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[Interview]

Translated from the Yiddish for Roberta Fleishman by Dr. Khana-Faygl Turteltaub, Yiddish Instructor, Northwestern University

Rivka-Regina Pozmenter Zamoskiewicz

March 10, 1996 Bnei-Brak

Interviewer: Yeshayahu Pery

[In English]

I, Yeshayahu Pery, have the honor of interviewing Mrs. Rivka Pozmenter, in the name of the survivors, here in Bnei-Brak, Israel. Language: Yiddish.

[In Hebrew]

Y. P. Hello Mrs. Rivka Pozmenter

[In Yiddish]

My name is Yeshayahu Pery. I have the honor today to interview you for the Visual History of Survivors [Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation] today, March 10, 1996 here in Bnei-Brak. And with your permission, we'll begin the interview. Please tell me what you remember of your home, of your family... of how you lived before the War.

R. P. About our shtetl?

Y. P. Yes, please.

R. P. It was a small shtetl, not many families, but it was a shtetl with a rabbi, with a shamus, with a ritual slaughterer, with a cantor. All of these were supported

by the shtetl. Of course, it wasn't so rich, but the [Jewish] community supported everything. It was a respectable life. There weren't too many wealthy people: there weren't too many paupers. For the most part, the Jews were merchants. Everyone had a shop, that is, a business, a store. The Jewish businesses were in the middle of the marketplace, and that was their livelihood. Everyone had either one kind of a shop or another. That was the Jewish livelihood. And, thank G-d, up to the time of the war things went very well. All the Jews lived as if they were one family. When there was a happy occasion everyone got together: the rabbi, the cantor, the ritual slaughterer and the Jews; the Jewish community. It was the same if the occasion was happy—a circumcision, or G-d forbid, if there was a problem—everyone cried in sympathy. This was the Jewish life, a quiet life. And we didn't have a bad relationship with the Christians either. We lived well with them. They were neighbors. We couldn't say [anything bad] until the war. No one incited them. That was the problem. If they weren't all riled up by someone... They weren't of the intelligent kind of people who understood things themselves. If they were treated well, they too were good. If they were inflamed, then they weren't good. During the last times, when it was already before the war. . . . People were already talking about war. They had more nerve. They already started to boycott, not to go to Jewish businesses. Things were being stirred up. [They were told] that when Hitler would come, he would completely destroy things. Unfortunately, unfortunately it all came true.

Y. P. Now I wanted to ask you a short question. Near. . . . What was the name of your shtetl?

R.P. Skempe.

Y. P. Where was it? Far from. . . .

R.P. Near Lipno, near [Sierpc], around the area [?] of Warsaw.

Y. P. Did you study in a school of any kind before the war?

R.P. In a *poshekhne* school. Just a *poshekhne* school.

Y. P. As you recall your shtetl Skempe, were there any Zionist activities there? Was it all connected to the Zionist Movement? Can you tell a little about that?

R.P. Yes. There were no organizations, because it wasn't a large community, but the young people were Zionists. We all strove [to go to] Palestine. It hadn't actually existed then, but everyone. . .

Y. P.: Strove.

R.P. Yes, strove for that. I remember speakers came to give talks about Israel. They collected things—money, silver, gold, money [sic] for *Kerem Kayemet* to buy land there, real estate. Everyone was so affected that even the children. . . . In our town if there was an event, it took place in the synagogue, so everyone gathered in the synagogue. So we got together and everyone, as he spoke, was so affected by this that whatever we had, a ring, a pair of earrings. . . . everyone. . . the children, the little girls on the other side. . . . We had a women's section and a men's section. Through the window [that separated

· This is a Slavic word, not Russian, perhaps Polish. I don't know what it means, but I would guess it means "ordinary." I will continue to ask around. [Trans.]

the two sides] they threw whatever they had. Everyone was Zionistic. There wasn't another party. In the biggest cities there were other parties. There were Bundists, there were Baltsonists [?], but in our town there were only Zionist.

Y. P. Middle of the road Zionists.

R.P. We all wanted to go to Israel. That was the only thing we knew.

Y. P. Now...Did your sister come to visit your town from somewhere? What can you tell us about that?

R. P. Yes. My sister lived in Hamburg, Germany, and it turned out that many Jews were from Poland, so they were sent to Porshin [Zbaszyn?]. They weren't from Porshin, so they came to us in Skempe [Skepe], and they were together with us until we were driven out.

Y. P. This happened in '36?

R. P. In '37.

Y. P. In the year '37. What did they say about Germany, about the troubles that Hitler made?

R. P. They were afraid to speak. They were afraid to speak but that which they did say was that things were bad, not good. How good could things have been if they had been chased out and everything was taken away from them. They came in the night and chased them out, and that was that! But this was a miracle for us! A miracle. . . unfortunately, later it wasn't such a miracle. My sister happened to be with us for a visit, so she had the right to go back and take what she still had. When

she came back the second time, when she had to leave, she brought with her quite a lot...silver, silverware...really a lot.

Y. P. She was permitted to leave.

R. P. She was allowed to take it out. Well, they already knew how things were going to be, so she brought all this out legally. We had to give it away later to Christians and they never gave it back. We never saw it again. She brought it, but . . .

Y. P. Did she remain living with you in that town?

R. P. She lived with us in that town until [thirty]-eight, no thirty-nine it was

Y. P. Until thirty-nine, until the war started was there something else that happened that you remember, that you want to tell us about Jewish life there?

R. P. Nothing special. In our town there was nothing special. We heard about a lot of terrible things that were happening, but in our town nothing special happened.

Y. P. In September '39, the war broke out.

R. P. Yes.

Y. P. The war broke out first in Poland. What do you remember?

R. P. At that time we left the town and went to a village. They said that when Hitler would come, he would immediately take away all the men. So the men went off probably to another city. They didn't really know that things would be better, but they figured that it wouldn't be [bad] all over Poland right away, so if he would come, the men wouldn't be there. So the men left and the women went to another village, a village where they knew some Christians.

Everyone thought that there would be a war, there would be shooting, there would be . . . so they left. But when they came, there was nothing. No one was shooting. The place was empty. They said that everyone should go home. Those who had left should come back. Nothing would happen to them. So we returned. As soon as we got back. . . People had run away from other towns also, so they stayed in our houses. They occupied our homes. In any case, slowly, everyone returned home. And that was that. Once again we sat around thinking about what was coming. We saw that things weren't good. We were no longer allowed to walk in the streets. In the middle of the marketplace there was a statue of Mary, a kind of... of...

Y. P. I know what that is.

R. P. Yes. It was built very high. In the middle of the market square. They shot that down immediately. As soon as they arrived, they shot that down first thing. The rabbi didn't run away. He remained in town, so they took the rabbi and the two boys that he had. . .they took the two boys and the rabbi and they were given the job of sweeping the marketplace. This happened during the first few days after they arrived. The men who weren't there were coming home, so each one was given a job to do. Many. . . There was a crazy person in our town; he was killed right away. [He was] a Jew. And that's how things were. We waited for three months after they arrived, and then we were taken to Warsaw; we were chased to Warsaw.

Y. P. Because everyone, all the Jews in town. . . .

R. P. Rein, Judenrein.

Y. P. What happened to you then?

R. P. Then we. . . The men went on wagons, because they took with them some linen, bedding and so on. We women were put on a small train, pushed [?] into one car. There was no place to sit. Nothing. My children and I. . . I kept them near me. And I still had my father-in-law; my husband's father was also there. And we all sat [sic]. . . Everyone stayed with his family. And that is how we traveled until . . ., actually not even to Warsaw. When we got to the bridge [that led] to Warsaw, the bridge was broken. We couldn't get into Warsaw, not with horses, not with anything. We got to the Narif [River], that's what it was called; it was already frozen. The day before it had not yet been completely frozen. People tried to get through and they drowned. When we went across, the ice on the Narif, the ice was already completely frozen. We were lucky, and we got across in peace. And we arrived. Everyone had someone they knew, so we went to our acquaintances in Warsaw

Y. P. It was already winter, 1940?

R. P. It was 1939, *grudzhin*.¹

Y. P. December.

R. P. December. We slept on the floors. Sleep? We were tired from traveling so much, so everyone stretched out on the. . . on the floors. And we lay there like that. And our men, the men who took the wagons were detained at Novigurd [Nowy Dwor?], before Warsaw. There they were searched and

¹ The name of the month in Polish. [Trans.]

everything was taken from them. They suffered [a lot]. They were beaten. These were the police, the Germans. We don't know. The Polish. I don't know which police [they were]. They arrived in Warsaw in bad condition. That is how we lived in Warsaw until the ghetto.

Y. P. Until the ghetto. Where did you live until the ghetto?

R. P. We still had enough for an apartment. [We lived] in our apartment. But the majority lived in the synagogues, in the... wherever they...

Y. P. Community places.

R. P. Community places. They moved in. They didn't have the money to pay. It cost. . . . I don't know. There wasn't anything to eat either. There perhaps they gave something to eat, I don't know. But everyone. . . A piece of bread was gold. What anyone had...if they could manage. . . If you could buy a piece of bread, that was good.

Y. P. All of this was still before the ghetto.

R. P. This was before the ghetto. . .

Y. P. What kind of decrees were there before the ghetto in Warsaw?

R. P. I don't remember. It was every day. . . I didn't go. . . I was a woman

Y. P. But what do you remember?

R. P. The men went to work. They were grabbed as labor if a man went out into the street. Of course my husband. My son was already a grown boy of thirteen. He was a well-built child, and when he used to go with his father, they took him too. One time it happened that they were grabbed [and taken] to the police station. . . and it happened...to this day I don't know what happened.

He was grabbed. [He was] a Jewish child, so they grabbed him and he wasn't returned. We had to ransom him. We got him out. That's the way it was. We suffered a lot. It wasn't good. It was very bad. I used to go visit ____, where my neighbors were. It was horrible. Diseases were rampant. There were epidemics. Typhus. People died of them every day. When they tried to pass in order to clean the streets, they couldn't get through.

Y. P. This was before the ghetto.

R. P. This was still before the ghetto. The [streets] were full. The sick lay there covered with a piece of paper. That's how it was. Then when there was the ghetto, you can imagine how that was. It was very bad. We smuggled ourselves out of the ghetto. We smuggled ourselves out.

Y. P. But first you were taken into the ghetto.

R. P. Of course.

Y. P. How long were you in the ghetto?

R. P. We were in Warsaw for two years.

Y. P. In the ghetto?

R. P. We were there one year before the ghetto.

Y. P. A year before the ghetto and a year in the ghetto.

R. P. Yes.

Y. P. So you went into the ghetto in [19]41.

R. P. Yes in 1941.

Y. P. What can you say about what you remember of the time in the ghetto?

R. P. What can I tell you. It was very bad. Bitter like gall. It was very bad. I remember that my husband...eh, we still had a little money. We were successful in managing that. My bother-in-law had everything taken away from him, and we managed to keep some, so we bought some things and even also cooked some things. I remember that people from our town came to us, people whom I didn't recognize. In such a short time they were no longer people; they were skeletons not people. They came over [to us]. They were wild, starving. They ran over to the kitchen and they grabbed whatever was still remaining in the pot. I was actually afraid of these same people. These were people with whom, just yesterday I had been the best of friends in our town. Everything. . .these were our people. People were very wild. This was caused by hunger, poverty, troubles. This is how things were. One day my husband found someone, and we went through the fence. We went through with the children.

Y. P. Someone who helped you?

R. P. It was like this; The children's parents were where it was still the German Reich. There was no money there. That is where we were taken. We weren't taken there. They wanted us to go there. My sister went there, because she looked like a Christian, blond.

Y. P. The sister who came from Germany?

R. P. From Germany, yes. She went first. My brother-in-law was like a real Jew. He was. . . he looked like a real Jew, so my sister sent a Christian, a real Christian

and he, my brother-in-law was disguised like a gentile woman, and she brought him there. They were already there in the inn in the shtetl.

Y. P. How did you manage to get out of the ghetto? Weren't there guards.

R. P. Yes, there were guards.

Y. P. Did you have to pay something?

R. P. I don't... My husband did this. I don't know...

Y. P. You don't know.

R. P. ...how it was.

Y. P. Hm, hm.

R. P. I know that they asked if I still had something. [They said] "Put it in a bundle.

Gather together whatever there is, today we are leaving the ghetto.

Y. P. How was it...

R. P. And by foot we went to that town.

Y. P. How did you actually get there?

R. P. It was very bad. It was like this—we went through the fence. We left the ghetto. My husband saw a coach. In Warsaw there were these kinds of coaches.

Y. P. Yes.

R. P. You know about [these].

Y. P. Yes, yes.

R. P. Yes. So he called one and it came. All of us went in there and he paid whatever was asked to be taken out of the ghetto, to be taken out to a road. He said where we were to be taken, and then we would go ourselves. He took us on.

On the way, my husband noticed that it wasn't [going] the right way. My husband was a very *spritner*; you know what *spritner* is?

Y. P. Yes.

R. P. He was very capable.

Y. P. Yes.

R. P. And he knew about these things, and he noticed that we weren't being taken in the right direction, not the right way. So he began to shout. Since my husband was shouting, we all shouted. I and my three children shouted, all three of them. I also had a son. All of us shouted. We made such a racket, we shouted so loudly. . . . Yes, and he saw someone run up the steps of the coach. He saw that. Since we were shouting. . . There was a church somewhere close by. There were nuns there. They were called nuns.

Y. P. Yes.

R. P. Religious sisters.

Y. P. Yes.

R. P. They lived there. When they heard the shouting, they came out. When they came out, the two who had jumped up on the steps....two of them had jumped on. While the coach rode, two rogues had jumped on. They quickly grabbed the bundles that we had. I had a large shawl around me. They pulled that shawl off me, took the bundles that we had and ran away. So the gentile stopped and we got out. When we got out, we went there to the nuns. When we got there, they asked, "Do you know where you have been taken? You have been taken to a forest. This is where they take everyone to be killed."

Y. P. These were Poles?

R. P. Yes. This is what the nuns told us, the sisters, the religious sisters. *Milosherne parne[?]*² they were called. You made such a commotion, and we saved you. And that was that. [They asked] where we wanted to go, so we told them. They understood that we had left the ghetto and we wanted to go somewhere. So she said, "How can I...can we help you? We cannot help you at all. Go here, here. Perhaps you will see an elderly person, an older person. Don't go to a young person. Take a wagon and it will take you to a road, wherever it may be. Later you'll go [elsewhere]. That's how it was. So we took another wagon and we got out of there. We went. And it was like this: I went, so as not to look suspicious, with my. . .my two little girls, and my husband went with my son. We walked a day and a night, a whole day and a night, and my husband did the same thing also, but he went via a different road and I went by another road. My husband and my son were caught; they were caught, and [we thought] that was that, but they were lucky and they were let go. We weren't caught. Just imagine, we arrived at the place where were supposed to go and my husband [also] arrived in that little town. It wasn't the right town; it was the town before, but we went there and we saw that Jews were being led to work, so we saw what was happening. We also had family there and they took us in. Then I went to my sister, and I was with my sister until . . . until . . .

Y. P. In which town was this? In Gostalin?

² She gives the name of their order in Polish. [Trans.]

R. P. Yes, in Gostanin [Gostynin]. My mother was there. . . . She lived there. She didn't live there. She had also gone there, because they had a brother-in-law there and my husband had a brother who lived there, so they went there, and we once again went to live with them. So now we were together. Three sisters were together. I, the sister from Germany and her mother. We were three sisters all together.

Y. P. In those times. . . . When was this? Was this still in '41 or '42?

R. P. In '42.

Y. P. In the year '42.

R. P. Yes.

Y. P. And there in Gusta...

R. P. Gostynin.

Y. P. At that time in Gostynin, was there a ghetto already, or there wasn't a ghetto there?

R. P. By the time we got there, there was a ghetto already. In '42 there was a ghetto.

Y. P. There was a ghetto. Were you once again led into the ghetto or did you not live in the ghetto?

R. P. We did live in the ghetto. Certainly. My sister also did not live alone. She also lived with a family. In the ghetto one could not live alone.

Y. P. So there was no ghetto at that time.

R. P. There was a ghetto. She lived with another family.

Y. P. Hmm.

R. P. We also came to her, but my sister went to work. Everyone went to work. I didn't go to work. I stayed at home. But we weren't there long. From that other ghetto in Gostynin we went to Tshekhova [Strzegowo] But my sister from Germany was taken right off the street. . .

Y. P. In Gostynin?

R. P. In Gostynin. I haven't seen them...her. . . from since [the time of] the ghetto.

Y. P. Hmm. How long were you in the ghetto in Gostynin?

R. P. We weren't there long, a few months.

Y. P. Hmm.

R. P. Not long, not long. I think it was even less than three-quarters. . . .

Y. P. Do you remember anything you can tell us? Anything that happened in the ghetto?

R. P. Where? In Gostynin?

Y. P. How were things there?

R. P. Also the same. There was a Jewish Council, and people were taken for work every day, and every day people were sent away. That's where my son was caught; that's where my husband was caught and sent away from Gostynin. My son was sent away. My brother-in-law was sent away—two brothers-in-law!

Y. P. Did you have any idea where these people were being taken, where they were being sent?

R.P. No. No one had the slightest idea. We were told that they were being sent to work, but we had no idea where they were being sent. One time my brother-

in-law returned, he had escaped, but the next day he was caught again and taken back, and he never again returned.

Y. P. What did the Jewish Council there do? Were there Jewish policemen also?

R. P. There was everything. There were Jewish police, and there were Jews who ran things, but in the end everyone was sent away. Not one [person] remained.

Y. P. But what do you remember? How did they interact with the Jews at that time?

R. P. They say well. I never went to work, so I don't know.

Y. P. Were you. . . . They took away your husband, they took away all the people you mentioned. Who stayed with you then?

R. P. My second sister, her mother, [sic] her three children and my three. . . my two children.

Y. P. How did you all manage there in the ghetto?

R. P. Us?

Y. P. Yes.

R. P. We weren't there long.

Y. P. Hmm.

R. P. We weren't there long. With me it was like this: I still had money, so I could still buy [things]. My daughter, the older daughter, looked like a gentile girl, exactly like a gentile girl. No one ever believed. . . . Even in Warsaw, she used to go out of the ghetto to shop. A blond, gentile girl. That's how she was.

Y. P. Hmm.

· Her sister's mother would also have been her mother, unless this was a child of her father's second marriage. [Trans.]

R. P. So she went. . . she was brave. She spoke a good Polish, so she went out shopping, and that's how it was there in that ghetto as well. She went and did the shopping for us. We didn't buy anything big. What was the shopping? After all, what could one buy?

Y. P. Just enough to exist.

R. P. Enough to survive. Some potatoes, some cabbage, I don't know, a piece of bread, perhaps black [bread]. I don't remember. Meat we didn't eat. Cake we didn't

bake. We survived as best we could, _____ . If we had a piece of bread and a potato, then that was good.

Y. P. Hmm.

R. P. That's how we lived. Then later we. . . . This daughter of mine, the *shiksa*, she looked just like a *shiksa*, she was very brave and she went. She went everywhere. She went outside the ghetto. Once she came home and she said, "Mother, you know what? There is still a ghetto in Shchenezgovo [Strzegowo]. . . ." and every day here they were talking about sending people away. . . . There was another young girl with us.. Her mother, that girl's mother. . . . In Skempe, my sister had taken in an orphan, who had no mother and father. She took this girl into her own house. It was a great pity. And this girl had family in Strzegowo. And it was said that in Strzegowo, they weren't yet talking about sending people away, so she said, "You know, mother, we

· There are a few words here that are unintelligible. [Trans.]

should go to Strzegowo.” [That’s what] my daughter [said]. She said, “I’ll hire a gentile who’ll take us, and we’ll all go there. Whatever will be, will be!” And that’s what happened. She went and brought back a gentile; we got in [his wagon] and off we went to Strzegowo. This was with my children, and the girl, and my sister and her children, because there was no one left in Germany. There was. . . . the one in Germany also had a daughter. We also took the daughter along. She was also with us, but she left Strzegowo and never came back home again. Oy, I cannot tell about everything at one time.

Y. P. Yes. So you arrived in Strzegowo.

Tape 2:

Y. P. We are continuing with our interview. Please continue to tell what happened in Strzegowo.

R. P. We were on our way to Strzegowo. We arrived in Strzegowo and the police. . . . We went in pairs. I walked with one daughter and the other daughter went with her cousin, my sister’s oldest daughter from Ameri. . . . from Germany, and the girl went. They went in pairs so it wouldn’t look suspicious. This was on a Sunday. In the meantime, the folk-Germans arrived and they saw something that did not please them. What was this? I wasn’t walking in the direction of the church. We were walking in the direction of the ghetto, so they saw that it wasn’t. . . . that these were Jewish children, so they got down and detained them. I was let through with my daughter. One of my sisters also got through, and her mother along with the children were allowed to

pass. The other children remained: the girl that my sister had taken with her and the one from Germany. . .

Y. P. Her daughter.

R. P. And they were taken into a cellar somewhere there and they were searched, thoroughly searched, and it was like this; my other daughter was younger and she was timid. She wasn't. . . . She more closely resembled a Jew not a Christian. She knew that she had money sewn into [her clothes], and she was asked where we were going, so she said that we had family [there] and were going to our family. "Do you know that you are not allowed to walk here?" [She replied] "We didn't know." They beat her trying to get her to tell where the money was. They [sic] were beaten...beaten but they didn't tell. She knew that she had [it], but she didn't tell. So that was that. When we looked back and saw that they had been detained, we went into the ghetto and we told them about this, [we told] the Jewish police and they went to get them out. And that's what they did; they went and got them out. They had been severely beaten. The daughter from Germany had been badly beaten and the girl also. All of them had been beaten, but they got them out. By then we were already in the ghetto.

Y. P. In Strzegowo.

R. P. In Strzegowo.

Y. P. What was life like in that ghetto?

R. P. The ghetto in Strzegowo was like this; The Christians had permission to take. . . . because their children were. . . the Christian's children, the big ones, were

taken for labor, so only the elderly remained. They had the right to take workers from among the Jews. One man came to me; he had known this Christian from before the war and he said that he wanted a woman like me to work [for him]. I said, "Why not?" [So] I went to work for this gentile. His wife lay in bed paralyzed. He took me there, and I worked there for that gentile. Others also worked there. My sister stayed with the children. Just imagine, I could have stolen something from that gentile, but I did everything to help them. How could I help them? With a little bottle of milk for a child, to give it a drop of milk or something. The gentiles also couldn't help [us]. They weren't allowed to give us anything, and I also couldn't take anything home; it was two kilometers [away]. I waited for a time when they wouldn't see, and I cut off a little piece of bread. I took them a bottle of milk; I took them whatever I could. They really couldn't make a meal out of any of it, but something was better than nothing. At that time there was no longer anything to buy. There was nothing to buy. It was a small ghetto. We weren't allowed to leave. Whatever we were given had to be enough.

Y. P. What did they give you in the ghetto?

R. P. What did they give? I don't know. After all, I wasn't there. I was with the gentiles. I don't know what they gave. I no longer remember what they gave. Maybe they gave a certain portion of bread. I know that they didn't have. . . . The children suffered from starvation. They all suffered. Once on a Sunday, the gentile... on Sunday they slaughtered a chicken. They threw away the feet. They don't use the head there. I ran the household there. I cleaned

everything, put everything away, so I took out the feet and I took out the head, things that they didn't use. . . . I didn't want them to know. . . and I hid them. Then I brought it [home] and my sister made lunch out of it. With [that] and a few potatoes, she made a lunch; so the children had a meal. This went on for about three months. Then they were saying that we were going to be driven out of this ghetto too, that we should be prepared. Yes, and during this time they gathered together ten Jews and they hanged all ten of them.

Y. P. In Segov [Strzegowo]?

R. P. In Segov [Strzegowo].

Y. P. Why?

R. P. For no reason. [They said] they were spies. They were carrying [things] to the Russians. To the Russians they were carrying news. They were spying for the Russians. And they took ten Jews and hanged them, and all the Jews had to stand around and watch this. No one could cry. We weren't allowed to do anything. Children stood there and saw their father being hanged, a brother being hanged. [She points at someone] You see, she remembers this. She remembers this also, how the ten Jews were hanged. I came running from the village. I held her in my arms, and she remembers this—how the ten Jews were hanged.

Y. P. When was this? What year was this?

R. P. This was at the beginning of three. . . . it was forty three. I don't remember precisely if it was the beginning. . . . Yes, it must have been in the beginning.

Y. P. Hmm.

R. P. Yes, it was in Strzegowo that they hanged the ten Jews. So I didn't go back to that gentile. We started to get ready to leave. We would go to gentiles. This gentile was actually good to me. This gentile was good, but I couldn't stay there. It was too close to the town. I told him. . . . I don't remember if I told him, but he taught me. . . . I couldn't milk a cow, so he taught me. He said, "You must know how. The war is not over. I know," he said. He was a smart gentile. He had once been to America. He said, "I know that they say the war will end quickly, but I said right from the beginning that this war will last years." And he taught me how to milk a cow. This came in very handy later. But I couldn't stay with this gentile. So my sister and I, she with her three children and I with my two children. . . . The girl, whom we had taken along, went to her family, and my sister's daughter went off with a youth group and never returned. They were going to go to Russia, and she never came back. I and the children—I with two children and my sister with three children—left, and we went to gentiles. It wasn't so easy to go to the gentiles. The gentiles did not want to let us in.

Y. P. Were these gentiles you knew, or . . . ?

R. P. Absolutely not. We knew no one.

Y. P. In a village?

R. P. Yes, in villages. Everything [took place] in villages. This was not at all our neighborhood.

Y. P. But the gentiles knew that you were Jews?

R. P. Yes, they knew. They knew that we had come out of the ghetto. They knew.

One gentile woman. . . We had gone to one gentile woman and she wouldn't let us stay in the house overnight. She told us to spend the night in the attic.

We didn't care if it was the attic, just so we would get through the night.

That's how it was. We went here, we went there. I don't know for how many days, for how many nights we wandered until we settled the children with gentiles. My sister. . . . It wasn't easy. It was very, very difficult. It took [some] time. We didn't know when the time would come.

Y. P. What do you mean by the word "settled"? What does it mean to settle the children?

R. P. It means that we gave them away.

Y. P. They agreed to it?

R. P. Gave them away. Gave them away.

Y. P. For money, or just like that?

R. P. No, not for money. We had no money. Without money.

Y. P. The gentile agreed to take the children.

R. P. It was like this—the gentile woman who took them didn't have any children, so we agreed that if we remained [alive] after the war, we would take them [back]. They would return them, and if we didn't return, [we said] " She will remain with you."

Y. P. How old was the little girl?

R. P. The little girl was. . . . When the war started the girl was two years old, so at that time she was five years [old], perhaps six years.

Y. P. And her brother was given to someone else?

R. P. Huh?

Y. P. And her brother?

R. P. Her brother was given to.... I don't even know where. . .to another gentile. The gentile took. . . He, her brother was two years older, so he could already take a cow out to pasture, because the older gentile children weren't there. They had gone to work. They used every single person [including the children]. She was also taking the cow to pasture for the gentile. . .a child of five years old and she was already taking the cow to pasture. Everyone was used. Everyone worked.

Y. P. How did you. . . ?

R. P. I worked. I. . .wherever I went, I worked.

Y. P. Were you together with your sister?

R. P. No. I wasn't with her. My sister had a small child. She also had a younger one.

Y. P. She had two.

R. P. Yes, those two, but she had another one that was born five weeks before the war so it was still a small child. It was perhaps three years old at that time. It was still a child. The children didn't grow. They didn't eat. They were small. So she had this little boy with her. This was also a problem that it was a boy. I don't know...if this was the problem. Well, that's how it was. So she was with the child. She went to work for. . .for one gentile. I went to work for another one. I was. . . the bigger ones...my, my children were snatched away, because they worked. . . they worked in the field. Mine were children who worked. One daughter . . . first of all, she looked like a gentile, so the non-Jews weren't so fearful. They said she was a member of their family who had come to help them. There were those who had thirteen children or fourteen. They needed

them, so she went there. She spoke Polish very well. They took her. Just a child, she was already digging up potatoes. You know about digging potatoes? She helped. She did everything. All of them were so advanced. They were already working as if they were grownups. The younger one was a girl. How old was she when the war broke out? She was seven, so now she was ten years old. The older one was two years older. She was twelve years old. She ran the . . . the whole household in [someone's] house. And I had... I had no rest. I walked. I walked a lot from one child to the other to find out how they were doing. I went to the gentile woman where she was. I went to the gentile woman where my children were. I went all around. I just kept walking. I wasn't. . . My sister was . . . that was the problem. She was a fearful person, so. . . and she had a small child, so she couldn't . . . she mostly watched the house. She didn't go [anywhere]. I was the one who walked around. I went. I was at a gentile's house. . . everything was good but I had a dream. I dreamt about my father and I said, "I have to change something here. I dreamt about my father. That must mean something." So in the morning. . . The gentile woman didn't even want me to leave. There was a gentile man and woman; they were husband and wife and they had a daughter. So in the morning, I was getting dressed and I said, "I'm leaving." He said, "Why are you leaving now?" I said, "No. . . I want. . . I have something to. . ." I don't even remember. I don't think that this gentile even knew that I was Jewish. In this gentile's house I even prayed: No, this gentile did not know that I was Jewish. They

· Rifka points at the floor and uses the Yiddish word for saying Christian prayers.

also chased the gentiles away, so I said that I was one of those who had been driven out of their homes. It was from Pomozhe [Pomerania?] that they had been driven out of, that the gentiles had been chased out of. All of their possessions were taken and they were driven out. They were the folk-Germans. So I said that I . . . I had been driven out of there. [Now] I got up in the morning and was about to leave. I said that I was going and I left. The next day, in another village, a gentile came to see that other gentile, and he didn't know anything, not even about me. He didn't know, and he said, "Do you know that here someone was caught who had killed a pig—*zabil shinyaka*—at night he had killed a pig. This also wasn't allowed. They had arrived just then and found that. So they burned the house down, and the Christians from there were driven away. Just imagine, the day before. . . the day I left. It was that gentile [whose house] I left. This was. . . was. . . never in my life will I be able to forget such a thing. Can someone forget such a thing?

Y. P. Yes. Where did you go?

R. P. I walked. I walked. Do you think I knew where I was going? I went at night for the most part. At night and by day. I went into another gentile. You should know that we could sense....as soon as we walked in. . . from the way they spoke, we knew right away who they were, if they were anti-Semites or not. The one I had left, the one they caught, he was an anti-Semite. He said, "I am coming from Sherpts [Sierpc]." That was a city near the village. He said, "On the one hand, my heart hurts because," he said "they are now taking the Poles also. They are starting up with us too. But one thing makes me happy," he said, "and that is that they've chased out all the Jews. They've taken care of

[Trans.]

the Jews,” he said, “that makes me happy.” Imagine that. I was in that kind of place. I stayed with that kind of gentile. When I went to another one, I saw how I was received. If they knew or if they didn’t know. When I came into [the home of] a family, a Christian one, it was before *bozhe na rodzenye*: [They asked] “How do you come to be here?” I said, “I was chased out from someplace I mentioned. Everything was taken from me. I have no place to go. I have family somewhere, but I would like to spend the night.” They said, “Fine. Stay here. You’ll eat with us. You’ll spend the night.” That’s how it went. I understood right away. These were people who had a heart. They understood. Well, good. Then we talked a bit. They asked what I had. I said I had an inn. “Then you know. . . Do you know how to make salami?” I said, “What do you mean, do I know. Of course I know how to make salami. I made it for *bozhe na rodzenye*.” “Oh,” they said, “good that you came here. You won’t go anywhere else. You’ll stay here until you’ve made the salami for us.” Imagine that. “Good, good,” I said. “I know where an acquaintance of mine lives. . . I’ll go there.” “No,” she said, “you won’t go. You’ll stay here until you make the salami for us. You’ll stay with us until after the holiday.” Imagine that. This was extraordinary for me. Well, I made the salami. You think I didn’t make it? And they really liked it. Listen, what is there to making salami? Putting in the pepper and whatever else in with the meat? It wasn’t anything special. Well, I made it. I also ran a household. I cooked, so I knew how to make it. So I had some luck and stayed there a few days. But I didn’t sit around, I walked. I went to see the children. I went to see how the children were doing. Once I came. . . I searched and searched . . . I went to work for a Christian. If I didn’t like it, I moved on. If I liked it, I stayed.

Y. P. They didn’t ask for documents?

R. P. That I didn’t have. I had piece of paper from a Polish friend of mine, but it never happened that someone asked me for a document, never. The name,

· Christmas. [Trans.]

Dublika... My name was Dublitska. I got that from a Polish friend of mine. Her name was Genova Dublitska. I got this from her. But I never used it. No one ever asked me [for it]. I was lucky. I was never, G-d forbid, caught. G-d forbid, it never happened that I was bothered on the road; nothing happened at night, never.

Y. P. How did you manage with all the prayers and all those things? You knew them all? You learned them?

R. P. I knew them from school yet. I did know them. I knew the prayers, I knew the songs, "G-d bless Poland." Of course I remembered things from school when we sang with the Christians. I didn't go to a Jewish school. We just had a Christian school.

Y. P. A public school [?]

R. P. A public school [?], a Christian school, but I sat near the picture and I said [the prayers]. Well, I said whatever I said.

Y. P. You spoke Polish well.

R. P. Well enough. No one ever knew that I was Jewish. Except when I was working in Germany.

Y. P. That was later.

R. P. Yes. Other than that. Never. No one.

Y. P. How long did things go on this way?

R. P. It went on for a very long time. Until... until... Things were already very bad. I was walking. I worked for a gentile. From my husband... My husband dealt with him. He treated me very well, very well.

Y. P. He did know.

R. P. Yes, he knew who I was. He knew. He said, “Why didn’t you tell me, before the war. I would have built you a . . .

Y. P. A hiding place.

R. P. A hiding place,” he said, “and you would have been with your husband and with your children.” But it was too close to our city, we couldn’t do it. Things were very good for me there with that gentile. I was also a housekeeper there. There were several children. I took them to _____. They were happy. From the time I was with that gentile [’s family] things became very difficult. There was a note on every door on which was written how many people lived there. When they came in and found another person [they asked] “Who are you?” So that was bad right there. Once they found me in bed at night. They went around at night, and they saw me lying in bed with one of the daughters. “Who is this?” “An aunt. An aunt came to visit. The woman died and she was her sister, so she came to visit.” It was good that they were acquaintances. He was a folk-German, but these folk-Germans were people who knew me. They were from our neighborhood. I went so far. I walked for two or three nights and I wound up at this gentile’s house, so the next day I had to leave. They took me. They took me to his aunt, a real one. We went at night. We were not allowed . . . If they were to see me. . . They knew me. They all knew me. From then on . . . I went to Germany

Y. P. Did someone arrange for you to go?

R. P. No. I traveled myself. An SS man . . .

Y. P. Knew that you were there?

R. P. Yes. Because one of their sons was there in Germany working, so he said that there was an aunt from Warsaw staying with his family. "She came to us, but if you want she can come." Because they needed someone to work. He came and brought me there. An SS man and he took me there. But before that I had gotten my children settled. Where I was, with that Gentile, I placed my oldest daughter. She also didn't stay in one place too long. It was bad if they stayed in one place too long. That was no good. One had [always] to go somewhere else. The younger one was in gentile house in a different place. They liked her very much. They didn't know that she was Jewish. They pretended not to know. They knew, but they didn't want to know it, because it was better that they didn't know. Someone had taken her there. And there she ran the whole household. Just imagine, she got up at night. . . There were several cows, and there were horses, and she fed the cows and the horses: a girl ten years old. She got up at night, before dawn and from a well, you know what a well is? She drew up the water and gave them [water] to drink. A child ten years old did this. The gentile did not want to give her back [to me]. I saw the problem. I was already about to leave for Germany, and I wanted the children to be better situated. I had a place for her. I had already found a place. I had come to that gentile without knowing anything. . . what did I know in my life? Had I ever been there? Who was there? But I got there. I found her. She slept with me at night. When I got there she was sitting near the oven building a fire. That's where she was sitting, and she didn't turn around to look at me. She didn't see me. She pretended not to see me, because she was happy there. She

was working, but she was happy. She wasn't afraid. She knew what was happening, and she didn't want to let on. She thought that perhaps I had come to stay there, but she didn't give herself away. But the gentiles themselves understood. They took her into another room and they said, "Do not be afraid. Who is this woman? I see that you know who she is." She said, "I don't know." She was very discrete. She denied that she knew who I was. In the end, I told them. I saw what was going on there. I thought to myself, if things go well, she could stay there, and if things didn't go well, I had somewhere to take her. So I stayed in that house. I saw how she got up at night and fed the horses and the cattle and everything, and I said to her. . . I told her. . . she wasn't sleeping at night. How could she do this? "I am safe. My life is safe," she said. I said, I am going to Germany. I want you to leave this place. You don't have to be here anymore." I took her with me. Do you know that gentile and his wife didn't want to give her up. "She is our right hand," they said. "She does everything." She cooked and she cleaned and she went into the fields and brought them food. . . everything. A child only ten years old. So that's how it was. I took her. To this day, they know nothing. After all, what business did I have with them? I took her and that was that. If they treated her as one should treat a child. . . She had to get up at night to feed the animals? A ten-year-old child? The well was frozen, and she had to draw the water, buckets of water from the well? I should have left her there? I had someplace to take her. I gave them money...those good gentiles. Well, that's how it was. I left.

Y. P. Both children were there?

R. P. No, just one. One was where I was. With the one who said. . .

Y. P. With the one who knew that you were a Jew.

R. P. Yes, and afterwards I told them here too. That's how it was. They asked why I wanted to take her. I said, "I want to take her, because I want her to see her sister." He said, "I'll even come get her from wherever she is." I said, "I'll let you know." And I never did. I saw that it wasn't good for her there, and I could improve [her life.] And I did. Then, just imagine, the SS who took me to Germany. . . I stayed with him, and a neighbor asked if perhaps I knew someone. She also needed a person. I said, "I have a daughter." I wanted my daughter to come. Things weren't bad there with them.

Y. P. What was the name of that place in Germany?

R. P. Osvaysen? I don't remember anymore.

Y. P. In the meantime, what happened to your sister?

R. P. My sister? She remained with the gentiles. She was caught while at the gentiles' [house].

Y. P. With her son?

R. P. Yes. No, not with the little boy. She was caught and she was taken away.

[Tape 3]

Y. P. This is number 3. Please tell me about your experience.

R. P. What else can I tell you that I haven't told you?

Y. P. Talk a little about life in Germany.

R. P. Germany. . .

Y. P. Did they know that you were Jewish?

R. P. No, they didn't know. There was the same. . . He had the same. . . It was like this: The one who came to take me [back with him] was not the owner of. . . of the inn, where he took me. He was also an employee. He ran the business there. He was the *zhontse*, as we used to say. You know the one who ran. . . ?

Y. P. A manager.

R. P. A manager. Because this woman, the German woman had two sons, and both of them were in the army, and she had a large inn, so she was entitled to have an employee, even two. So she had a gentile boy and she hired me. I worked in the house, but I also milked the cow along with the boy, and I went into the field to work. Just like the gentile boy did. I worked.

Y. P. Was the gentile a German or a Pole?

R. P. No. No. A Catholic.

Y. P. A German.

R. P. No, no, no, no.

Y. P. A Pole.

R. P. A Polish boy from Poland. All of them were Polish. They took all the Poles for labor.

Y. P. Yes.

R. P. He worked in the field and in the barn. He had several animals [and] a cow, and I also helped to milk the cow. I also washed and cooked and cleaned. . . everything that needed to be done. Just as the gentile woman from the other inn also wanted a person, a woman in her house, so she came. . . He told her, the gentile who also worked there. . . he said "I'll ask her, the one they just brought. Perhaps she knows of such a person." I said, "Yes, a daughter of

mine. My daughter was thirteen years old. I don't think she was even thirteen. Maybe she was twelve.

Y. P. This was the blonde one?

R. P. This was the blonde one. Yes. She... I said that I had a daughter and that they should send for my daughter. So I wrote a letter in Polish, because they said that I was an aunt of theirs. They knew me. I was an aunt. So he went. They sent that gentile and he brought my daughter. So now my daughter was with me. Now I had my daughter with me. The other one I had given to... I knew that, praise G-d, it would be all right, because I knew those gentiles. They were very honest, fine people. I had stayed with them previously. And here I was a bit calmer now that I had my daughter with me. Later, that one...the manager wanted me to go live with him there where he lived. It was near... what was it called? Valfhaym or somewhere. It was deep in the east there. I didn't want [to go], so he said, "Then you have no right to work here. You have to go into a camp to work." I said, "So I'll go into a camp, but I'll go with my daughter. Wherever I go, I'll take my daughter with me." So I took my daughter with me. This was before Shevuos.

Y. P. This was before Shevuos. In '44?

R. P. I was in that camp for nine months?

Y. P. It was in '44?

R. P. Yes, it was in '44.

Y. P. It was before Shevuos, summertime.

R. P. Yes. Because I remember it was like this. Hmm, Christmas I think we were here. Yes, it was before Shevuos.

Y. P. Hmm.

R. P. I said, "Where. . ." I took my daughter with me and he took us there, there somewhere in a city. I don't remember what the name of that city was either. It was a big city. We were registered and we entered the camp. Well, the difference was great. One place was a private home. We lived there and they treated me well. I can't say [no]. We sat together at the same table and ate. And there was something to eat. In the camp. . .you know how it was. In this camp there were Russian prisoners, there were Russians from Russia; there were Italian prisoners, and there were also British prisoners. And I worked in the field right along with everyone else, but I couldn't compete with their work. They were Christians who had land, and all of them knew how to work the land. I couldn't work the land. I would do the _____.: Imagine it. There was an elderly man, who guarded us. He was called our supervisor. His name was Shimon Feld, Shimon Feld. He was an old person. I don't know, he was perhaps eighty. He guarded us. Once in that yard, in that camp, there was an inspector. He rode around on a horse, and inspected again how the work was going. He always came on a horse. I was always the last one remaining. I worked near my daughter. My daughter finished her work and then helped me out. Even those_____ that we tied, she did her own and

· Here Rifka does something with her hands to indicate the kind of work she could do and she says a few Slavic words that I cannot comprehend. [Trans.]

even managed to do mine also. But when it came to the *pyelig*. . . Do you know what *pyelig* is? The green stuff put in.

Y. P. Yes. Yes, I know.

R. P. I just couldn't keep up, so the inspector used to say, "Look at her. *Dubluka*. She's not working. *Dubluka*, she's so far away from here." But Shimon Feld said, "She works slowly but well." I picked out all the bad green stuff and left only. . . But the Christians already knew [how to do it], so they took a bunch of bad with the good. So he said, "She works slowly, but she works well." *Dubluka*. They couldn't say *Dublitsky*, so they called me *Dubluka*. Well, he saw that it didn't pay for me to work in the fields, so he took me into the kitchen, as a kitchen worker to peel the potatoes and cook them. So that was that. He took me into the kitchen. It was better for me. I worked in the kitchen. On the other hand, they liked my daughter very much, because she was a good worker. They took her into the granary. You know what that is? A kind of warehouse, where [they store] what they give the horses and the cattle to eat. She was at the weighing . . . She was very talented, very talented. Thank G-d, may no evil eye befall her. To this day, she can do anything, *zaradno* as they used to say. She was very well liked. She is short, and she did everything well, so they took her in there into the granary. She doled out the whatever. . . There was certainly plenty of work to do. I slept with a Christian woman, who was a . . . She had been a servant in a Jewish home. She used to help out on the Sabbath. She was a great anti-Semite. She wasn't very bright. She envied me, [because] I was taken into the kitchen. She

worked in the field. To do field work, they went out to work at four in the morning. [To work in the kitchen] I also got up at 4. At 4, everyone had to get up. We got up at 4. I also went into the kitchen at 4. This *Dublika*, [I mean] this gentile woman was envious of me. She said that since she had lived with Jews, she got it into her head that I was. . .that I was something like a Jewess. Yes, and she told a gentile woman, another gentile woman, that I was a Jewess. This gentile woman. So the other gentile woman said. . . we got along well together. . . she said, "What are you talking about? What are you talking about? Felka. . ." My daughter's name is Fela. [They called her] Felka. "Felka's mother is Jewish? What are you talking about?" They thought she was crazy. So she said. . . she said, the gentile woman, "She doesn't go to church." [The other one said,] "You don't go to church either." She also didn't go. I didn't go to church. I didn't have time to go to church. When did I have time to go to church. Sunday I didn't have time. I had to be in the kitchen, but Felke went to church with the gentile boys and girls. "Well, that's nonsense," she said, but it wasn't nonsense at all, if she had said it at. . .

Y. P. Did this put you in danger?

R. P. It was actually dangerous. She saw that I had. . . the gentiles were friendly to me. .

Y. P. No one ever asked you for documents.

R. P. Never. I was never asked. Imagine , I lived that way for nine months until . . .yes. . the kitchen wasn't so bad now. Why? First of all, we had. . .there were plenty of potatoes. Well you know what went with the potatoes. I didn't eat

any meat while I was with gentiles. All the years I was with the gentiles, I didn't eat any meat. I said I was sick with _____. And that was that. No one ever made a fuss. Now in the kitchen every Sunday there was a . . . a goulash. In that there was a piece of meat. So my portion, what I took for myself I gave to my daughter. She in turn gave away her potatoes, because she had two portions of goulash, and she didn't like potatoes. The gentiles said, "Since you are giving us your food, we have to give you something too." So they gave us some sugar. . .

Y. P. Hmm.

R. P. And some fish. . .and bread. It was like this—bread. . .if I had potatoes, I ate potatoes and I didn't want to eat the bread. I knew that the end had to come, so I said to my daughter, "Listen, let's gather some bread together. No matter what will happen, at least we'll have some bread. The war won't last forever." And I saved up some bread, and later it came in quite handy. When it ended, we were sent out, taken out of our beds, put on a truck and sent out. "Go wherever you want." They didn't actually say go wherever you want. There was someone driving the truck. Deeper into Germany. This was already at the end. Well, that I don't know. I got. . . Imagine, there where my daughter was. . . my daughter was where I was. When we were going to Germany I said to her. . . I wanted to have a little bit, a little bit of something. I wanted to have a bit of security. . . I don't know, it was a nice day, a Sunday and I received a telegram. Imagine that! [It said in Polish] *Babtsh umarla*, your grandmother died. How could they suspect me, when I got a telegram saying,

"Babtsh umarla." And other such things. When it was Christmas, they wanted to send me home. I didn't want to go, but I couldn't say that I wasn't going. Everyone was happy that they were being sent home for Christmas. They were being sent home, so I also said that I was going. I had to say that. I couldn't say that I wasn't going. It was a joyous occasion, the greatest happiness. We were being sent home for two or three days. So that same night, I said. . . my daughter got sick. A whole night. In the evening she started to moan. She couldn't speak. Her throat got infected. It was terrible! I got up and said, "You know, Fela, I'll go and tell them that you're sick, and that you need to go to a doctor. There was no doctor there. I went down. . . Shimon Feld was the night guard. I went over to him. Everything was in Polish. I spoke Polish. They didn't know any Polish and I didn't know German. I couldn't say that I knew German. I tried to show him with motions that she was sick, that she was in pain, but he didn't understand me, so he woke someone up and asked [him] what I was saying. He said that Fela was ill and we had to go to a doctor, so that something could be done. He went to tell this to the inspector, and the inspector said that we should go somewhere, but they didn't take her to a doctor. They gave her something for her throat and [the illness], thank G-d, passed, but we didn't leave. To me this was also a miracle. We didn't have to leave for Christmas. They said, "Don't be upset that you couldn't go [home] for Christmas; we'll let you go [home] for the New Year." To me it was a miracle. I didn't, G-d forbid, want her to be sick, but for me it was a miracle that we didn't have to leave; we

stayed in the camp. So Christmas passed. That's how it was. Miracles happened. Something [like that] happened to anyone who remained alive. I don't know if it was the same thing . . .

Y. P. This was already at the beginning of '45.

R. P. This was the beginning, yes. This was the beginning.

Y. P. Did you know what was going on in the world at all? Did you understand that the Russians were winning?

R. P. No. There was no way I could know that.

Y. P. You didn't hear any news? No one said [anything]?

R. P. No, nothing. When I was with the Germans, before I went into the camp, then I knew, because they read the newspaper. They got a newspaper every day. It said there that the situation was terrible, terrible, terrible—that they were doing so well, that every day. . . every day they were closer to. . . taking over the world. Every day it was reported. . . where was it written? The headline was, "The Dogs" . . . "The Three Dogs." The three dogs were

Y. P. England?

R. P. England, of course. America. Churchill. . . Churchill, I think, and Stalin and Roosevelt. The three dogs. Every day the three dogs were in the newspapers.

Y. P. Now I wanted to ask you something else.

R. P. That's what I read. I knew German. That's what I read.

Y. P. Another question: while you were in Germany, before you were in the camps, you were pretending to be a Polish woman.

R. P. Yes.

Y. P. While you were among them, do you ever hear them speaking about what was going on with the Jews? That Jews were being killed? Did they talk about that?

R. P. Yes.

Y. P. They knew.

R. P. Yes.

Y. P. They knew.

R. P. They knew everything.

Y. P. They used to speak about it.

R. P. Yes, yes.

Y. P. That Jews were being murdered.

R. P. Yes, yes. That's what they said. They said that not one Jew would remain.

Y. P. That's what you actually heard from their stories.

R. P. That's what I heard and I believed it too. When I came home, I thought everything was over.

Y. P. What happened later. It is now the beginning of '45. What happens now?

R. P. Yes, we were taken out of Germany. . . not yet [taken out] of Germany. We still wandered around there for a few days, until the bus left us off, and we went our separate ways. We were in a city. I also don't remember what city. I don't remember the name of the city. We went into it. The gentiles immediately went from house to house and took what they found there, and my daughter and I also wandered around. "Mother," she said, "I'll also go and take things." I said, "No, you won't. I don't know where to take from. I don't know what to take. I don't want to take anything. I am not taking anything." She said, "But

they are dragging me along with them." I said, "Don't go!" I didn't let her. A wagon stood ready, a packed wagon. A wagon packed full of things, and two children milled around that wagon. Two were crying. These were the Germans who had fled. I don't know if their parents had been killed or if they had been taken away. The two children were standing near the wagon and were crying. I said [to myself], this is how things had looked for us, unfortunately. Even worse! With us, they killed the children right away too.

Y. P. When was this? When did you find out that the Russians had liberated you?

Do you remember?

R. P. We were freed in winter.

Y. P. Winter.

R. P. In *lutu* it was. February.

Y. P. At the beginning of '45.

R. P. Yes.

Y. P. Where did you go then after you were liberated?

R. P. After the liberation, we went to the Russians. The Russians took us. And we said that we were from Poland. They took us. They had to go through my city. Can you imagine? They took us right to my city! I don't know how long we were traveling.

Y. P. Hm.

R. P. We traveled...I don't remember how long. A night a day. However long it was.

Two days. I don't remember.

Y. P. Tell about what happened when you were free.

R. P. Huh? Then the bread that I had saved came in handy.

Y. P. The zwieback.

R. P. The zwieback was what we lived on at that time. That's what I had. I said, "You see the time would come.... We would be taken someplace." Who knew where? [Who knew] why this occurred to me. I said, "Listen, we are going to eat the potatoes." But then we were living well; we had the zwieback for a few days until we came to the city. When we got to the city, we saw that there was no one there. We thought that since we had remained alive, perhaps others had also [remained alive]. Who knows; perhaps they were also alive. We went into our town and the Christians were looking at us. We came [back]. One Christian, I remember, brought us a bowl of cooked potatoes with meat and meatloaf. This was the first time since we had left the camp that we ate some cooked food. Well...I went to my house. I couldn't go into my house. My house had been taken over by . . .by the Russians. The Russians had not yet taken Berlin. They blocked my house and I couldn't get in. I went to a neighbor, a pharmacist. I went into the pharmacist to ask his advice. [I asked] "What should I do? I came with my daughter. I have nowhere to go." He said, "Go to Soltis." Soltis was somewhere else. At that time there was a Russian commander. I said, "Maybe I should go to the Russian commander?" He said, "Don't go. No one knows how long they will be here." He said, "Don't go. Go to Soltis. He'll give you someplace." Soltis housed me with a neighbor. We spent two or three nights there. Then they left. They left the apartment empty. They

went to the front to take back Berlin. When Berlin was taken, the war ended.

After Berlin the war already ended.

Y. P. Yes, this was in May, 1945.

R. P. Huh?

Y. P. May, 1945.

R. P. When the war. . .

Y. P. Then you were already in your house.

R. P. Then we were already in my house.

Y. P. What happened after that?

R. P. For ten months I lived in my house, until one evening, we were sitting with Christians. My children had their friends. They were going to school.

Y. P. You haven't said how you discovered your second daughter.

R. P. Ah, the second daughter was close. She was close to me.

Y. P. So you brought her to you.

R. P. No, I told her to stay there. I didn't have anything yet. I myself didn't have a place to stay, so I ordered. . . I pretended that nothing had happened, until I could. . . Then afterwards. . . I don't know how or with whom. . . I said that she shouldn't come until I had gotten settled. Everyone knew right away. After all, they knew who I was. I had been born there. All the Christians [were surprised]. One Jewish person had come home. I was the only one who.

..

Y. P. No one else came with you?

R. P. Not one other person came. It was a very small town, and no one came [back].

Then, then maybe half a year later, I heard from my sister-in-law. She had survived. She didn't come to Skempe but had gone to Lodz. She was told not to go to Skempe. [because] there were no Jews there, so she went to Lodz, where there were Jews. She stayed alive in Skazhis with the children. Praise G-d, four children remained alive. Only her husband died. At the same time as my husband.

Y. P. How long did you remain in Skempe?

R. P. I lived in Skempe for ten months. Until one night there came. . . Yes, I got my daughter back. I started slowly to do some business. I ran to get her back. They didn't want to give her to me. I took them into my house. I showed them my house. I showed them that I had a room to give her. I had a house. . .

Y. P. You showed this to the Pole.

R. P. Yes, and she would be ours. "She would be yours and she would be mine. My sister will be your wife. I wanted us to be together. But they didn't want to come. They didn't want to be in a town, in a village. It wasn't big, but they didn't want to leave their [family] and come. We had to go back, but they didn't want to. And that was that. Later, a gentile [woman] came about ten o'clock, twelve o'clock [maybe it was] eleven o'clock and said [in Polish]"What Hitler started, they want to finish." She got drunk, maybe she was [already] drunk, I don't know, and _____ to end it. I ran out to this gentile woman, and took her into my bed [?] to sleep. I spent the night in the gentile house with the children. In the morning, I went to Lipno. . .there were still a few Jews there. I told them the story. They said that the time had now come, and they had to escape. If they were going to kill her, it was time to run away. It wasn't a secure situation. Because one Jewish person sitting alone in a house was not a safe situation. That's how it was.

Y. P. Where did you go from there?

R. P. From there...the men, it was mostly men who were there. I think that there was one woman there, one or two. There were several men. My cousin was also there, a cousin. We went to Shtshetshin. We took a . . . and we went to Shtshetshin. In

We had some family on the border and we entered Berlin. It was Christmas. . .no. . . yes, it was Christmas. Or was it a day be[fore] or a day later. I don't know. It was around Christmas. That's what I think.

Y. P. The end of '45.

R. P. I think it was already the beginning of. . .

Y. P. The beginning of '46. Where were you in Berlin? In Schlachtensee?

R. P. Yes, in Schlachtensee. No, there wasn't a Schlachtensee then. It had not yet been opened. It was only opened when I was there. We entered a Russian...a Russian zone. We didn't know, so we entered a Russian zone. There was a camp there. Then they said that the Russians were looking [?] for us, that they wanted to deport us. So we hid for one night, and then for several days we wandered around, until we wound up with Germans for a few days. Then they opened a kind of embassy. I think. . .they said it was an. . . an embassy. . .of Poland. There hadn't been a Polish Embassy there. So we went in there. They brought us food every day: bread and fish and coffee. Until they opened Schlachtensee. Then we went into Schlachtensee. In Schlachtensee things were fine. Everyone said that they didn't want Germans to work there, so

everyone. . .everyone who has a trade should go work at his trade, and. . . so we wouldn't have to depend on them for food. This was from UNRRA:

Y. P. From the Joint.

R. P. Yes, it was from the _____, it was.

[Cassette 4]

Y. P. Rivka Pozmenter, with your permission we will continue. We are now up to cassette number 4. Please, tell me your experiences.

R. P. From where? We were in Berlin in the refugee camp. While in the refugee camp. I found out that I had a brother-in-law in Feldafing, so I tried to go to Feldafing to my brother-in-law. We sought ways [to go]. At that time, it wasn't easy to travel. So I was in Kastel. There was a camp there also. I don't know how long we were in the refugee camp in Berlin. We were there a few months. Everyone had settled in. They said that whoever had a trade, should work at his trade. I didn't have a trade. Since I had the two children, I said that I wanted to work with the children. At that time, several _____ families had come from Russia, so I said that I would work with the children, I would take care of the children: their meals, when they go to school. A teacher turned up, someone who had come from Russia. She taught the children, and I said that I would supervise their meals, their clothing. There were children without parents, and there were children who did have someone, and there were children who had no one at all. So I took care of the

· United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), organization founded (1943) during World War II to give aid to areas liberated from the Axis powers.[Trans.]

children. This lasted several months, until...until people began to leave this camp. And I went to Feldafing. How did we go? Most likely by train, until we got to Feldafing. I was in Feldafing. . . .

Y. P. This was a D. P. camp.

R. P. Yes. Feldafing was a camp that gave. . . for. . . they gave everything. The children began to go to school. . . my children. I took care of the house. I didn't go to work. Slowly I began to. . . yes, I think. . My sisters, I had sisters in America. My brothers found out where they were. They also sent me packages from America, and we had enough to live on, enough to live on. We had no money. We had enough to eat. This lasted a few months, and I said that I was uneasy and wanted to go to her.

Y. P. To your sister's children.

R. P. In Poland. I wasn't going to leave the children. I had no idea where the little boy was. I knew where she was, but I didn't know where he was. People talked me out of doing what I wanted to do. To travel to Poland today? Traveling to Poland was very bad. There were still in Poland. . .in Germany there were Poles who had stayed, because they had been working there. So they had the right to travel [to Poland] for free. This was called *repatyantn* [repatriation?], so I also applied to be repatriated. And as a repatriated person, I traveled and it didn't cost me anything. [I said that] I was Polish and I had been there to work, and now I was traveling home. So it didn't cost me anything, and I traveled. I traveled to Poland. I left the children with my brother-in-law. My brother-in-law had remarried. His first wife had been my husband's sister. She died. She was killed.

Y. P. Was murdered.

R. P. Was murdered by Hitler. He got married to his second wife there, and I left the children with him. One daughter, the younger one, was sick. She suffered with her ears. After the war, she suffered terribly with her ears, but she had treatments. She was taken to a hospital. I went, I traveled to Poland.

Y. P. This was already in '46.

R. P. This was in '46.

Y. P. Yes.

R. P. Either at the beginning of '47 or in '46 it was.

Y. P. Hm.

R. P. I don't remember how long it took to get there from Germany. It had to be the end of '46.

Y. P. '46.

R. P. That's how it was. I went to Poland. And I searched. And I found her. I got there. Alone? I no longer went alone. At that time I no longer went alone. I arrived in a small town where there were two or three Jews. One was Sakovitsh, who is no longer alive. This Sakovitsh was a very brave man, and he was involved with such things. He did things like this.

Y. P. To find out about, to save Jews.

R. P. To find out. When I was going home in German, I stopped off . . . I was told that in Warsaw there was a Rav Kahane. Perhaps you've heard of Rav Kahane? He was a general in the Polish Army. I was told that he could help me. Of course, I heard about this in Germany. I don't know exactly where. And another thing, I stopped off at a camp for children. Children had been taken to this camp; it was called Shtshetshi....no! It wasn't called Shtshetshi.

Y. P. _____[one unintelligible word]

R. P. Where was it? Near Cracow. So I stopped off there, because I was told that there was a boy there, who had been together with my daughter, at the gentiles. So I said if I would find that boy there, I would take him to Germany. When I got there. . .

What was the name of that city? Near Cracow.

Y. P. Filitshk.

R. P. What?

Y. P. Filitshk, perhaps?

R. P. No, it wasn't Filitshk. Well, I went to that camp, and they had been taken out just the day before to go here, to Israel. He lives. . .he lives in Beersheva. So, I didn't find him. I said [to myself], I thought he was here, and I wanted to take him along also. So, I went to Warsaw. When I got to Warsaw, I asked about Rav Kahane. He lived on a tree-lined street that was guarded with many guards. Soldiers were standing around. When I approached they looked at me as if I were crazy. "What is she doing here? Go. Go. He isn't seeing anyone. It's impossible." I said, "No. I must speak with him. Someone sent me, and I must speak with Rav Kahane." Well, then someone, a soldier, came down and said that Rav Kahane is sick and is lying in bed. I said that I wanted to be let upstairs, that I have something very important to discuss. I told him that I wasn't leaving. "I'm not going until I see Rav Kahane." Can you imagine? He led me upstairs to Rav Kahane. He said, "I am just getting up from bed." I'm telling it as it happened. It seems like a children's play. I told him that I was traveling to get my children, and I wanted the Rabbi to help me in some way; maybe to

send someone with me. He was a great man. He said, "I can't do that," but he gave me a letter; he gave me a letter, a letter. Who looked at his letter at that time? Well, I told someone that the rabbi gave me a letter. He said, "What good is it?" No one even wanted to look at it. The police didn't even take much notice of the letter. I sent the police [to get them]. The police brought them in a kind of wagon [?] She probably already told you about that.

Y. P. You found the boy too.

R. P. Then. . .yes. She didn't want to go. She said that she wouldn't go.

Y. P. Yes, she already told [us that].

R. P. So you know that already. She already told [about] that. She wanted to go to the police, so she went to police. She felt more secure with them than with me or with Jews. She remained there with the police, and I went to another city. When I got there, it was the same thing. I told people, "There's a boy here. It could be that it is one of my sister's boys, and it could be that it's not one of my sister's children. It doesn't make a difference. He's a Jewish boy and I won't leave him with any Christians. We have to take him out." The police. . . we gave them money; we gave them money. I sold something from my house, so I had a little money. We gave and we brought [him]. The minute I got out of the car I said that's him. I recognized him. He wasn't the child he should have been at that age. He was hunched over. . .but I recognized his face, and he also recognized me. He said, "This is my aunt," but he didn't want to go to me. It was awful. There was a lot of screaming. There was so much screaming that the commandant said, "Why are you screaming? No one is doing anything to

you.” He said, “I am screaming, because the Jews want to take me. It is now right before Passover, and they need blood for the matzos.” He said, “ I don’t want to go. They saved me, and I want to stay with them.” If you had seen that child, you would ask, “How did this gentile treat him?” You should excuse me, but he had the mange. He was completely covered with sores, on his feet, on his arms, everything. He looked like this [Rivka hunches over]. You’ll see the photograph.



That was when things were good already, after everything. He slept in the barn. With the animals, he slept. With the pigs, he slept. And he ate whatever

they brought him, of course, whatever was left over. He was *ba gospodash*. Before that I lay down and kissed his feet. Because I saw what had become of him.

Y. P. Yes.

R. P. Well, I took him and I returned to the city where she was. She had already cooled down a bit and I took him into the house. The police said that there was no other choice other than to be with us: "You must go with your aunt." Well, with kind words. . . I promised him golden ____: "I will buy you a ball. I'll buy . . ." What wouldn't I buy him? "We'll go to Warsaw. I'll buy you boots." He was wearing a mismatched pair of shoes. The boy was wearing a pair of shoes both for the same foot. Where did he get that from? When they went to get *tshukhi*. . . You know, after the war the gentiles traveled around getting *tshukhis*. You know what *tshukhis* is. It is what the Germans left behind, and they gathered that up. They gathered it up and they sold it, and this was called *tshukhi*. They took him along to get *tshukhi* and that's when he found the two shoes that he wore, otherwise he went barefoot. He didn't have a pair of shoes. That's the house he was in. This was before. . .eh. . .before the *companyes*. If the boy had still been around for the *companies*, he wouldn't have lasted. And he was two years older than she was, but he was a head shorter than she was. She had at least had a normal life, not a rich life; she was with poor Christians, but she had food. She wasn't starving. He was actually starving. He was starving.

· I am not sure what this means. [Trans.]

Y. P. Where did you go from there? Did you back to Germany?

R. P. I took them from there, and I went to Warsaw. I had an acquaintance in Warsaw. The same one who helped me get them, now lived in Warsaw. His wife lived there. So I went there to him. Warsaw was completely in ruins. We lived in a broken-down apartment, but there wasn't anything else. So she. . .so I stayed with them for a few days, until I had promised him that I would buy him a ball. I ran all over Warsaw; there were no balls. It was impossible [to get one]. But someone told me that in order to buy something, it had to be in Prague, but the bridge to Prague was broken, so how could I get to Prague? So I said, "No matter what it costs, I want someone to buy me a ball in Prague. No matter what the price!" Well, someone brought me such a ball. [She indicates a large ball with her hands.] There was great joy. They wanted the ball; [now] they had the ball. Then I wanted to buy them boots. It was impossible to get. I didn't buy them. They were upset with me. Both of them didn't talk [to me]. Both of them had already gotten together —the brother and his sister, and they were angry with me. They didn't talk to me! Actually didn't talk to me! So we traveled to Germany; we traveled to Germany and we came to. . . . No, to Austria. People could no longer go to Germany. We went to Austria. When we got to Austria, we went into a camp, a Jewish camp. What was the name of that camp? I no longer remember. So we were in a camp in Austria. And there were Jews there, who had come from Poland, from Lodzh [Lodz]. They came as far as the border, and they couldn't get past the border. It wasn't that easy. And . . . I

was very tired, so lay down, and the children took the ball and they played near the door. Then I heard people running and I was awakened. A woman came over to me and woke me: "*Giveret*". No she didn't say *giveret*..."Mrs., are you sleeping? Now is the time that we are going to cross the border. They're coming to take us." So I got up, and ran to find the children. I said, "Where are the children?" I grabbed the children, and we ran across the border with those people. . . until we were across the border.

Y. P. Into Germany.

R. P. Into Austria, into Austria. From Poland it was Austria.

Y. P. Ah, from Po[land to] Austria.

R. P. The border. We went into Austria and into the camp, and there were more Jews there, and we were given a place, my children and I. I slept with the little girl, and he slept with someone else, another little boy. There was an old Jewish man, who taught them. I immediately gave them to him [so he could] to teach them. A week or two later, he came to me and said. . . he said to me, "Mrs., did this little boy ever learn Yiddish?" I said, "I don't know. The war broke out and [he was] four years old. He had been going to a *kheyder*. In our town, a boy already went to *kheyder* when he was four years old. They started at three."

"Because everything I tell him, he says he knows. He knows how to learn [Torah] a little. He knows a bit of Hebrew. He remembered."

Giveret means Mrs. in Hebrew. [Trans.]

He had a very good mind. He remembered, but what was [the problem]? He couldn't speak any Yiddish. He only spoke Polish. So, everyone understood Polish. He learned with him. But what happened. When Friday came, I wanted. . . he came. . . yes, I bought him...as soon as I arrived I bought....you know, I bought them boots, both of them. And I said, Friday. . . when he came home, I said, :You know what? Polish the boots for the Sabbath." And he said, "What kind of Sabbath is it for me. For me there is no Sabbath. I'll polish the boots for Sunday." So he polished them for Sunday. What was I going to do? He said, "I don't have... Why do you need the Sabbath? Seventy nations did not accept the Sabbath! So I have to accept it? I have to accept the Sabbath? For me there is no Sabbath!"

So he didn't. He didn't go to the synagogue. So what. Well, [eventually] he did go to the synagogue, and he did begin to polish his boots; he began to study [Torah], and he became a *mentsh*. When we got to Germany. . . in Germany he didn't want to take off his Polish hat. Throughout I wanted. . . It was a few months before we got to Germany. The food in Austria was very meager. So what happened? I didn't want the children to go hungry, so it was like this: when I got my portion of bread, I put it aside for the children. And I had acquaintances there, who gave me potatoes, some potatoes. They saw that I was pilfering bread, but I wasn't eating it. I didn't taste a piece of bread. I gave it to them. I didn't want them to be hungry. After all, with the gentiles they ate. Here they'll stop? It was almost. . . Well, that's how it went for a few months until I went to my brother-in-law. Once I got to

my brother-in-law, I also had a apartment. My brother-in-law. . . there had been a kind of camp for prisoners during the time of the war, and they took that over, and Jews lived there. Those who had gotten there early, grabbed a good residence;[there were] villas. Feldafing was a . . .a nice. . . it wasn't a city; it was a village, but it was a nice neighborhood.

Y. P. It was a large _____.

R. P. It was a very nice neighborhood. But we no longer had that. We had come late.

But my brother-in-law took a great interest in the children. He sent them to the school. And I began to do some business. I began to earn a little bit, so I had a little suit made for him, so the children would be [nicely] dressed. And he went to school, and did very well, very well. Then he was bar-mitzva, and he got a pair of phylacteries [*tfillin*], and I got packages from America from my sister. They sent me prunes; she sent me various things, so I traded these for flour. I went around in the villages. I traded them. She sent me chocolate. So I had some for the children and some I traded. I baked some. . .some rolls. I got some herring; I don't know from where. In the camp we also got some herring. Some [I sold] on the black market, and we made him a bar mitzvah. I cooked the prunes for the bar mitzvah, and the rolls and the herring. Don't even ask what kind of bar mitzvah that was. Even the rabbi said no one had such a bar mitvah. It was a bar mitzvah after the war. He got a pair of *tfillin*. I. . .I don't know from where. . .I brought a piece of material and I made him a *tfillin* bag; it was embroidered. And this little *tfillin* bag he kept [all these years] like [something precious]. He'll show it to you, if you'll be there—that

little *tfillin* bag and the *tfillin* that he got in Feldafing. He keeps it as a memento. And the bar mitzvah was extraordinary. So, everything was good.

That's how things were.

Y. P. How long did you stay in Germany?

R. P. Two . . . With the children? Two years, since '[4]6. Yes, but we were there longer. We were there longer. They weren't there so long. They were. . . I don't know. If we got there at the end of '[4]6. . . I don't remember if it was on a holiday that we came. They must have been there longer more than a year, perhaps a year and a half.

Y. P. In Germany.

R. P. Yes.

Y. P. You remained. . .

R. P. I stayed with them.

Y. P. Did they leave Germany before you did?

R. P. No together.

Y. P. Aha. When did you. . .

R. P. They came later.

Y. P. When did you leave Germany?

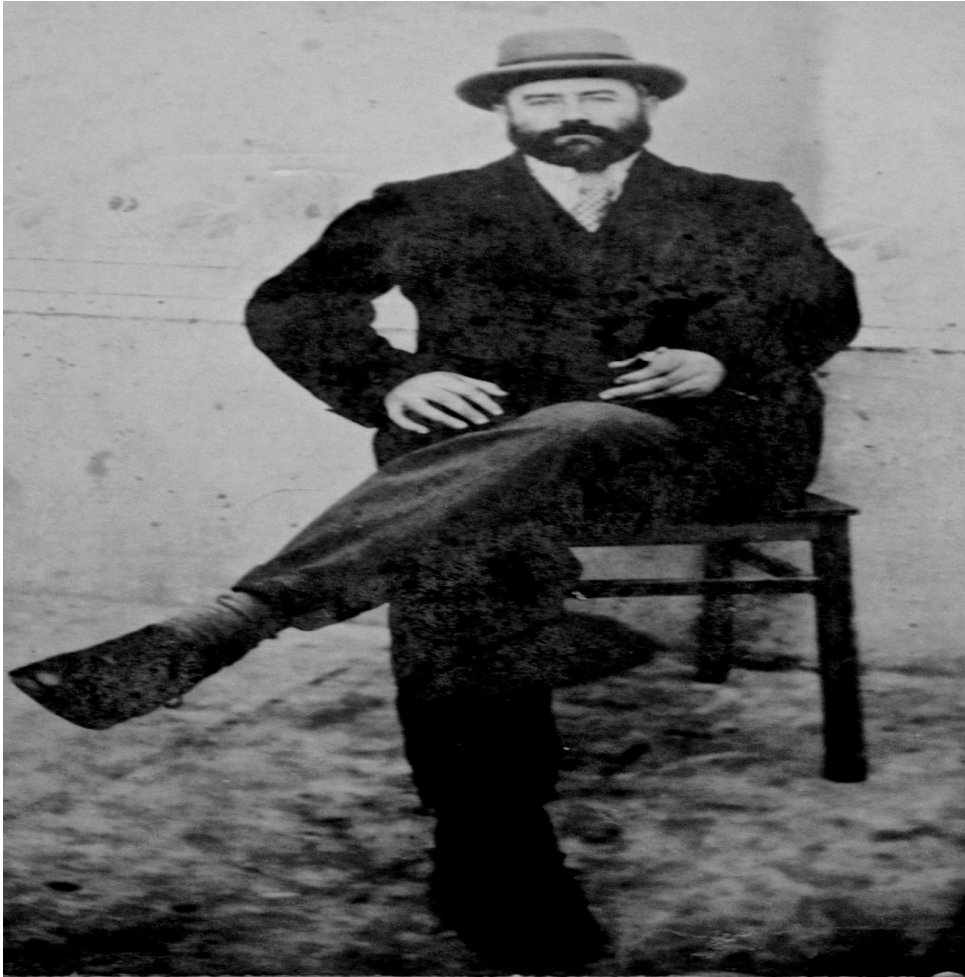
R. P. In '48.

Y. P. Where did you go?

R. P. To Uruguay.

Y. P. Did you have relatives there?

R. P. A brother, one of my brothers. (Motel, below)



Y. P. From before the war?

R. P. From before the war. He went in '27.

Y. P. How long did you stay in Uruguay?

R. P. Two years.

Y. P. And from there you decided...

R. P. [To come] here. We didn't want to go anywhere...

Y. P. In which year was it that you came back?

R. P. '50. 1950 in *tamuz*.

Y. P. Together with the children.

R. P. All together.

Y. P. With your children?

R. P. No difference. With mine and. . . one daughter remained, because she had. . . because in Feldafing she met a young man, and that young man stuck to her. He wouldn't let her go. He wrote to us that he wants to bring all of us there. We shouldn't go to Israel. Instead we should go to Canada and he would sponsor us. I said, "No! I want to go to Israel. If we got our land back. . ." As soon as I heard we had gotten it back, I strove to come here. The children. . . the daughter remained. She said, "Mother, first I'll go to Canada, then I'll come to Israel." And she did indeed go to Canada. They got married in Canada, and she comes to Israel once a year. She has a daughter living here.



Y. P. So she lives there in Canada.

R. P. Yes. She has a daughter living in our Jewish country. She comes once a year, twice a year, but she lives in Canada.

· The Hebrew month usually corresponding to July. [Trans.]

Y. P. So you have been living here in Israel since 1950. How did you settle in here in Israel?

R. P. Well, it wasn't easy. When I got to Israel. . . I immediately went. . . I arrived on Wednesday, on Sunday I already went to work. I worked in a kindergarden.

Y. P. Here in B'nai Brak.

R. P. No, in Jubelia. In Yaffa. I worked in Jubelia. I lived in Yaffa. I had. . . My sister from Germany had a daughter in Israel, so she lived. . . She. . .she also lived in Jerusalem, but after the war, she moved to Yaffa. So I stayed with her for a year and a half. Then I got married here. When we lived in Yaffa. For a year and a half I worked in a kindergarden, and my daughter, the younger one, went to work. And these two children were placed in a *mosad: Mosad aliya* in Petakh Tikva. They were in Petakh Tikva. And so. . . until I got married. When I got married I took them home.

Y. P. Now, since you've been living in Israel all these years,

R. P. Yes.

Y. P. . . . your children got married; they have families.

R. P. Yes. They got married here. One got married here, and one got married in Canada.

Y. P. You have grandchildren.

R. P. I have, may no evil eye befall them, grandchildren, but my grandchildren are in America, because both of them. . . even the one who got married here

Y. P. Left.

R. P. Also left.

Y. P. How many grandchildren do you have, may they be well?

R. P. May they be well, I have grandchildren: Shloyme, Mordkhe, Khonona. . .from one daughter and two grandchildren from the other daughter. One daughter has a daughter here, and the other daughter has three children. Now there are great-grandchildren, may they be well; there are more.

Y. P. Now, you also merited to see your sister's daughter and son get married and they have families

R. P. I married them off. I made both weddings. Both children got married, may no evil eye befall them. They are happy. They have nice families. They have, may no evil eye befall them. . . . She, may she be well, has sixteen grandchildren, and the

Y. P. Son, the brother?

R. P. He doesn't have a lot, two sons and he has five grandchildren. But they are happy. She remained very religious. She married a religious man. The other one is not so religious, but he is very nice, and. . . . Thirty-eight years he worked in the same place: Bezek. So isn't he a *mentsh*? Eight. . . at the first place he worked. He got out of the army, got married and went to work there, and he only now retired. Can you imagine?

Y. P. I wanted to thank you on behalf of myself and the foundation for going to all the effort of telling us everything. I want to wish you health until one hundred and twenty, and may you have *nakhas* from your children and grandchildren

R. P. Amen. Amen.

Y. P. From your side, from your daughters' children, and may we not hear of any more woes.

R. P. Amen. If only that were so. If only that were so.

· *Bezeq* is now *Israel's* largest and leading telecommunications group. [Trans.]

Y. P. [In Hebrew I am happy that we brought the two of you together: Fela Freund and the aunt who saved. Here we have merited that the aunt in the end was reunited with her niece after all they went through, and they are both sitting here. We will send the [video] cassette to your aunt.

Fela: Thank you.

Y.P. Thank you both.