table, chairs, to eat, on what to eat. Well she gave me a lot of stuff so I had, then little by little I bought it for myself. I buyed one piece here or one piece there. And I was there for four years.

Q: What were some of the biggest difficulties when you came to this country?

A: The difficult was, without a language, without money, without everything. We had nobody, only my sister. This was the only help, what I had from my sister. Otherwise, my daughter used to come from school, she used to make the homework, and she used to cry, and I was crying with her. "Why you came here, why you came here, what made you to come here? You don't live with your sister anyway in one house, why you came here? We had already everything there, and there was all the Jews. Why you came here, to put me again with other people, I mean non Jews". All aggrussions it was all the time, for the longest time I remember. And I used to curse myself what I did, but there was no way to go back. We had to do it. I said to my husband, "we start and we have to finish, and we have to raise the children, and we have to go on with our lives. Otherwise what it's going to be"? Then I went when he was already three years old. My daughter used to come from school at 3:00, I used to go at 4:00 at work. I used to work in a factory for chuckalud (ph), the second shift. So I used to work.

Q: So it was a tough adjustment being here?

A: Very hard, very hard. To start from the beginning, how many times you can start? How many times? I was 37 years old when I came here and I gave birth to my son. It's a good remembering, you know, my whole life. He was born in March and I came in February, just in the same day. I came February the sixth, March the sixth he was born. This time to get to, to be in hospital for a whole week and talk to the walls. This was good?

Q: What do you think gave you the strength to get through all of this? Is there something in your character that helped you?

A: Well I have a very hard character. And really, I'm not afraid, I'm on?

Q: Yeah.

A: I'm not afraid for anything. Shut it off a little.

Q: You want to turn it off. So you had a tough constitution.

A: Yeah, very.

Q: Do you think that's something you learned through your, when you were a child, or it's just the way you were?

A: I don't think so, when I was a child it was nothing specially. We was growing up, till I was, but I don't think I didn't went through nothing specially like. I remember when my grandfather died, this I remember. I was staying with him. He had a stroke. Nobody knew what it was. When he was sick, I used to come and gave him water, you know, but the mouth was on the side. To this day, what I remember when I was a child. Otherwise, nothing.

Q: Maybe your parents respected you independence?

A: When my sister went to school. In Europe they used to start when you were seven years old. I was not quite six years, I was five and three quarters, something like this. So I said, I start to cry when she went to school. So I said to my mother, "I want to go to school too". So I remember, my mother said, "let her go, let her go. She'll be able to go, to make homework, let her go". I was crying, and I wanted to go, and I went. And I went and I was staying at school with her, with my sister, and we was together all the years through the school. In fact, when we was in the fifth grade, my sister got sick and she couldn't go to school no more, and I went and I finished seven classes.

Q: So you were a willful child?

A: I wasn't so bad. I wasn't too, I mean I didn't gave her a hard time, my parents like naughty children giving hard times. I never heard of this and I raise like this, my children. They never said to me, "no", or "I want to do this and I'm going to do it". And I used to say, "no way".

Q: Let me ask you something. During these years, during the Holocaust, did religion play any role in keeping you strong, or did you even know when it was Shabbos (ph)? Or did you pay any attention to this?

A: We do pay attention, we do. We used to pray and ask God, he should help us. But then, what

we could do? Nothing to do. Why God punish us? Why is God on their place, on the non Jews place, on the non Jews side, not on our side. What we did wrong? We kept strictly, there was nothing non kosher, I didn't heard this after the war. But before the war, where I was raised in a house, I never heard of this non kosher things, or to do something on Saturdays. We never heard of this.

Q: But during the war?

A: During the war was a different thing.

Q: Did you know when holidays were? Did you even know?

A: We knew a little, like Yom Kippur, you know, Yom Kippur, you're not allowed to eat. So we was counting, that it has to be this time, let's say tomorrow. And we had this week before, we had a mistake. So twice we didn't eat, we prayed but we didn't have no books to pray. But what is the holidays, what is this? What is everything there, where was our God? Where was our God? To listen to little babies crying, to be taking away mothers, I mean kids, babies from mothers. You have to give away your baby to kill them? It's not heard. It was in Spain Inquisition, you heard about this? I suppose you learn about this. But years and years ago, maybe 2000 years ago, so they killed people because they are Jews. They had a choice, they could get to be non Jews if they wanted to leave. But they didn't want it. So they burned them, you know about this. But we didn't have no choices, we are a Jew, you are a Jew, you have to be killed, that's it. No pity from nobody, from nobody.

Q: Were you angry you were a Jew?

A: Sometimes, sometimes. You know, some girls, I had a friend, Pollack took her, and he raised her. She wasn't the same age as I am, as I was. He kept her the whole war. She used to go to church, she used to pray there. She used to do things whatever he said, whatever he told her. And she was as a Polish girl. After the war, she came in Ashoshok (ph), to our town, with this man. He was a older man already, and she went back to him. That time soldiers came in our town, came a soldier, a young boy. And somebody told him that in this and this, down there lives a Yiddish, Jewish girl. She lives by Pollack and she is a Pollack, she goes to church and everything. Even there, he took her out. He took her out, he got married to her, and he took her to Israel. I went there, I went there by her. If not for him, she would be, she would spend her whole life there with him. Well he gave her life, let's put it this way, he gave her life. A lot of people they got married to the Pollacks and they was staying with them. But I don't know if I would do this, I don't think so.

Q: How long after liberation did it take you to start being observant again?

A: A long, long time. We couldn't come to ourself. First of all, you know, as a young girl I was so skinny, I didn't have no bust, no nothing. When we came I had worn, I don't know, I didn't have no underwear, no nothing. And excuse me, I got sick. I used to sleep and the water

goes. It was hard till I got to myself. I got to eat food better and I realized that it can't be this time, it can't come back any more. And I have to establish my life, and I have to lie, you know. So why from them? And that's what it is. I mean, I looked out for myself and I used to say, "we have to do it, we have to have a family, we have to have a life". I don't know who tried, maybe my parents, who knows. Because to be honest with you, I couldn't believe in God already, what he did to us.

Q: Okay, I'm going to put in one more tape.

End of Tape #6

Tape #7

Q: Is religion important to you today?

A: It is important because I want the children, they should go in the same footsteps. Otherwise, I'll be honest with you. If not for the children, maybe I would be a free person. I'm going every Saturday to the synagogue. My husband goes twice a day now, since he retired. But before he used to go also only on Saturdays. He used to work on Saturdays because we had to make a living. Nobody wants them, they want Saturdays too. And this what we went through, I wouldn't care too much. But later on when the kids start to go to school, I wanted them, I used to light candles every Friday night. I didn't cook on Shabbos (ph), on Saturdays. I used to prepare Fridays. When I used to go to work I used to stay till 2:00 at night on Thursday night to prepare for the two days food, not to cook, not to do anything. And I used to clean and shop, everything in the same day. Used to come from work, go shopping, to prepare and cook. That was the life. Then I wanted my daughter should go to Ishiri (ph), they wanted a lot of money. Yaffialia (ph) tried for me, I couldn't do it. So I gave her public school, she went to public school. Then when my son was already five years old, I put him in Ishiri (ph), I find more or less cheaper. I put him in Ishiri (ph), he didn't, he was so connected to me like a wire. And I was staying with him, for a whole month I used to go to Ishiri (ph) with him and sitting with him. Till the rabbi came to me and he said, "it's no use, he's crying, he doesn't want, he doesn't like. Take him home, take and put him some place else". What I did the mistake is, when I gave him to Ishiri (ph), it was only boys, it was too religious.

Q: you felt it was important to keep up the traditions.

A: Yes. And now I'm keeping up very strongly, very. I don't write on Shabbos (ph), on holidays.

Q: Over the years, especially maybe when your children were a bit younger than they are now, did you talk about your experiences during the Holocaust? Did you tell them about them?

A: No.

Q: Now do they know?

A: They know, some things. Little things I told them. But I couldn't sit with them and talk about this. I would hurt myself too much. So I didn't talk to them, really. They find out from places, from movies, from books, from these things. From papers they find out. Then little things I told them where I was, like from Ashoshok (ph), like from Grodno, little things. When I was in the woods. So my grandson used to listen to, he wanted I should tell him. But the kids, my son, my daughter, especially my daughter, she didn't like me talk about this. But they know everything what I went through.

Q: Now.

A: Yeah, you know. My daughter went with me to Washington, to the Holocaust, when I was there, my grandson, and they saw everything.

Q: Let me ask you, I don't know if you've thought about this, but I'm sure that these experiences had a long term impact on the way. I'm trying to get a sense of how these experiences impacted you later maybe in terms of the way you raised your kids, and the way that you live today. Maybe certain fears you had, certain values.

A: Well I didn't have no fears later on but I was sorry when I had so much trouble, you know, here. I was sorry. I used to say to my husband, "why I survived? What I have accomplished in my life? What I have accomplished"? I have no joy, no nockis (ph), but maybe that time I was really angry, you know, what I did and why I came here, and what I went through a lot here. Everything from the beginning. How many times you can start? Start and start, and went through everything. But then I figure out, still I have a family, I have to raise them. Maybe later on I'm going to have more joy, more nockis (ph), more Yiddish nockis (ph), you know? And that's all, and that's what it is. Now I have all the time with sickness. My husband is a sick man. Last year he was twice in hospital and they put him a pacemaker. Listen, we're getting older, everything comes out. We are not so strong anymore. We can't take things what I used to take. I said all the time to my daughter, I said, "what I used to do, I can't do nothing here now. She said, "you can do it, you are a strong woman, you will be strong with us and with the life".

Q: Do you think that you raised your children differently because of your experiences than you might of had you a normal background?

A: No, I don't think so.

Q: Are there certain situations you're in, certain noises, certain smells, that remind you of your life in Europe?

A: Sure. The only place is in the house, by me in the house. Every Friday night, this is never going to go away from me. When I'm lighting the candles, my husband is coming from Shull (ph), is making Kiddish (ph), you know what Kiddish (ph) is. I'm missing. The first years was terrible. Later on, you know, I got used to it. Thought, this has to be, it's not going to come any more. I survived, and I have to live to see a little nockis (ph), for my kids, for my grandchildren. We should only be well. This is my first and the main thing, you know, to live a few years like human being. To see something. But on the other hand when you are sick, you can't go away, you can't travel far away. Three years ago we was in Israel for the bar mitzvah for my grandson. We had a beautiful time, we enjoyed so much. And now, who knows? God knows when we're going to go again because you have to go constantly to doctors with medicine, to keep up with appointments. So we happy for this, we getting up in the morning, we get dressed, thank God for this. What is more to ask now? Nothing more. I have my own home, we have a car, we're still driving. We are not so poor. We raised the children and they are like, we say in Yiddish, "To Godt and to light" (ph), you know what it

means? "To God and to people". And they are nice children, very devoted to us. My daughter calls me when she goes to work, and at work, and when she comes from work. And every day she's coming, whatever. "You don't feel good? I'll take you to the doctor and tell me the truth. Tell me the truth". Not all the time I can tell her the truth how I feel because she feels bad too. Beside this, she's a European girl, it's different too. But now you can, I mean the, she's without the accent, so is my son. He was born here. And that's what it is. We still struggle now for the health. Before it was for work, for money, for life to live. And now it's for health. God should give us only a few good years to live.

Q: I'm finished asking you questions. Is there anything else you want to say to conclude this? Or anything you want to tell your grandchildren?

A: That I survived. I went through a lot in my life and with God's help, I lived to have my own children and I lived to have grandchildren. And maybe if God would help me, I should live and to see great grandchildren, and to have nockis (ph) from them, from all of them. And God should give us health for another few years, without any trouble, without what I went through in my life.

Q: Thank you.

Conclusion of Interview