

Interviewer: Louisa H. Weinrib
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Louisa: Today is Sunday, October 27th. This is Louisa Weinrib talking with Pauline Merenstein Davidson at the Holiday Inn, where she is staying in Montgomery.

Pauline, we are talking today because you are a survivor of a concentration camp, and you came to this interview... Let's start off by telling me a little about yourself, beginning with your date of birth and something about your family of origin.

Pauline: Well, I was born in Lublin. It is the second largest city in Poland. And we were three children: a brother, Seymour, and a sister, Rose, and I. Of course, my father and mother, and aunts, uncles. I had a lot of aunts and a lot of uncles on both sides.

Louisa: All in the same town?

Pauline: No ma'am, not in the same town. Some of them we had in RevaRuska Some we had in Lvov. And some of them we had in smaller towns like UzeFuf, Narul and some of them, I don't know everyone of them in the family, but we had quite a few. And holidays or so we got together.

And we worked kind of hard. My father has been an exporter for hard wood, and they were buying, you know, kind of lumber. And it was a very well-known firm. It came from my mother's side, some of it, and the firm was named Borok. It was one of the largest, practically, in Poland, in the southern part where we lived.

And we were religious.

Louisa: How big was the Jewish community in Lublin?

Pauline: It was very large. I think it was at least 350,000, something like this. Jewish people.

Louisa: Wow! That really is a lot!

Pauline: It was the second after Warsaw.

Louisa: Did you have primarily a Jewish education? Or a secular education?

Pauline: I went to school, to public school, and then after school had some, just a little, Jewish to read a write only. But Jewish, you know, all the other things, we were religious. We're Orthodox, so it was home, it was natural, that's the way we lived.

Louisa: What language did you speak in your home?

Pauline: Jewish. In the home it was Jewish; outside was Polish.

Louisa: Polish. Okay. What sort of religious practices did you have in your family? The Sabbath?

Pauline: The Sabbath roast we'd observe, and all the Jewish practices. All of the Jewish observances. On the High Holidays and, you know, everyone was fasting, since you are thirteen (years) the girls and the boys. We were for the holidays, Passover, you know, strictly kosher. My father came from a family of rabbis, and he was not a rabbi, but he was very observant. And he was a very good person. He was very good.

Louisa: Did your mother have a job? Did she work?

Pauline: No ma'am. She just mothered, and I think at that time was enough, because she had so much. And we did have some places out of town, that when summer time we used to buy from a small home they had in our villages where daddy used to buy their lumber. You know you buy wood from people, and if you buy a forest, it takes sometimes a year to bring it out. You can mostly bring it out in the wintertime when it's snow, so it's easier and people don't work as much in the fields. So we just stayed there summertime and helped work.

Louisa: I don't think you told me your date of birth on the tape, did you?

Pauline: No, I don't think so. It was the first...in the reality I am born the 24th of April, 1920. But in the document, someone mixed it up in the United States and they put the 1st of October, 1920. So it goes by the 1st of October, 1920.

Louisa: (Smiling) Okay.

Pauline: Because otherwise we have to have all the birth certificates and everything, so... I did write where we used to have the things, but everything is destroyed. So there is none of that.

Louisa: Were your brother and sister older or younger than you?

Pauline: Older. I was the youngest.

Louisa: Youngest. Okay. What did your family like to do for fun? Recreation or holidays, or something like that?

Pauline: I really don't remember fun.

Louisa: No fun?

Pauline: I don't really remember that we had. It was just routine. We enjoyed it very much, but like summertime we used to go in the woods and get berries, blueberries and boysenberries, and all kind of things. You know, make syrup from raspberries. So we had preserves, and we used to have gardens. But most of it we had our home in a small town, and we used to come there only for summertime, and we had a lot of flowers. And everyone worked in flower garden or little garden of vegetables. Just little, like tomatoes, something.

Louisa: Did you have girl friends?

Pauline: Sure.

Louisa: You played dolls?

Pauline: Played dolls, just like every other children—we were just children and went to school, and I had a lot of friends, especially the non-Jewish friends we had a lot. I felt it was (?) feeling for being Jewish, but I never thought it is going to come to something like this...that my friends are capable of doing what they ever did.

Louisa: What sorts of things happened? And when?

Pauline: It started when we used to listen to the radio, when Germany, of course, came to power with _____, so I was just 10, 12 years old, but I could see that every speech it was in German Hitler made, or whatever. And whatever came up my mother used to listen to the radio, just worrying, how the other people can take it, or how's it going to be. And of ^{course} ~~of~~ they suffered quite a bit from the First World War, so they knew just what a war means.

Louisa: Your parents suffered.

Pauline: My parents suffered. My father lost quite a bit in the First World War, from what I heard from other people, and of course from my father himself. So, they were very worried. The neighbors used to say, "Well, there is going to be a war in the world. There's going to be a war. Every thing you have, we worked for it.

Louisa: When you started (noticing) things changing, when was that?

Pauline: It really started around '38, where there was already...one time we got up in the morning, and at our place, in front of our house somebody made a large placard, or put it on the walls written everywhere in large letters, "Do not buy from a Jewish person", and "They are parasites", and "Let them go to Israel". Then they used to call it "Palestine". And that was it, so I noticed it. Then when I came to school, you could feel it, that the Christian girls would not sit close to you, and outside, they would, some of them they would not play.

Louisa: And this was 1938?

Pauline: 1938, 1937 I start to feel it already tight. The tightness. Of course you felt way before in Poland. Anything it was the Jews. But it did not have as much contact, and it was a respect, at least this much between a religious respect, or personal respect. So that's how it was, until then.

Louisa: Did you witness any other events, for example, troops moving. You know, military movement?

Pauline: That was in 1939 when Poland was Poland was invaded.

Louisa: 1939. Yes. What about boycotts of Jewish businesses and doctors, and stuff like that?

Pauline: That has not been before.

Louisa: No. Okay.

Pauline: That has not. Not in Poland, they did not boycott. Maybe I notice a lot of times that, uh, there has been not far from us a Jewish home, like a hotel, and there was a non-Jewish. So the weddings, Christian usually had weddings there after they came out of church. So they used to have three, four joining together, and the non-Jewish not to come into the Jewish place. Very seldom to the Jewish place to come in.

Louisa: A Jewish hotel?

Pauline: A Jewish hotel. So they rather join together if the hotel didn't have space enough, than to get a hotel out of a Jewish person. From a Jewish person to rent. So I noticed that much. And then I started to notice when Passover time came up, and my girl friend says to me, "You know, I'm not going to taste your matzohs this year, because my mother and father told me that you

use blood in those matzohs for Pesach, for Easter, and I know it's true, because my grandma said the same thing. And if my grandma says, that's true."

Louisa: Wow!

Pauline: So, I was kind of _____, and I came home, and I told that to my parents. I remember like now. And my mother said, "Well they not educated in it; they don't read everything up. Somebody says something, they usually believe."

Louisa: Umm. Well, describe the circumstance, where your family was finally separated, or deported, or what happened when the crunch came to your family.

Pauline: When the crunch came to our family, the first thing we moved out of house. The neighbors, we knew, came in and robbed everything.

Louisa: Robbed your home.

Pauline: Robbed our home.

Louisa: While you were there? Or while you were absent?

Pauline: There. They just threw us out. Out of the home in Lublin. And it was on Lewatowska 16, a very nice large home. It had a few apartments what we used to rent, and an uncle of mine, a brother to my father used to live there, too, on the third floor, and we used to live downstairs. So the first thing the neighbors, we knew the people, came in and they just took all the things. I was wearing a nightgown, and they took it off that nightgown out of me, and let me stay naked. And this was my girl friends I went to school with...their parents.

Louisa: That's horrifying.

Pauline: And that was someone who worked for my father. He was like a park ranger or something, because they had so much buying all the lumber from, so they worked together. And then a few other neighbors came in and they all robbed. That was our home in Lublin.

Louisa: When was this? About what time?

Pauline: That was about the third day or so when the Germans came in, when they told them, it was everything, whatever it was Jewish it was just....

Louisa: Okay. So that was in September 1939.

Pauline: September, 39. So, we just got together, and my father went to someone...I don't know who it was...and he brought us some clothing, and he brought us some bread. And he brought us some other things, like turnips or something. I don't remember what. And we just got the horses and the wagon, and we went to the home of this small town, to Narul. This is not far, about three or five kilometers from Belzec. And we stayed there about a month. And around October, November, I don't remember when, the Polish military kind of pushed away the Germans. They had a good fight; a heavy fight. So when the Germans came back, they burned all the town. So they burned with it. So they burned our home, and this home was half ours and half a Christian family, what worked together with my father. And the Christian family had land, but we didn't have it there, but we had just a garden and flowers, and we had a big orchard there, so in summertime we have all the fruits, and they burned everything. They burned the whole center of town. I mean the whole center. And they took together...we ran away, but my father did not ran away; he went back for something, and the Germans got him there. And soon the Germans came in, and no matter, it was Jewish people they got together and they were shooting right away in the middle of the square. That was right away after they came in.

Louisa: So they shot your father in the square?

Pauline: They didn't shot that time; they just beat him up, and somehow they let go some of the people to work. And from then on it started. I and my sister ^{we went to} _{work} something for the Germans to carry gasoline cans. And there was no food or anything, and if you just said something - you didn't say anything, even you just didn't do fast enough - they will right away shoot you.

Louisa: So you saw people getting shot?

Pauline: I saw people getting shot. People getting - after we cleaned the tanks and somebody didn't do it right or didn't polish right - they used to just bind them to the tank, and the tank would just run, and the people would just run themself off and they would just dragging them. They were dead long. And that's all how it was at that place. And Narul was a very bigger place.

After this we tried to go to RevaRuska, there where the Russians were. But we could not go already. The Russians did not let in. The Germans didn't let it, because it already has been division of a border. There were guards,

regular guards. So Belzec started to be a camp, because people by themselves started running to the Russians. And the Russians didn't let in. It was a tremendous field. It was probably eight or ten kilometers between Belzec and between Lubitcha at a town. So it was an open field. All they had was a train station there, and a mill, a flour mill, and some a few other things, because the town was to the other side where people lived.

Louisa: At this point your family was still together?

Pauline: At this point my family - I didn't know where my family was. I and my sister were taken away.

Louisa: I see.

Pauline: I did not know where my parent were.

Louisa: Or your brother.

Pauline: Or my brother. I had no idea.

Louisa: When were you separated from them?

Pauline: I was separated just like, oh maybe, let's say half October or November.

Louisa: At the time you were working on the tanks?

Pauline: I were working with the German military, just took it, and so it was some people and I also knew they lived not far from us, and they used to bring us a little food. Or they used to get us to lay 'em straw in their barns. They had some feelings from the beginning, and they were doing, but right away the Germans told 'em if they are going to do something for Jewish people, they go punished. So, they kind of stopped, but once in a while did it, and somehow it happened, I don't know, that a girl I went to school with came up and said that her mamma wants me. And she was talking to the German soldier there, and he said "That's all right." So I went away.

Louisa: You went away with your friend.

Pauline: With my friend. And there I worked for a while, and then...

Louisa: Your friend was a Christian?

Pauline: My friend was a Christian. They had a very large, like hotel, or something. Not as much of a hotel, than just a restaurant and lodging over. It wasn't so great, but it was a nice, very nice place. And I worked there and I had the food. It wasn't anything elaborate, but you know. And it was very hard from the beginning to eat anything what it wasn't kosher because it didn't

taste the same way. And we get sick, and they were just thinking right away that she is spitting up. It was very hard, but they just kept me like someone coming from a part of the family.

Louisa: Un huh. Well, that was very good of them...

Pauline: Yeah. That was very good of them. But their home got burned by the Germans, too. So, they took it over a Jewish home at the back streets, where they were not burned, but it was hard for them later, too, and they just let me go. They said they could not...

Louisa: Do you think their house was burned because you there there?

Pauline: No. The house was burned just because right after the Polish military was with the, had the engagement with the Germans. So everybody's who was more in the center of the town, or had a larger home, more visible, it was burned down.

Louisa: Did you know of any other heroic acts or kind acts that Christians did for Jews?

Pauline: Yes, I have. In that little town, there was very few Jewish people left, because the Russians were not far, just about 15-20 miles. So everybody know what going on already, and they left. They moved before the Germans were coming in, because the Russians were first, and then the Russians go back, and then the Germans came in. And that was the division. So it was kind of late for me to run with the crowd, with my family. That's the way I find out where my family went. My brother and my mother. My father was later he came there, because he was also detained for work. And it was too late for me, because I stayed a good long while with the family there, and they didn't know what happened. But finally, someone told me that my family's on the Russian side, and they told me where they are, and I knew the address where my mother's sister lived on the Russian side. And this is where later I tried.

Meanwhile, the father from the church, the priest from the church, he took quite a few people in, and he was hiding it for a long, long time. But even his neighbor - and the neighbor has been in the Polish Sejm, like Senator, and he was looking if someone hides a Jewish person. And he is the one, who took his sons and his friends and came in and killed about thirty Jewish people and the priest.

Louisa: That Senator next door.

Pauline: That Senator, oh, he was not next door, but he lived in this town there. But it was not anything that no one knew. Everyone knew, and it was from the beginning, if they'd find some kind of Jewish person, they would bring. The Germans would give them a few something you couldn't ^{even} buy or else afford. They would do it. Well, and then the Lithuanians got into it, and everybody. It was nothing. If somebody says today they didn't know, this is no such thing, because everyone was looking where to get a good home. It was Jewish people or the clothes or the jewelry or anything. It's not so.

Louisa: (Sadly) Yeah, I've heard. Well, what about your sister, at the time you went to live with that family?

Pauline: My sister got somewhere else to work, so I didn't know where...I know where she worked later - now I know - because my sister is alive. But I did not know at the time. I did not know what happened to my family at the time at all. I didn't know til March 16, I think that was the date, in 1941.

Louisa: When you got back together?

Pauline: I didn't get together with my family, but I managed to get on the Russian side, and when I came on the Russian side, everybody was already taken by the Germans, because the Germans already kind of gotten there in 1941. They were...so...I came quite a bit later. See, now in June they took over already the Russian side. So when I came there, I didn't have long, because from March only we stayed together, but people were talking there's going to be a war; it's going to be a war, and they would talk about it. But the Russians did not take the people they did not want. They did not say anything about it. It's just, you know, rumors. And it happened. In June it happened, and right away the Russians came in, because they were just about to take a lumber town from the border. And so they came in. They just made a place where the Jewish people of Reva Ruska were by the train station there. That's a whole ghetto they made, and then we just...my family weren't there. I never seen my father or mother or my brother ever. My brother was taken away somewhere else. My father was taken away. I never find out where they are or what happened. Only I find out that my mother died of natural causes.

Louisa: So, you never saw any of them again?

Pauline: No, ma'am.

Louisa: But your sister, you did.

Pauline: My sister I found out later. I found out later my sister in 1946.

Louisa: Wow!

Pauline: That my sister is alive, and she was in Cyprus.

Louisa: When you were on the move from one town to another, were you walking?

Pauline: I was walking, but it was very hard. I was not much on the move, because you had to have documents. People know you, and they take one look they know the Jewish people, and...

Louisa: How could they tell by looking at you?

Pauline: They could tell. They could tell right away that didn't see you in church.

Louisa: Oh.

Pauline: The priest and the church had the documents where you born, and the Christening, and know the other things, and the who, where you lived, and where is the family, and where is anyone you know from the villages.

Louisa: I see.

Pauline: In small towns. The people didn't move here and there. In America you don't know who is come over. But ^{out} there you know who the 20th generation was.

Louisa: I see. Well, you have blonde hair and blue eyes, and you would fit in anywhere.

Pauline: I fit in and I used to go to church for a while, but that didn't help.

Louisa: You probably didn't have a lot of clothes.

Pauline: I didn't have support. Clothes I could fit. No one really dressed, so much. You had a home, you had a family. People just didn't, weren't interested. And there were so many...Belzeⁱc^{already} was an open field, and people were dying, and so...

Louisa: When people...you were talking about people dying. Were they dying of disease or getting shot or being overworked or malnutrition, or what?

Pauline: Everything. Everything. Everything together. Sick. Right away the older people got right way sick in the middle of the field. Nothing there. No mattresses. Not on the grass. It was raining, snow, cold.

Louisa: Exposure.

Pauline: Exposure to everything. Who cared?

Louisa: Malnutrition, filth?

Pauline: Well, when we filth. So they started right away. From the beginning the Germans, see they moved out a lot of people to work back, but later they just made a regular space and built...they used a mill, a place where it used to be a flour mill. It belonged to a Mr. Kessler. I knew the man. He lived on there. And so they started. People were just laying there, and so many. There was no place where to go. No where to hide. Nothing. Were you had something to exchange, so you go to a place here, there; maybe they exchange something, but there were so many people.

Louisa: Were your main contacts other Jewish people who were in a similar situation as you, or with town people...

Pauline: From the beginning I did not have with Jewish people too much contact, because I have been with this particular family, and I worked and I just, I just been like a maid around the house, and just...they were pretty good to me. This was about six months, eight months, and that was it. They could not, because they had to change where they were living, they didn't have a place. All kind of things. Their circumstances. Their father was taken away in the Polish army, and he didn't come back, so it was hard for them too. The Germans occupied the place, and they were there. You know, she didn't have any income from there, so she had to just work and take care of them.

Louisa: What month did you leave that family?

Pauline: I left that family in the Spring of 1941.

Louisa: And then where did you go?

Pauline: I didn't go anywhere. Soon I left I was picked up.

Louisa: Okay. Tell me how you were picked up.

Pauline: Just went outside, and I was walking and I had Polish papers, but the people recognized me. They knew my father, and they recognized me right away. Somehow, there are so many people that know you, that you have no idea, and children, and not children, we been there before, and I was just picked up, and thrown in a truck, and brought to Belżec.

Louisa: You were picked up by Germans?

Pauline: I was picked up by the Poles, but I don't, they don't tell you their names (laughs). A first name maybe you hear here and there, that's it. So they would just put in, and it's not far, just about three or four kilometers to Belżec. Just thrown in the truck, and when we got together in a place, there was quite a few Jewish people, young people like myself, and then we went...we just walked to Belżec. But at that time I had a pair of good shoes, and I had some clothes, and it was cold, so one of the guards or soldiers or whatever took that coat off me, because he said he wants it for his family. So in the cold I was just (?). And some, I knew the ways how to go in back in the woods, because I used to help mark them the trees and my father used to buy trees. We used mark it so that when they did which one are cut down. To cut 'em down to bring out of the forest. So I knew all the back woods how to go, ^{and} I went over to the Russian side. And this is how I was on the Russian side when the war started (next is garbled) when Germans came in right away to Reva Ruska, it was already the family gone, like I said before, and I just stayed in that house a little while. It was a lot, a lot of empty homes. You could have a hundred, two hundred homes.

Louisa: How did you eat?

Pauline: Whatever I find. Any scraps in the homes, that's got left over. People were there. But it was very hard. And when the Germans came in, and later on they took me to work. I worked and it was terrible hard, terribly hard.

Louisa: When the Germans picked you up out of a home and took you to work, did they think you were Jewish or a Pole?

Pauline: They just said I'm Jewish. Even I had the papers, but somebody said I'm Jewish.

Louisa: Okay.

Pauline: So that was Jewish. And I have seen some of the men or young boys, so if they had papers, they just let down their, their clothing and can see if they circumcised. So, that was Jewish.

Louisa: I see. Did they treat you rough?

Pauline: They treat me rough. And some of them did not, especially one I had, he was Polish, and remember even the name til this day. His first name was Albin. And, you know, very few people that you hear by this name, that's what I can remember, and he said he knew all my family, that he worked once for my father for a while, a few summers.

Louisa: Albin?

Pauline: Albin, that's his first name. I think his name was Rysowski. And another one was (phonetically) Skibitski, a man, and I don't know where he was from, and they said they knew my family. So, I didn't have so horrible, because they used to bring me, once in a while, some bread, once in a while something, you know. And as long as I was in that place, I was hungry, but I was not starving, because they always gave something sometimes. They both.

Louisa: Yeah. Did you get slapped around at all?

Pauline: Yeah. I got slapped around, later. From the beginning I was not beaten so bad. Later, one time, I really did not have any strength to work any more, and we were mixing cement and were mixing some other things, and I used to saw by hand very good with a hand saw where they cut trees down or other things I used to help during the summer, and I learned very good to cut trees and make some things, what for building materials. I used to work on that. So, I wasn't so badly treated from the beginning, but later one time, a German soldier came in and he has seeing that that guy gave me to eat or they gave something to eat that was just water or something, a little turnip greens or some...and he gave me the bread, and he gave me later he brought me some pork meat or some, cooked thing. He said his sister send this. That his mother died already, and his sister now is the oldest one and the German soldier has seeing, so they didn't let me have it anymore. They put me somewhere else to work, and it was bad. It was terrible.

Louisa: Was this in the camp?

Pauline: It wasn't a camp. They was starting to build it, and at one time later I thought, well, it hasn't been the mass killings are in it, or it

not been yet right away when the Germans came in to the places like Reva Ruska and Lvov and all those places, so I thought that I might go farther and farther. They told me, if you going to walk from place to place, and you have documents, and I help you, maybe you go the Russian side where the Russians are. And I could not believe this, but later I had a terrible experience, while being in Belzec. Then they built in already all around and I was not able to get out, so some of those men were not German, and they had trucks, and they were bringing in material, wooden material, so they took me for picking up the boards, the size of the boards to load on the truck. And it was from my father's saw mills.

Louisa: Oh!

Pauline: And so they took me there, and one of them, when I was at the saw mill, called Dlugi Kont, just a nothing but a place, a god-foresaken place, you didn't see much of anything, just a train went by, and they knew my father, the people, they were very hard farmers, and they gave me documents that I was their daughter, because their daughter died. She was sixteen. So they gave me documents, and I made a picture, and I had like little documents, so I could travel. But you could not travel to the front where the Russians are with the Germans there. But they had some people. They had family, and I was really lucky. I travelled, and travelled and somehow they gave me ^{always} a loaf of bread, and on the way you had always a job. Now people need to help on the farm, need to help to do something, so I knew all those things, because we didn't have a lot of land, but it was quite a bit of farm, not like Americans got, but it was cows, and it was, oh, horses, and I knew how to shove the manure. I knew how to milk. I knew how to work in the fields and go with the sickle, I knew how to saw trees. I mean I knew all that.

Louisa: You are a very small woman. You must have been very strong.

Pauline: But I was strong. And I used to work with men. They were picking one side up of building material, and now I get the other. So I did not have good, but I did not have ^{the} comparison to other people. And somehow they were going, they were going, and then one person told me I came to a place, I can't what it was that place. It was a small place, and they told me, you know this and this is my family, but you can not be seen, because he already took a Jewish family what he had business with together, and he would take one

person at a time, and on the way he would say that he is taking to his home to hide them, but in meanwhile he was taking them and on the way he would kill them, and the person before he died he wrote in Jewish a little letter to his family so he would take the other person, like this. Then he took the whole manufacture plant over. So this is one of my family, and he might come tonight. You better get out of here, and they were hiding me. I never stayed since then in that place. I couldn't be. That was a place on rail way, way out, going toward the Russian side. And when I came to the Russian side, it was an old - can you imagine - an old border line. I went on the train, and I went - it was different, if somebody, they had already on the trains where they were taking Jewish people somewhere, but I went with the Christians, so I didn't know there what it was. When we were going by, it was so many times the trains with the people were ^{locked up} just and you would hear their screams and their cries, and the cars were standing when we went by, and they had the people would just run to the windows, "Look at them, look at them" and everybody would laugh and are making jokes about it.

Louisa: But, you know what was happening.

Pauline: I knew what was happening, but you know, sometimes I went to the window with them together to look what goes on.

Louisa: I bet it made you sick.

Pauline: It made me sick inside, but I had to. Otherwise anyone would be spotted, and fact is, ^{that} one time somebody was sitting in the corner and she just couldn't take it, she got so white and yellow, so they just turned around and say, "Lookit, lookit, lookit. That's a Jew." You can tell. No matter how she looked, they could tell how your eyes are built and how this and how this, everything. I mean that is really...they looked after every little bitsy thing. Just to look. That was a pride for them.

Louisa: So, did they then throw that girl off the train?

Pauline: They throw her right out. Out through the window. Just picked her up and threw her through the window.

Louisa: Gee!

Pauline: So we just went, and when I arrived there in Vinnica. And that was already between Poland and the Ukraine before the War even. And

somehow I got it through, and I came over to the Russian side, either they were partisans or they were just peasants, Russian peasants, and whoever they could smuggle through, they did.

Louisa: So they helped you.

Pauline: So they helped me from that time on, but that was late already. That was like 1942.

Louisa: So, did you have a language problem? Or could you...

Pauline: No, I did not. I did not have a language problem, because I spoke Ukrainian, too. Polish I spoke very well. I mean, you could not tell that I'm not Polish, except that it's no documents.

Louisa: Sure. Well, how, when did you learn Ukrainian?

Pauline: Ukrainian you learn from people. Neighbors here, there, you know, you just knew Polish. And the Russians already had the partisans. They could pick up somebody they picked up. So, they picked me up and from there I went to a town, Lipietsk. It was already bombed and they had (?) the Russians, and there I find some other Jewish families...they were from Romania, or some...you know, a lot of people were running from the territories what belonged to Russia when Russia took it in 1938 or whatever, '39. So with those people, they took us on the trains and they send us to the Ural Mountains. And the Ural Mountains I survived, but before this from Belzec I went back to Lublin, I didn't tell you this. I went back to Lublin, because I still hoped...I did not know my family was away at the time. And when I came, already another family lived in our home and in ^{our} house, you know, when we were...and it was very painful, because I took all the...and the mezzusa still was there. They didn't cut out the mezzusa from the door, and I just lost myself. On this, they recognized me. But, I didn't give in. It was very hard. I just took away my face, but later she was giving me something to eat, and that woman gave me cups what my father made Kiddush on Friday night to drink in. It was a big silver...

Louisa: A cup, a Kiddush cup?

Pauline: A Kiddush cup. And this is way I got lost on. I recognize and I broke down. She knew what she was doing.

Louisa: Sure, torturing you.

Pauline: Torturing me. She said, "Now, don't you think I know who you are?" And she was vicious. She was vicious.

Louisa: So what did you do with the cup?

Pauline: I didn't do anything.

Louisa: I mean, did you take it with you or leave it?

Pauline: I couldn't have it. They just lived in the place, and whatever they left or they robbed from it, so they stayed there, but she gave it to me just so to wake up on me. See, I didn't know those people that they would recognize me. So she handed me that cup, that Kiddush cup to drink. But she did give me to eat, and she gave me a big round loaf of bread, and made it like with a kerchief, just like peasant make, and she made some other things gave me. Put on like peasant shoes some. She did do that. And said, "I'm not going to tell anybody about it, but you can't stay here, can't do anything, you just go."

And so I went, and from there I went East, East, East.

Louisa: That's when you went to the Russian front and the Urals.

Pauline: That's when I came to a small town...it was about...then we travelled train with the wounded soldiers already what coming back; they put us on there, on the cars. I wasn't by myself. It was a few, quite a few.

Louisa: Railroad cars?

Pauline: Railroad cars what they carried from the front already all the (?) people, military, Russian military, they put us in the freight cars, so we helped them to wash up the wounded to give them or help little feeding. You know, there was no nurses or anything right around, and this is how I got it, and we stayed in Lipietsk about a couple of months, and it was a better situation there. There they gave us already a ration card for bread and one meal a day. And the meal wasn't much, but it was something.

Louisa: It was eating.

Pauline: It was eating, and it was very bad, and then...

Louisa: Had you lost weight?

Pauline: Yeah. I lost weight. I was kind of a little heavy when I was

young. I weighed about 54 kilograms. That was a good size for my size, I'm just 5 feet.

Louisa: And with poor nutrition and heavy work...

Pauline: The scaredness, the scareness was worse than anything. Being scared, you never knew who is taking one look at you...didn't know what comes next. Because you had seen so much. So much. So much.

One experience, particularly, I wanted to go with you step by step by step.

When we were in Belzec, they already started killing, but it was not killing this, it was they used to bring in trucks to people. I wasn't on that part, I don't know, but I have seen, because we had to clean the people up...you know just to cover them up with dirt or something.

Louisa: Burying them?

Pauline: Well, you can say to bury; really it wasn't at burial because not individually, it just...

Louisa: A whole, a mass burial?

Pauline: A whole, mass burial. A mass burial, just to cover up. And we were brought down there that day...(she clouds up to cry) oh, my stomach hurts, (cries) and my hearts suffers just to think about it.

Louisa: you mean, right now?

Pauline: (Crying) Right now. It is so bad I can't talk about it. I remind myself sometimes. It just cuts me through and through. Well, anyhow...

Louisa: Just take your time.

Pauline: We...they were just putting a wide board. We dug big, big, deep not trenches, just a plain pit.

Louisa: A pit.

Pauline: A pit, a very big pit. That's the first time I have see it. And then they would bring so many people and with machines, and take 'em off the clothes, and that was just in the middle of the field in Belzec.

Louisa: You mean live people taking off their clothes?

Pauline: Live people on the truck, yeah. They took off their clothes in piles. And they just tell them "get on the board". And you know there were mothers with small children, and all this, so what happened? They would stay there, and they were shooting them down, so the small children they fallen with the mother. They wasn't shot. They were alive the children. They just want to be out of the blood and everything just covers them. (she is sobbing) You see this you get so...like a stone. You don't even think this is this world.

Louisa: You witnessed that!

Pauline: This is what I had to do! And then at last, they said, "You know," it was started raining and it was late, and that's the time they said they going to kill us too. Because tomorrow they have other people, and there is no short(age) of people. But it started raining very bad, and somehow, I don't know who it was, or what it was, jerked me, and I find out later that that was that driver, that Albin, who he was driving the truck what brought the people. That was just a job to them. He was, he jerked me, and where the clothes were, he just pushed me down there, and with the clothes. And when it started raining...well I was naked already almost. When it was raining so bad, I, what I did, they said to themselves, the Germans, the ones who were shooting, "Well let's not cover this one today, it's raining, I'm getting kinda wet. Let's go away. Tomorrow the other people will cover them up. What do you care." But you know, half of those people are alive. They just shot here or there. It doesn't mean...

Louisa: They are in the pit, not dead yet?

Pauline: In the pit, and one or the other, and the children screaming. They're still alive. And also I was staying with that clothing, I was staying til I don't even know because there is no time or anything. It was so bad that night. It was terrible, and it was raining, and it cold.

Louisa: Now, wait a minute, let me ask you something. You were a worker there? Or you were naked about to be shot?

Pauline: No. First they brought us to do. To do something. I don't know what we had to do. But we never did get to that work, it started raining. So they left, somehow, us standing, a few only. And I don't know what they did with the others, because I didn't look what was going on. You hear so many shots, you hear so many (?), you hear this. You don't know what is going on. It's just cover over and stay down there. (still sniffing) And later I knew some

people. This is how I came to that guy's home. It was away from, a place across from, they told me that the house is named Hannah Miller. Also a Jewish home, and it was in Belzec, so I came down there, and there was already a few people. And I really got splashed up with blood with all this. They gave me clothes, and that's how I came to another family. That guy let me there, and I got dressed, and fed, and I couldn't wake up, even onto the roof where they have all kind of straw and that. And so, I stayed there in the straw for a while, and after this, they got me out of that small town. And I was very lucky. Very few. And going out of town, I met another few Jewish girls what some other people did that to. I don't know who the people were and where. So we kind of kept together. From then on we tried, but it was impossible, you know. If someone always looks for you. Well, when I went up out of there, someone spotted me, a German soldier...

----- END OF TAPE 1 -----

Tape 2, Side A

Louisa: Okay. This is tape 2 and you were talking about a German soldier spotting you.

Pauline: A German soldier spotted me after we had been out from the work, and instead to turn around and shoot me, I don't know, they didn't check the rest of us somehow, they were in a hurry there from Belzec. So, he just beat me up, and you can see, this one is the way the stabbed here with the bayonet...

Louisa: That is a slash mark on your arm.

Pauline: That's a slash. And the way he slashed me, you can see my fingers slashed to here.

Louisa: Uh huh, and a linear scar on the little finger of your left hand.

Pauline: And it went to the hand, and came out right there.

Louisa: And that scar is on your left arm, forearm.

Pauline: And then he kicked me in my face, besides this, when you see I have no movement of my left eye, or I can't see much on it. That's from this. He kicked me very...

Louisa: With his boots on?

Pauline: With his boots on. My whole side of my face was for years numb.

Louisa: Is that right!

Pauline: And I can't see much on my eye, left eye. And then he with the other side of his weapon, you can see how he got me in my whole back. See here? Those things are out? (turning her back and lifting her blouse)

Louisa: Uh huh. That's like a protruding vertebra from your spine.

Pauline: That's right. In two places.

Louisa: And you've got a scar in your lower back. Is that from that?

Pauline: A little bit of scar, but later they operated and they straightened out the (?).

Louisa: Oh. Okay.

Pauline: And it was so bad, that all through the time that I was just hurting, and until they had to, after the War, they had to take out the kidney because my right kidney was out.

Louisa: From that kicking.

Pauline: Kicking, and beating, and I was bleeding so much.

Louisa: I can't imagine. It's amazing it didn't knock your eye out of the socket.

Pauline: Because he kicked me in.

Louisa: Well, how did you get up from this kicking?

Pauline: I just lay there, and when I woke up later, I just groaned a little and I stood up, and ^{then I} just left. And there was really no where to go. But it was a while later. It was quite a while to walk and at night, and it's scary.

Scared, scared, scared. And the woods.

Louisa: Well, this kicking that you got, was it in the woods?

Pauline: That was in Belzec, where we had to cover the other people after we didn't. And they already put together their, well, what they were shooting with and what they were doing, and they just took this away. So they did not shot us; it was a few people. I was not the only one who was still alive. And they just left.

Louisa: Why do you think they left?

Pauline: Because it was raining heavy.

Louisa: Okay. And you were able to walk away?

Pauline: Not right away, but later. Somebody helped us. Because peasants used to come and get clothing and other things. So once in a while they had mercy. They took us a little bit to ride. You know, they would cover us up.

Louisa: Were these mostly men who would help you out?

Pauline: No, they were women and men. There was someone you know a name. Someone you don't know a name. Someone wouldn't even tell you because the neighbors will right away tell Germans, and it wasn't just like the Germans in every all kind of little villages. There was always some, the Polish people or Ukrainian who was like overseers or some...and he would right away if he knew somewhere a Jewish people, or somebody hide, he would tell right away. And they would have killed them, too.

Louisa: Like a spy network.

Pauline: Yeah. Well, from the beginning they didn't, but later it was open. Everything was open. Open season. So we just...that was there in Belzec. But then, when we got to the partisans, we just went over to the Russian side, through the woods. It was a long time, and we went to the Ural Mountains. From Lipietsk we went to the Ural Mountains.

Louisa: Did you feel safer there?

Pauline: Yes. It wasn't good, but it same thing. They treated us the same way they treat the Russian people. The only thing...we were very bad off, because we didn't have anything. The Russians what lived there, they (?) at

something. Families. They had a little gardens. They had a little fields. They had something. We didn't have anything.

Louisa: When you say "we", who were you with?

Pauline: Oh, I was with a ...

Louisa: Just other girls?

Pauline: Just other girls. I was with girls from Tomaszow Lubelski. And at the same time and with others from somewhere from Bessarabia, and all those, I can't even remember none of those names we were there. But we were there for all the years later.

Louisa: So, did you stay there for the rest of the War?

Pauline: The rest of the War. And there, when we came to a town named Chusovoy, not far from Perm, it is in the vicinity of Sverdlovsk. And when we stayed there, so they put us about ten, twenty in a room like this (Holiday Inn motel room). And it was bad, but it was...we lived! And we went to get a job. They gave us jobs, and we worked in a ? factory. It's not a factory, it's a big plant. They whole town, practically worked there.

And then they used to bring in 1944, so when ? when they were taking territories, they used to bring more people, and they brought a lot of Jewish people what they brought some. So, my first husband was a neighbor from Lublin on the same block where I was born. I knew him and his family.

Louisa: Reb Merenstein?

Pauline: Yeah. So they...but I never talked to him in my life, you know how it was with religious people they...as a girl I never talked to anyone or had a date or going out or none of that! But, when they brought him to the Ural Mountains, so I asked what happened, and he said that he was...they took him first the Russians in the military. But then they didn't trust the Ukrainians and he was going there, so they just sent him back to work. So he was working in the same place as I was.

Louisa: I see.

Pauline. And that's how we met. I mean he was real good. He and another man later did like a little Jewish community, but it wasn't really anything that they would do religiously, because it was terrible, you know. It was Stalin's

time. But if it was a holiday, they would say to each other, or if we worked at Yom Kipper, we would work and we would fast. Or what year did we do... I mean, all kind of things we would help each other. Now, Lieb and another man, his name was Yagit, was his family name, I don't remember his first name...

Louisa: Yagit?

Pauline: Yes. What he did is he knew a director from the hospital. And that director from the hospital was doing things for the man, for Jewish people that no one else would do. It was very dangerous. They used to put in jail people for next to nothing. Just say something. "The bread wasn't good." Because they used to give us a piece of bread, it was no more than glue and sawdust and all kind, and it was so heavy that you had to take the knife and water and try to cut a little piece. That's not important now, we survived. So, a lot of people used to die in the jails. So before they used to die, they were so sick, they were going to die, they used to throw them out to freeze. The night...two nights before...who cared? Human being was nothing there. So, they used to go, and they used to look if it's Jewish people. And they used to get those boys or girls, or whoever it was. Mostly young people, because, you know, older people couldn't run away that much, and they came over, they saw, they used to bring 'em half dead and half unconscious and naked, and they used to get 'em something. We would wash. They had lice. They had sores. I mean it was horrible. And we would shave 'em. We would wash 'em, clean 'em, we would dress 'em all.

Louisa: These were people in the jail?

Pauline: They was throwing out from the jail. Considered dead already. They going to die. And they needed the space for other people...why should feed 'em when they going to die anyhow. So they throw 'em out! (said with very agitated voice)

Louisa: Sure. Makes sense. (sarcastic)

Pauline: Yeah. That's what the Russians did. That was communism. That's the way it is.

Louisa: So, you and your friends got these people...

Pauline: Those men came to us, and said, now you got to go get the warm up

the water. We will get the wood, and the warm and they used to bring ten, twelve people every two to three weeks. And we used to get 'em and they would revive 'em. So they needed documents. So the doctor, if somebody die, the doctor would put 'em in the hospital, and the hospital whatever is bed it was, they gave him something to eat, they nourished him a little bit. Her name was Vera Vanasenna. That's all I know. I don't even know her second name.

Louisa: It was a female doctor?

Pauline: A female director, a doctor. And she used to get every person, if it was Jewish, she would take 'em in. I don't even know if she was Jewish or not. I have no idea. She would never mention.. "Don't ever mention my name, or you know me, or I know you, or if you see me. Out."

Louisa: How did you meet her?

Pauline: My husband met her.

Louisa: When did you marry?

Pauline: I married in 1944. And really I don't know. Married, not married, it was just kind of alone, know 'im.

Louisa: So you didn't have a wedding, just declared yourself married?

Pauline: No. No. We had a very religious wedding. And we were very, very strictly on religious basis. So this lady took the people in, and she nourished them til they were good on their feet. She made passports. She had a friend, or it was a lover or husband, I don't know. He was a high commissioner in the N.K.V.D. And he was the one who used to give passports and all kind of things. So he used to make for her the passports for those people.

Louisa: In the N.K.V.D.!!??

Pauline: Yeah!

Louisa: That's amazing!

Pauline: She did that! She brought the passports for those people!!

Louisa: That's quite a wild story!

Pauline: They were considered dead. You know. As far as the (?) statistics, who cared? But she gave them another name. They brought somebody from

somewhere, there and there, so they gave 'em passports. And that was it.

Louisa: Where did they go with their passports?

Pauline: They went to work. They went to...listen, that's just another person!

Louisa: Oh. So, a passport was not to leave the country, it was just to go to work?

Pauline: It was to live! You have a passport, you come and you register yourself. You have a card, a ration card. You have work. You cannot go anywhere because you...no one is going to sell you a train ticket, but that's what you were doing.

And so, that's how we got...I knew him, and we just went through, we worked there very hard.

Louisa: And you were doing mostly...what kind of work?

Pauline: Any kind of work.

Louisa: Agriculture?

Pauline: No, I did not do agriculture. I used to work on a crane where they melt steel.

Louisa: Factory work.

Pauline: It was a plant. And then I used to work on a locomotive. I used to work on a train. Freight train, bringing in coal, and bringing in ore and all kind of things into the plant. It was around 100 miles stretch where I worked and, first I worked as a helper, you know, just shovelling coals and cleaning all the things, but later I just worked as, by myself on the train. For a few months.

And then it came a time that they said whoever was born on the Polish side will be able to leave, and we left.

Louisa: You went back to Poland?

Pauline: I didn't go by myself, there's no such thing. The Russian government let us go. And they provided the tickets. They provided all the ration cards on the way. So we left.

Louisa: What year?

Pauline: 1946.

Louisa: And you went with Lieb?

Pauline: Yep. Then I was married, and I went with Lieb.

Louisa: And you went back to where?

Pauline: We came to the part where it was Germany before, to the southern part. A small town named (phonetically) Bilava.

Louisa: Bilava?

Pauline: Yes, I think Bilava it was named.

Louisa: What was the state of your health?

Pauline: Well, I felt much better, because I was in a hospital in Russia then, a they straightened a little bit my back up. And then, a lot of things...I wasn't feeling good, but I had to work.

Louisa: How did you work with a bad back? Injured back?

Pauline: I was in pain. And then it was very hard; for a long time I wasn't able even to get around or anything. And when I came to Montgomery, then Dr. (Elias) Kaiser operated, and he straightened out for me. They had to take out my kidney. They had to take a lot of things out. (next is garbled.)

Louisa: Let's don't jump ahead to that. How long did you stay in Bilava?

Pauline: Just enough to get us together and leave, and walk through southern Poland, through the woods, through Czechoslovakia we walked, and we walked through Austria, and when we came to Vienna, that took us about three weeks.

Louisa: All that walking.

Pauline: All that walking. In a little bit we had cigarettes, and we had a little bit some gold pieces a few only. Very few pieces.

Louisa: Where did them?

Pauline: In Russia.

Louisa: You earned them, huh?

Pauline: No, I didn't earn 'em, I bought it from black market. Somebody sold it to me just for really next to nothing, just for a day's ration bread.

Louisa: Uh huh. You said...^{when} the tape was "off" a few minutes ago, that when Jewish people went back to their old neighborhoods in Poland, sometimes their neighbors would kill them.

Pauline: In my town I know a lot of neighbors got killed after the War. They survived, and they went back to see if they can sell their properties, or they can sell something. The people who lived in the homes, they killed them, or the neighbors, or simply any non-Jewish person who lived there didn't care. And they killed 'em. In fact is, in Bilava we were there in 1946 when we came from Russia, they threw a young boy who was about a few houses down from us, temporary living, they killed him the neighbors in the daytime, and threw him onto our door.

Louisa: As a warning?

Pauline: As a warning. So, we just went out the same night out of the place where we lived. And they just killed him in our eyes and everywhere else. And now you think it's that much better? No.

Louisa: Well, when you went to Austria, what did you do in Austria?

Pauline: We just came, and it's already...already they had places where they registered refugees in 1946. And everyone said...you listened only what rumors are...it's not that anyone tells you...or writes you...or guarantees you. So what we did, we heard that in the American Zone, the Americans treat Jewish people nicer, because the English didn't treat good at all. They were just...almost as Germans.

Louisa: Oh, really!

Pauline: ...when it came to food. When it came to anything else. When they almost. They just didn't kill, from what I hear, because my sister was with them.

Louisa: Was this English military, or English civilians?

Pauline: English military, in Germany. So we walked so that we get into the American Zone. So we got into Vienna, and in Vienna down there, someone got us already some bread and other things. And through the way, we used to walk only at night, mostly, but during the daytime we were trying to lay low because it was July and August. So in the fields you could find all kind of things to eat. We got carrots, all kind of raddishes. And if not, you just threshed out wheat and made wheat. I mean all kind, you could find it.

And it was fruit. On the way in the villages, we could steal sometimes, and that's how we survived.

Louisa: Um hum. Did you meet up with any people from H.I.A.S. (Hebrew International Aid Society)?

Pauline: This is what where we met when we came already in the American Zone. Then we met people from H.I.A.S. Then it was just refugee status.

Louisa: A refugee camp?

Pauline: A refugee camp. We were a little while. We just a while...I don't know. And Echschtat was a very small camp; we was there. And then we were sent to Würzburg, but we weren't there...we were just there about ten days or so. And the rabbinate knew my husband from before the War. He came from a famous rabbi's family, and they knew he was a rabbi, so they sent him to Berlin to be a rabbi.

Louisa: Is that your husband?

Pauline: Yeah. We were in Berlin from 1949 til 1951, when we came to the United States.

Louisa: How did you feel about going to Berlin?

Pauline: I didn't feel too good to be there at all. Individually, when you spoke to Germans, you know - neighbors, some of them answered you, some of them did hand you like, but most of them you had nothing to do. They wouldn't have nothing to do with you. That was it. But one particular woman was very good to me. We lived a while in Temple Hall. Her name was Donna. And when I was ill, because I had to straighten up with my back so much, and I was for months in the hospital, so she helped me with a lot of things I didn't have money or anything to pay, and she just did everything. But the other Germans never even want to speak to her, because later I find out that she had two older sisters - Jewish- and she was hiding them. And she was a poor woman! Very poor! Her husband was a janitor.

Louisa: This woman had two sisters.

Pauline: Two Jewish sisters. And she was hiding all through the War.

Louisa: That's amazine!

Pauline: And she was a poor woman. And her husband was a janitor for the whole long block from house to house taking care. So he could take care in delivering the food, and everything else. And they were living in just a tremendous amount of coals in a cellar, where he was taking care of, and it was built like a steel protection or something, and with big...it still was there in her cellar. The air. That they could have air. It was built then like little tubes, ? tubes, and that's all what the air came in. And at night they would get out, not in the street or anywhere, but out of this, and they could walk. But later, when it started bombardment on Berlin, that was very easy, because they were Germans, they were ? , and so there their home was bombed out, everything was gone, so no one really knew much about it. So they took him to our place where they used to live years ago, she has a sister there, so she let them have it to the sister. And I used to send her packages for a long time, because these two were sisters. They didn't have much anything, so when I was in Montgomery, and I still have a lot of letters from her. And I just, since I was very ill in a long time, so I just quit lately, but I used to send her always packages for the holidays. Sometime a piece of material. A lot of things I used to.

Louisa: How many Jews were in Berlin when you were there?

Pauline: It was a lot of Jewish people, but the thing is, very few were originally Berliners. But Jewish people were about seven or eight thousand at the time.

Louisa: After the War.

Pauline: After the War, just everybody came and everybody went. Some are to Israel, and some to America, some to South America. You know. A lot of people out of there just left. No one really wants it. How can you look at someone you know that each of them is a murderer?

Louisa: Absolutely!

Pauline: There was no such thing that Miss Donna was telling me, Gertrude was her first name, she used to tell me. "There's no such thing." That one thing she taught me. "I'm German. And of course we lived with it. I don't approve of all those things, the way I was raised." But you can not cut out. It was the American anti-nazification, you know they're not going to be...they sign up they not nazis anymore...so^{if} they not nazis, the Americans let 'em go with everything. I mean really with murder.

Louisa: Yeah.

Pauline: The Americans didn't do nothing to those people. What ever Russia is bad, and it's terrible, they took care of those people.

Louisa: They took care of the Nazis?

Pauline: They took care of the Nazis. Where the Americans did not. On the contrary, if someone will tell the different. All the ?, all the lowest from the lowest, they all married the nicest Americans, and they're here, and they're such madams, they're such ladies, and they will tell you how fine they are. Well listen, you tell me, I know, they had no reason to run away from there. Just like the old Ukrainians. They're in America. They had no reason. They had families there, they had their fields, they had their everything! Why did they run away? Because they were always with the nazis. And they were doing the killing, especially the Lithuanians. I don't even want to go into individually things, because it tears me apart! I don't... just let it go. You know. (She varies between yelling angrily and weeping.)

Louisa: I believe you.

Pauline: My heart flops.

Louisa: It flops...just thinking about it.

Pauline: Just thinking about it. Believe me, I don't have such a...

Louisa: People live schizophrenic lives.

Pauline: Maybe they live schizophrenic lives, but they were people who were calculating what they were doing. They were sober. They were taking it as a business. They have everything written down neatly and nicely, but the Poles, the Ukrainians, this and this...why not?

Louisa: It's not, it's not...

Pauline: I mean, why didn't they? It was nothing to them to kill a person. They go to church or something, and they say Jesus Christ will forgive you. That were, because I went to church for probably for six months, and I know what it was. First thing the Catholic priest will tell, "Well, it's only,they kill Jesus."

INVENTORY OF ENCLOSURES WITH PAULINE M. DAVIDSON TRANSCRIPT

1. Photograph with negative of Mrs. Davidson, October 27, 1991
2. Tape recorded interview (3 tapes)
3. Department of Archives and History gift form.
4. Transcript of tapes, 63 pages.
5. Handwritten notes of phonetic spelling during interview, with some corrections written after interview by Mrs. Davidson.
6. Copy of letter from Louisa Weinrib to Mrs. Davidson, dated Feb. 10, 1991, requesting interview.

Louisa: Yeah. Oh, I see. Makes it okay.

Pauline: Makes it okay! And I don't want...

----- END OF TAPE 2, SIDE A -----

Tape 2, Side B

Pauline: ...no not yet. Don't ever think the Jewish people have it safe.

Louisa: You can't tell who will betray you.

Pauline: You think here you've got a lot of friends? I don't believe that. We have friends because the government is here. You know. Because the law is that way. Imagine if the law would say, "Go ahead, get everything you want to.

Louisa: Go do what?

Pauline: Go get it anything you want it from them. Can you imagine what it would be?

Louisa: Oh, it would be anarchy, or worse.

Pauline: It would be what it was to us.

Louisa: I understand. When did you and Lieb decide to come to America, and how did you do it?

Pauline: He decide that right away after the War. We had papers to go to Australia, ^{we had} papers to go to Ecuador, we had papers to go to Brazil. We had papers, I don't even know where else, and he said, "No" - he is going to America, because, this, he knew approximately how things are. He wanted to be more in a Jewish style. You never know what's in the other countries. You know, you hear this one...I was in Munich, the person what was next to my bed, her son was in Sweden, from Sweden he went to Australia. You know, those nazis, they went, they got their families later, they came back, and

and, that's all right with them. That's how it is. That's like Mrs. Donna told me, said, "Don't ever think they not the same nazis what they used to be. It's only they're in the house. And don't ever think ^{if} they sign up for the American government they're not nazis, that that means that they cut out their heart and put it on the paper. They're the same think and the same heart, and the same feelings." It will come another opportunity, not in our generation, not in two generations. It's going to be the third. You just wait. Not for your time. It's going be, because Germans are that way. They're patient. They slowly. But they're the best scientists, but they're also the best murderers.

And that's how it is.

Louisa: Did you apply through H.I.A.S. to come to America?

Pauline: We applied...I don't know how we applied. We couldn't apply to H.I.A.S., because my husband was not on...he was a private man. When we were in Berlin, he was working and having a salary from the German government. Only through the Jewish, uh I think through the Yiddish Germande, but we were paying tax. We were paying security. We were paying medical care. Everything like any other citizen. We had passports. We did not live in a camp in Germany, because he worked as a rabbi in a town. And people what worked in towns, were on a German economy style, not on United Nations. But our business we did with the registry. But we are refugees, we did with the United Nations, you know, with the H.I.A.S. To keep our names, we did with the H.I.A.S. But we did not receive food or any other things from them, or help.

Louisa: But when, how did, were you told that you could come to America?

Pauline: The United States gave us visas.

Louisa: Oh.

Pauline: They took in so many people. May come in as refugees.

Louisa: You applied to the Embassy?

Pauline: We applied to the Embassy, and we had to get all the documents together. We didn't have that much, and you had to be clean of everything. Not even a traffic ticket. And they went and looked and interviewed all the places we lived and other people, and we're all right! Fact is, my husband worked at the day when we left for the United States!

Louisa: Oh, wow! So when you came, did you come by boat?

Pauline: Yeah, we came by boat.

Louisa: Through New York?

Pauline: Yeah. We came to New York. We stayed in New York a couple of months. And then we came to Montgomery.

Louisa: How did you happen to come to Montgomery? A job?

Pauline: Montgomery was looking for someone to take care of certain religious things. We had a lot of other places to go, but people told us that, well, Montgomery, it's not as big, and not as ... it's a nice town. So it's better, because I didn't want to go anymore. We had to go to Buffalo, New York, and Cincinnati and Cleveland. All this. And I didn't like this. They said it's cold, it's this, and we were just already through and through that. So we wanted just some smaller place, and so it would be tranquil, and it would be...

Louisa: What year was this?

Pauline: In 1951. We came to Montgomery.

Louisa: To Agudath Israel (synagogue)?

Pauline: To Agudath Israel, and there we stayed. Thirty-seven years.

Louisa: Wow!

Pauline: (reflectively) Thirty-seven years! He worked thirty-two. And I stayed five years by myself. (Heavy sigh) Oh my God!

Louisa: Did you have other family in the U.S.?

Pauline: No.

Louisa: How did you go about creating family? Did you get people in various towns that you were close to, and have like an aunt and niece relationship? Did you just be alone all those years?

Pauline: Well, I feel alone even today. I had friends, and I think they are my friends. But it is not the same as family. And you know well that how we lived in Montgomery, that every soldier I never closed the home. Every holiday I had full people. And anything. I don't remember the time I ever sat down at the table, that my husband didn't bring home people. Especially

during the Korean War, and through the Viet Nam War, even, so, you know, they had a rabbinic school in Montgomery at Maxwell. We always had rabbis four, five, six at a time.

Louisa: Is that right? I did not know that.

Pauline: They were all the time staying with us. I always had people. It's good to do things, and it's nice to have friends. But still, when you stay at the table on a holiday, and you look all the faces, and you all alone...it's not family.

Louisa: It's not family.

Pauline: No. You know, there's a Jewish saying, "God, you may throw me around everywhere, but when my final time, just throw me between my own family." "That I fall between my family." You know. This is something you wouldn't understand.

Louisa: Well, I've been blessed with a lot of family. Did you have children?

Pauline: I had two children, but both of them died.

Louisa: In Montgomery?

Pauline: One in Europe, and one right after birth, and one in Montgomery. I was only pregnant, but it's all this from the food, they say, and where we worked. See, the United States does not have any research for those people, what we used to get the food was with all kind of things, what the Germans used to give us where we worked. I don't know what they were giving us, but from what I hear, they gave us all kind of things. And so, it always dissolved every pregnancy, and ^{then} I didn't take any chances.

Louisa: So, you think that your loss of the baby was due to food you had during the War.

Pauline: That's what they told me. The food and the treatment, because I went to Israel and I stayed four months there.

Louisa: When was that?

Pauline: It was in 1971 after this. And I made all different analysis they made. I wanted to go through myself what they don't do in the United States for this type of people, and they told me that, "You know you didn't have any children." And I said, "Yes, how did you get to know?" And he

said, "Because I see your blood samples, and see all the other things." and it says still, still I have in my blood certain things that it's from that.

Louisa: That would make it inhospitable to have a healthy baby.

Pauline: Yeah. It will all dissolve. All dissolve. That's what they told me.

Louisa: I see.

Pauline: I went to a place and, not a hospital, there.

Louisa: For a study about

Pauline: For a study about that, because I wanted to know, some friend of mine told me that she couldn't either. Now look at Mrs. (Sigmund) Diamant. She almost died; she had that one child, and they find out just because of that, too. And I hear later because it was too weak and so on, and all kind of things. She couldn't have another child. She barely had this one.

Did you have some interviews with her?

Louisa: She has refused to be interviewed.

Pauline: They were so...they were terrible, because they were in Auschwitz all the time all the years, and she refused because she is very emotional.

Louisa: Oh, I can understand that.

Pauline: And she is very big. She is kind of peculiar ?

Louisa: Is that right?

Pauline: Yeah. I kept kind of a friendship, but they don't let you get close.

Louisa: Yeah.

Pauline: I don't know why.

Louisa: When you came to Montgomery, how did you put down your roots as an American, or did you within yourself feel less American, and still European?

Pauline: I don't know really. I didn't think about it: American or European. I just thought that life what happened, happened, and this people it's a new world,^{and} a new life, and I did not speak much about anything with people in Montgomery. In fact, I'm cutting out very emotional thing right here, too. Certain things that I don't even want to mention what they were doing, or how they, some of those things, but one thing I will tell you...

Louisa: You mean people in Europe? Not in Montgomery?

Pauline: Yeah, in Europe. Not in Montgomery. ~~Because~~ it will ^{me so,} get ^A I don't know if I can compose myself.

Louisa: Take your time. You know, this is highly emotional material for everybody, and the purpose of this a hundred years from now, people need to know this, and so just say whatever you can make yourself say, even though it's painful, just for the record.

Pauline: Well, it's really painful when I have seen the first time, you know I come from a religious family and you don't date, you don't go with men anywhere, you don't do none of this what modern times bring to. And when I came up upon where just a bond, a band of teenagers and a man from a village wanted to have a good time, and they put up like crosses, you know, trees. They were trees. And they took some Jewish young man, good looking young man, and they bind him up, and strained him, and crucify him like Jesus, and then they undressed him naked, and they took out their sexual organs and gave to suck it to calfs, the young calfs. And you know how that could look. And they were playing a harmonica and dancing around it.

Do you know what that means? The first, when the Germans came in, they say they not going to kill the town. The whole town Jewish people. That was in Lublin before we went...before they took us to work. They say "I not going to kill anybody or anything", they just ten Jews, come out and we just, we just, they be there, they'll be the ones who will go to be the save us from the town. So they built a big square, they build it and one of the very pious Jewish people was Lieb's father, my husband's father. And they hanged him upside down on his feet on swings. And they took lye...you know what hot lye is when it boils? (Crying) And they threw 'em their faces where they were swinging there. And all the goyim, those bastards, standing and laughing ^{while} those people were screaming, and their skin was already flesh hanging down what it was already boiled and all and burned.

Louisa: Oh, my God!

Pauline: And they were laughing there. How can you talk? How can you explain to somebody like this?

Louisa: It's inhuman.

Pauline: It's inhuman? Your mind can't even understand it. Who can you talk something like this? And the same people going to church, and Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ.

Louisa: Yeah. Well, after telling the townpeople they weren't gonna kill 'em, and inviting ten pious men to come out, that's what they did.

Pauline: That's what they did. And later on they took the young people, and they killed many right after this. People had to dig their own graves. It was whatever to their mind came in, they were doing. But, later they were just whatever left, they made in a long place, and then sent them off already to those places where they were built. Because when I was Majdanek, the camp Majdanek, it's just a few kilometers going out of town where I was born. It's outside Lublin. And when they started building it, there was nothing. You know, there wasn't...first there were the ghettos. I was never in a ghetto, you know, because I was always with non-Jewish friends. But then, they were just taking everybody together and sending off.

Oh. (heavy sigh) When I went first to Majanek there wasn't anything. They were just starting building. "Can you tell where there are going to be shops?", that's what they were saying. "We're going to make shops, people going to work." And they gave something a little bit better to eat, and we believed it! I mean...who would ever believe that it's going to be something like this?

Louisa: When were you there? At Majdanek.

Pauline: I was there in '40, 1940. Winter.

Louisa: You hadn't mentioned that before.

Pauline: Well, because I went back. I was there when I was going back from Belzec, coming home. I thought when someone was in our home already living, and the woman what gave me the kiddush cup. This is where it was when I came back, so I went there, the Germans got me. It wasn't even Germans. I don't know who they were. They were just, that uniform they were wearing. They were Ukrainians or Lithuanians...they didn't even speak German. They were looking for...so they got us out there. But, I worked, and there wasn't anything. And a lot of people had a good opportunity just to run away! You know,

young people did a lot. It was just from the beginning. Some of them had an idea. Then I had a neighbor what worked there, and he ran away. His name was Finkelstein, and he took quite a few people. He showed how to run away. They dug under...there wasn't even a fence or anything. You just carried boards, and after this we had to go somewhere to sleep. So they just went on, like going for their own things, private, and going away. They didn't kill then from the beginning. So they run away. That's when people started talking: "why do they taken away all the people and children? and just us to work? Well, they going on the farms to work and this we are going to have here a factory."

But some people start to talk, "Hey listen down there they already killed this one; they started...they walked ^{a lot of} people in smaller towns into the woods. They killed them down there, sometimes left them, sometimes just covered them up." You know. So there, every minute it was something else. You knew that to believe or not to believe, but you knew my family's going, this is going, there is going.

Louisa: You described mutilating Jewish boys. What about the girls? Were they raped?

Pauline: I did not see Germans raping as much Jewish girls. They were just like that would be beyond their dignity to bother. They had enough, you know what I mean, the villages and everybody. They were all in the same lovey dovey situations, so they didn't bother that much. But the others sometimes did.

Louisa: The Poles?

Pauline: The Poles, the others. Well, I was pretty lucky. I never had that. I never had to deal with that. One time only, a guy, a man took me in winter and I gave him some money and another woman to take, and she had a child. And he took...it was very snow and you know, with a sleigh, and we were in the middle of the field going and with a horse, and he said, "Jews have a lot of money. You all have money, you all have money" and he just threw us off the sleigh in the snow standing there, and he just took the little packages we had. You see how ignorant they are? "I know you have money just because you are Jewish." Just like "once you are Jew, you fabricate the money, you fabricate the gold, you fabricate everything

else." So this I had, but those things happened, different kind of things happened on every step where ever you go. So we had all kind of things.

Louisa: (Sadly) Yeah. Gee. When you came to the U.S. did you speak English? Did you have to learn?

Pauline: No. Not at all.

Louisa: You learned how in Montgomery?

Pauline: In Montgomery, mostly by radio.

Louisa: By radio!?

Pauline: WCOV. I used to listen every word they were saying, and first it's just I didn't understand at all. Then I was...I learned where the division between words is. Then after to put together. And I could, of course, read Polish, so the letters almost the same. So what did it happen. And ? people were very nice. People were very nice, and ^{then} this one would show me something, and this...and there has been some courses, but we couldn't afford. It was \$19 a week, two hours or three hours.

Louisa: To take English classes?

Pauline: To take English lessons. I mean, you know, Lieb made \$35 a week.

Louisa: Ah, when did you start business? You had a delicatessen.

Pauline: Oh, this was really not much of anything. This was just to keep up, to serve the Jewish people, but we didn't make any really on that.

Louisa: Well, when did you start the delicatessen?

Pauline: I don't even know when we started. Somewhere in 1954, 1955. Well, he, my husband, started...he knew how to take out veins out of the meat. He knew, of course, he was a "shochet", too, not only a rabbi. And so, he knew all this things, but he didn't know how to cut meat. So they taught him in Montgomery. From the congregation some taught him a little bit, and he start cutting the meat. And then, you know, I knew how to make kosher. Open up a chicken and make kosher. So, what could you make? A quarter? And everything is so high Jewish. Kosher was very high. The people in Montgomery charged us for kosher. We used to get a live chicken. He charged us more for the live chicken, when you could get ^{some} chicken, the meat, in a store.

Mr. Silverstein, whenever I see him, I still tell him the same thing. He used to charge for a chicken, with the feathers. The feathers go nowhere. The guts go nowhere. Sometimes we make ten cents. When a chicken was sick, it wasn't kosher, you throw it away. Two or three chickens out of twenty, that's all what it was.

Louisa: Oh, my heavens!

Pauline: But, Lieb was a person that he said, "What is our life. That's the only thing left that you have to give yourself. You have to believe in God, you have to.." So one time I told him "either he is that pious or he is that stupid."

Louisa: (Laughing) Oh! dear!

Pauline: It has to be one way or the other. Because the way we lived... we lived nicely...well, moderate, let's say. You know. You know me for years. So, but we didn't have any luxury, vacations, or anything. We did everything ourselves. So what did he make? And we had money from...we had the only refugees that came to Montgomery with money lost there.

Louisa: Say that again?

Pauline: We're probably the only refugees coming to Montgomery with money and lost in Montgomery.

Louisa: Oh.

Pauline: And lost in Montgomery the money. You know, we lost a lot.

Louisa: You mean you didn't make as much money as you had been in Europe?

Pauline: Oh, in Europe we would not have even engaged in such low jobs as we did in Montgomery. We had a tremendous thing in Europe. We were two years in Berlin, and he was paid salary, and we had, we had a lot of privileges, like a car, a chauffeur, and apartment...large apartment...

Louisa: Oh, really!

Pauline ...with the best and most gorgeous furniture, with the best silver and all this...nothing was ours. Everything belonged to the Jewish...uh the Yiddish Gemande, let's say like the Jewish city hall.

Louisa: The Jewish...

Pauline: City Hall. You know, only for what they govern themselves. So that what it was, but it's a...and we saved pretty good. We lived modest, and we saved nicely. We came with about \$30,000.

Louisa: To Montgomery.

Pauline: Yeah, and we bought a building and then we lost that, together with Atlas.

Louisa: Together with what?

Pauline: Rabbi Atlas. I don't know, you don't remember him. He was a fine person. And, so, ? , what do you need?

I ask you one question. There are so many rich people in here and there. How many bedrooms do they sleep at one time?

Louisa: (Laughing) I don't know!

Pauline: How many clothes is no matter how elegant it is...you're not wearing ten different outfits at one time.

Louisa: That's right.

Pauline: So what do I care if this comes from K-Mart. And I bought it in 1960 here.

Louisa: Wow!

Pauline: And I wash it and it's clean. So I don't look what at you going tell me that look at this, look at this. I'm clean. That's all it's to matter to me.

Louisa: People's need and their wants are two different things. Right?

Pauline: That's right. And the kind of life we live, I'm satisfied what I have. Now, when it comes to health, that's entirely different story. This is the first priority, and people who have not suffered, they don't know what they saying and what they talk about. So every morning when I open up my eyes, and I say my prayers, and I say "Happy birthday to Pauline", because a day to live, and you get up in the morning, mean to myself, that's a birthday! That's the kind of attitude I have.

Louisa: Good. Have you had any long-term ill health from your war experience?

Pauline: Yes.

Louisa: What?

Pauline: I came out with TB, and I didn't even know it, til in Montgomery. I knew I been sick, and they told me, but no one helped me with it anything.

Louisa: You mean in Europe no one helped you, or here in Montgomery.

Pauline: No. In Europe no one helped me, they said "you know you came out..." ...I knew that I had TB because I was spitting up blood when I came out of that Majdanek when we were there, when I ran away. Even before going to Russia. I knew it. In Russia nobody helped me with anything, so I worked a little and the food, maybe it didn't, but when I came back and when we came to the United States, I have seen to it that, but it was kind of too late. My kidney already had it, and...

-----END OF TAPE 2-----

Tape 3, Side A

Louisa: This is the third tape, and we were talking about your health when the last tape ended, and now you are talking about Jewish marriages, so go on.

Pauline: Well, it's not only Jewish marriages. General human beings, maybe I'm very ignorant, that's what I take myself anyway for, why people divorce. I'm looking at America, so many young people, older people, nice people, and they get a divorce. The harder the times are, they get a divorce. I had, when we were escaping from Poland, with Lieb, I had a pair of boots, and just what I had on me - clothes, and he. And that was it. And we did have a few gold pieces, and we had cigarettes. We bought a lot of cigarettes, because for cigarettes you can get something in exchange. At the time that's how it

was. But, we had times that we had, particularly in Brno in Czechoslovakia, just over the border from Poland...we had to stay there because a few Jewish people were killed...oh the bandits robbing, oh it was just an open season... who cared much. So, and we stayed there but a week, maybe, and you couldn't take off the boots because the feet were so swollen, if I taken off the boots, I never put them back!

Louisa: Right!

Pauline: So I had to keep it. Can you imagine? I already walked a week. And he went, that was the first time a doctor has seen us. I don't know how it come. It was just a point of gathering together, or a transit...I don't know. It's just someone told us, "You go straight up there this way, and you will see some people. You will see a building. You go in into this building." He just turned away and went away. "You just be sure and go there." We came down there; there was a doctor, there were some wooden cots, there was some a few a little straw. But there were people took this everything up, so what it's left for us is just like a dog house. You know how one side by the bricks a dog house? So we just got into that dog house, and we stayed. It was straw there. A lot of people stayed. And all we had there, once a day, is a sliced bread, rye bread, not rye - black bread, some kind of soup - all I can tell you, it was water. I didn't see anything it did was soup. It was kind of raddish, like a tomato, or it had a tomato - I don't know what it was!

Do you know, I gave him my bread. He gave me his soup. And we didn't argue. Then we came to Vienna. We didn't have anything. ^{You} Couldn't exchange anything even what we had, because the Germans wouldn't give you anything. I asked a German to sell me an apple, one apple. She said the only thing she's short of, she wants a summer umbrella for her granddaughter. Everything else, she has everything! So if I have a summer umbrella, with flowers on it to give a gift to her granddaughter, she will sell me an apple. Not for even for gold, not for even a tallis I had on my back, or something. Nothing! So, you can see how life is. And if it's so hard, instead of get together and see through it, you know, times changing. There's always something better tomorrow than today. People just let it go. Pulling apart...but the same people will have money for whiskey, or for any other things. You know what

I mean.

Louisa: Their values are screwed up.

Pauline: (heavy sigh) I don't know.

Louisa: Yeah. Well, let's get back to...

Pauline: Let's get back, because he's getting a little bit (referring to her husband getting restless in the next room).

Louisa: How long did it take you to get your health back, once you came to Montgomery?

Pauline: Oh, for a long time. It took me probably til almost '58.

Louisa: Dr. Kaiser took care of you?

Pauline: Dr. Kaiser took care. I had about, oh, more than a dozen operations on my back.

Louisa: Oh, you did? Who did the back operations?

Pauline: Dr. Kaiser and the neurosurgeon, Dr. Bostwick. Because I was hit very badly on this side with that, the German what was hitting me so bad over my head. And I have on my right side, I have also such a hard - it's not something, a hardened thing - but it's inside, Dr. Bostwick told me, and the blood vessel and the nerves it goes through it. Once I get too tired, or once I get upset, or something, I have the headaches. And he told me that, just has to be a little bit easy on myself, and I have to rest a lot. Something I get very little now. But I'm making out!

Louisa: Did your experience during the War affect your religious faith or your feeling about God at all?

Pauline: I have to admit that it did.

Louisa: In what way?

Pauline: When I have seen what was going on. I have seen people with, they were alive and with open stomachs. What I have seen, you get some, like a stone. You don't have a mind what to think about ^{it} anymore. You don't no tears, that's the first thing I haven't had for years any tears. Til the feeling came back, took me years. But I did not threw away my God, my beliefs.

But I was very disappointed. At times I was mad. At times I was thinking that it's really good to be a non-Jew. You know, we're only human.

Louisa: Right.

Pauline: And I had a lot of times, but after everything settled down, I still believed, though I am not strictly observant anymore. Like I used to be, because when I was a girl, even after, til I came to Montgomery quite a few years after, I would not hand my hand to a man, I would not wear pants, I would not feel comfortable on my neck to unbuttoned, or wear short sleeve where it's so comfortable and airy.

Louisa: You mean to leave your lapel open?

Pauline: Leave your lapel ^{open} or something. But little by little you get, you go with the people. You don't feel any, any, on your conscious that this is immoral or that this is not proper. But, when I came to Israel, and I went to see some very religious people, I sure dressed myself religiously. My sister was laughing at me, says "Now you've become a Jewish nun." (Laughs)

Louisa: (Laughs) Well, tell me about your reunion with your sister.

Pauline: My sister...I was in Germany already in 1947 or '48, and every time we met some people what it was around, you know, either from the same town or we're in the same places, we used to talk: "do you know this..." And in certain instances, we find even family for people. I could tell numerous people what their family was, what this, and what, where or how it happened to them, and they were together with me. And all kind, not just in Germany and in Poland, what had happened, but even in Russia. Whole families just died from hunger and were gone. And there is nothing left from them. And I remembered. So we always talked to everybody, even today, like someone told me what happened to my mother. I didn't know. Said she was very ill after they took my brother away, and she wasn't capable of doing anything. From the beginning they took her to work. She did hard work, and then couldn't, so they just throw her away, and she was laying until she died. And they called this "natural causes" because there was no food, no water, nothing.

Louisa: (Groans) What happened to your brother?

Pauline: My brother, I never find out. I never knew. Til this day, I don't know. He was taken away, and I have never seen him.

My father was with us, with the bunch together, to smuggle us through, because he knew, he was the one who knew all those people, he used to make business buying their forest what they had a lot of acreage or something. And he knew all the woods. He knew all the way to go from town to town, that you won't even find..there's absolutely no trail, even. You know what I mean? And he knew certain people where they lived, and he knew their homes how they were built, ^{from} what direction we can approach there we can steal something to eat! (Laughs) You know how ~~those things were~~. He knew even with certain people he made business they did not have a dog to bark.

Louisa: Oh good. Okay.

Pauline: I mean, it was just like you have a guide. But they got him. They got him, not the Germans. I believe they are Lithuanians got him and took him to work something, and they beat him up first. And then they just took him. My sister was beaten up the first day the Germans came in. Kicked her so bad that she has a whole boot from a German with the nails like sinked in in her forehead.

Louisa: In her forehead?

Pauline: In her skull. In her forehead. And her hair don't grow down or comb. They just like inside there, and she has also her eye like this. She can see in her eye better than I do, even as bad as it was.

Louisa: Where is she now?

Pauline: She is in Israel.

Louisa: So you were about to tell me how you got reunited.

Pauline: So we talked with people, and one said to me, "You know you look like I knew and I worked in a camp with a person what her name was so-and-so, she was from there-and-there." And I said, "Yes". And , "You look just like her." And I said, "Yes." And that's how I find my sister. I knew she's alive then, but I didn't know where she was. But he says he has seen her in Italy. But, my sister and I, if we're going to live, we had a girl friend, my brother used to be engaged to our girl friend, and they had their father is in Brazil in Pôrto Alegre. And they already had passports to go to Brazil, so the Germans did not keep them. They were in Portugal already, So I had the address, not written down, but in my mind, the address where that girl's father lives in Brazil, and I remember it to this day. And this is after she would write

there to that girl friend, she was almost like his fiancé and they were talking about getting married. And I would write there, and she will know us, that's how we will get together, I said. And this how it was. I wrote there, and they never lived already in this address, but people knew and the letter came they put it to the Jewish community, and it was this-and-this name, and so she answered us. And she told me where my sister was. My sister was in Cyprus. She had all that with the English; that's where she was with the English already. She said they were cruel.

Louisa: What did they do, for example?

Pauline: Well, the first thing, they were starving them. And they were dying from starvation on Cyprus.

Louisa: They weren't treating them medically?

Pauline: No! They wouldn't bother anything. They sometimes they allowed them just to go to the garbage and pick something up what they threw out, the military. And they just gave them very, very little food.

Louisa: Well, has your sister come here to visit you?

Pauline: Yes. She visit me. She visit me a lot of times. She said a year at a time when she comes. She was in Montgomery, and she was with me twice there, and already in Meridian..

Louisa: Oh, good!

Pauline: And then I hope she will come again, but she says she just can't make it. She's too weak. She been beaten up also, and kicked, and, you know, she can't do it. Very hard for her. Very hard.

Louisa: And she went to live in Israel.

Pauline: She went to live in Israel. They have a very hard time, and...

Louisa: Did she marry?

Pauline: Yes, she was married already when I found her. She had a very nice hard working man. And this is what my sister gave me her daughter. You know, my sister is the one who gave me a child. In Montgomery I raised her.

Louisa: No. I didn't know that! How did that happen?

Pauline: Because I didn't have any children.

Louisa: And how many did she have?

Pauline: She had three. And gave me, yeah.

Louisa: You adopted her?

Pauline: Yeah, I adopted her.

Louisa: How wonderful!

Pauline: Yeah. Well, we are very close knit. We used to be a very close knit family on my father's side. Mother's side especially. We're a big family.

Louisa: Was this your sister's youngest child? Or what?

Pauline: The oldest.

Louisa: The oldest?

Pauline: The oldest.

Louisa: How old was she when she came to live with you?

Pauline: About twelve years.

Louisa: Isn't that interesting!

Pauline: And she went to, later, to New Orleans. She finished high school in Lanier.

Louisa: Oh. What was her name?

Pauline: Jaffa. Jaffa Merenstein. Took our name. And then she went to New Orleans. She married, and she didn't marry too good, and she had three children. And it's very hard. She died at thirty-four.

Louisa: She did?!

Pauline: She did. She was a nurse, a very good nurse.

Louisa: What did she die from?

Pauline: Cancer. Breast.

Louisa: Oh, my. How sad. Are her children still there?

Pauline: Yeah. Two boys are with the father. And the granddaughter is with me. The girl is with me. She is already a senior in high school in Meridian.

Louisa: Ahhhh.

Pauline: Fact is, she is in New Orleans now. She went to see her brothers. Two brothers. Her father is a very rude man. Very rude.

Louisa: Very rude?

Pauline: Oh, so rude for a Jewish person. I have never heard...

Louisa: Is he an American?

Pauline: Yes. Not (next unintelligible)...

Louisa: Well, I just wondered if he came from Israel, or where he came from.

Pauline: No. No. He's an American. He is born in New Orleans. And that's how we have.

Louisa: Did you ever receive reparations?

Pauline: No.

Louisa: Were you entitled to reparations?

Pauline: I registered for the reparations, and they told me I'm not registered in the camp, and that I wanted the reparations, and why I wasn't registered right there from the beginning and just following up. Because Lieb was religious, you know, and religious people did not want a reparations. Because that meant we taken money. It's like selling, like killing yourself, the people is selling yet.

Louisa: Yeah.

Pauline: So he did not want anything to do with it. I would need those reparations, but I did not receive anything. Now, I'll tell you what I received. Uh, Mr. Franco...uh, I received \$2000 for jewelry. I told him who took it, my mother's jewelry, and at what place they took it.

Louisa: Who is Mr. Frankel (misunderstood)?

Pauline: Ralph Franco (Montgomery attorney). He worked it out. He told me to apply, and I went to him, and that's what they send me, just \$2000.

Louisa: Oh, Franco...oh...okay.

Pauline: That's the only thing I got, but I did not got from mine time being being in all those camps or working, and I know they took my name a hundred

times. But you know the Germans. If you don't show, just exactly, and if they don't have it written down everything...that's it. I don't know what they have, what they don't have. They probably don't have, because when I was in Majdanek for a good time, they didn't have the numbers yet. You see, they just had til 29,000, 30,000 there was numbers, and after this they later quit. When I came there,they already didn't make any numbers on people.

Louisa: Yeah.

Pauline: I was registered.

Louisa: Uh huh. Have you gone back to Poland or Germany since you've been an American?

Pauline: No. Not to Poland I didn't go. I didn't even go to Poland to see if I could sell something. Then, you know. After the War. And I wouldn't go now. What would I go to see? If I would know where certain graves, certain relatives...but they ploughed through everything.

Louisa: Yeah.

Pauline: They ploughed through and they made fields, and they wouldn't even tell you anything, if you asked if it's a cemetery from...now they've picked up all the stones. They make latrines from them, sidewalks. You could walk on a sidewalk in Poland,and it's all Jewish grave stones made a sidewalk.

Louisa: Is that right?!

Pauline: Yeah! Especially a town we stopped when we were coming from Russia to Poland, not far from Poznan, it's Jastrzebec (phonetically Yastembitz). It was the whole town was with, laid out with Jewish gravestones.

And we walked, looking. Because my husband went, you know, made a prayer for the dead, you know, just every opportunity he had. And a couple more men, they got together, and we did whatever he could. Sometimes so many people went off and they never came back. The Poles killed them there. In 1946-1947. Yeah.

Louisa: Have you had flashbacks and nightmares about your war experiences?

Pauline: For a long time about my father I was dreaming for years, because I have seen how they were beating him badly. And my father was a very,very healthy person. He was so healthy, that you have no idea. I am little. We all are little, but he was tall. He was over 6 feet tall.

Louisa: Wow!

Pauline: And all his lifetime he was walking in the woods all the time to look up and assess the, you know, the lumber, what it is, and it was walking. He was always walked his life from early in the morning summer or winter. And he was so healthy, that you have no idea.

And so...but he was beaten up badly. He was badly beaten up. But he recovered quicker than anyone else, and they were wondering. Young people couldn't keep up anything from him. Nothing, that how healthy he was. And someone told me, that in Reva Russka they took the whole place, they whole town, what it was the Jewish people where they had him, the ghetto by the freight station there. And they just burned that place with all the people and everything, so. They told me that my father was about, they worked him, maybe the last two weeks till the Russians came in. But they burned the whole place up there up.

Louisa: Mmmmmm. It's horrible. And you've had nightmares about that.

Pauline: I had nightmares about this because my father was so healthy, and he was with us, and he got us to the Russian side to the peasants, and everything, but he himself, he knew military stuff and they used him - the partisans - and the Russians used him like a guide for the villages and for the woods, the forest and all this, he knew where everything was. Practically place where it was forest, he knew. So, you know, we had about four or six of sawmills and hardwood export to places, and so he didn't go with us. He just left with the men, and that's where they got him with the men, too.

Well, they did a lot of damage to the Germans, through the partisans, you know, they did whatever they could. They made all kind of running up...

Louisa: All kind of what?

Pauline: Well, all kind of damage they could do...railroads...the ? ...
saw military ^{things} that they knew where it was, and...

Louisa: You mean blowing them up?

Pauline: Blowing 'em up. And if this is not saw, they knew where a lot of people would work with the Germans, and they will tell, you know, that they were looking around, and then just tell the Germans every little thing what

it is, or the other thing. So, he knew, he knew by name a tremendous amount of people.

Louisa: Yeah. Have you ever sought help working through your anger or feelings of regret?

Pauline: No. No. No one gave me any help. No one asked me for anything. There has been no help. Not for me, or the...later they married and they had families, not the young girls I was in Russia with, a lot of them.

Elaine (pronounced Ilin) was two girls mine age.

Louisa: Who was this?

Pauline: Their name was Elaine.

Louisa: "Ilin"?

Pauline: Yes, from Tomaszow Lubelski,, and they now in Israel. I kind of, through my sister, I find out those few girls what is. Some of them just left. Some of them got killed on the way escaping from Poland, after the War, you know.

Louisa: I was talking about your, uh, nightmares and your flashbacks about your father. Have you ever sought help dealing with that, like from a psychologist or a counsellor?

Pauline: No. No. No. From no psychologist, no counsellor. No one. Only when my sister was here, we both talked. She told me her side, but she had... she had just about the same thing as I had, only she was a little bit better off than I was, because she was with one family, a non-Jewish family, and she was all the time with them.

Louisa: Where was this? In Poland?

Pauline: In Poland. And after this she worked there, and she worked hard on the fields, and after this she...they hid her. And she had very bad, because when they hid her, they would go away sometimes, and one time they got away when it was already the Germans not far, and they took their food away for the military and their heavy clothing for winter, and they were just burning down some places, so she said she was staying there in that cellar til the worms were crawling around her. But finally, it was not ? , and she came

but she was scared to come out.

Louisa: Oh, I believe that!

Pauline: When the people came back, they told her you can't go no where. You cannot show your face, because this is bad. They caught this one, and that one. And one had a beauty parlor, a man, and he came, and they killed him. Killed his wife, and killed his children.

So people, after they wanted from the camps, they wanted to come back to their homes to live or whatever...they killed them right away.

Louisa: When you think back over the War years and your family's experience, do you have any heros? Any personal heros?

Pauline: I think my father. I cannot say "hero" because everyone tried to do whatever they could, but I think my father was a hero, because he knew very well Russian. He knew very well Ukrainian. And he knew a lot, a lot of people. So he did not...he wasn't able to place people to hide, they told me, but he was able to bring food to some people when they were in the ghetto before they burned the place. They worked. He had a connection that other people did not have that connection.

-----END OF TAPE 3, SIDE A-----

Tape 3, Side B

Pauline:times he just didn't have anything, they told me that he was begging himself for something to eat. That's how bad it was. I mean, people just starving, that's all it was. And someone told me that they...it came out typhoid in that place, so they just burned it, the whole place up.

Louisa: (sarcastically) That's a way to cure typhoid, by burning everybody and every thing, I guess. That's horrible.

Any other heros?

Pauline: My sister was married to a man. He was all the time...he was a high

officer in the Polish Army, so when the Germans came in, he stayed right away with the Russians and with certain Poles and the partisans, and he had...he was having all the time working with the partisans.

Louisa: Was he Jewish?

Pauline: Yes, he was Jewish, but they didn't know. He had Polish papers.

Louisa: Oh.

Pauline: They didn't know he was Jewish. He would never tell that he was Jewish. He was ? . He told me that when they got Germans, they wouldn't give 'em a chance to live no more, because they had seen what they were doing. But no one could get to it.

Louisa: No one could get to....

Pauline: ? The Germans were doing something, and it was so heavy, that no one could come in into it, or help, or do something.

Louisa: If you had it in your power to create a memorial to victims of the Holocaust, what would you create?

Pauline: It is very hard to answer. I would create something that every person should somehow see what they can do, because educated people...the Germans were extremely educated. And the Poles are not as ignorant...like someone says, they all know only jokes. And the religious, and propaganda. Those two when they get together, they can do a lot of it, what happened. And myself, I attribute all those things what happened, mostly, to the Catholic religion, because it was such a heavy propaganda on a religious basis. And in Poland in all those....in the villages, in the small towns they were so devoted. Whatever their preacher said, that's what they would do it. If it hadn't been something with the Pope, others would have said, "No" - the bishops - they would have not be done that. Simple as this. Because the Germans did'nt do just all by themselves, every one of them did. Very few women and very few men that would not have seen...they were just crossing themselves and making a prayer after the person what have been taken. Very few. The rest of them would just say, "Well, where did they were killed? Where the killings took place today?" So they were just go and having something to rob. Ah! The clothes, the dishes, everything. Everything! All there was.

Louisa: Well, what kind of memorial could we create to, uh...

Pauline: Well, I understand that Milwaukee is, because I donate to this. They having a...they going to build a memorial to the Holocaust.

Louisa: Milwaukee?

Pauline: Yes, I believe this is one, but what kind memorial can I create after over 200 people in the family what I knew...my father's was a tremendous family and my mother's was not as tremendous, but they were fine business people, very pious people. What could I create more than remember them?

Louisa: 200 members of your family were lost?

Pauline: Yes, were lost. Are lost. My sister and I, we sat down and we made a list, what we remember the names.

Louisa: You made a list?

Pauline: Yeah, I made some list, and my sister has that in Israel, and we just. And, oh, we do...I bought some windows in a synagogue in the name of my husband's family and my family. And my sister, we all got together and we bought some in a synagogue a few names things - bricks and things like this. And that's all that I can do. I put up a stone for my first husband...on his tombstone...it's all his family.

Louisa: Where is he buried?

Pauline: In Israel.

Louisa: He is?

Pauline: Yes. He's buried in Israel, and....

Louisa: He died in Montgomery?

Pauline: He died in Montgomery, but he is buried in Israel, and the congregation, that's one thing I can tell...the congregation took care of that to send him and all the other things. They didn't take care the way it should have been, because they waited a long time, and they didn't know how to arrange...it was all kind of things, and they didn't even tell me. Because I knew better than they. If they would have told me, I had it all ready for it now. Well, what can I tell? What can I tell? Very little Try to go on with life. Sometimes my life does not have any meaning. It doesn't mean much. Sometimes I'm

very depressed. But... and still believe in God, and you know, by Jewish standards to believe is if a person lets himself down or does something to himself, it's as much as murders another person. It's equal. Promise you.

Louisa: Um hum.

Pauline: So, I still hope to God for a better tomorrow. Something I arranged myself like this, "Whatever happened I didn't do it; I was the one who suffered, but that was yesterday. I'll try to make the best out of today. And then I still look for a better future tomorrow. But I don't know. Is it going to come?"

Louisa: I think that you have a healthy attitude.

Pauline: Well what can you do? Hang myself?

Louisa: No!

Pauline: I mean, you know, it's, it's ...a lot of people did!

Louisa: Oh, I've heard that.

Pauline: I lot of people had nowhere to turn. No where to...

Louisa: Well, you're a real survivor, and a fighter.

Pauline: Yeah, survivor...yeah, yeah...I knew how to fight. I knew how to lie. People told me how to lie, and that helped. I don't lie today.

Louisa: How did they teach you to lie?

Pauline: Just don't give yourself away that you're Jewish. Your guts might turn over, but you just laugh at it. "I know how you feel, because I'm sorry for you too. It doesn't hurt me. I'm sorry, but!..you could say, "Well I got used to it, so I don't!..they're going. You know. There were people that going just like....go! But, uh...lying. A lot of lying. A lot of falseness. Lot of try...not..not to let themselves lie to. And somehow my looks were blended in. You know, light blonde.

Louisa: That's how you feel^{like} you survived?

Pauline: Oh, a lot have told me just because of this. You know, now you see now, how you say, a small nose like this. And you know, very bright. Mine hair was just so blonde when they started ? . And hard work, most of it I think that I have to really, maybe I didn't like it what my parents taught me, but I appreciate it. Let's say this saved my life...hard work. I knew all kind of things to do. I knew all kind of things to do.

Louisa: Yeah. You sure did!

Pauline: If a peasant knew, I knew.

Louisa: Have you ever told anybody else except your sister what you've told me today? Have you discussed your experiences with other people?

Pauline: Not in small ? details. But if they ask me, I say, "Well, I lived through the War." And this. But, that's it.

I would like to tell you one day how it looks to live under Communism.

Louisa: Okay.

Pauline: Because, today is no more, and there is no one as happier than I am. Maybe generations will have a ^{better} life than all those people did.

Louisa: Do you want to say a few words about that now?

Pauline: That's all. Yeah. I was treated like any other person, so I had no qualm that it was something that that anti-Semitism was not under Stalin, because they could not...if they would have said something, they would have been shot. They had it in their heart, but they wouldn't say much.

Louisa: Under Stalin.

Pauline: Yeah. So, but it was...we lived like cattle, not like people. You don't have any brains for yourself. It's just you live here; they give you this little bed; here you stay; here you get up. They give you a card. You go to work. They give you there a little meal, whatever wants meal, and this is what you have. And all depends on what job you do, accordingly what piece of bread you get for the day. The ration is 200grams, 500, 800, something like this. That was the highest, about. And 1 kilogram bread a day was high.

Louisa: Um hum.

Pauline: So, this is people who worked very hard jobs. We were considered... I was considering, lately, the last thing that I was working a hard-considered job, but anyhow, that is not the important thing.

They paid us. So that taken out like this, like I had, let's say, 600 rubles. 600 dollars a month. So, here, if you like to buy bonds from the government, you buy a bond. Bond there, they take your note 25% every month from your salary for a bond. And the bond will bring back the money in 20 years.

Louisa: Oh, my heavens. You should live so long!

Pauline: This is one thing, that's the 25%.

10% was for cultural. For cultural expenses.

Louisa: What's a cultural expense?

Pauline: Anything cultural. To keep up theatres, the Olympics,

Louisa: Not the good culture for the government.

Pauline: Culture, for the government. Then, if you are under 18 and you haven't got three children at the time, you have to pay 10% tax. Then it was a highway tax. 5% or 6%. Then it was all kind...then it was income tax. So ^{when} you had to pay the first two weeks in a month you had so much of this. And ^{when} it came the other two weeks, you had to pay everything. So you haven't got anything! And if I had, let's say, 400 rubles, and if I wanted to buy a pound of bread on black market, that what it was. So what I used to do...either I used to go...I had to work 12 hours, and from 12 hours with my back hurting and all this, I had extremely difficult.

Louisa: I can't imagine!

Pauline: But, a doctor, you go to a doctor. If a person has no fever, he's not sick! There's no such thing that someone is ill with not having fever. If I came with TB, I was not recognized that I am ill, because the fever is just a little bit. You know, there is ? . And there's nothing there. And this I was beaten up and this ? , and this is just a little thing. It doesn't show, and I had to work. Well, finally, what I'm talking to you is doc when I married my husband, and this doctor took me in the hospital, and she wrote all the documents that I am not capable working and that I'm sick and all this. This is where I went off from work. And I went, and I had to have something, a few soemthing to buy my bread with, so what I did, I went somewhere to wash up floors in a restaurant, so they give me a little soup to eat, and that was it!

Louisa: Well, it took you off hard labor, I guess.

Pauline: Yeah, they took me off hard labor, and I didn't have the ration, and I didn't have...didn't miss the money,either, because I could do without it.

Louisa: Yeah, gee.

Pauline: Yeah, you know, there's stealing there. That's one thing. Some of the Russian people are nice. It's a different world. You know this is government people, and this is people. (Laughs) If they steal something, they tell you, "Hey, you have no experience. If you go, you just stay here. When we're doing something, we divide." 'Cause say, they going to catch you. You don't know what to say. You don't know where you are. You're going to admit. We can't afford. (a little muttering) So that's how it was!

Louisa: You've had quite a life!

Pauline: Yeah, I've had a life!

Louisa: Is there anything else you'd like to say on tape?

Pauline: Oh, a hundred different things. Who knows? Who knows. It was a life.

Louisa: And when did you marry Mr. Davidson?

Pauline: There's a friend of mine in New Orleans. And I really didn't feel like it because I was five years by myself, and I worked a little, and I had a little place. You know, I had a home, it wasn't...for me it was fine.

Louisa: Here in Montgomery?

Pauline: Here in Montgomery. So I just let it go, but, still being alone, and my sister was telling me, her husband died, and she said, it's so bad, it's so bad to be alone. At least you have someone to talk to you, and someone to be there. And he's a very fine person, very nice. He's not (now) feeling too good; it's one of those things now. But when we got married, he was very nice.

Louisa: How long have you been married?

Pauline: Just a little over three years.

Louisa: Oh, my goodness! Practically a newly-wed! (Laughs)

Pauline: Yeah. For old people, that's old, you know! (Laughs). But he's very nice.

Louisa: So, you've been in Meridian three years?

Pauline: Three years. In June was three years. ?

Louisa: Yeah. Well, let's finish up, and I would like for you....

Pauline: Let's finish up this thing.

Louisa: Yeah. Do you have any messages for future generations, who might listen to this tape about your life, and your experiences?

Pauline: For future generations is: be kinder one to another, understand another. First, maybe if you would learn what other people are, we would learn how to live with them. Because we can not do what had happened, and from the way it looks like, you can see how it is now already here, all kind of things, and we hope that it's going to come to peace, to some understanding between human beings, between countries, between religions. That's what I can think of. What else can I say?

Louisa: Yeah, that's a tall order!

Pauline: Well, it's all individual people.

Louisa: It is.

Pauline: If the government said so, everybody says "hooray" and they go. But if, would say something, there's a lot of good people, and a lot of bad. Maybe something. But it's all the home is information. No school will teach you what home and home will teach you. No matter how old people are, and no matter what, they will always say, "My mother did so." You just try to cook..."No, my mother did that way and I'm doing this way." And no group is good. And this how it came from. All this, because it's inside, and one generation the other.

Louisa: Yeah. Hate inside.

Pauline: The hate inside, and it happened that's in my generation, it all blew over, and it showed. The hate was with you there, all through the years. Look all those pogroms. Russia has a, really a...it happens from generations to generations to generations...the hate. Maybe now they learn that. What do you think?

Louisa: I don't know. We'll have to wait and see, won't we?

Pauline: I don't know. Not in my time.

Louisa: I think the next five years will be big changes. I don't know if it's for the good or the bad.

Pauline: I hope in America better changes will be.

Louisa: Yeah.

Well, right here I'll turn this (tape recorder) off, and thank you very much for coming to Montgomery and talking with me about this.

Pauline: There's a lot of things I don't want to talk about what I have seen, like when someone ? and wants to rob 'em ? , so they will take those two fingers in here, and just kill 'em right then and there.

Louisa: Hit it in their throat.

Pauline: Yeah. And you just...you fall, but the worst part is children. How do you look when they bring a truck of children, and all they do is, when they took the children out of the places, they take 'em by foot and throw in the truck like it was....the same way ^{like} we collecting garbage.

Louisa: Golly!

Pauline: And that truck is just going, and sometime the truck turns over in the mud, and it's all like, like with the live and the dead together, and children is screaming, and crying, and (stutters)...how do you can explain this? And the same people go today lies to their children, and they kiss and they love and this. But this is Jewish. So. How can you explain this when you look with your own eyes? How can you explain how they kill so many people, and underneath the people, the dead is picking it up? So high. And they looking at it and then they take out the bayonets and sticking this one, sticking this one on the top (indicates random jabbing). The people are living yet. The children, mostly, because they weren't even shot, so they take the bayonets and stuck 'em so it will be easier to cover 'em up quick.

How can you tell, how can you tell (stutters) that they put a foot down and tear in half and throw away, ^{and} a nice lady, she's married an hour and they got her now. That's from Majdanek, that woman. She had a job like this; they were from New York, she was married ^{to an American,} and oh, she's the finest and the nicest. So! There's a hundred different things. It just makes me nauseous, to think about it even. I have not forgotten. But I learned to live with it. It won't be any good. So what if I think about it. It just makes me rush in my head, and think I am...you know when memorial services coming, I don't see anyone, I see that, (Memorial service at Yom Kippur) and I hear the hollering,

screaming. Do you have any idea what it means, screaming that God himself should have heard, because they went to heaven. That high and that loud.

Louisa: Hmmm. It's unimaginable.

Pauline: Where's the mercy? And where's the education? And you think in America, look at that. All of it wasn't thinking there existed such a thing. Look at those books, coming up, they're coming up on TV with all kind, and they're nazis and they're sending money....

Louisa: Yeah. That's why I'm doing this.

Pauline: Propaganda, know this? So what are you going to say about it? What can you say?

Louisa: Record stories like yours to make theirs a lie.

Pauline: You see German soldiers or the Lithuanians or the Croatians now they killing themselves. So what's going on? They used to have little boys making a string. You see, I got me a puppy (next incomprehensible) and that little boy would go on or something, they would kick him, they would hit him. You see. (next incomprehensible, muttering) making all kind of things.

And I was going through one village and there's some families, looks like Jewish families ^{were} there with children. There was no men, only women with children somewhere. And they got them into a barn down there, and playing the ? , and dancing with their girls, and they making a party because it's going to be a killing. And they kill the people with the children and they're dancing, and they ask me if I want to go to a killing party.

Louisa: A killing party!

Pauline: Yeah. A killing party. They're about 12 or 13 years old little snotty little boy, and he knew how to shoot. He was a sharp shooter.

Louisa: Well, who was he shooting, the Jews?

Pauline: The Jews. The Jewish children.

Louisa: Oh, God.

Pauline: A little village in the middle of nothing. Couldn't even write or read or anything. So they ask me if I want go, and tell 'em I work so hard

shelling beans or something, and couldn't go. Should I go there and take a look?

Louisa: No. No way.

Pauline: So what's there to say? How can people be so cold, so heartless?

A light, like the fire from heaven should have come and burned them up.

And they lived! They lived. They're not even sick, or anything.

Louisa: Yeah. Feel virtuous.

Pauline: Oh! They...they don't even feel no guilt, only absolutely nothing!

That's one thing. I don't look any shows. I don't look any reports on the

TV. They ask me, "did you see that?" I say, "I did not see...I don't look."

Because I'm not going to look, I don't start to think about it. First, I don't think I could sit there quiet and look.

Louisa: Yeah. At Nazi movies.

Pauline: Yeah, at Nazi movies and the Nazi this, and the Na...they show sometimes, you know, the from France, I have seen, that's uh, they were saying a Jewish report some kind of record, certain things in Poland and this. I wouldn't even go. I don't know. Maybe, some people tell me I should go ^{and} see. Maybe in the cemeteries something. Maybe here. Maybe there. But everything is gone. There isn't anything. And where would I go? I don't want to see.

Louisa: I don't blame you. I don't blame you. Well, I'll turn off the tape now. Thank you for going through this. I know it's...

Pauline: Been hard.

Louisa: I know it's been very difficult.

Pauline: It's just like my head's turning...

Louisa: Your head's popping out.

Pauline: Like I'm getting, I don't know...

Louisa: A headache?

Pauline: Light, just like light from something, you know.

-----END OF INTERVIEW-----