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Ruth Sommer, transcript only

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L.B. Now, we'll see if this is working. Are you working? Are you working?
(Tape off and on, some sound distortion). See, that's why 2 people come in handy.

R.S. NO, now it's going.

L.B. Yeah, but then it's, it was going before and then it stopped. I even bought a more expensive tape, to be sure.

R.S. Um hm.

L.B. Let's see, we'll turn it off... (Tape off -- Long pause).

L.B. O.K.?

R.S. (Laughs).

L.B. Now, suppose we start with, your...name, if you would tell me your name.

R.S. Ruth...my, married name?

L.B. Start with that, yeah.

R.S. Ruth Sommer.

L.B. And what was your maiden name?

R.S. Stein.

L.B. Stein.

R.S. S-t-e-i-n.

L.B. Right. And, where were you born?

R.S. In Vienna, Austria.

L.B. Mm hm. In what year?

R.S. 1917.

L.B. Aaaah.

R.S. And that's the truth. (Laughs).

L.B. I know that...I, I had...O.K. 1917. And, uh, were you born in, a, p...the, one of the, a particular district of Vienna?

R.S. I was actually born in a hospital, in the 19th district, where my father was a physician, and later became the Director; and all my life I spent practically in the same spot, in Vienna.

L.B. In the, in the 19th district?

R.S. Yes.

L.B. Now, was that a particular kind of a district? Because, I've heard of the 2nd, and the 10th.

R.S. Yes, 19th was very...elegant.

L.B. The 19th was elegant.

R.S. Elegant. Very residential and very elegant.

L.B. Was it, uh, mostly professional people?

R.S. Uh, private homes, uh, anything but, uh, wealthier, people.

L.B. Was it a mixed neighborhood, in terms of Jews, or non-Jews, or was it all Jews?

R.S. Yes...no, not all, no, rather all...mostly non-Jews, mixed but, uh, certainly not like the 2nd district, uh, you probably heard about...

L.B. The 2nd district was Jewish.

R.S. Was mostly Jewish, right. But this was...

L.B. Right, and then the 10th was the working class district.

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. (Phone rings). I think your phone is ringing.

R.S. I don't have to answer the office phone.

L.B. Oh.

R.S. And the other one I just won't answer.

L.B. All right. Um...now, Vienna, you were born in 1917, that was the year...uh, let's see, that was the third year of the War.

R.S. Yeah, just practically at the tail end of the War.

L.B. And, you say your father was...a physician?

R.S. A physician, and later he became the...

L.B. Director?

R.S. Director of that hospital.

L.B. What was the name of the hospital?

R.S. Kauffmannische Sanitorium.

L.B. Was it a, a, uh, a sanitorium as we know it?

R.S. No, no, it was a general hospital, with some, one private floor and, uh, a couple of floors like a, well, wards and things like that.

L.B. Mm hm. And, uh, was it, um, if it was in the same district that you lived in, did it, uh, were, did it limit its patients mostly, to the wealthy?

R.S. No, no, no. They came...it had something to do with, uh...well, like there was an insurance for...people with stores and businesses, and they mostly came to that hospital. Kauffman was a merchant...

L.B. Mm hm.

R.S. ...so there was some connection between their insurance and them using that hospital.

L.B. Oooh.

R.S. Business people.

L.B. I see. And all, they came for all kinds of ailments?

R.S. All, anything, yes.

L.B. How many beds? Do you remember?

R.S. Well, he was mostly in charge of the private beds, were like 120 of so, and then the rest was, uh, just general...they didn't have any, they had, just had a regular administrator for the rest of them.

L.B. Mm hm. Now, um, you say you lived in a private home?

R.S. There was a little house next to the hospital, on the same grounds, in the same, uh, fenced-in area, and we lived in that house.

L.B. Could you describe that house to me? Do you remember it?

R.S. Well, ^{uh} yes, we just went back last year to look at it. Ah, well, we had a very large apartment, the downstairs floor which was about, I don't know, 9 rooms or so, 2 bathrooms...

L.B. 9 rooms on one floor?

R.S. Yeah, it was a, quite a big house...2bathrooms, small kitchen because we didn't cook, we ate the hospital food which was brought in...

L.B. Mm hm.

R.S. ...by the maid. (Pause). It was very nice, pretty, in a park sort of.

L.B. Now, you described that as a house.

R.S. Well, upstairs there was another, administrator, and the third floor there was somebody else.

L.B. So it was really, what we would call here, an apartment house. It wasn't a one-family house?

R.S. Uh, no, no, it was an apartment...well...see...

L.B. Like a flat.

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. You had a flat.

R.S. Mm hm.

L.B. Is that correct?

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. You had 9 rooms?

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. Now, could you tell me what rooms there were, what kind of rooms?

R.S. Well, all right, let's start with the maid's room, next to the kitchen, and then the dining room; uh, maybe the 9 isn't correct, or something...

L.B. All right.

R.S. The dining room with the big, uh, addition there, where the piano was. Then there was the middle room which we ca...called the darkroom because it didn't have a window to the outside. Then there was a big summer room, then there was a little den, then there was another...the purple (Laughs) room...

L.B. What were, what were these rooms used for? Let's say, the purple room, what was that...

R.S. Purple room was a...entertaining, it had a nice table and uh, had nice chairs with a tapestry, and had a purple rug, and my mother was very fancy on those, uh, things, and uh...Then there was another room, then there was a bathroom. oh, I left out one bathroom, down near the kitchen. Then...was another bathroom at the end, actually, for a while, we had 3 bathrooms there, I think. Then there was... oh, my parents' bedroom, and another bedroom, and another bedroom, and my brother's bedroom, and uh...I, I don't know, I, that's, I don't know, *it is somewhat*...

78

L.B. Where did you live, uh, do most of your living, in the house?

R.S. Mmm...

L.B. Which room did you use the most?

R.S. Uhh, let's see...Oh, and, then there was a little den, in between there. Of course we ate in the dining room, three times a day, I mean, uh, five times a day, you know, we had breakfast and then, the other, little breakfast again, and uh...

L.B. What do you mean? Describe your meals.

R.S. Well, breakfast, actually, the real breakfast, was just coffee and a roll, and uh, my parents had it in bed...

L.B. Uh huh.

R.S. I probably, too, when I was home, when I didn't go to school.

L.B. Mm hm.

R.S. And then, at 10:00, I remember, my father would come, he used to be in the hospital, he would come home, and they had, uh, oh maybe, coldcuts and rolls. Now, at noon, we had a big meal...

L.B. Mm hm.

R.S. ...soup, and meat, and potatoes, and dessert.

L.B. Mm hm.

R.S. And in the afternoon, again, coffee and cake and...

L.B. What time would this be?

R.S. Uhhh...

L.B. The afternoon?

92

R.S. Maybe, 4:00, ? "yawn" . And, around 7:00, again, dinner, with everything, meat and potatoes...

L.B. Oh, so you'd have 2 big meals?

R.S. 2 big meals and 3...well, breakfast was actually very, very little...

L.B. Very small.

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. And, uh, no cooking was done in your house at all?

R.S. No, unless my mother felt very ambitious, sometimes she would, nobody liked the food so she says, "I'm going to cook." And then she would cook for one day, and then she was all done.

L.B. But even the little meals were brought in?

R.S. Everything was brought in. Maybe so...it was ~~hard~~ ^{up}, we had a special oven or something, where you could put the things in, so they would stay hot or something, but nothing was actually cooked. But this ~~was~~ ^{was} unusual, I mean, or anything like that...

107

L.B. Yeah, mm hm. That was because your father was the Director of the hospital.

R.S. Yeah, that was included in...

L.B. Yeah, it was part of his, uh...

R.S. Yeah, yeah, salary...or...

L.B. Whatever. Yeah. And, how many people were in your family? How many people lived in this...

R.S. Four...

L.B. ...house?

R.S. ...and the maid.

L.B. The maid lived in?

R.S. Yeah, she lived in.

L.B. So, it was your mother and father...

L.B. How old was your brother? Was he younger?

R.S. No, $3\frac{1}{2}$ years older.

L.B. He was older than you.

R.S. Mm hm.

L.B. And, uh...yeah, it's turning. (Laughter).

1067 R.S. (Laughing). ?

L.B. Noo, it's very disappointing to suddenly find, you're ^{been} talking, and it's not, you know...spending this time. Now....uh, the other people that lived in this apartment house, were they Jews?

R.S. Yes.

L.B. They were?

R.S. Yes. It happened that...I guess, had something to do with the business people, a lot of business people being Jewish, and...Well, they were Jewish, they were 2 other directors, administrators and uh, and they were both Jewish.

L.B. They were also connected with the Hospital?

R.S. Yeah, yeah.

L.B. Because this was the hospital house?

R.S. Yeah, yeah.

L.B. Uh, so, would you say most of the patients in the hospital were Jewish, then?

R.S. I would say alot of the private patients were Jewish, and then some of the others were, the ones on the wards probably were not, not as much.

L.B. Uh,huh. What about the physicians on the staff?

R.S. Mixed, very...

L.B. They were mixed.

R.S. ...mixed. Lots of Jewish surgeons, but there were others, and uh...mixed.

L.B. All right. Now, um, you were born ah, sort of, in a very confusing time, and, do you remember...how far back does your memory take you, that you remember things that happened?

R.S. Well, just instances, uh, maybe when I was 5 or 6, but, you know, just, uh...

L.B. Well, if you were 5, that would be 1922.

R.S. Yeah, I remember just, you know, my father picked me up from school, and maybe....

L.B. Now, tell me about your schooling. What kind of schooling did you have?

R.S. I went to elementary school...for 4 years.

L.B. What kind of a school?

R.S. Public.

L.B. It was...well, uh, this was now already after the War?

R.S. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

L.B. And, at that time, uh, the Hapsburg Empire was finished.

R.S. Yeah, we had to...

L.B. So you went to, you were in Austria?

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. And, you went to an Austrian public school?

R.S. Public school, yeah.

L.B. And...did you have to pay to go to the school?

R.S. No.

L.B. No. What was the language used?

R.S. German.

L.B. It was in German. And, uh, how many years was this public school?

R.S. 4 years.

L.B. It was a 4-year public school.

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. And you started at what age?

R.S. Well, it would have been....5, probably...or...6...5 or 6, I don't know.

L.B. So it would be somewhere between 1922 and 1923, that you started school?

R.S. Yeah, yeah, somewhere there.

L.B. All right?

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. Um, now, my history is, is a little hazy, this, uh...inter-War period...

R.S. It probably was '23, because I finished altogether in '35 and it took 12 years, so it, it must have been '23.

L.B. All right. Now, do you remember what you learned in this 4-year school?

R.S. Not much...I don't ~~remember~~ remember, I mean, I don't want to say that I didn't learn much. (Laughter). But I don't...I guess reading, and writing, and uh...whatever.

L.B. It was, the basic elementary...

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. Did you get any Jewish education at all, in those early years?

R.S. Uh.....I don't remember. I must, I think we did, but I, this part I don't remember, I remember after the 4 years, when I started, what we had, gym...gymnasium for 8 years, then I remember we had to come in the afternoon; but we must have gotten something in those 4 years, probably one, in the after...one hour a week or something, but I, I can't...

L.B. You don't remember, all right. Well, then let's go to the gymnas time, the gymnas years were from...uh, the age then of about 10?

R.S. To 18.

L.B. 10 to 18.

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. And was, the gymnas was not ~~just~~ public?

R.S. Gymnasium.

L.B. The gymnasium was not public?

R.S. No it wasn't, and we payed, uh, oh, like uh, maybe \$30 a month, a little.

L.B. Did you live there?

R.S. No, no, no.

L.B. No, right. And, was this, what was the language that was used in this gymnasium?

R.S. German.

L.B. That was German.

R.S. But we had foreign languages.

L.B. Mm hm.

R.S. You know, being taught.

L.B. Was it a State school?

R.S. No, it was a private school.

L.B. But it was not a Jewish gymnasium?

R.S. No, no.

L.B. It was a secular?

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. Were there many Jews that went to your gymnasium?

R.S. Yes, yes.

L.B. About, you know, do you have any idea of the percentage?

R.S. (Pause). Uh, in my class? Maybe 40% of my class, I, I would really have to think back or go look at the picture.

L.B. Yeah.

R.S. Maybe 40% of the class was Jewish, or 50% at some times. Some was, uh, I know the, the woman who ran the school was Jewish.

L.B. Oh, she did?

R.S. Yeah, she was Jewish.

L.B. She was Jewish. Was it in your district, in the 19th district?

R.S. Yeah, yeah.

L.B. So most of the girls who went to that school were from that district?

R.S. Mostly, yeah, were, yeah.

L.B. So they were mostly upper class...

R.S. 18th, 19th, yeah.

L.B. ...of the, uh, be...of the, more wealthy classes?

R.S. Yeah, yeah, most of them.

L.B. I see. Now, did you know you were Jewish?

R.S. Yes, I knew I was Jewish. Uh, my father was quite, uh...well, I don't know,

R.Scont. he was religious, without running to services or something, but he was very conscious of uh... oh, yeah, I knew I was Jewish.

L.B. Yeah, well, you know, sometimes it happens that...

R.S. Yeah, I know, but, oh no...

L.B. You're not...

185? R.S. No, no, there wasn't, we, uh, I mean, we didn't...for a while we belonged, but then just for the holidays we went to what we used to call a Bethhouse:

L.B. Mm hm.

R.S. People used to spend the whole day, and my parents went and, I mean, fasted; and, my brother had a Bar Mitzvah. Oh yes, we...we knew we were Jewish.

L.B. Now, uh...Germans and Austrians, as a rule, did not speak Yiddish. Did you come into any contact with Yiddish at all?

R.S. I have an aunt, who lived in the 2nd district, and uh...maybe when we visited her, I vaguely remember that you would hear it, but otherwise...

L.B. Did your parents understand it?

R.S. My mother must have. Uh, she is Po...she was Polish. And, Yeah, it's very much like German, and she probably, and my father probably didn't.

L.B. Was your father Austrian-born?

R.S. No, he was born in Czechoslovakia, in Carlsbad.

L.B. He was a Czech?

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. And your mother was from where, in Poland?

200? R.S. Well...? *Zheshuv*

L.B. Do you know what, uh, province that was?

R.S. No, I don't. It somewheres near where my husband comes from, if you look him up. It's somewheres near there, I really, I don't really know where.

L.B. I'm trying to remember, your husband's not from Galicia? *[He was]*

R.S. No...well, if he comes back...

L.B. Well, I have to go back to his tape, you know...

R.S. Yeah, well he'll, he'll probably come back and we can ask him.

L.B. Yeah, all right. Oh, so she comes from the same district, or province...

R.S. Somewheres, yes, not too far from...

L.B. ...as your husband. All right. So she...uh, you think your mother did understand Yiddish. And then they moved to Vienna. Do you know why they moved to Vienna?

R.S. Oh, my fa...well, she met my father in Carlsbad; where, this is a, was a resort, like Saratoga, and she had a gallstone, and he was in medical school, and I think he came home for a vacation, and, but he was in school in Vienna, he went to medical school in Vienna, and I guess that's why they eventually...

L.B. Settled.

R.S. ...Settled in Vienna, yeah.

L.B. Was your mother, then, if she, if your mother was uh, at the Baths, they had the Baths at Carlsbad, right?

R.S. Yeah, yeah.

L.B. *If she* was at the Baths at Carlsbad, then her family was not a poor working class *family* either.

R.S. Uh, they were not rich, I think they must have put everything into that, was so, very important for her to get better, or something. Uh, they, they were poor...

L.B. Oh, she went for her health, is that it?

R.S. She went for her health, and, I guess, that was uh, they did all they could to send her there.

L.B. I see, I see. And your hus...your father was from, that, that city?

R.S. Yeah, he came from there.

L.B. All right. Now...um, did your parents, you say your parents did belong to a, a synagogue, or a shul, at one time?

R.S. Yes, I, I think so. Uh, I know they regularly went to services on the High Holidays, otherwise they didn't; but I think when my brother became Bar Mitzvah they must have belonged to...some...I mean, he became Bar Mitzvah in a, temple, m,

R.S. cont. in a synagogue, and, uh...maybe they did belong and paid ~~a~~ dues and didn't go...

L.B. Yes, but they didn't attend.

R.S. Yeah, they didn't attend, is probably what; because you had to pay dues anyway, there was the ~~Kultusgemeinde~~ Kultusgemeinde.

L.B. Now what does that mean?

R.S. Uh, didn't you come across it...in one of the other people?

L.B. No, no, no.

R.S. Well, there was like a, the center, and you had to pay a, like a tax.

L.B. Um hm. Kultusgemeinde

R.S. ~~TO the Kultusgemeinde~~. And, I'm sure they paid that. As a matter of fact, the ~~Kultusgemeinde~~ was the thing that was there during the whole Nazi period, and they kept all the books, because I had a, have a friend who stayed during the whole Nazi period and she worked for the ~~Kultusgemeinde~~, and they kept all the books about all the transports, it was a Jewish agency but they kept all the books about all the transports and who was going next and everything else. It was a very important part of...it was an office, it was a whole building, as a matter of fact...

L.B. And they, in a sense, kept track of the Jewish population?

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. Of all of Vienna, or just your district?

R.S. No, no, all of Vienna.

L.B. All of Vienna?

R.S. Yeha, mm hm. I think it was in the 1st district, I even remember where it was. And they kept, and I'm sure we, everybody had to pay a tax, or something, some membership due or something.

L.B. Now was any of this tax then passed on, from the ~~Kultusgemeinde~~ to the State?

R.S. I have no idea, I have no idea. But, I, I doubt it, I, I don't think so.

L.B. Mmm. I, I have not heard of that. What I suspect is that, uh, I may have, uh.

260? R.S. Have you had Sophie Pisker?

L.B. No, she's next on my list.

R.S. Well, you ask her, and she probably knows.

L.B. How do you spell that? K-u-l-t-u-s?

R.S. Yeah. Kultusgemeinde.

L.B. G-e-n-e-i-n-d-e.

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. It may have been called by some other name, too.

R.S. No, I, I doubt it. Uh...you ask her, she probably knows more details about it. I, I have to confess, I wasn't that interested...

L.B. Yeah.

R.S. You know, I was, uh, young.

L.B. Right.

R.S. I didn't, uh...but I knew it was there, and I knew it stayed; because that friend survived all the terrible things, she and her mother, and I think she always knew which block was going next, and uh...

L.B. Did, uh, the Kultusgemeinde make the selections?

R.S. No...I, I don't know, I couldn't go into those...I saw her last year, and I, I really couldn't go into the details.

L.B. Mmm. How did she manage to survive?

R.S. Yeah, well, I don't know. They needed her apparently, but I... I couldn't, uh, I mean, there was, there are questions that you cannot ask...

L.B. You don't ask, right.

R.S. ...but I know, that she managed, but that her mother managed, who is over 80, and, uh...I don't know. The only ones that survived, uh, and stayed, I mean, lot's of them went away, but she stayed through, through the whole time.

L.B. And she's still there?

R.S. And she's still there; she married some judge, a Gentile judge, and whether he had something to do with it, he's uh, older than her mother, and uh, whether he had helped her, or...I don't know, and she married him after the war...

- L.B. Did you hear Fackenheim, when he was here? The professor...
R.S. No.
L.B. He said, "The survivors don't talk".
R.S. Well, uh...you don't ask.
L.B. Right.
R.S. She just, when she said something, she said she was, they needed her, they had to have her. She was the only one that could do what she was doing.
L.B. Yeah. But, before the Nazi period, it, did it have any other function? Did it serve the, uh, for example, uh, there were...
R.S. It was so...something...
L.B. ...in Germany, there were burial organizations, there were...
R.S. Probably.
L.B. ...help for the sick... You doh't...
R.S. Yeah, probably. Maybe birth certificates you had to get there, something, it may have, uh, had some...it was an office for things. Maybe marriage licences were, uh, given there.
L.B. Mm hm.
R.S. Sophie Pisk will probably know.
L.B. All right. Um, now, um, I don't want to get too...I'd like to stay on the subject of, um, uh, being Jewish, just for a minute. If they, if, uh, was there a shul in your district?
R.S. Yeah.
L.B. What was it? What, uh, was it, what, was it Reformed, or...
R.S. No, no, it was a, we sat up, uh...
L.B. The women?
R.S. Women separate, so it was an Orthodox.
L.B. It was an Orthodox?
R.S. Probably, yeah.
L.B. It was not Conservative?
R.S. No, I don't think so, I'm pretty sure it was Orthodox.
L.B. It was Orthodox.
R.S. Yeah.
L.B. The women sat separately.
R.S. Yeah.
L.B. And the men had their heads covered.
R.S. Yeah.
L.B. Uh, could your mother or father read Hebrew?
R.S. Oh, my father could, yes.
L.B. He could?
R.S. Yeah.
L.B. And your mother?
R.S. I doubt it. I....maybe she could, I, I don't know, but my father was very... he, he could, very well, I mean he read well, and uh...he wa...he probably had quite a bit of Jewish education, at one time, some...from someplace.
L.B. Now, how old was your father when you were born? Do you have any idea?
R.S. I can figure it out. He was...born 1881, and I was born in 1917, so 17 + 19, about 36.
L.B. (Long pause; figuring). Yeah, a 36. And your mother was about how old?
R.S. And she was born in 1886, so she was 5 years younger, 31.
L.B. So she was 31. (Fause). All right, so, there was an Orthodox shul, which they belonged to, you think. Was that the only shul in that district?
R.S. That's the only one I can remember.
L.B. Uh, uh, would you say that the city, life in the city, was divided pretty much according to what district you lived in?
R.S. Uh...no. Well, I would say, the 2nd district was really sort of isolated, and looked down upon, you know...
L.B. Oh, it was?

R.S. Yes, very much.

L.B. Why was that?

R.S. I guess everybody was a little anti-Semitic.

L.B. Now, did the Jews in the other districts feel this way too?

R.S. A little, I would say, yes they did. If you lived in the 2nd district, then it was, uh...not so...you know, great.

L.B. Uh huh.

R.S. Yeah, Jews were a little an...I mean, they were. I don't know how, snobs, or something.

L.B. Well, there was a class difference, too, right?

R.S. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

L.B. Uh, what kind of, what class, would, would you say there was a par...a class, that lived in the 2nd district?

R.S. Uh....well, I would say, maybe they were, people that...immigrated later, they were from Poland, mostly, mostly from Poland, they probably did speak Yiddish, and, uh, different, uh, and the other ones were Austrians.

L.B. So there was an ethnic difference...

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. ...between the 2nd district...

R.S. And uh...

L.B. ...and the rest of the districts, in Vienna.

R.S. The rest, yes. The 2nd one was, I mean, some of the other districts probably didn't have that many Jews, but, uh, the 2nd district was isolated...

L.B. And...

R.S. Isolated by a river, going...

L.B. Yes.

R.S. And, you had to cross the bridge to get into the 2nd, was like a, island.

L.B. What was the name of the river?

366? R.S. Tha...I think that was the (Donnar Canal.)

L.B. Uh huh.

R.S. The Danube, a part of the Danube.

L.B. Yeah.

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. So it was isolated, almost in every sense?

R.S. Yeah, yeah, absolutely, it was a different world, the 2nd district.

L.B. And you only entered it when you visited your aunt?

374? R.S. Yeah. Well, then there was, uh, like a, swimming pool, that was right across the bridge, to, that we went to, the (Anabath), that was. But otherwise I can't remember...going there.

L.B. Mm hm.

R.S. So that was like a little ghetto, that uh...

L.B. But were these people, were they poor as far as you remember, really, or were they...

R.S. ~~as~~ they were not rich, they were not rich.

L.B. They were not rich?

R.S. No.

L.B. Now, I don't, see, I don't want to put words in your mouth, but I'm also trying to understand.

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. Is, would you say, the main difference was cultural?

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. Ri...even more so than money?

B.S. Oh, yes, yes, no, some of them probably did well, were in business, I don't know, but it was all...cultural, and uh, the language, they spoke a little different, and they were not Austrians, like us.

L.B. O.K. So it was the Austrian bit, maybe, too.

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. Now, who were your parents' friends?
R.S. No...person...
L.B. Were they Jews, or non-Jews, or mixed?
R.S. Jews, Jews, Jews.
L.B. Jews.
R.S. Yeah. I think almost all of them were Jewish. And my friends were Jewish.
Uh...no, we didn't mix that much.
L.B. You did not?
R.S. No.
L.B. Even though you lived in a mixed district?
R.S. Yeah, we didn't, no, we didn't mix that much.
L.B. And you were all Austrian?
R.S. Well, yes. (Giggles).
L.B. But you didn't mix?
R.S. We didn't mix, no.
L.B. All right. And, um.....(Pause)...Were these Jewish friends of your parents', were they professional people too...
R.S. Yes.
L.B. ...or were they mixed, business, professional...
R.S. No, no, well some business, mostly doctors, and uh, lawyers, lots of lawyers, and uh.....Jewish, uh, married to Gen...Jews married to Gentiles, there was a lot of that.
L.B. Which way? Men to women, or women to men, or...
R.S. Oh, Gentile women and Jewish men, only.
L.B. Mostly.
R.S. Only, mostly, yeah...yeah, mostly. I, I don't even, well, there must have been some the other way around too, but, that was the common...practice.
L.B. That a Jewish man would marry a Gentile woman.
R.S. Marry a Gen...yeah, mm hm.
L.B. Now, would he be ostracized for this?
R.S. No, no, it was so common, that uh, didn't, you know...
L.B. Supposing...
R.S. So he married a shiksa.
L.B. Right.
R.S. Yeah.
L.B. What would have happened if it had been a Jewish woman, had married a Gentile man?
R.S. Probably the same thing, nothing, but it just didn't happen, I don't know.
L.B. Do you know of any case where something like that happened?
R.S. Uh, I can't remember, I don't know; I can't think of a, some, Jewish man, I mean, right now I can, but I can't, I probably do and it'll probably come to me later, but I can't think of it now.
L.B. I was wondering, if a Jewish woman married a non-Jewish man, would she then disappear into his life? You see...
R.S. Yeah, I know what you mean, but I really can't answer, because I don't know, I can't think of any right now.
L.B. If you had known someone then you could remember, you know, which way it happened.
R.S. Yeah, I, maybe I have, but at the moment...
L.B. There was no one in your family that married a non-Jew?
R.S. No, no. (Pause). No, that would have been terrible, but it didn't happen.
L.B. And that was going to be my next question. Was it ever considered at all possible, that you might marry someone who was not Jewish?
R.S. No, no. We never, I mean, there was a catastrophe when it happened, and you don't think about those things, and it didn't happen.
L.B. It was a catastrophe?

R.S. It was a catastrophe, I mean, something terrible. And it, uh, didn't happen.

L.B. Even though there was non-observance, and so on, but still...it was...

R.S. Yes, it was horrible, yes, yes.

L.B. It was horrible.

R.S. Yes.

L.B. Now, suppose your brother had married a Gentile woman, would it have been as bad?

R.S. Yeah, well, it would have, uh... (Giggles)...killed my mother.

L.B. It would?

R.S. Yeah. (Pause). So, but we were lucky, and it, uh, didn't happen.

L.B. Yes. (Pause). Now, uh....for the present, if you can think of anything else to add on this, on this particular subject, let's see if there's something... (Long pause). Do you know whether your father, uh, followed politics at all?

R.S. I'm sure he did, yes. He was a....aware of everything that was going on, uh, smart.

L.B. But, uh, well, I mean, aside from the fact that, you know, because of his, um, intelligence and his standing and so on, he would have been aware...Was it ever discussed in the house, that you remember?

R.S. I don't remember anything, in partic... unless something terrible happened, you know, some....somebody was shot, like (Giggles) chancellor or something, then he would talk about it, but otherwise, no, we didn't, I don't remember....

L.B. Ah, well now, I'll st...I'll drop that for a minute, and I'll take you back to your schooling. Now, you're going to the gymnasium, and it's about 50% Jewish, you say, most of your girlfriends were Jewish girls...

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. Um...what were some of the subjects that you studied in the gymnasium?

R.S. Oh, math, language, Latin, geography, French, German, history...

L.B. History of what?

R.S. General history, I guess, of Europe, I would say, European history.

L.B. Did you study about the War at all? Did you, see, by 1923, you were 6, and you were, then, then you were in the gymnasium until 1927, right?

R.S. I don't think we, we, we went at, uh...

L.B. No.

R.S. ...fi...about the, the si... about the First War, I, I don't think we, we studied ancient history, like from way, way back, from the Stone Age.

L.B. But you didn't talk about recent events?

R.S. No, no, no, never. The Stone Age, and God knows what. I don't think we talked about the War, I don't remember.

L.B. Even though it, it was, it affected everyday life.

R.S. Yeah. Well, by that time it was over, and done with, and few, over for a few years already, like in '25, '26, was almost 10 years, you know, we didn't, uh, we didn't do any current, uh...

L.B. Current events.

R.S. ...events, or anything like, just the Stone Age, way back.

L.B. Did you have any feeling at all, about what had happened during the War...
524 (Tape ends)

Side 2

000

L.B. ...testing you. (Tape off). O.K., we'll start. Now, let's see, what were we talking about? We were talking about what you learned in school.

R.S. In school, yeah, yeah.

L.B. Right.

R.S. Then, once a week, or twice a week, I don't remember now, we, in the afternoon, we had to come back for religious, for religion.

L.B. Now, who taught the Religion?

- 5? R.S. A Jewish man... short, dark, I can remember what he looked like, and he taught, uh, well, history, Jewish history, a lot, and uh...
- L.B. Modern or ancient?
- R.S. Uh... pretty ancient, ancient, too. And I remember, I was quite interested, and when it came to, at eighth, at the end of the last year, you had to take a
- 9? [matura], that was an exam, I guess you heard, and I, I, you had a choice of what subject, and I chose Jewish history. And, uh, I did all right, I did well, I guess I was interested or maybe it was easy (Laughs) I don't know why, but...
- L.B. And that was just from once a week?
- R.S. Yeah, but 8 years. Maybe it was twice a week, I don't know, but it was for 8 years.
- L.B. Did you do any reading, aside from...
- R.S. Oh, yeah, oh...
- L.B. Oh, you did?
- R.S. I mean, we had books, and uh, but, uh,.... I don't even know, what do you call, prophets, no, not prophets, wha... what would you call the, the, the...
- L.B. Well, you had the Torah.
- R.S. Yeah, well, I know.
- L.B. 5 books. Then, you had what?
- R.S. I don't even think that's what we... we were taught; mostly ~~what~~ ^{about} the, the people, you know, that were, living and writing and doing things in the, uh, olden days, like uh, somebody Ben-Da... Ben-this, and some, I can't remember, but mostly about the people...
- L.B. You mean... you're saying, history... uh, verified history, rather than something that was put down in the Torah?
- R.S. Yeah. I, I think...
- L.B. Rather than religious studies?
- R.S. Yeah.
- L.B. Is that what you're trying to say?
- R.S. I, I think so. It wasn't that much reli... ~~was~~ ^{was} about the people that lived, and, you know, in those years, and wrote books, and... I don't remember too much.
- L.B. Do you remember any of the books you read?
- R.S. No.
- L.B. Any of the authors? Did you read, uh...
- R.S. No.
- L.B. You didn't read Sh... or did you? Did you read Shalom Aleichem?
- R.S. Yes, I think we read, but I don't know whether that was assignment, or that ~~we~~ ^{we} just wanted to read it.
- L.B. Well, no, never mind whether it was an assignment or not.
- R.S. Oh, yeah, yeah, we read that.
- L.B. Who were the authors whom you read? Do you remember any?
- R.S. I don't remember, I know, Shalom Aleichem, I read.
- L.B. Did you know about Herzl?
- R.S. Oh, yes.
- L.B. And, Weitzman?
- R.S. Yes.
- L.B. You did?
- R.S. But I don't think I learned it, that's from, from newspapers, and things like that, not from school.
- L.B. All right, then, do you remember what you learned about Jewish life, ei... first, from home? Did you learn anything about Jewish life from home?
- R.S. Ohh... not much.
- L.B. Did you pick up any feeling about other Jews, from home? Let's say, was there any talk about the Jews that, uh, came in from Eastern Europe?
- R.S. No.
- L.B. Your parents had no feelings ab... uh, uh, one way or the other?
- R.S. No, no. They didn't, uh, I mean, they came, that's it, and they were there,

R.S. cont. and uh...no, there was no, nothing...

L.B. So, the uh, the differences between Austrian Jews, and Eastern European Jews, which you say was present...

R.S. Yeah,

L.B. ...were, were not felt in your home?

R.S. No.....no. Well, as I said, my mother had a sister in, uh, 2nd district, that came later, I guess, from Poland, and her husband came from Poland, and uh... No, I don't think we talked about it. They were there and we were here.

L.B. Mm hm.....There was not talk about Russian Jews, and such, did you know about Pogroms happening?

R.S. I heard the word, pogroms.

L.B. You heard the word. Did it have, did it have any immediate impact on you?

R.S. No, no, nothing.

L.B. So, it was almost as if it was happening in another world?

R.S. That's right. Just like anti-Semitism was, uh, I heard the word...and that's all, I never knew anything.

L.B. It, you never experienced it?

R.S. Nothing, I never knew anybody who experienced it, I knew there was some, it existed, but that's all. I...

L.B. How about the non-Jewish girls in your school? Did they ever, uh, indicate to you in any way, that because you were Jewish, you were different?

R.S. No...no. They would say, the one professor is an, anti-Semite, but that's all, it's uh...

L.B. But, I'm talking about the non-Jewish.

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. Yeah.

R.S. Well, uh, somebody would, you know, would say that he, that one professor is an anti-Semite, and that's all, so he's an anti-Semite, we didn't know, and... the girls didn't know, we got along, we got along very well.

L.B. Did you ever visit their homes, the non-Jewish girls?

R.S. No, I don't think so. But not because, uh, I wouldn't have, because it didn't happen. (long pause). No, I didn't, I don't remember, but, uh, it isn't that I wouldn't have, or didn't want to, it just, uh...I guess it didn't, maybe I did at one time, I don't remember, but I...didn't...!

L.B. Well, I meant if, if it happened often enough...

R.S. No, no, no.

L.B. ...you would have remembered.

R.S. Oh yeah, no we didn't. But we were very friendly in school, and we went on trips together, and...there was nothing.

L.B. I'm going to...it seems, ~~it~~ feels I'm skipping. Let me, let's go back to the Jewish bit, I wish I knew enough of... Did you, uh, read Bialyk?

R.S. No.

11. L.B. No. Did you know of Achad ha Amim?

R.S. No.

L.B. Did you know of any of the Zionist writers, at all?

R.S. No, no, I, I guess I didn't, no.

L.B. You did not? So, if you read anything about Jews, or Jewish history...can you think ~~of~~ ^{of} ~~it~~ ^{of} ~~in~~ ^{of} a minute and try to remember what it was ^{that} you read. You say you remember Shalom Aleichem.

R.S. Yeah, I read that, but that may have been after...

12. L.B. But it must have been tra...!

R.S. ...after I was out of school, I read it, one time, but I don't remember at what point.

L.B. Well, I don't care what point, as long as it was before you left Europe.

R.S. Yeah...it was, uh...before I left.

L.B. You read him translated into German?

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. Is that right?

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. Was there any other writer, translated?

R.S. Uh, I really can't remember, I don't, don't know, and I don't think so.

L.B. If I knew some I, it might...

R.S. No, it probably won't...

L.B. No.

R.S. ...because I probably didn't read it.

L.B. (Long pause). So you, i...in, really, even though ^(T)you took you...wha...ho... do you take more than one matura, or just the one?

R.S. Well, in 3 or 4 subjects.

L.B. All right, so you took one matura in Jewish history?

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. And yet, you, you can't remember what you read, you passed it, you were interested enough to take the matura, but you don't remember...

R.S. Yeah, yeah, I don't remember, no.

L.B. Isn't that, where you got your information?

R.S. Where?

L.B. Yeah. To b...you had to do, reading to pass the matura.

R.S. We took notes, in the class, I remember that. I mean, we took notes, when he lectured, I remember that. Because, a friend of mine, and I, we took it together and we studied together, and we had our notebooks, and we...

L.B. Now, was he hired by the school, or was he hired by individual parents to come and teach?

R.S. No, no, that must have been by the school, by the school. There were just, uh...I don't even think everybody took it. Was it compulsory? I can't even remember, it seems there were so few in the class. (Pause). Well, maybe that's all there was, I don't, uh, it seems to me, when I think back on those afternoons, maybe some didn't attend.

L.B. Mm hm. Some Jewish girls, you mean?

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. It was all girls, your school, right?

R.S. Yeah, yeah. Maybe some didn't come, because it seems the class was, just very small, and still there were so many... As a matter of fact, I'm sure that some did not, because I remember some girls, I don't remember ever having...been in that afternoon class with them.

L.B. And yet, there were many more in your ordinary classes...

R.S. Oh, yeah.

L.B. ...who were Jewish?

R.S. Yeah, uh huh.

L.B. All right. Now...tell me, um....Was there any feeling in your house, uh, for example, about, uh, the W...the W...First World War, itself? H...did they express any feeling, that you remember, about the Hapsburg, uh, dynasty, about the Hapsburg Emperors?

R.S. No.

L.B. Or about how the War had turned out? Did you suffer any? There was a terrible depression and an inflation...

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. ...and, uh, unemployment, and shortages. Did your family suffer from any of this?

R.S. No, no.

L.B. Did you know it was happening?

R.S. Yeah, I knew there was a lot of unemployment, but uh...I guess we weren't that...interested....we didn't suffer, and my close friends didn't suffer, and, you know, you hear things, but it, uh, I was what? 12, 13.

L.B. Yeah, yeah.

R.S. It just didn't, I think we were much less mature than the kids are here at 12 or 13, we were kids, we were...children.

L.B. All right, now, look. You started....your elementary school in about '23, then in '27 you went to the gymnasium, you stayed there until 1935.

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. During the years that you were in the gymnasium, how would you say you spent an average day?

R.S. Well, I...let's see...I got up at 7:00, I think school started at 8:00. From 8:00 until 1:00, five days a week, and Saturday, from 8:00 until 12:00; and then afternoons, we had to come back, I think, for Religion and Gym. Uh...I had piano lessons twice a week, I had French lessons twice a week.

L.B. This was private?

R.S. Private, at home. (Long pause). I don't know...I guess we had homework. We played, we read, we...went downtown, we went to the movie once a week in the afternoon, probably, on Saturday...

L.B. You did?

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. What kind of movie would you go to?

R.S. Oh, whatever was, uh...showing.

L.B. In what language?

R.S. German.

L.B. German. And, were they Austrian made, German made?

R.S. I guess some, some were Austrian, some were German, all in German language.

L.B. Mmm. Were you aware of American movies, for example?

R.S. Probably. There were some; I'm sure there was, maybe there were quite a few, I don't remember exactly what...whatever there was...

L.B. What was your social life like? Because, uh, now let's see...from twenty...

R.S. Well, all those things, I did with girlfriends.

L.B. ...seven...you were 10, from 10 until 18, so those were your adolescent years.

R.S. Well, I, yeah. Uh, let's see, from 10 until 16, I went to movies with girl friends; and when I was 16 (Giggles) or 17, no maybe from 17 on, I went to it with boys.

L.B. Uh huh. Now, was there, uh...for example, you told me about your feelings about your daughter, that she should have some means of supporting herself some...something. Was there ever any such feeling expressed to you?

R.S. No. I was going to get married, and my husband was going to support me.

L.B. That was the...

R.S. Oh, yes.

L.B. ...the basis of life.

R.S. There was no question.

L.B. No question.

R.S. Yes.

L.B. And the husband would be Jewish.

R.S. Yes, of course.

L.B. And what sort of a man, would he be?

R.S. Oh, he has to be a professional.

L.B. He has to be a professional?

R.S. Naturally.

L.B. Right.

R.S. And uh....No, we didn't even think of the catastrophe if I shouldn't get married, and uh, would have to support myself, or something like that. Nobody thought about it. Anyway, people didn't even...uh, thinking back, people didn't even think about getting married as young as ^{here}. At 18 or so, I used to go out, or I used to go steady, but it never occurred to me that maybe I should marry that fellow, or something. I think, we didn't think about getting married as young as here, so...In those years, it uh, I don't know, we just, uh, maybe we didn't even plan the future, didn't think that much.

L.B. In your memory...because, by '35, Hitler was already in power...

R.S. Yeah, but not in Austria.

L.B. No.

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. Was there any awareness?

R.S. No, well this is it, nobody, even when he, when he was there, you didn't believe that, uh, anything would ever happen to you, or...I mean, this happens over there, it's terrible...it's terrible, the poor people over there, but uh...

L.B. Your own father, for example, did he ever talk about it at home? As to what was happening in Germany?

R.S. Oh, he felt...he felt sorry for the poor people in Germany. I mean, they were.. it's too bad.

L.B. You, nobody foresaw the Anschluss, for example?

R.S. Oh, no. (Pause). They didn't foresee it; when, when it came, my mother said she wasn't leaving because he is not going to last. I mean, this was the attitude, it just can't, it can't be. And she wasn't going to leave, until finally they made her.

L.B. (Long pause). So this, and '35, you graduated. What year was the Anschluss?

R.S. '38.

L.B. '38. Now what...is there anything else? Oh, actually, your life, uh, during the years you were going to the gymnasium, was almost purely social, and school?

R.S. That's all, that's...

L.B. Is that correct?

R.S. Yeah, that's right.

L.B. And, by social, it would be, uh, going to the movies...did you go to dances?

R.S. Yeah, dancing school, twice a week, and dance...dances from the dancing school, and uh...

L.B. Mm hm.

R.S. ...parties, and uh...

L.B. What kind of parties did you have?

R.S. Well, first, ~~of~~ all, girls, and then they were girls and boys.

L.B. Well, when they were boys and girls, what kind of parties, were they in someone's home?

R.S. No, in the home, ~~was~~ very...fancy.

L.B. How fancy? Because, the people don't know now, tell me what it was like.

R.S. How fancy? Evening gowns...

L.B. In an evening gown...

R.S. ...and tuxedos.

L.B. And tuxedos.

R.S. Yeah, yeah.

L.B. And, uh, did you dance?

R.S. Yes, we danced.

L.B. Boys and girls danced. And, what kind of music did you have?

R.S. A record player.

L.B. You had a record player?

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. Uh, were you chaperoned, or not chaperoned?

R.S. Well, the parents were home, we were chaperoned.

L.B. The parents were home?

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. Were, was there food served?

R.S. Oh yes.

L.B. What kind of food?

R.S. Lavi^h buffet, very, very nice.

L.B. So, but the food was not cooked by the mother?

R.S. Uh...

L.B. Ususally?

R.S. Well, our's wasn't, and somebody else's probably wasn't either, because everybody had maids and cooks and everything else. It wasn't cooked by the mother, I don't think any was.

INTERVIEWER

L. BROWN

L.B. Amongst your friends?

R.S. No.

L.B. (Coughs). It went down the wrong... (Laughs). All right, uh..... You know, looking back now, it's almost like a dream world, isn't it?

R.S. Yeah, I, it was.

L.B. Would you say that it was a happy time for you?

R.S. (Pause). Uh... (Long pause). At times, it was happy, and at times it was just, uh... ordinary, you took everything for granted, everybody else was doing the same thing, and uh... I would say, we were, had a happy childhood, and youth, and uh...

L.B. Well, not everybody feels that way, you know, even with the best of financial circumstances, people don't always feel that way.

R.S. But, I, I do.

L.B. You do?

R.S. Yeah, I was, was... very happy. I don't know, I didn't jump out of bed every morning, saying, "I'm so happy", but uh, looking back I... almost everything was good, nice. I had friends, I had, uh, I had a good time.

L.B. Mmm.

R.S. Thinking back. (Laughs).

L.B. Is there anything that, you might have liked to do, you think... or that you thought, at the time, looking back, do you remember anything that you may have wanted to do, that you were unable to do because of the social circle that you lived in?

R.S. No.

L.B. You didn't think to go beyond that?

R.S. No, no, never, no, there was nothing that I couldn't uh... couldn't do, I mean...

L.B. Because there were lots... it never occurred to you to go for a career, for example?

R.S. Uh, well, I went to college.

L.B. After gymnas.

R.S. After gy... I went to college.

L.B. All right, then let's take that.

R.S. All right. I started in '35 after high school, and I went, uh, for 2½ years exactly, until Hitler came, to the day...

L.B. Where, where did you go?

R.S. University of Vienna.

L.B. And what did you study?

R.S. I was a major in chemistry.

L.B. You were a chemistry major, there, for 2½ years. So you never completed?

R.S. No, it was finished. The day he came, I, I finished.

L.B. Well, can you tell me, what you will, of what happened after the Anschluss?

R.S. Well, uh, suddenly, I guess they didn't let us in, and we didn't want to go in.

L.B. Mm hm.

R.S. Into the labs and things. And suddenly everybody, this one was a Nazi, and this one was a Nazi, people that we were friendly with, suddenly everybody said, they're all Nazis now, they were Nazis before, and uh, they just wouldn't, wouldn't let us come in anymore.

L.B. How... oh, your parents never really had friends among the non-Jews, you said, that most of their friends were Jewish.

R.S. Jewish.

L.B. Did you find that there was any, uh, demonstration, personally, not in the school, but in your ordinary life?

R.S. No, no, as a matter of fact, the other 2, I told you there were 2 other people living in the same building...

L.B. Right.

R.S. And they had to leave the day after the Anschluss, because everybody, I guess

R.S.cont.. the Gentiles hated them. And after, the day after, they had to get out, they threw them out of their apartment.

L.B. Who, they? Who...you mean, the hospital?

R.S. Suddenly, it was all taken over by Nazis, and Nazi employees, and they were suddenly the, running the whole thing. And they threw out the other 2 people, but, uh, my father was such a nice man, I guess everybody liked him, and we stayed... until, the Jewish holi...from March until Yom Kippur, which was either September or October...

B.B. What year is this now?

R.S. '38.

L.B. Yeah.

R.S. We stayed in the same place.

L.B. Right.

R.S. With a...how...with a swastika flying on the house. But, uh, it was safe... I mean, you weren't being, you didn't think of being stuck up, and I don't want to live in a house with a swastika on it, you stayed...uh...where it was safe. And the friends came to visit us, because the few hours that they were there, they were safe.

L.B. How do you know they were safe? Because the swastika was on top of the house?

R.S. Yeah. I mean, nobody would touch my father, or us, while we were there. They knew we were Jews and we were living there...

L.B. Mm hm.

R.S. ... and everybody else was out, but uh, they, they liked my father, he was a nice man, and uh, they wouldn't touch us.

L.B. Mm hm.

R.S. Until, then, in October, November, they said we really have to leave, because we couldn't stay there any more.

L.B. Mm hm.

R.S. And then we moved out.

L.B. Could you tell me what happened to you after that?

R.S. Well, my parents took an apartment, and uh...I...

L.B. Where?

R.S. In the same district, in a private house, private home, in a...

L.B. In a Jewish home.

R.S. In a Jewish home, they still had their house, it was in the very beginning, you know, they still, nobody had taken anything from anybody, it was still...pretty quiet, nothing terrible was happening. I left, in December, for England.

L.B. Why?

R.S. Oh, I knew we had to get out.

L.B. You did know?

R.S. Oh, yes.

L.B. Had you talked about this is the family?

R.S. Since March, yeah, we'd been trying to get out. Everybody was leaving, we knew we had to get out, there was nothing left for us there.

L.B. Even though your mother said that he will go away?

R.S. What was my mother, but, uh...a lot of the older people said they're not leaving, they are waiting for his end, but, uh, they knew that young ones had to go, and then later they realized that, uh, everybody had to...

L.B. Oh, so the young, they, they made it their business to send the young ones out?

R.S. The young, the young boys, especially. But then, in November, I don't know if you remember, November 10th, the Crystal Night.

L.B. Yes, that was in Germany.

R.S. No, that was in Vienna.

L.B. In Vienna? Oh.

R.S. That was, and my father was arrested, and my brother was, were arrested, but fortunately, they, they let them go...

INTERVIEWER

L EROW'N

L.B. Mm hm.

R.S. But then, by that time...my mother realized, already, that he wasn't going to go away.

L.B. Now, Kristlenacht was what, month?

R.S. In Nov...November 10.

L.B. In '3-...

R.S. '38.

L.B. '38?

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. And December, you left...

R.S. I left for England...

L.B. England...

R.S. ...because I couldn't get an affida...I could, I got affidavits, but, uh, they were never any good, so I couldn't come here. But, I could go to England as a nurse in training, so I went.

L.B. Because of your 2½ years of chemistry?

R.S. No, no, the only th...way you could get into England was, I mean, we, there was no problem getting out of Austria, they wanted you to go, but, uh, nobody would let you in. So, you could either be a maid, or a nurse in training, in England, so I chose to become a nurse in training.

L.B. Mm hm.

R.S. And, uh, my brother left for Sweden, about a month later.

L.B. How did he get...in?

R.S. Oh, I don't know...I did a lot of lying at the time, it was necessary...

L.B. Sure.

R.S. I had friends...that had gone to Sweden very early, very close friends that I matched up with her husband at the time, and so I thought she owed me something. (Giggles). And I wrote to her that, uh, if she lets my brother come in, then, he'll be supported from the United States, which I knew wasn't going to happen, but, uh, I had to do that, and, so she did. They let him come to Sweden, they said they were going to take care of him, and, he was out, and...he was safe, and then he came here. And I did the same thing for my parents, I lied a lot and, I got them to England.

L.B. Now, how did you get your parents to England?

R.S. Well, way back, my father had a patient from England, English, the wife of a Lord, Jewish, Castle, she was a Jewish, wife of a Jewish Lord; and, I hardly... maybe I met her once or so, but I called her up, and I told her the same spiel, that if she gets my parents to England...at that time it was already getting touchy with getting...

L.B. Yeah. Now, what year was this, for your parents?

R.S. That was in '39.

L.B. Yeah.

R.S. Beginning of '39. If she could get them into England, the relatives from the United States will support them, it's just a formality. And, within 2 days or so, they had the visa, and, uh, they went to England.

L.B. This was before the War started?

R.S. Well, they came...yeah, just before the War started. So, they were out, I mean, by that time, my mother knew they had to leave. And, uh...then everybody came over here, I came...

L.B. Now, in order to come over here, you did have to have an affidavit.

R.S. Oh yeah, but by that time there was no hurry, we could sit and wait.

L.B. Did you have people here?

R.S. Oh yes, we did have people, but, uh, for an affidavit, you need, uh, lots of papers besides a income tax return, and I guess they didn't want to send it or show it, or, whatever it was, they...there was some difficulty getting that part. And, I think, finally, got the affidavit from a perfect stranger. I, I did all kinds of things, but you had to. I...

L.B. Could you tell me some of the things you did? Because, you see, students listening, don't know what went on. If it's not, it you don't mind.

R.S. No, this is, uh, I had, I guess my father belonged to B'nai, B'nai Brith or something, and somehow I took the uh...

L.B. In Vienna?

R.S. In Vienna. And, uh...I took the list with me, and I looked up a name, of somebody in Pottsville, Pennsylvania, I still remember...

L.B. Now wait a minute, he belonged to the B'nai Brith...

R.S. But they had the...

L.B. ...they had an international membership list.

R.S. International membership list...

L.B. Yes.

R.S. And I picked a name, like out of a hat, of some...it turned out, he was a butcher...in Pottsville, Pennsylvania; and I wrote him, I, I need an affidavit, and he sent it. I never met him, I never saw him, I mean, I wrote him a thank-you note, I never needed anything from him, because, we could live with our relatives and everything else, but the business of a, the income tax, they didn't like.

L.B. You know, that's interesting, because a stranger was willing...more than a relative.

R.S. He, I, just on my word, that I won't need anything, it's just a formality, and, uh, he sent it, right away, prompt. (Pause). I rem...I've never seen him, I, I don't even know if I remember his name, but I remember Pottsville, Pennsylvania. You had to do those things, you had to do all kinds of things.

L.B. I know, I understand, I understand.

R.S. Because you just couldn't uh...

L.B. So, uh, what relatives did you have here?

R.S. Oh, my mother had a lot of uh, cousins, second cousins, my father didn't have anybody, but, uh...It seems a lot of the Polish people came to, uh, evade the draft, and so on...in the First World War, and uh...

L.B. Mm hm. Where were they living?

R.S. In New York.

L.B. In the city?

R.S. Mm hm.

L.B. And none of these were able to provide an affidavit?

R.S. Oh, they were able, and they sent them, but they...

L.B. I....

R.S. They did send them, we had affidavits, but they never had the paper enclosed, and the paper....I had maybe 2 or 3 affidavits, so did my brother, but they were always not, not enough.

L.B. But the one from Pottsville, Penn. was enough?

R.S. Was fine, yeah, that was fine, had all the papers, uh. They didn't even have to be rich, but they had to show how much they made, and the only, the only way of really proving how much you make is by an income tax return, I mean, I knew the word "Federal Income Tax Return" before I knew a word of English...

L.B. Isn't that...

R.S. ...because this was the thing you had to have.

L.B. It was the key.

R.S. Yeah, and...

L.B. The key to entry.

R.S. That's right. I mean, they didn't have to be rich, but they have to have an income, I mean, enough, and they, it didn't have to be millions, but they wouldn't send it, they didn't, maybe they didn't pay taxes...(Laughs)...I shouldn't say this, but...I don't know, they just didn't have that...

L.B. Plenty of people don't pay taxes today, (Laughs), so they're no different.

R.S. They didn't want to send the piece of paper...

L.B. I know, the thing that's so interesting is, is, it's uh...it's, fate, you know, it's so, uh, peculiar, so random.

†11? R.S. Yeah, yeah. That's uh... ?

L.B. If you hadn't taken the list with you?

R.S. Yeah, I had the names; and if my father wouldn't have had that patient, and if she wouldn't have believed me when I told her they are never going to want anything and then actually she had to support them while they were in England, for a while, and she, she could we... I knew she could well afford it, she was very, very rich.

L.B. Actually, then, you were quite an enterprising young lady.

R.S. Yeah, and look at me now. (Laughs).

L.B. What do you mean? No, tell me.

R.S. Now I can't do anything.

L.B. Well...how...how.....how...

R.S. This was a matter of life and death, and we had no choice.

L.B. I know, but people, sometimes, in these circumstances, they go into a...a panic, and they can't think.

R.S. Oh no, I didn't. I, I thought, I, in any kind of emergency, my brain used to really work well. Uh....

L.B. It's really, it sounds fantastic.

R.S. I, I had to do that, I knew I had to save my brother, he was a young boy...

L.B. Yeah, yes.

R.S. He had to get out of Vienna, and fast. So when I wrote my girlfriend, well, I made it sound, it really, you know, it's just a matter of writing a letter to let him come, and the same with the people in England. And, uh...then there was no hurry, I knew I'd come over here eventually, I mean, they were safe, everybody was safe.

L.B. You mean, once they were out of Austria?

R.S. I'm glad I did it, imagine if I wouldn't have gotten my parents out.

L.B. Oh no, that's not, we're not even considering that...

R.S. Well, I know people who didn't...maybe they didn't make that special effort, and they, their parents were, you know, so....it was just that I always felt good about them. I know, I had a girlfriend who really didn't, I guess she didn't make this very...Somehow there was always a way, in those days, if you really...really, really tried.

L.B. But, what I'm trying to say...uh, understand...you see, you have to have the imagination to think of these ways, some people don't have the imagination. They feel, well, if, if I can't do it, I can't do it; you see, then they're stopped, by the fact that someone says it cannot be done. Do you understand me?

R.S. Well, yeah...for me it had to be done, there was no...

L.B. So you found ways to go around, so that you were not stopped.

R.S. Yeah, I, well, I did all right.

L.B. Were you able to help anyone else out?

R.S. No, I had one, one cousin, a girl, and uh...well, I guess, uh, we just didn't make the effort in time, there was just so much you could do, and you, really, you know, girl, and she was in Czechoslovakia, it wasn't that urgent...and we couldn't.

L.B. Mm hm.

R.S. We just couldn't get her out, when we tried and when we did then, later on, that was just, just too late. That was the only one that we....maybe we could have, and, uh, well...

L.B. Yeah.

R.S. We just didn't make the utmost, uh, effort, maybe, at one time, she didn't want to leave, and then it was, we just let it go.

L.B. Now, you said, people did all kinds of things. Uh, can you, what kinds of things did people do to get relatives and friends out?

R.S. Oh, the young people...

L.B. You, you, you came up, you came up with some ideas, you used a *you father's paper*

R.S. Well, the young people crossed over, they walked into another country, and we were very much considering that, my brother and I. If nothing would have happened I think we would have just walked.

L.B. Where would you have gone?

R.S. Well, they walked into Switzerland.

L.B. Mm hm.

R.S. Some, in the very beginning, when Czechoslovakia was still O.K., quite a few....they were, just walked.

L.B. What, there were no border patrols?

R.S. Well, there were, you had to....you did all kinds of things.

L.B. Mm hm.

R.S. You walked, you sneaked into another country.

L.B. (Long pause). Now, what year was it, that you finally managed to get here?

R.S. I came in '39, I was in England for...about 10 months of so, and then I... got my affidavit, and then...said I was sorry, you know, in the hospital. It was all right there, but I really didn't want to stay.

L.B. Mm, you didn't want to stay in England?

R.S. No, I didn't want to stay. I mean, I was killing myself, from never having lifted a finger, to suddenly, working 12 hours a day, and it was just...(Laughs)... but it was O.K., I...survived...and I came here.

L.B. And when did you brother co...

523 (Tape ends)

Side 3

000

L.B. 1-2-3-Testing, 1-2-3-Testing, 1-2-3-Testing (Tape off). Now, you start to say that...at what point was it that you had no idea?

R.S. We had no idea, until we left, actually, what was going to happen, about people getting killed...or anything like, ever...this never occurred to us. I mean, there were concentration...we knew there were concentration camps...and my brother had a couple of friends that were sent, but they came back. And it was...there was just, uh...

3 (Speaks to third party who has entered house)

R.S. ...it was just, that they, they had to work hard, but they came back and there was...nobody ever thought about, uh, people getting killed, in camps, or anything like that. And when we left, we had no idea what was going to happen, the worst that ever happened to anybody was, uh...oh, they made them, scrub the streets, the Jews, in Vienna, they had to scrub streets...

L.B. In your district?

R.S. Yeah, everywhere. And, uh....but, uh, maybe they got beaten, somewhere, but that, until I left, that was about the worst that happened to anybody.

L.B. Was your social life, uh, circumscribed, after, uh...1938? In other words, uh, we heard from Germans, for example, that after '33 they no longer went to the movies at night, or they couldn't even go to the movies. Uh, people wouldn't talk to them.

R.S. No, we wouldn't go out much.

L.B. You would not?

R.S. No, we wouldn't, uh...I remember, when I went out, I had a card with me, uh, some letter that ^{showed that} my father ~~was~~ was in the First World War, and this, uh, was sort of a protection, they respected that, anybody who was a...a soldier, in the War, at that time, they were still sort of, that, they wouldn't touch you. But that was just for the first few months, afterwards I'm sure it didn't make any difference. But, for the...I carried it around with me. So...but nobody ever... I don't think I ever showed it. But we, you wouldn't, uh, go out much, you wouldn't go to movies, I don't think; you still have people visit you, as I said, we were in sort of a...a...a safe place, for people to come, and uh...when we lived, still lived in the hospital. And...that was until October, maybe November, then I left, but uh...nothing terrible was happening, and you had no id...nobody had any idea that...anything was going to happen the way it did, but we knew...they didn't want us, and we have to go, and there was nothing...

L.B. Was your father replaced as Director of the hospital, or did he leave before that happened?

R.S. Uh, I'm sure he was replaced by somebody, but I...

L.B. I mean, he wasn't replaced before he left?

R.S. No, no.

L.B. He continued in that position...

R.S. He continued, yes, he continued, more or less...

L.B. ...until he left.

R.S. ...Until he left, yeah, maybe not quite, uh, in the same position, but he was there, he went to work. I mean, maybe he didn't have all the responsibilities as before, but he went to work every day...

L.B. He was not, uh, forbidden to use the hospital?

R.S. No, no, he went to work. Maybe he, there was somebody else had his job, and he just did something, but he was still there, until, until we left, (pause) until October, November, whenever, I remember we were packing on Yom Kippur, so... somewhere around that time.

L.B. Now, they came, you said, in uh...

R.S. March.

L.B. They came to England. You left in December?

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. And they came in March?

R.S. No, I didn't say they came...they came that year, they didn't come in March, they came sometime that year, but I don't remember...I, I don't think...

L.B. In '39, you mean?

R.S. Yeah, they came...

L.B. That was the year, because you came in '38.

R.S. I came the, uh, Christmas '38, and they came the following year, I don't know exact, maybe in July, August, or something.

L.B. Right, mmm.

R.S. Just, yeah, they came just before....before the War started.

L.B. That's right, O.K., because the War started in September.

R.S. The War started in, in September. They came just before the War started.

And I came here just after it was, War was declared, in '39. I left them in England, my parents came to England for, for a while, and I....I left them, ~~then~~ then they came over during the War, I guess...

L.B. Mm hm.

R.S. '40, '40.

L.B. Before the United States entered the War?

R.S. Yeah, yeah.

L.B. (Long pause). Now, let's see if there's anything...we ^{haven't} covered... (Long pause). You went to the University of Bienna, starting in 1935. We'll go back a minute, O.K.

R.S. Mm hm, yes.

L.B. You took the matura, and then...did you have any trouble entering as a, as a student at the University?

R.S. No, anybody who had a...high school education, could enter.

L.B. There were, was there a quota for the Jews?

R.S. No, no.....no.

L.B. Was there a quota for women?

R.S. No.....all you needed was a high school diploma, nothing else, and to be able to pay them, whatever.

L.B. Mmm. (Pause). Were you unusual among your friends in that you went to the University?

R.S. No...no, most of them went.

L.B. (Long pause). That's interesting. And yet, when they were going to high school, none of them ^{thought} of any, of any such thing.

R.S. Well, it was just uh...having an education, I guess. Not really that you'll ever need it, but uh, just to....have an education, never thought that I would be working, but, uh....you wanted to have that...I guess, prestige or something, I don't know...

INTERVIEWER

L E R O W N

L.B. Mm hm, mm hm.

R.S. Probably.

L.B. And...another thing I don't think I asked...did your mother keep a kosher home?

R.S. No.

L.B. No. All right. And, uh...now when your parents entertained....uh, what sort of...was it evening entertainment, as a rule?

R.S. Yes, mm hm.

L.B. Was it on the weekend, or during the week?

R.S. Probably Saturday.

L.B. Saturday night?

R.S. I think so, yeah.

L.B. And, what sort of...uh...entertainment would it be, what sort of evening would it be?

R.S. Just talking.

L.B. They would sit and talk.

R.S. Sit and talk, yeah.

L.B. You said your father belonged to B'nai Brith, and you didn't tell me about it first.

R.S. Well, uh, actually, I don't even...B'nai Brith was sort of a secret organization from what I remember, you couldn't just go around telling everybody your father belonged to B'nai Brith, and I don't...never quite understood, and I probably never even inquired, why it was secret. But, you wouldn't just tell everybody your father belonged to B'nai Brith.

L.B. Is that right?

R.S. Yeah. Maybe Sophie Pisk knows. (Laughs). But, uh, it w...what we heard was, it was a secret organization. (Pause). And I don't even remember...

L.B. Who was it a secret from? The, the State, uh, the...not from other Jews?

R.S. No, no.

L.B. Did you tell other Jews?

R.S. Uh, I don't remember ever talking much about it. I remember when he was, uh, when he joined...and they said it was secret, but I don't know who it was secret from, probably not from Jews. Maybe it was not legal to belong, I don't know. Maybe somebody else would know, but I don't. I guess I was never that interested in anything (Giggles), in anything.

L.B. Did you have a fun social life, did you have a good social life?

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. Did you meet your husband there?

R.S. Oh, no, no.

L.B. No.

R.S. I met him much, much later, I met him in New York. Uh...yeah, we had a... especially after, uh, I mean, when we went to University, we had a very good time. Yeah, that was a, couple of years, was just 2, 2½, years, but...it was very nice.

L.B. Yeah. And what did y...life, consist of, at the University, what cons...what was a good time?

R.S. Oh, I meant the social life was good...

L.B. Yeah, yeah, that's what I mean. What was a, what was a good time?

R.S. Well, every...we took turns, I guess, once a week, everybody had, somebody had a party...

L.B. Uh huh.

R.S. And, you had dates, Sunday afternoons, you always had a date, I mean, you hoped, you hoped you had a date Saturday, you hoped you had a date on Sunday. In the winter we went skiing. In...

L.B. Where did you live?

R.S. What do you mean, where did I live?

L.B. When you were going to the University, where were you living?

R.S. At home.

L.B. You still lived at home?

R.S. Yeah, I always lived at home.

L.B. So, uh, in a sense, uh...you were supervised, you didn't live in an apartment, with other girls, and then, so that you would have, relatively free of adults.

R.S. No, no, no. We always, everybody lived at home.

L.B. So there was...

R.S. Nobody lived in...in...

L.B. ...there's a ki...you always had, then, in a sense, the parents were always in the background?

R.S. Oh yes, mm hm.

L.B. Of dates, parties...

R.S. Oh yes, the parents were always...

L.B. Right?

R.S. Yeah, mm hm.

L.B. (Pause). 1917, 19-35, you were 18, and you stayed there until 1938, you were 21, just about.

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. And that whole time you were pretty much...uh... (That's all right)...cared for, by your parents. Is that correct?

R.S. Yeah, yes.

L.B. (Long pause). And you considered yourself to be...a Jewish woman?

R.S. Oh yes. Jewish by birth, and by religion...that's all, I mean...

L.B. Now, your friends at the University...since you were still living at home, did you enlarge, the scope, of the kinds of friends you had, or did they stay pretty much the same as before?

R.S. Some stayed, and some new ones...uh...uh, well then I, I guess I started dating, and I...dated the same fellow, for practically all the time until I left, so then...

L.B. He doesn't know. (Laughter). And we wan't tell him.

R.S. So that was, I mean, then you didn't really, you know, you just ~~did~~ ^{had} ~~one~~, uh, close friend, and uh, everyplace you went, you went with him, and uh...

L.B. Did you meet any of the, um...of the more radical students?

R.S. No I didn't, I knew they were there somewhere but uh...

137. L.B. So you stayed? st, within that circle?

R.S. Yeah, within...that's right, yeah.

L.B. Did you know what was happening, in the student body?

R.S. I heard, you, you know, you hear, you read, but uh, I guess, uh...I ~~was~~ didn't see, ever see anything happening, or anything...

L.B. And you weren't interested?

R.S. No, no.

L.B. (Pause). And...when you were growing up...you know, uh...girls and boys usually have a model, somehow, when they're...y...it may not be expressed, but, you know, you feel, uh...now you said before, what was expected of you, before Hitler came to power, was that...you would be a nice Jewish girl, you would go to the gymnasium, maybe you would go to University, it wasn't definite that you would go to University, was it?

R.S. Oh, pretty much, you know...

L.B. It was pretty much definite?

R.S. Yeah, yeah.

L.B. All right.

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. You would get married.

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. And, it would have to be a professional man.

R.S. Jewish.

L.B. And a Jew.

R.S. Yeah.

INTERVIEWER

L. BROWN

L.B. And, of some income?

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. A suitable income. And that was pretty much what your model, this is what I mean by a model...

R.S. Yeah, yeah.

L.B. Is that correct?

R.S. That's right, yeah.

L.B. (Pause). So that, anything outside that...didn't even hi...it never occurred to you...

156? R.S. No, no... ?

L.B. ...to wonder, or to question...

R.S. No, no, no.

L.B. What kind of reading...did you read novels? When you were in the gymnasium?

R.S. Probably.

L.B. What kind of novels?

R.S. I don't remember.

164? L.B. Were you a romantic girl? Did you read...uh...English Romantic, or German Romantic, or...Well, you know, the world was in a state of Revolution *and you went sailing during*

R.S. It wasn't, not for us.

L.B. No, I know that. That's what I...

R.S. Not for any...you ask the other women, it wasn't for them either.

L.B. Yeah, I know...it's interesting.

R.S. There was no revolution, it was uh...you hear about those things but they don't touch you, they don't, it's like a... (Long pause). No, we didn't...I guess I read novels, I don't...

L.B. You don't remember what you read.

R.S. I don't remember exactly.

L.B. You don't remember any authors?

R.S. No, I, I just can't...

L.B. Was reading important to you?

R.S. (Pause). I read, I...I, I don't know...It's 40 years, ^{almost} I just, you know, I can't remember what I read, I really don't. So I would hear some of the authors now, I would remember, but at the moment I can't...

L.B. Oh, I wish I knew...Well, let's take the Russian authors, for example. Did you read any of them? Like Tolstoy? I know more about them than I do...

R.S. Thomas Mann, I read.

L.B. Thomas Mann.

R.S. I read that.

L.B. All right, all right.

176? R.S. (Mumbles). *Some Mann*177? L.B. Now let's see, who, are there any... *Fenchtranger* and Bredht, and um...

R.S. I'm sure I read, I know read, but I just can't remember what...I mean, at the moment.

L.B. Yeah, all right. *You know* I'm not testing you...

R.S. I know, I know.

L.B. I, what I'm trying to get is a picture, you see?

R.S. I know, but I...I know.

L.B. What was going on, in this world, in your mind. You see? Some people remember one kind of thing, some will remember the books they read, or the magazines; and other people will remember their social life, and others will remember their school days, and others will remember going to synagogue.

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. You see? So, depending upon what people remember, this is what hits them.

R.S. Yeah, well, just, uh, pleasant...pleasant years, with uh, whatever I told you here, and uh, reading probably was not the most important thing in my life.

L.B. Yes, that's, I think that's what...

R.S. Yeah. I'm sure I read, but...

INTERVIEWER
I BROWN

- L.B. ...otherwise you would remember.
 R.S. ...but if I was, I mean, I read.
 L.B. Did your mother belong to any, were there any Jewish women's organizations?
 R.S. No.
 L.B. There was nothing like Hadassah, nothing like...
 R.S. No, if there was...I don't think there was, I don't think I've ever heard...
 L.B. ~~Mmm~~. Did they ever consider going to Palestine?
 R.S. No.
 L.B. Never.
 R.S. Never.
 L.B. Not even when it was time to leave?
 R.S. No, no...no.
 L.B. Do you have any idea why?
 R.S. (Pause). Uh....well...I really don't know, maybe it wasn't possible.
 L.B. Mm hm.
 R.S. Maybe, uh, maybe they knew it wasn't possible, it was one of the places you really, couldn't very easily go to; you picked the thing that was possible, and uh...
 L.B. You made this, England possible, therefore...
 R.S. England...the United States was possible, it was just a question of technicalities, but you could come, you know...
 L.B. Mm hm.
 R.S. So that, you didn't look for anything that was, uh, that difficult, I mean, you probably could go to Palestine, but we knew it was very, very hard. I think young people could go, at that time, if they wanted to, you know, work on the farm, but it wasn't my, my thing...
 L.B. Your dream. (Laughter).
 R.S. It wasn't my dream, wasn't my brother...my brother was finished, he had, he was one of the last graduations in medical school, in '38, and so, he didn't...
 L.B. Did he become a doctor, here?
 R.S. Yeah, there.
 L.B. He did?
 R.S. He still, he finished there...
 L.B. Where?
 R.S. ...in '38, in Vienna.
 L.B. In Vienna.
 R.S. Yeah.
 L.B. But, you say, he came here.
 R.S. He came here right after gradua...he graduated, was one of the last, uh...
 L.B. He went to Sweden, and then he came to the United States?
 R.S. Mm hm. But before he went to Sweden, he had his M.D.
 L.B. Now, did he practice medicine here, in the United States?
 R.S. He's practicing now.
 L.B. Oh, I didn't...I don't know your brother. (Laughter). I don't know your family. (Laughter).
 R.S. He's been practicing for 45 years.
 L.B. I'm sorry, you know... (Laughter).
 219? R.S. I guess he never came...?
 L.B. I have to be careful that I don't ask a question that so...upsets somebody, you know.
 R.S. No, no, no, no. ~~B~~ ^{And} ~~then~~, he went to Sweden, and then he came here, and he... has been practicing ever since ~~1938~~ about '39.
 L.B. So he had...and he had no difficulty establishing himself as a physician here?
 R.S. No, he had his internship and residency, and everything else...
 L.B. There were some who came, as physicians, and then had to retake an exam...
 R.S. Well, everybody had to...
 L.B. Oh.

R.S. My father had to at, how old was he in '40...59, I think, he had to take the exam, everybody had to take the exam. But he took it at 59, my brother was just out of school, so there was no problem.

L.B. Mm, no, yeah.

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. Well, I think.....(Long pause)...Tell me something, uh, your father, just a, just a, couple, we're almost finished now, and I'll ask you, then if you want to add something...How did your father dress? For example, did he have a beard?

R.S. No.

L.B. He was clean-shaven?

R.S. Mm hm.

L.B. And, uh,,,uh...he...what, what was his clothing like? How did he dress?

R.S. Normal, suits...uh, like everybody else.

L.B. Like a Viennese?

R.S. Yeah.

L.B. And your mother, what sort of clothing did she wear?

R.S. Fancy. (Giggles).

L.B. Fancy? She liked clothing?

R.S. Oh, my mother loved clothing. My mother led a very, I don't know how she could stand it, I mean, I don't do that much, but she never did anything. (Laughter) But, uh, she liked clothes, she dressed very...

L.B. You mean, she didn't cook, she didn't clean...

R.S. That's right, that's what I mean, she,,, I don't know what she did, she shopped I mean for clothes (Giggles), she played cards, she entertained...

L.B. That's what I want, that's what I want...

R.S. Uh...she loved auctions, and, some of the things that you see here, ate, the things she used to accumulate; she had a whole housefull of antiques...and, some of them she managed to bring over here. That was one of her pasttimes, auctions, and, antiquing.

L.B. She liked beautiful things, then?

R.S. Yeah. She...was always fixing up the house with more Oriental ^{rugs}, on top of Oriental rugs...Yeah...(Laughs)...but she never did anything really, I mean what we, we consider...

L.B. (Pause). Did she take an interest in her children, was she concerned about her children?

R.S. Oh yes, oh she was, and she was very proud that we didn't have a nursemaid, because, in our...class, uh, people had nursemaids, but she was very proud that she brought us up and, uh, not a nursemaid. Oh yes, she, was...that she did.

L.B. (Long pause). Um.....I was going to ask you, when I saw these things, I wondered if they came from Europe, and then I meant to ask you. Uh, did they just walk out of their house, or were they able to take something with them?

R.S. No, everything had to be checked, and...stamped. I mean, those things are not the most val...I mean they're nice, they're good, and...

L.B. No, yeah. Yes, I know.

R.S. ...~~Boston~~ and Meisen, but uh, everybody had that. So everything had to be checked by a inspector.

L.B. Mm hm.

R.S. The chandelier...

L.B. This is from Europe?

R.S. Yeah. Uh...well, all those figurines, and the plates, and some of the things up here...but they were not anything, you know, museum pieces, so they could take them out. She had a few boxes full, that she had shipped.

L.B. They allowed her to ship that?

R.S. Yeah, they allowed her to ship...

L.B. Because I have heard a story...

? R.S. Well that was later...

L.B. ...from one German, who left...he was the Director of a museum, and um...he

L.B. cont. saw what was coming, so he...put money into a newspaper, closed his apartment...with the key, left as if he was going to work, and just...

286 R.S. Yeah, well...yeah, ^

L.B. ...got on the train.

R.S. ...some left like that, and...

L.B. Because he felt any other way would be to announce his departure.

R.S. Yeah, well, some people....what should I say? Some people were a little afraid...that somebody had something on them...you know?

L.B. Oh, you mean, if they had been politically active?

R.S. Yeah...something.

L.B. He was, he had been very active.

R.S. Well...that's why he didn't want anybody...but my mother, she didn't ever, bothered anybody...

L.B. That would have made a difference then.

R.S. That would...oh, yes, absolutely, I knew people...

L.B. Now, explain that to me.

R.S. Well, I knew people that, uh...for example, they had enough money in Switzerland, they got on a train, and they went...as if they were going on a vacation and they never...you know, they just never came back, left everything behind, but uh, what, just left everything. If you....either you were afraid because you, either you were smart and decided it doesn't matter what you leave behind, maybe you didn't even have to be afraid, you know, but my mother loved those things and she wanted to take 'em, and she could take them, she knew there was no difference whether she...uh, she has somebody inspect them and she'll pack 'em up or whether she leaves them behind when she wanted them. But, if you...well, if you were politically, uh, involved at all, then you would just walk out.

L.B. You would not call attention to the fact that you were leaving.

R.S. That's right, you, you'd just leave. But she would...no, they weren't involved in anything...

L.B. I see, I never understood that.

R.S. Yeah. Well, some people, they just uh, didn't care, ^{about} ~~what~~ their belongings... they had, uh, enough on the outside somewheres. That man probably had the money somewheres...

L.B. No, no.

R.S. He didn't have anything?

L.B. No, but he had been very active...uh, in, you know, political parties...which were...

R.S. Well, then he had, had reason not to call attention to his, uh, leaving. ^{that was different}

L.B. Right. (Long pause). I see...is there anything...Ruth, that you would like to add? That you feel, um....uh, students of Jewish history would, could know... or should know, or understand, or feel...in addition to what we've said here.

R.S. I can't think of anything right now, really. I, I know this was not the most... (Laughs).

L.B. No, it was very...

R.S. ...informative...thing....but, um...

L.B. ...it was very interesting, it really was.

R.S. ...I...but that's, you know, I was a young girl, and, as I said, I don't think we were as aware and as mature as people are here at 18 and 20, and...I mean, my little daughter, she lives a completely different life from what I'm doing, ^{from} what I did at her age, but that's the way it was, that's all I, all I can tell you...

L.B. Well I'll say "Thank you very much".

R.S. Oh, you're welcome.

L.B. Thank you, really.