

ROCHESTER ORAL HISTORY PROJECT (Rochester Jewish community 1924-1975)

Interviewee Mrs. Jenny (Jacob) Hollander

Interviewer Nancy J. Rosenbloom

Date(s) of interview June 8, 1976 (1st interview) ^{July 11, 1976 - 2nd} 2 tapes

Setting (place of interview, people present, impressions)

This interview occurred at Mrs. Hollander's apartment on Monroe Avenue. She was very much at ease. She wears a hearing aid and sometimes had trouble understanding my questions.

Background of interviewee

Mrs. Hollander, originally Mrs. Panitch, came to America from a small town in Poland in 1930. Her first husband was a teacher at Talmud Torah. Mrs. Hollander was a trained teacher in Poland where she taught German, Russian and Polish language. Only in America did she become a Hebrew teacher, first at Hillel Day School and more recently at Beth Sholom. She retired in 1970. Currently she is an extremely active woman in the various community groups, several of which meet at the Jewish Community Center. She is a woman content with "her lot in life" and is a religious woman. She is quite willing however to change with the times as much as she can.

Interview abstract

The first interview included general personal and biographical information, her career at both Hillel School and Beth Sholom, and some recollections about Rochester in the 1930's, 1940's.

Interview index (corresponding to tape numbers, sides of tape, and casset recorder numbers)

<u>***</u> Social history	<u>**</u> Jewish community
<u>**</u> Family	<u>**</u> community relations
<u>**</u> Demographic/residential	<u>**</u> Religious life
<u> </u> Economic	<u>***</u> Jewish education
<u> </u> Political/civic	<u> </u> * Anti-semitism
<u>***</u> Zionism/Israel	

Interview log

- corresponding to tape numbers, sides of tape, and casset recorder nos.
- including references to others in the Rochester community

--see following page(s)--

Mrs. Jenny Hollander
Interview I
Side A

- I. *Biographical: Mrs. Hollander migrated from Poland in July, 1930. She had been educated in a Russian gymnasium with nonJewish children. In Poland, she taught in a public school. Her husband migrated to America in 1926, bringing with her one daughter (her only child), already in her midteens. Anti-semitism was not a cause for Mr. Panitch's migration. He came because it was hard for a Hebrew teacher in Poland. In Rochester he taught at the Talmud Torah, prayer, Bible, Tanach, Gemorrah. Some children came from the Jewish Children's Home although Beth Joseph center also had a Hebrew School. The Baden Street Settlement was located next door to the Talmud Torah although in this time period it was already a day care center for nonJewish children.
- * Mrs. Hollander's own experience in Rochester included learning English at no. 9 school; attending evening school at East High School. Mrs. Hollander lived on Harris Street for 11 years, then moved to Field Street, Alliance Avenue, and Monroe Avenue. After the move, she joined Beth Sholom on Field Street.
- II. *Career as teacher: Mrs. Hollander taught hebrew at Beth Sholom where the students mostly spoke English. At Hillel School the student spoke Hebrew. She taught first grade then first, third and fifth grades.
- ** Mrs. Hollander discussed in some detail the history of Hillel School.
- ** Mrs. Hollander's early training as a teacher and some stories about being a Hebrew teacher in Rochester.
- ** Discussion about the New Yeshiva and its relationship with Hillel School. Funding comes mostly from Bingo, Ladies Auxilliary, tuition.
- III. **Zionism
Mrs. Hollander is in Mizrachi, Hadassah, Pioneer Women has family in Israel and has travelled there eleven times. Her parents fled to Israel in 1934, away from Hitler.
- IV. Personal data
She subscribes to the Daily Press, Daily Forward in order to have information about Israel..
Discussion about butchers in Rochester, plenty of Kosher meat.
- * Father had been a grain merchant in Poland. She was the middle of four children, one brother in America two sisters in Israel.

Side B

- Childhood in Poland.
- * Rochester in the 1930's; the Depression. Her immigration experience. Reference to Mrs. Ruderman.
Riots.
Antisemitism in Rochester.
Participation at the JCC.

Side B

Jewish Children's Home, Mother's Club
Story of Mr. Hollander's migration from Israel to
Binghamton.
Recollections about Jewish Children's Home

V. Religious Life

Participation in Beth HaKnesset and Beth Sholom,
ORT.

There has been some modernization at Beth Sholom, changes
in congregation and services towards a more cultural
community.

Mrs. JENNY HOLLANDER
Nancy J. Rosenbloom
July 11, 1976
Tape 2

Side A

- XX A. Activities at the JCC
Recollections of Israel EMIOT
Mrs. Hollander is quite active in a variety of clubs at the JCC. She has organized programs there including talks on Cabala, Hasidism, Maimonides.
- XX Mrs. Hollander is a member of the "Women's Libbers."
Anecdote
She is active in the senior citizens groups.
She is active in Mizrahi as the National Fund Chairman.
She is a member of ORT
She is active in Hillel School fundraising.
Some repetition from tape 1 on her career in Poland and Russia.
- XXX B. Mrs. Hollander has some sound opinions on Women's liberation and on women's roles as concerns her own mitzvot. Women's voluntarism is itself a role.
- XX C. Mrs. Hollander remembers Joseph avenue as something like the stores in the old country.
- XXX D. Mrs. Hollander remembers teaching in Poland as "friendliness of Germans and Jews. She talked somewhat about Communists in her town after the first World War.
- XX E. Mrs. Hollander talked somewhat about her first husband, Mr. Panitch, and why he came to America.

SIDE B

- XXX F. Recollections of Bolshevism
Antisemitism in Poland. There was no antisemitism between the Polish and Jews in America. Antisemitism is different in America because the gentiles do not feel as free to express themselves. They feel the Jews are people to look up to because they are more privileged since they have "made it."
- XXX G. Mrs. Hollander's recounting of her immigration experience is fascinating. Mr. Panitch had emigrated under the German quota because the Polish quota was full. He did so illegally and was arrested some years later after he had attained American citizenship. He had a trial and was aided by Rabbi BERNSTEIN, 1935-37. Who reported him? Mrs. Hollander was unwilling to say or she did not know. However, these types of cases were apparently frequent.
Mr. Panitch had decided to come to America because he had two sisters here.
- X H. Recollections of Mothers Club of Jewish Children's Home, had about 100 members. They treated the children very well.
- XXX I. Recollections of Rabbi Solomon's Cheder on Thomas Street. This was a private school as opposed to the public school, the Talmud Torah. Mrs. Hollander never considered teaching at the Talmud Torah.
- XXX J. Zionism
Mrs. Hollander's opinions on Israel were formed in Europe. They have not changed since she has been in America. She had a strong opinion of Israel's proper action in Uganda. She had an opinion on American reaction to Israel foreign policy, i.e. American leaders do as much as they can.
- XX K. Future of Rochester Jewish Community:
Loss of orthodoxy despite the St. Regis Street Shul. Intermarriage poses a real problem. Jewish youth don't have traditional education which is a large part of the problem. Hillel school does seek more children.
Rochester is like any other Jewish community.
Rochester has been a friendly city.
Comment on Russian Jews.

Interview I
Tape 1
Side A

Q. Jenny Hollander on Monroe Avenue. Just to test the tape recorder would you like to give us a little biographical data? How long have you been in Rochester?

A. I came 1930, July, 1930. It'll be exactly 46 years.

Q. Oh, OK. OK. You've said you've been in Rochester since 1930. Where are you from?

A. I'm from Poland, (Transcriber's note: Mrs. Hollander says a few words in Polish in a very heavy accent. I believe it is the name of a town or area in Poland. I cannot render even a close transcription.) I . . . my education I got in Longaja Gymnasium, the Russian gymnasium. And it was . . . Jews were taken very few. They had to have a high . . . the highest marks, otherwise they wouldn't. . . just wouldn't be needed because . . . it was Russian government.

Q. When was this?

A. When I started?

Q. Yea.

A. Long ago. I was at that time . . . at that time it was a . . . we started from the third grade. I was about 12 years old.

Q. And this is like about 1918. . . 1919?

A. Was mother there? Was . . .

Q. When did you leave Poland? When did you leave this small town in Poland? When did you emigrate to the United States? 1930.

A. 1930.

Q. '30. Oh, oh. So Rochester was the first place you came?

A. Yes.

Q. Oh, I thought maybe you went through New York.

A. No.

Q. OK. I'm not sure this is recording. Let me. . . Were you a Hebrew school teacher in Poland?

A. Yea, I was in. . . first I started in Hillel School. I teach in Hillel School, and I was there several years. And then I went to Beth Sholom in the afternoon.

Q. What. . .

A. Afternoon school.

Q. Right from 1930 you started?

A. No, I went. . . Hillel School started . . . don't remember which year. Soon as the Hillel School started, I was the first teacher.

Q. In the old country were you a Hebrew school teacher?

A. In the old country I was. . . no, in the old country I was a Russian teacher, Polish teacher, a German teacher because it was at the end of the war. And when the German occupied our city the. . . the schools became German. And every. . . all subjects were in German. And being I knew German from my high school I. . . and then I have to. . . and then we have to have our license so we . . . in every. . . in. . . in . . . in German language. So, to courses. And then became . . . Poland became independent I became a Polish teacher. And then I had to get a license in Polish. And I got my license in Polish to courses, and so we had to pass. And then I had. . . I became a permanent teacher, Poland. Till 1930, till I came here. In fact when I. . . they did not know that I wouldn't come back, I got Buffalo from the council got a letter there, they are waiting for me, why don't I come back? So, but here

- A. (Continued) I became a Hebrew teacher, also got a license as a Hebrew teacher. And seven years in Hillel School and fifteen years in Beth Sholom.
- Q. Beth Sholom. Did you teach Jewish children in Poland. . . in Poland also?
- A. Poland . . . first the Germans. . . when the Germans were at war only Jewish children. But then when we were Polish, it was always mix.
- Q. So it was more or less a public. . .
- A. Polish and. . . Polish and Ger. . . Polish and Jewish.
- Q. What made. . . when you decided to leave in 1930, what was. . .?
- A. My husband was here four years before me, four and a half years. And so I came to my husband with my daughter.
- Q. One daughter?
- A. One daughter.
- Q. Did you already sense that there was going to be trouble in Europe against the Jews?
- A. It was the Nazis. . . I didn't. . . no, I did not come because there was trouble against the Jews. I did not. . . in fact, I did not have any trouble when I was there. And. . . but later on Hitler started later on, four years later. But I did not suspect it. I came just because my husband was here.
- Q. And he was also a Hebrew teacher?
- A. He was a Hebrew teacher, yea he was in Talmud Torah. Yea.
- Q. Here. Teaching. . . where. . . where did he teach? This is Mr. Panitch?
- A. In Talmud Torah on Baden Street.
- Q. Oh, on Baden Street. And what kind of students were down on Baden Street? Were they mostly immigrant children? Or were they . . .
- A. It was an afternoon. . . an afternoon Hebrew school.
- Q. Who were the children?
- A. All. . . all children for every age. Three. . . was a . . . there weren't. . .

- A. (Continued) other. . . I don't think there were any other. . . except the temple Hebrew schools, Hebrew schools.
- Q. That's right. That's. . .
- A. Because the temple and nobody else had a Hebrew school except Temple Beth El and Temple B'rith Kodesh, no more. And the Talmud Torah.
- Q. At the Talmud Torah it was mostly an Orthodox. . .?
- A. Absolutely.
- Q. So it was . . . what types of studies? Reading the Torah and. . .
- A. They. . . they. . . they learned Hebrew, Hebrew davad, Hebrew language and . . . and reading the Torah. They learned everything. The Bible, Tanach, Gemorrah.
- Q. Did they speak mostly. . . was it Yiddish speaking?
- A. No, no.
- Q. English or Hebrew?
- A. They spoke English, spoke English.
- Q. I guess what I'm really asking is were they American children or children of immigrants who had come? They were mostly children of immigrants?
- A. No. At that time, there were a lot of immigrants and a lot of children from the Jewish Home, too, the orphan asylum at Talmud Torah. All Jewish children that lived around that section so they came to Talmud Torah, there was no other school.
- Q. Around. . .
- A. It. . . the. . . Beth Joseph had also a Hebrew school.
- Q. Beth Joseph was also Orthodox?
- A. Orthodox, yes,
- Q. But they really probably taught different kinds. The Talmud Torah. . .
- A. Yea, they did. That section. St. Paul Section went to Beth Joseph. And

- A. (Continued) from the old section, from the Joseph Avenue section they all . . . there . . . there used to be over two hundred children.
- Q. Yea. Do you recall . . . do you recall the Baden Street Settlement? What . . .
- A. Yea, they . . . it was right near the Talmud Torah. Baden Settlement was the next house from the Talmud Torah.
- Q. Oh.
- A. And they all used to come to visit, little children. At that time only little children, they used to take care of them, the girls used to come . . . mothers had to work and they used to bring the children, and they were a whole day children, when they came home from working take the children.
- Q. Mostly Jewish children?
- A. No.
- Q. Mixed?
- A. I don't think there were at that time any Jewish children. Later on there came there was extra Jewish children, not many.
- Q. Actually, I'm curious about your own experience coming to Rochester. Did you know English before you got to . . .?
- A. No, I didn't . . . I did not know any English. But I started in No. 9 School at in the evening there was a special course for . . . for newcomers. And teacher . . . Selsun was his name . . .
- Q. It sounds.
- A. I think . . . no not Selsun . . . no, that was what's his name . . .
- Q. Salatin, yea.
- A. And he was teaching Salatin, yea. And we have to . . . and I was very good at that, and then I went to my daughter to get her to Benjamin . . . no first I went to East High in the evening. And then I . . . what did . . . it was too far for me to walk, I could not afford to take the bus, I used to walk in the

- A. (Continued) evenings. I used to come back at 11 o'clock, and so I started Benjamin Franklin with my daughter.
- Q. So at that time you were living around Benjamin Franklin?
- A. I lived on Harris Street.
- Q. On Harris Street.
- A. Yea, and so we all used to walk every day to Benjamin Franklin. One they try to give now a picture how it both was.
- Q. So your daughter was born in
- A. Poland.
- Q. In what year?
- A. My daughter was born in 1915.
- Q. 1915. OK. Let's see. Did you stay in Harris. . . did you live on Harris Street for a long time?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Up until when?
- A. Yea, yea 11 years on Harris Street.
- Q. And then you moved?
- A. And then I moved to Field Street, then I moved to Alliance Avenue. From Alliance Avenue here.
- Q. So once you left Harris Street then did you join Beth Sholom? Or by then you were teaching?
- A. No, yes. It was Beth Sholom was down there was at that time. I lived on Harris Street it was . . . until I moved to Beth Sholom and on Harris Street I joined Beth Joseph.
- Q. Beth Joseph. And then. . .

- A. And then on Field Street I joined Beth Sholom. And then later on I became teacher at Beth Sholom.
- Q. OK. Maybe we'll talk a little bit about teaching at Beth Sholom. You . . . you taught Hebrew all . . . all ages of children?
- A. In the afternoon school we did not talk much Hebrew, we taught mostly English, just a lesson someday was just . . . At Hillel School we talked Hebrew mostly. But at Beth Sholom we used to talk everything in English and translate in Hebrew and give some . . . some Hebrew knowledge, some Hebrew conversation. We used to have conversations. But like conversations which words that we use every day.
- Q. The children . . . you taught all age children?
- A. Yea, I . . . yea I used to have the first grade, I used to have all the time the first. They knew that I'm an expert. And then they used to change in other grades. We used to . . . in the beginning we used to have three grades because we used to teach till half past seven, three grades. So I used to have first and third and fourth or first and third and fifth. But then after that it was only the best children, and we had only . . . had best grades. So I used to teach only to six o'clock, so I used to teach only two grades. So first and third most of the time.
- Q. What made them change from seven thirty to six o'clock.
- A. Because the children, they said that it's too late. Come home and they'd . . . they have no time to eat supper. So, the children, we changed to four to six.
- Q. What year did you retire? At Beth Sholom?
- A. Three years ago.
- Q. So that's 1973?
- A. 19 . . . 19 . . . yea I can see. They gave me a plaque. I don't remember

- A. (Continued) what year. . . ago. . . it's five years. . . five years. . .
- Q. Five years, that's 1970. OK. Did your first husband, Mr. Panitch, teach at Talmud Torah his whole life? That was his life?
- A. Until he retired.
- Q. Until he retired. So was that even after you moved onto Field Street? You moved. . .
- A. Doesn't matter. Anyplace we was he went. . . he went to Talmud Torah till he retired.
- Q. Do you think in Rochester over the past forty years there's more of a demand for Hebrew education, less. . . ?
- A. Hillel School is only one. . . the one at least those that. . . that meant Hebrew and send the children to Hebrew school. It is the only place where they can learn Hebrew, and they can have the education in full. The afternoon schools give you only a drop of everything.
- Q. Did you prefer teaching at Hillel School to Beth Shalom? Or. . .
- A. It was more money and easier, better time. She went from four to fifteen in there in Hillel in a whole day. And especial when we start I started in the Joseph Center one year and that was very hard work. It was. . . we had teach the whole. . . we had to . . . they need. . . they needed in the evening . . . they need it for services. So in the morning we'd have to take out all the chair and tables, and we had to pay food back and put everything in order, the hall should be for. . . it was very hard work. And then when we moved on East Avenue it was more room and it was much easier. We didn't have to. . . came home right away and didn't have to start working.
- Q. How many children did you used to have in a class at Hillel School?
- A. It depends. Not always the same. We started maybe with . . . with 10 children.

- A. (Continued) and when the year was finished we had, I think, over 90. And then here we came, it was great already, every year another grade. We started with kindergarten and first grade and nursery. And then nursery. When we came here on East Avenue, at that nursery and first worked. . . and every year was another grade, so it was coming children. In the beginning were not too many, but it was more and more and more.
- Q. Were most of the children from Orthodox homes?
- A. No, no. No, absolutely not. Even now. . .now they have all from B'rith Kodesh and from Beth El, they have 120 children.
- Q. And they're prepared very well in both secular subjects. . .
- A. Secular, yea. In fact, after they finish public school and when they go into high school every school wants to have 'em 'cause they are the best students.
- Q. Yea. Did. . . do you think they enjoy, the children themselves, enjoy being in a. . . ?
- A. Very much. I have Mr. Hollander's granddaughter, and she. . . she enjoys so much that when it comes vacation she cannot wait to start again.
- Q. When they left were they more or less fluent in Hebrew? They could speak Hebrew easily?
- A. When they finish school they are mostly. . . almost fluent. But they understand very well. It may be hard for them to speak up, but they understand very well.
- Q. Is. . . is Zionism encouraged in Hillel School?
- A. No, have nothing to do. . .have nothing to do. It's just school. Zionism is a party. And this is school. Nothing to do with Zionism.
- Q. OK.
- A. They. . . they learn about Israel naturally, but they have nothing to do with Zionism.
- Q. Right. That's separate. Let's see. Maybe you could talk a little bit

- Q. (Continued) about your own training in terms of teaching Hebrew. Well, you said you . . . when you came to America you got a certifi. . . you were certified.
- A. I was learning since I was a child Hebrew. I was not teaching the Hebrew in the old country, but I was learning since I was a child. When I came here I continued. And every year we used to have a course in the mountains and I used to attend. And. . . and. . . and I studied privately with my husband. My husband was a very learned man.
- Q. This is Mr. Panitch?
- A. Was much more than I. Yes. So then we had chance. . . I had chance.
- Q. Was that certification from Rochester?
- A. No, from New York. Special. . . a special . . . how do they call it? When you graduate what you get, a diploma. A special diploma from the Board of Education in New York.
- Q. And you could have taught at . . .
- A. Naturally I could taught any school. Any Hebrew school.
- Q. Do you think that there are enough Hebrew teachers? Like did people my age continue to go into . . .?
- A. We get from Israel mostly teachers. Here from America we wouldn't. . . although there are seminars, there are a lot of seminars now, there are more and more teachers. But, most of the schools have Israeli teachers.
- Q. Why?
- A. Because the Israeli teachers are more . . . more educated and they know better the language. And the. . . and they want the children to get the. . . the language and the. . . the expressions and it's different when you get it from your own land, it's very different. Even the accent. So the children get the better accent.

Q. Do you think there would be enough Hebrew teachers, Rochesterians, that would be able to teach the children?

A. Rochesterians? No.

Q. No.

A. From Rochester? No. Absolutely not.

Q. Why do you. . .?

A. No, there are very, very few Hebrew teachers in Rochester. Because they. . . not many take. . . because not many take the Hebrew knowledge. They. . . they go to school in the afternoons school. They cannot have the knowledge for. . . for a Hebrew teacher.

Q. What do you think most of the graduates of the Hillel school go on and do?

A. They. . . a lot of them go on to. . . to the Hebrew schools. To Hebrew high school and then to Hebrew college. But not many.

Q. Not many. And a lot of them become professionals, doctors. . .

A. They go to. . . to public school after they finish Hillel school, they go to regular public school.

Q. Right.

A. And you go to college. Just like you go to the Hebrew. . . continue with a Hebrew education. First of all because you cannot. . . you cannot have it here. They have to send the children after. . . when they're twelve years old they have to. . . you have to send them out of town. Not every parent likes to send a child twelve years old out of town. And secondly, not. . . not every parent is interested enough in the Hebrew language.

Q. Now this new yeshiva that opened on Field Street.

A. It is only for the boys.

Q. Only for the boys.

A. Boys, not for girls. They try to get it for girls. Yeshiva is getting

A. (Continued) bigger and bigger, you see? Enlarging it. What now a new home, and it's getting more children, people especially. And we get from out of town, they don't get only from Hillel School or there wouldn't be enough.

Q Where. . .?

A. From out of town. From New York, from Boston they come. They shouldn't. . . they are in the dormitory.

Q. Oh, there are dormitories?

A. Dormitories.

Q. Do they take children like at age 12 through age 18? Or does it also start then with. . .?

A. That's right.

Q. Well, Hillel School meets now at B'rith Kodesh. Right?

A. Yes, yes.

Q. Has Hillel School shrunk in size do you think? Or grown?

A. Oh, no.

Q. Grown.

A. Grow. But, today. . . they sold their building, they had a building on East Avenue. And they sold the building, so they. . . they was teaching in Beth El two years. And two years in B'rith Kodesh. And now they've decided they stay on in B'rith Kodesh. But they're still looking for a permanent house or permanent place, they should have their own school. They are thinking maybe JCC could build. . . but it's a lot of money involved. But they're still looking for a permanent place for Hillel School.

Q. Do you see new. . . new families sending their children to. . . to Hillel School? Or are they mostly children of people who've gone to Hillel School?

A. First of all most come there. . . they have grown up children. . . most of

- A. (Continued) the families. And adults would have to come here, they cannot afford Hillel School . . . parents for position. And even with the scholarships, they don't give too many scholarships. And when they come from Russia they're not very interested so much in a . . . in a Hillel School.
- Q. The Russian Jews coming now you mean?
- A. Russian Jews are not interested in a Hillel School. You know, we don't. . . from Israel they come here they. . . we get 'em in Hillel. Israeli children. . . if a family moves from Israel then they. . . they. . . the children go to Hillel School.
- Q. Are there many Israelis. . .
- A. Yes, sure. . .
- Q. . . that are. . .? To do what?
- A. Children.
- Q. What do Israelis come to Rochester to do?
- A. They. . . their families come they settle in. . . in America. They move here.
- Q. Do you think a lot of them are coming?
- A. Not a lot but. . .
- Q. A few. Right. OK.
- A. And there are Israeli teachers that come with their families, their children go to Hillel School.
- Q. Their children. That's right. I remember when I was in grade school, you had to be released. . . well, no we would have had to be released to go to Hebrew school. We would go to Hebrew school after. . .
- A. After school.
- Q. At three thirty.
- A. Afternoon, that's what I. . .
- Q. But, but sometimes. . . like half the children would be allowed an afternoon

Q. (Continued) . . . off to go to. . . do you remember any of that? Was there any other. . . was there ever any contact between Hebrew school and public school in terms of allowing children maybe a whole afternoon off of public school? Or Hebrew schools were happy enough just to start at three thirty?

A. I don't remember it. I don't think so. Not when I was teaching.

Q. They. . . they used to have something called "free time." And. . . and they'd let Christian children leave like at two o'clock in the afternoon one afternoon a week for religious instruction. You don't remember that? OK. Not very important. Who funds Hillel School? Who gives them money?

A. Hillel?

Q. Yea. Contributions. . . ?

A. The Hillel School. . . first of all has bingo.

Q. Oh, bingo.

A. Bingo brings in a lot. Second they have membership.

Q. This is for Hillel School? Bingo. . . you mean bingo at Beth Sholom?

A. No, Beth Sholom is for Beth Sholom. Hillel School has a Moose. . . Moose on East Avenue.

Q. Oh, right.

A. Every Wednesday afternoon.

Q. Right, right.

A. Hillel School. It's bringing in a lot of money. And there's membership, and there is already auxiliary and there's tuition.

Q. Tuition. But they do offer scholarships?

A. Oh, yea. Lots.

Q. Oh, a lot of scholarships.

A. Lots.

Q. Is that originally. . . Let's see. . . It was always privately. . . private

Q. (Continued) money?

A. Private. It's a private school.

Q. Never had money from the Community Chest or from. . .

A. Charity? Sure, they get a lot of charity.

Q. From. . .

A. A lot of people. People who want to contribute, they contribute it to Hillel School. There is a lot of people. . . the Board members especially they contribute a lot. Other ones who contribute to Hillel School. . . the school costs a lot of money, very big expense. And a good. . . especially Hillel School has everything that really a school should . . . is called for. They want. . . they want to better and better and better it.

Q. Playground. . . and

A. They have playground, they have the library and everything. They're trying to better. It was a. . . it's really. . . it wasn't right away, it worked up little by little, but it's. . . it's . . . it involves a lot of money.

Q. What do you think of Jewish camps like Camp Rama where they speak . . .

A. Jewish what?

Q. Camps. Summer camps.

A. Oh, they are marvelous. They are marvelous, I attended some of them.

Q. Here in America?

A. No. . . in America, sure in America. A Rama Camp and then there's a lot of Hebrew camps and they are marvelous.

Q. Did you teach in a camp?

A. No, I didn't teach. I just came for vacation.

Q. Vacation.

A. I wanted to watch. I just watched. OK. I went for vacation. And I was in Rama camp. Very nice. The grounds are beautiful. Food is good. And

- A. (Continued) they have a special instructor that. . . for everything instructors, for the Hebrew language. And they learn a lot, and they. . . the atmosphere. . . the whole atmosphere is Jewish.
- Q. Do they speak in Hebrew during this. . .?
- A. In a Rama, yes. In some . . . in the Hebrew camps they speak Hebrew. That they among themselves natural they. . . they hop in English, but. . . but for the teachers they try. . . they. . . they tell them and try that they should speak Yiddish, I meant Hebrew.
- Q. What's the name of the camp? Is it affiliated with the Orthodox movement? Rama also?
- A. No Rama is. . .
- Q. Conservative.
- A. Yea, Conservative. I. . . I. . . there's a lot of. . . lot of camps but I have no idea. I wouldn't name them. There are a lot of camps that are Orthodox, most of them are Orthodox.
- Q. I wonder. . .
- A. From the yeshivas they have camps. Orthodox. Hilai. . .
- Q. Hilai. Right. I'm curious. In He. . . at Beth Sholom the boys and the girls were in the same Hebrew class, right? There. . . there's no difference in education in terms of Hebrew?
- A. No.
- Q. All right. Because the laws are stricter in terms of boys and girls mixing in Orthodox, right? But, . . .
- A. No law that they should not mix in, very. . . we don't have a law that boys and girls should not to be together.
- Q. I don't know. I thought, you know, because in Orthodoxy they're on opposite

Q. (Continued) sides of the congregation. . .

A. No, they shouldn't be. . .

Q. Right.

A. But, they can be together. There's no Jewish law. . .

Q. Well, they why. . . why aren't the girls. . .

A. They play together. . . It's only they maybe. . . strictly Orthodox they. . . they . . . separately, when it comes to a wedding, a very Orthodox wedding, they eat separately and they dance separately. But. . . but they come here and they find ways to communicate.

Q. So why aren't there girls at the yeshiva? I mean are yeshivas only. . .

A. Yeshiva. . . separate for girls, separate for boys.

Q. For boys. Why?

A. This is the Orthodox. Yeshivas they have separate. I think a lot is because the boys learn lot. . . a lot more, they acquire more and give more thought than the girls. . . although there are some girls that can learn as much as the boys, but. . . but they feel that they. . . that the boys require much more. . . different. . . a different way of teaching; a different program. A different curriculum.

Q. It is a different . . .

A. . . for girls, different for the boys.

Q. Well, but at Beth Sholom it's. . . it would be the same. . .?

A. All the children are together. . . and the progress. . . all the . . . all the Hebrew schools are together.

Q. If your . . . if your children were still young would you send them to the yeshiva?

A. Absolutely. Absolutely.

Q. 'Cause your own daughter went to public school?

A. She did not have a chance, she was brought up in Poland. We didn't have there. . . . but she. . . she's a Hebrew school teacher. She learned Hebrew privately.

Q. Where does she teach Hebrew?

A. New York in the East Midwoods.

Q. In where?

A. East Midwood.

Q. East Midwood.

A. Yea. It's a very big congregation. Dr. Stearn would be that they are teaching come from there.

Q. That's right.

A. Very nice school and very nice . . . beautiful congregation.

Q. Is it an Orthodox congregation?

A. No it's Conservative.

Q. Conservative. Is her husband also involved in Hebrew. . . ?

A. No, he is a . . . he's not nothing.

Q. Totally nothing. What about Mr. Hollander's two children in Rochester? And your grandchildren by them? Do they go to Hebrew school?

A. Yea. His granddaughter, this one. She goes. . . his son's daughter, she goes to Hillel.

Q. Oh, she goes to Hillel School? She's pretty.

A. Very.

Q. Does he have any sons? Do you have any grandsons?

A. Not here in Rochester. He has a grandson but he works . . .

Q. He went to public school?

A. Yes, he went to public school.

Q. I just wondered.

A. He went to Hebrew school at Beth Sholom.

Q. At Beth Sholom. If it was your choice, would you have sent him to the yeshiva, if he'd been in your. . . if he'd been your. . .?

A. Sure.

Q. Yea. I'm just trying to see what kind of changes. . .

A. Naturally. If you want to. . . if you. . . if I. . . if you want your child to know Hebrew, and if you want your child to know the heritage so there is no. . . no other place but. . . but day school.

Q. Right. Right. If you had. . . if you had aspirations for your grandchildren, would you want them to be Hebrew teachers or. . .?

A. I wouldn't. . . I wouldn't care what teacher they are, I would like 'em to get a Hebrew education. Whether. . . I wouldn't care what. . . what they wanted to do after that, but I would like to give 'em a Hebrew education.

Q. Right. Maybe we can talk about Zionism for a few minutes. Are. . . are. . . is that a sensitive topic?

A. I am a Zionist. I am an ardent Zionist. I'm a Mizrachi.

Q. Mizrachi. . .

A. Zionist. . . Zionist. . . Pioneer Women, Mizrachi and Hadassah. They're all Zionist organizations, all the Zion. . . all Zionist organizations. Zionism is. . . is an organization to work for. . . for Israel and then. . . and to know the heritage of the people and to. . . to learn everything and to help Israelis. This is Zionism. Zionism is Israel.

Q. Have you been. . . travelled to Israel? Yourself?

A. Eleven times.

Q. Eleven times.

A. I just come from Israel.

Q. Oh.

A. I was six weeks. I was for Pesach in Israel. I have two. . . I have two. . . I have my whole. . . in fact I have my whole big family in Israel. My parents died in Israel. I have two sisters living yet in Israel. And nephews and nieces and sister-in-law. . . I have a big family. And when my. . . Mr. Hollander . . . when he was living we were every. . . every year it was our vacation go to Israel.

Q. Did your parents go from Poland to. . . to Israel?

A. To Israel.

Q. In what year?

A. My parents came. . . it was four years later than I because the Nazis. . . the Nazis came there, it was when Hitler came. And we were on the German boundary, we were very close to Germany. So then there was. . . in . . . in Scotland we had a very rich and very good Jew uncle, and he took all the families into Palestine.

Q. So your whole family went to Israel except for yourself?

A. Yea.

Q. You came here because your family. . .

A. I came here four years before, later on I would probably go also to Israel but my husband was here and I came before Hitler started.

Q. Why did Mr. Panitch come to Rochester? Did he have family. . .?

A. 'Cause he did not find. . . he could not. . . he did not find any work in Poland. It was hard for him. And the Hebrew teachers were paid very well. . . very little, and his sisters were here and they . . . and they thought it would be better for him to come here.

Q. His sisters were in Rochester or in New York?

A. No, they were in New York. They died already.

Q. So when he came to Rochester. . . I just wonder how he eventually . . . ?

A. He came. . . he came to New York and he worked there a year teaching. And then from Rochester came down there by Rabbi Kurtz, he was one. . . he came to choose a Hebrew school teacher for the Talmud Torah. And there were. . . there were I think a lot of . . . how do you say. . . teachers. And he chose my husband.

Q. So that's how you got to Rochester. This beautiful city. Well. . . let's see. To get back to Zionism, now you wouldn't want to move to Israel in. . . what for?

A. What for? They. . . my sisters want me to. They are very comfortable and they want me there. My daughter is in the. . . in the. . . in the New York. His children are here, Mr. Hollander's and my children, they are here. And I have so many friends and so many activities. I'm very active in all organizations. So, I feel that this is my home.

Q. Where do your sisters live in Israel?

A. Huh?

Q. Where do they live?

A. In Rehovot.

Q. Rehovot, that's outside Tel Aviv?

A. Yea, that's where the Weitzman Institute is.

Q. Right.

A. This is our sister city, Rehovot.

Q. Oh, that's right. That's right. That's funny. Is that on purpose, or do they just happen to be in Rehovot.

A. No, no. They live here for so many years.

Q. When you go to Israel do you travel around?

A. Yea, sure. I was in the. . . this time I was . . . when yomutzmahut I was

- A. (Continued) in Jerusalem, then I was in Tel Aviv, I was in Atania, I was in . . . Pesach I spent in Atania in a hotel with my sister. I was in Holon, I was in many places I went to. . . the Golon Heights, I went many places.
- Q. Do you feel because you're Orthodox, do you feel. . . ?
- A. I am Orthodox.
- Q. You are Orthodox.
- A. Yea.
- Q. Do you feel that Israel's not Orthodox enough or that there's. . . ?
- A. No, Israel most of the people are not Orthodox, no.
- Q. Does that bother you?
- A. No.
- Q. No.
- A. Doesn't bother me, I feel that everybody can do whatever they want. I. . . the Israelis deserve. . . Israeli children especially, they deserve to be respected, and they deserve to be taken the way they are. They do so much for Israel, very good people. So it doesn't bother me what they. . . everybody. . . I feel that everybody has his own way of living, and his own way of thinking.
- Q. The Mizrachi women's group. . . has that grown over the years? In numbers? In Rochester?
- A. Oh, Rochester and in. . . Rochester they're not so many, but in New York they are very. . . and Israel all over. Mizrachi organization is a very, very large organization. In Rochester there are not too many.
- Q. What types of things does Mizrachi do? Does it raise money for Israel?
- A. What type? What do you mean by what type?
- Q. Well, . . .
- A. Mizrachi has national forums, we raise money for the grandmothers in Israel

- A. (Continued) Every year I pay \$54 for mother in Israel. Membership, we . . . we . . . scholarships, we give a lot of money for the scholarships. So there are all kinds of . . . all kinds of bonds. . . Israel Bonds. . . Mizrachi buy bonds, special organizations that buy bonds. Everybody buys bonds, but Mizrachi have their own quota for bonds.
- Q. Is that. . . is Mizrachi related in any way to Poale Zion? Or is that a different organization?
- A. What do you mean?
- Q. Poale Zion. . .
- A. Poale Zion. Poale Zion. Yea. Poale Zion is also Mizrachi.
- Q. That's also Mizrachi. How is that related to. . .
- A. Poale Mizrachi. Poale Mizrachi. Not Poale Zion, Poale Mizrachi are Mizrachi. And the younger ones are Poale Mizrachi.
- Q. Oh. . . oh the Poale Zion is the older one. . .
- A. Poale Mizrachi. Poale Zion is different.
- Q. Is it Orthodox?
- A. No. Poale Zion are more like the Pioneer Women or the. . .
- Q. Labor Zionists.
- A. Yes. Like. . .
- Q. I noticed you have some Yiddish newspapers. Do you. . . do you get the Forward or. . .?
- A. Could you stop for a. . .
- Q. OK. we were talking about different newspapers that you get. I just saw you. . . you still get the Yiddish press.
- A. Yea.
- Q. The Daily Forward?
- A. Yea. The Daily Forward.

- Q. What kinds of . . . why? Just to keep in touch with. . . What kinds of things appear in the Yiddish Daily Forward?
- A. Yea, well they have a lot of from Israel. They. . . if you want to know about Israel, what's going on in the nation that you don't get in all papers, you get it only in Jewish Forward. And then you get some. . . you get every Friday you get the explanation of the sedra, and you get some. . . and others you get news. See? It's a very . . . if you want to know about Jews. . . Jewish, what's going on in the world today, you have to have a Jewish paper. You cannot get in our papers.
- Q. Have you had any contact with the Russian Jews here in Rochester?
- A. No. One of them called me up, and I forgot her name, before I went to Israel. And she said when I come back. . . she was real nice, she said when I come back I should call on her. And I forgot her name and I got . . . I think I'm getting so. . .
- Q. When you mentioned the condition of Jews all around the world. . .
- A. I was talking to a Russian Jews in Israel and, gee, they are very comfortable there. They settled there. They are there four years, and they. . . the children go to school and they. . . they. . . they are really. . . and the husband has nice job. And they have a nice home, and they are very happy there. And they like the atmosphere, they like the. . . the climate. They like everything that is there. I was. . . I was really happy to hear that.
- Q. Yea.
- A. Then I talked to another one near my. . . near my sister, they live. . . their . . . their place, they walk place in a restaurant until. . . the hotel I mean till they. . . they their house was built. But, so that's why I ask her how. . . she says everything is good but . . . but they serve everyday the same. . . the same things. I said, what is the same thing. She says, . . .

A. (Continued) oh, I forgot what what the food. . . the kind of vegetable that they. . . very, very good. They have it here, too. And she told me. So I said so what's wrong with that? They get meat. She says, yes we get meat. So you see you cannot. . . you cannot always satisfy people, by little things they. . . and she looks beautiful. I says, look at how good you look with. . . so you wouldn't . . . without food you're probably eating it. She says, yes, we're waiting for our home.

Q. You mention. . . you mentioned meat, which reminded me of something. In Rochester is there only one kosher butcher? Or are there several?

A. Several, several.

Q. Several.

A. Kosher butchers.

Q. So you've never had any problem keeping kosher in Rochester?

A. No, no.

Q. No, OK. You still have to go down on the other side of the city. . .? Oh, no right here on Monroe Avenue. . .?

A. On Monroe Avenue is. . . and Park Edge. . . the poultry I get from Park Edge most of the time, but they are kosher. And if you get here and there, good butcher on Monroe Avenue but a butcher. . .

Q. I forgot. I thought that there was just one meat market down. . .

A. No, there are a lot of meat markets. There's Goronkins, and that is in Irondequoit. And there's a lot of meat markets. Joseph and meat market here. Now there on Joseph Avenue they've moved out, but there were. And then Monroe and then when Monroe Avenue farther down, the meat market they had five, six meat market.

Q. Could I ask you something about your own father? Did he. . . what was he in Poland?

- A. If you want I could give you the book to read about our city. He was a merchant. We lived on the boundary, the German boundary. Most of the people lived from the . . . from the . . . the boundary from the Germans. There were some . . . some Jews, too. Horses and things different countries and to Germany. My . . . my father was grains, mushrooms, and all kinds of grains. And they used to buy . . . buy the farmers in the city or in the . . . they used to bring from the mills, and they used to deliver it, and load it on the wagon . . . trains into Germany. And summertime my father used to go to live out there . . . mushrooms, a lot of mushrooms. And they . . . and he used to come and dry it on . . . on swings dry it and send it to Germany. It was very expensive. It was a very, very great . . . and this he used to sell on the stock. He . . . at that time the stock was built with that. That was the way they got rich, if not they got poor. It was one year this way and one year that way. We were big merchant.
- Q. You'd say he was prosperous, though? Or, I mean . . . above a certain . . . ?
- A. Well, they were not millionaires, but we are comfortable, were very comfortable. There were a very . . . a lot of poor people in Poland, there's no question about it. But . . . but most of them were . . . the majority they lived the way we were, and we were comfortable.
- Q. Are you the oldest child?
- A. No, I'm in the middle. I'm the sandwich.
- Q. Oh, there were three in your . . . ?
- A. There were three girls and one boy.
- Q. But, all three children except for you went to Israel? Your brother . . . ?
- A. No, my brother is in here in the States. In America my brother is here in New York.
- Q. Did he come after you or did he come to America . . . ?

A. He came a year before me.

Q. Before you. Already with a family?

A. A year before me. No, he wasn't married at that time when he came here. And he came. . . he came to. . . Poland and married a girl from. . . that he met here from before and brought her here.

Q. Where did he live? In New York State?

A. He lived in New York all the time on Ocean Avenue. But, now he's in Newport. He's in the beer business, a big business.

Q. Oh, he's not involved in. . .

A. The soda business.

Q. Is he involved in Hebrew at all?

A. No. No, but he's a scholar.

Q. He is a Hebrew scholar?

A. Oh, he's a scholar. He went to yeshivas in the old country. He went to the. . . my father sent us all to learn Hebrew, and he he sent specially to the great. . . biggest yeshiva.

Q. All three girls, too? You all had really fine educations?

A. Oh, yea all Hebrew education, yes.

Q. And your two sisters?

A. I said that I graduate from a. . . from a high school, from a gymnasium where I learned Hebrew, very fine.

Q. Right. And your own education was mixed with non-Jewish? Gymnasium. . .

A. Gymnasium, non-Jewish yes. Also there. . . Yea. And Lebovitcher school to get a Jew. . .

Q. Did you ever. . . you never felt. . . or did you ever feel any. . . because you were Jewish. . .?

A. You couldn't say that. . . it was a closed for Jews in that gymnasium where I was, so naturally. But, not much.

Q. Not much. No. . .

A. Not too much. I really. . . I had Russian adults, a very good friend, a played with him constantly.

Q. This much be back, oh, let's see. . . maybe 1910?

A. 19. . . naturally, 1910, yes.

END OF TAPE 1, SIDE A (Interview I)

Interview I
Tape 1
Side B

- Q. This is Side B. Today is June 8th. This is Nancy Rosenbloom, and I'm interviewing Mrs. Jenny Hollander for the Rochester local Jewish history project. Let's see. Is this recording? OK. We were talking about your own childhood in Poland. When your sisters went to Israel, were they Hebrew teachers in Israel as well? Were they also Hebrew teachers?
- A. No.
- Q. The only reason you became a Hebrew teacher. . .
- A. No, my sisters were not Hebrew. . . were not Hebrew teachers. They were not teachers.
- Q. They were not teachers.
- A. No, they were not teachers. Their husbands worked, they did not work.
- Q. But if you had your choice, you always were a teacher?
- A. I loved it.
- Q. You loved teaching.
- A. I loved it. Even when I was a baby I used to take in kids from street, dirty like nothing, and used to take in the house and wash 'em and clean 'em, put 'em on the floor in a circle, and I was in the middle and I was the teacher. I was maybe four years old. My mother used to tell me she had so much trouble with me, she says I used to always make the dirty kids in the house. I always loved to be teaching.
- Q. You were a born teacher.
- A. I really was born teacher.
- Q. OK. Maybe we'll, let's see, jump back to Rochester. Well, when you came in 1930, that was before the Depression?

A. Yes. It just started.

Q. Did . . .do you. . .

A. Just started. Just started already. 1931 was the . . . the Depression already.

Q. Did you go through. . . yourself, go through particularly hard times because of the Depression?

A. Absolutely. We were very . . . very limited. Especially when there was belong to me a boy, a sick boy. He was sick from the beginning, a terrible glandular condition. And I walked with a horse with my husband to get him well. We went all over with him. To Rochester, Minnesota. We sent him to private school. We used to pay at that time \$3,000 a year, and you know what at that time meant \$3,000. We didn't save for ourselves a penny. And then when we came there were times my husband. . . my daughter and I we each one had the one dress. Every night we used to wash the dress and press so she can go to school. Really hard time. We never complained. We were always satisfied. And . . . and we . . . I suffered through one or two years and then he died.

Q. Do you have recollections of the whole Joseph Avenue area in the 1930's and the 1940's? What was it like?

A. Oh, it was very lively. It was a Jewish . . . a Jewish city. Joseph Avenue was a Jewish city. When I came to Joseph Avenue I felt that I'm in my old country.

Q. Everybody speaking Yiddish?

A. Everybody speaking Yiddish, and everybody going to shul. The shul was filled. And . . . and everybody send their child to Hebrew school in the afternoon. It was. . . the atmosphere was Jewish. It was all Jewish.

Q. Jewish shops, bakeries. . .?

A. Jewish shops. Jewish bakeries, Jewish. . . the butcher shops was. . . so. . . so strict, everything. And there . . . and there were shofad. . . you know shofad? They used to kill the chickens, they used to. . . there and the special house and they used to kill their chickens and it was. . . it was . . . and the people were different.

Q. Did you encourage any of your family to come here to Rochester instead of Israel?

A. No, oh no. I was sorry I was not in Israel, but I did not encourage them.

Q. It wasn't like writing back home and saying. . .?

A. I used . . . I went so many times to Israel, but I could not. . . I could not move to Israel. When I was with my husband I did not have the ability, I did not have the money to move to Israel. But then after he died I did not feel like I was already rooted here.

Q. Were there other people from your town in Poland that came to Rochester? Or . . . or no one?

A. Yea. I have a few. . . I think four. . . four or five came over. Had one family is living here.

Q. Oh.

A. A Mrs. Poltick.

Q. Oh, right.

A. She's . . . she's from my town. And Mrs. Ruderman she's from our town.

Q. That's right. That's right.

A. I don't know. I'm trying to get a sense of the whole Joseph Avenue area. Let's see. Harris Street is an easy walk to Joseph Avenue? Everyone used to walk.

A. Everyone used to walk then because they. . . because they didn't have 10¢ to

A. (Continued) ride a . . .

Q. Bus.

A. . . . by bus. And then there were . . . were not so many cars, very seldom you have a car. It was one in a thousand. It was not like now. Everything was entirely different.

Q. More like a community?

A. And you know, people used to keep closer, too. At that time the people used to be closer.

Q. You mean friends. . . friendship, friends?

A. More friends, yea, more friendly, closer together.

Q. Do you miss that? Yea. A little bit.

A. I have a lot of friends. I . . . I'm . . . I can find friends in any . . . in the woods.

Q. Did most . . . did most of the people . . . when did you move from Joseph Avenue?

A. I lived only 11 years on Joseph Avenue.

Q. So that would be 1941.

A. On Harris Street. I never lived on Joseph Avenue.

Q. On Harris. . .

A. On Harris Street. And then I moved to Field Street.

Q. Were you among the first to move away from Joseph Avenue. It was still . . .

A. Oh, there were a lot of people that moved away. It was not like now. They moved away because of inconvenience. People just moved to . . . they try to move to Monroe Avenue. Like now they move to the suburbs.

Q. Monroe Avenue was a nicer. . . ?

A. Monroe Avenue, yea, was the . . . the aristocratic street.

Q. Do you . . . did you used to go back down on Joseph Avenue to do your shopping

Q. (Continued) after you left? Or. . .?

A. Absolutely. Because I was used to that. There was the meat. . . bags to buy meat, Mittenbergs. And buy fish at Schaeffers. I always went on Joseph Avenue. And my groceries from. . . from they had groceries there. I used to go. . . there was no. . . no Park Edge yet.

Q. Till when?

A. To me Joseph Avenue was like Park Edge now.

Q. Right.

Until about when? Say the 1960's or. . .?

A. Probably.

Q. Do you have any recollection, or any particular recollection, on the riots in 1964?

A. It was very terrible. How many years is it? It is ten years?

Q. Yea.

A. It was. . . we felt terrible. It was just. . . and Schaeffer was. . . but this was the riot they were among the last. In the beginning before that was even . . . it was worst.

Q. That's right.

A. Afraid to. . .to say. . .now, we're afraid to go out in the evening. But at that time everybody was afraid to stay in the house.

Q. Why didn't. . . Mr. Schaeffer stayed down on his shop on Joseph Avenue, is that it until. . .? I remember when he was attacked a couple of years ago. Why did he stay?

A. He. . . he had nothing to do. He loved it. He was used to it. He was so many years in the store. And he decided there was a certain point he had already decided another few months and then he goes to Israel with his children. It was another few weeks that he wanted to stay. And that happened.

- A. (Continued) I don't blame him because he thought what shall I do. He loved it. He was living there all those years.
- Q. Even after the neighborhood had changed into being 90% black?
- A. That's right the children. . . the children. . . he was so good to the blacks, they used to come in. He used to give them everything they wanted and. . . and they used to be his friends. They used to come in constantly his store. And he asked them what they want, they used to take whatever they wanted.
- Q. Yea.
- A. That just might have been one freak accident.
- Q. How could he expect that a thing like this should happen to him? He was so friendly with them. He's a friendly man. And he was so friendly with the blacks.
- Q. Was he. . . do you think he was one of the last stores down there?
- A. Not. . .
- Q. Jewish stores? Jewish stores?
- A. No, he was not the last store. There was a lot of people. . . a lot of these stores . . . out when they. . . when they two to three years ago.
- Q. Two or three years ago. 'Cause now.
- A. After him. . . after him some people started moving out. More of them.
- Q. Did you feel in the 1960's that the blacks were maybe angry against the Jews as Jews?
- A. They were not angry against. . . I don't think they were angry against the Jews. They poured out on the Jews. I think they were angry because they were mistreated, and they were. . . they were very . . . they felt very. . . very inconvenient. They. . . they were poor. They did not get jobs and people did not want to sit near them in busses. People. . . people did not

- A. (Continued) want to sit near them. In a way they. . . it's natural. It's psychological.
- Q. Yea. So it wasn't really any. . . you know people talk about. . .
- A. So they fall down on the Jews, you know, who probably. . . they did not pour out on the Jews, troubled by. . . they should have troubled everybody. They troubled the whole city until they got their rights. They were fighting for their rights. So that's all.
- Q. Oh, I want to ask you a couple others short questions. 'Cause we were just talking about blacks. I remember when Beth Sholom was bombed, right? A couple of years ago. Did they ever know who did that?
- A. No.
- Q. That it just happened.
- A. Never found out.
- Q. It. . . it was destroyed, a lot of it.
- A. That's true. A lot of damage they had, thousands of dollars. They fixed it up and now they have a beautiful building.
- Q. It is beautiful.
- A. Did you see it?
- Q. Yea, yea.
- A. Very beautiful building.
- Q. And they have bin. . . they have a sign that says "Bingo every Wednesday night" in front.
- A. If not they wouldn't be able to keep it up.
- Q. That's right. True. Well, I guess then one little question I wanted to ask is on anti-Semitism in Rochester. Have you ever felt any anti-Jewish feelings here in Rochester?
- A. Absolutely not. First of all, I don't mingle with non-Jews. And secondly,

- A. (Continued) here we have neighbors non-Jewish, very friendly. We don't know the non-Jewish. . . very friendly. I wouldn't say I don't know the non-Jews because they meet more together, we meet each other. . . one with other. But when we meet together they're very friendly.
- Q. Would you have ever thought of moving into a neighborhood that wasn't Jewish? Or. . . well. . . ?
- A. No, I. . . I always have to live near. . . like to live near a synagogue and have shopping. . . near Jewish. . .
- Q. Near Jews.
- A. Near Jews.
- Q. Your. . .
- A. I wouldn't be happy without if I wouldn't be living near Jews. I. . .
- Q. I can tell from your phone calls that you go to the JCC?
- A. That's right. I go swim there.
- Q. Oh, you swim?
- A. Oh, yes. I go every Monday. But yesterday I did not take my bathing suit. I don't know what happened 'cause I just came from Israel and I kind of forgot to take my bathing suit. So I felt. . . I go Monday and Thursday I go. And sometimes when I feel like it I go on another day, but most of the time I go Monday and Thursday. Thursday we have a. . . a special women's group. The men meet separate and the women, leaders group we call them. And we meet separate. And have. . . sometimes they have nice programs. Sometimes I give a little program.
- Q. What kind of program do you give?
- A. It was. . . I gave 'em. . . It depends what they want. About Herzl, about Zionism. You know, this kind of program. Oh, I have the greeting, I have the prayer, want me to say the prayer for them one day. Installation of

- A. (Continued) officers, so. . .
- Q. Are you glad that the JCC moved out onto. . . do you like the JY downtown?
- A. I wouldn't say. . . I like it there because it took a year to get there. Here . . . first it's very good, but it's only once. . . once . . . once a day I can go in the morning. And then in the evening. And then that's all. It's never. . . like I just had a birthday that time. . .
- Q. Right.
- A. I remember I went.
- Q. That's right.
- A. So it's much, much easier to get there.
- Q. Was it active. Did people used to come down to the JY?
- A. I used to go there. And there were a lot of people that used to exercise in gymnastics.
- Q. What kind of groups met there?
- A. Young groups. They have all kinds. See, I belong to a . . .
- Q. That you belonged to?
- A. . . . senior citizen group. A very large group. And then, but at that time, when I was here there was a . . . forget it, there was no special senior citizen group together. But now Jews in that group and we can join the. . . the athletic club, join the. . . so we were all together.
- Q. When you first came to Rochester the JY was already built?
- A. Yea. Not the new JY.
- Q. No, no the old. . . downtown.
- A. Downtown, yea.
- Q. Did you used to go to learn English? Could you have learned English at the old JY? No. Just sports activities and. . .
- A. Yes, just sports. Used to go swimming.

Q. Did you always belong to the JY even from the beginning?

A. I think. Since I remember.

Q. Mostly for sports.

A. Yea, most. Just for sports. Yea, used to go to some of the meetings.

Q. Do you remember the old JY used to have dormitory facilities? People used to live there.

A. Yes, upstairs.

Q. Who? Who used to live there?

A. Mostly old men and. . .

Q. Jewish?

A. There were a lot of black.

Q. Oh. Oh.

A. That's why they. . . they. . . they. . . that's why they moved. . . they had to. . . they made them move out. In the end they didn't have anybody, they made 'em move out. And a lot of single people, you know. person who. . . bachelors used to live there. And it was not so. . .

Q. But in the beginning was it mostly for Jews? Jewish single people that needed a room?

A. In the beginning it was mostly Jewish but then after that it was the all. . . all black.

Q. Changed. I was just curious.

A. Yea. But it was a lot of black people.

Q. Yea. Let's see. Other institutions that I can think of in the Jewish community are the Jewish Children's Home. Now. . .

A. Sure there's some. And then they had the Jewish old aged home.

Q. And the Jewish old age home. Do you have any special recollections about the

Q. (Continued) Jewish Children's Home?

A. It was a very nice institution, and they had a wonderful Mother's Club.

Q. Mother's Club.

A. Mother's Club. Oh, they. . . the mothers did so much work. And when it's a Bar Mitzvah the mothers. . . the mothers was very. . . women used to prepare . . . used to call it mothers. . . used to prepare like a regular Bar Mitzvah for their. . . for their child, everything. Give present to the child. And. . . and Mr. Hollander was a real father to the children. He was wonderful to them. Even now the children. . . they have alumni even now and they even collect money now and they give the money to students at the . . . that go to college. And it's five hundred dollars, thousand dollars. . . five hundred dollars a year.

Q. Did most of the children. . . were most of the children. . . were they immigrant children? Were they Rochester babies? Where they just. . .?

A. No, they were Rochester. . .

Q. Rochester.

A. Rochester, they were from other town. Very few. But, they were there. . . all kinds, they were orphans, and there was nobody to take care of them. And then they decided that. . . that better for the child to have a home. So they used to give them to foster homes. So they. . . they. . . that's why they did away with . . . very few children's home. . . they give the children to foster home.

Q. But before when there was the Children's Home the children would grow up in the home, they didn't. . . they didn't. . .

A. Go to college. The lawyer. . . what's his name? Oh, my G-d. The lawyer, well, the doctor. . . They send 'em to college.

Q. Was that funded by. . .?

A. Most. . . most prominent people. . .

Q. Money from the. . .

A. . . . from the. . . from the adults that were in the homes.

Q. Was that money from the Jewish community? And it wasn't. . .

A. Sure. And also from the . . . and from the . . . what they have the whole . . . once a year they. . . the Community Chest.

Q. From the Community Chest. Was that mostly an Orthodox upbringing?

A. It was not mostly, it was an Orthodox.

Q. It was Orthodox. Which was consistent. I mean, what would you call an Orthodox upbringing?

A. Orthodox. They had. . . they had the Hollander Shabbas observance, they learn about the Jewish. . . they. . . they are . . . Mr. Hollander have the Shabbas . . . used to get up and taught. . . was teaching them from the Torah, was talking to them. And they were brought up in the Jewish way.

Q. Mr. Hart, too. I heard Mr. Hart used to come down. . .

A. Mr. Hart. Mr. Hart was the main body. He. . . he started that. He was . . . he gave a lot of money for that. He. . . he initiate all the home. He was the main body there.

Q. What was Mr. Hollander's title?

A. He was the superintendent.

Q. Superintendent.

A. He was the. . . he was the whole. . . he was leading the. . . the school. . . the home.

Q. Did he have a special education? Did he have a. . .?

A. He was Israeli.

Q. Oh, he was Israeli.

A. He was an Israeli. He was born in. . . in Jerusalem. And he was a teacher

- A. (Continued) in Binghamton before. And they brought him from Binghamton. He was a very capable man.
- Q. What made him, I wonder, come from Israel to Binghamton?
- A. The families. . . a lot of his brothers live in New York. A lot of his family came, so he came to Binghamton. Do you know there was probably a financial conditions, you know, was not. . . so. . . so he flied here and he was very successful. And so he stayed on.
- Q. What. . . what year do you think he left Israel? Moved to America?
- A. I don't remember.
- Q. Thirties? 1930's?
- A. No, before.
- Q. Later? Before, twenties.
- A. Yea.
- Q. Before Israel was even a State?
- A. Oh, sure.
- Q. Before the declaration. . .?
- A. Long before. Long before.
- Q. When there was hardly anyone there?
- A. He was here many years. He was many years here. He was maybe fifty, sixty. . . sixty years here.
- Q. Oh, so like even before partition and. . .?
- A. Yea.
- Q. The whole thing.
- A. Absolutely.
- Q. Well, he was the superintendent, let's see. . . I wonder if he had. . . did he have a college education?
- A. He did. . . he had an Israeli education.

Q. OK. And then. . .

A. He did not have . . . but he had an inborn education. Just educated in. . . knowledgeable person. He knew what he is doing and he was capable, his capability. Some people with education cannot do as much as people without higher educations.

Q. Crazy.

A. And this was a man. He. . . he could do everything. And he was. . . he knew how to go along with people, that's the main thing that we needed there. He was loved by everybody because he knew how to go. . . get along together.

Q. What year did you marry Mr. Hollander?

A. I was eight years married with him. That's eleven years. . . so. . .

Q. 1964.

A. '73, '76. . . 1964.

Q. What did he do after he . . . after the Jewish Home. . .?

A. He was working in Jewish welfare office.

Q. Oh, the Jewish welfare office?

A. Sure.

Q. I didn't know that. OK. I didn't know that. In the Jewish Home & Infirmary, the old age home, also. Do you have any recollection of that?

A. The Jewish old aged home what they. . . the director of this is from the home.

Q. Oh, a child from the home went on. . .?

A. A child from the home.

Q. . . . and became director of. . .

A. Sure. . .

Q. . . . the Home & Infirmary.

A. And they're doctors and they're lawyers today. He send in. . . the small children. He was sent to Yitzkin. . .

Q. Yitzkin, right.

A. There are a lot of very educated from the home. They would send them to college.

Q. Most of them remained. . .

A. Through college.

Q. . . . identified with the Jewish community. I mean they really feel. . . ?

A. Yea, oh yea. Yea, all of them.

Q. That's a good education. Good upbringing.

A. Yea.

Q. Well, maybe for today we'll . . . we'll end unless there's anything. . . anything in particular you want to talk about. Recollections?

A. What can I talk about? Recollections. Plenty recollections from the old city and from the city, sure. I'm a person that never complains.

Q. I can see that.

A. It's always said whatever it is is. So there I am, thank you, G-d. I'm a believer. Not that I believe that G-d gives me everything. But, but he helps.

Q. We need that.

A. So. . . so this, you know, a person that believes his life is much easier than the others. He has somebody to lean up. . . to lean on. And that's me. I went through plenty. But being always having somebody to lean on I remained steady on my feet.

Q. You still. . . you go to shul every . . . every week?

A. Oh, yes. Every Shabbas, every holiday.

Q. And you keep all the holidays?

A. And I'm a member of the sisterhood, and I go to the meetings. And I'm a member of Mizrahi. And I'm a member of ORT. And I'm a member of . . .

Q. ORT is. . . ?

A. A Zionist organization, but not a religious. And I was a member of Hadassah, but I've stopped. And Beth Hacknesset and Beth Sholom. I'm a member of all . . . I'm a member of the yeshiva.

Q. What is Beth Hacknesset?

A. Beth Hacknesset is the. . . the synagogue that's on. . . on St. Regis.

Q. Is that an Orthodox shul?

A. Oh, yea. Very Orthodox. Strictly Orthodox.

Q. So where. . . where do you go to services? Sometimes. . .

A. I go to Beth Sholom. Yea, yea Beth Sholom.

Q. Because. . .

A. It's also Orthodox but not as strict as Beth Hacknesset.

Q. Did many families leave Beth Sholom to join Beth Hacknesset? Or different. . .

A. Beth Hacknesset is a small. . . much smaller shul. Very small, very small. It has no school, and it's a small place and has. . . hasn't much members. Don't have too many members. It's a more private shul.

Q. Families from where?

A. Families from that side. From. . . from Brighton.

Q. That maybe once belonged to Beth Sholom? No.

A. No. They. . . some. . . most of them belonged to Beth Sholom. But, some that don't . . . are very, very religious. More religious, so they belong to Beth Hacknesset.

Q. Do you think that there are more religious Jews moving into Rochester? I mean, do you think. . . ?

A. Yea, lately a lot of religious. . . you know, college. . . college professors. They. . . they go to Beth Hacknesset. This shul is not Orthodox enough for them. A lot of religious families are here, but they are professionals.

Q. That's interesting because you always hear about religion on the decline and. . .

A. Originally. Now it's growing. No question about it. Even among the youth. You ought to see young boys, how. . . how many there are, strictly religious boys.

Q. In terms of going to shul every day?

A. They go to shul every day. . . maybe not every day, but they go to schools. They come on Shabbas and they learn. They not only go to services, but they go to learn in shul, too. And they. . . and they observe everything. And they try to . . . to support everything that is religious.

Q. Right, right.

A. More religious here. . . much more now than it used to be.

Q. Is there a Hassidic community in Rochester?

A. No.

Q. No. 'Cause occasionally I'll see somebody. . .

A. No, no. First of all most of them that you see they come. . . they come from other cities, they come to collect monies. They come to the yeshiva to collect for the yeshivas. They are rabbis. And here only a few would have it. Most Jews don't have it.

Q. If. . . yea.

A. In. . . in Miami Beach, in. . . in New York, there you have. . . In Israel, there you have Hasidim plenty.

Q. Right, but here you don't have many. So, and if they were in Rochester they would probably go to Dartmouth Street Shul or. . .?

A. Beth Hackneset.

Q. Beth Hackneset. Not Beth Sholom?

A. They would. . . some of them. . . Beth Sholom is an Orthodox shul, no question

- A. (Continued) about it. An Orthodox shul.
- Q. Yea, yea.
- A. But, it's a more modern Orthodoxy.
- Q. Do you think it's changed in the past years? Has it modernized?
- A. More modern, absolutely.
- Q. Why? In order to. . .
- A. Because the people, the people make the. . . who make a shul? The people make a shul. Because the members of this congre. . . more modern people.
- Q. Younger people?
- A. Beth Sholom does not have too young people, but they are doctors and lawyers. And Rabbi Golder he is on the top of the shul, so these are modern people. And they try to modernize.
- Q. But. . . but even people. . .
- A. But they are very religious, there's no question about it.
- Q. But even people such as yourself, do you think you've modernized?
- A. Well, I suppose so. I'm not sure. I like to look it. . . and look nice. I like to have nice flowers. I like to. . . they. . . they. . . the decorated.
- Q. Right.
- A. It's. . . I like that the service should be. . . the sermon should be. . . should be for. . . for cultural people not just the. . . just with talk to G-d.
- Q. Right. People, too.
- A. The people make it.
- Q. Right. OK. Well, do you want to say anything else today?
- A. I think that that's enough.
- Q. OK.

Interview II
Tape 1
Side A

- Q. Today is July 11th. This is Nancy Rosenbloom. I'm interviewing Mrs. Hollander. This is Side A. Do you want to say something to test the tape and I'll play it back? You were saying Mr. Emiot is from Poland?
- A. Yea, he came from Poland he was in the time of war, the Nazis, you know. And he suffered very much. He's writing now. He's . . . his little stories in the . . . in the Ledger, Jewish Ledger. Even this week, there was a beautiful story there about. . . oh, his grandfather. About how he studies and about how pious his grandfather was. How, what a wonderful, good person he was. He thinks more of other people than of himself and how he cherished him. He should study the Torah and he should be a good Jew and. . .
- Q. Mr. Emiot came here by . . . by himself or with his whole family?
- A. He came. . . his wife was here. He brought. . . His wife was here, he came later.
- Q. Came later.
- A. He came later. He was. . . he was very. . . his life is really a history. If he is safe, he looks terrible. He's sick. He's not well. But, it's a miracle he was saved.
- Q. Yea. Does Mr. Emiot participate in the senior citizens group at the JCC? Does he talk to the group or is he a member of the group?
- A. No, he doesn't talk to the group. He's writing. . . writing stories. And he is having a class, Jewish, in Jewish. Yiddish.
- Q. Oh, he teaches Yiddish?
- A. He's teaching Yiddish, yes. He's in class. . . and that. . . not exactly teaching he's. . . he has twice. . . I think twice a week or once a week

- A. (Continued) the classes in the evening.
- Q. Well, maybe I'll ask you about your participation in different activities of the JCC. Last time you said that you give lectures and every once in a while you give a film talk?
- A. Jewish. . . I read them Jewish stories at there are a lot of them that like to hear Jewish words, they don't. . . some of them don't even understand Jewish so I read 'em little stories. By Sholom Aleyhem, by Sholom Marsh, Jewish writers and give 'em a feel about Jewishness. And once I talk to them about Cabala, is about Hasidism.' And I . . . Maimoinides and I talk to them, and it was two years ago. But since then I was most of the time away, so just. . . but I come every week. . . every. . . twice a week to the JCC. Monday and Thursday. Monday the Friendship Club. And they. . . men and women meet together and they have different programs. And they have a lunch together, little lunch. And they. . . and they have dancing. We. . . we really enjoy it. And Thursday, very busy day. We organize a special women's group called the "Libbers" for liberation. And we. . . then we meet together. First I go swimming in the morning. And then at 12 o'clock I meet with them, and we have lunch. And after lunch we have a program, different programs. Like two weeks ago they had a beautiful program. They had a little children came and they played violin, you know. They were from four to twelve. And it was really very interesting to see them, everyone has his schedule, naturally. And one of twelve played violin really, could be a virtuoso. He played like a real grown-up, very. . . very difficult piece. It was very interesting.
- Q. Are these. . .
- A. See they brought the children, the JCC, the teacher brought. . . private teacher. They teach 'em privately. Is private lessons to children from. . . from four . . . from three. . . and she brought the whole group.

Q. And some were four year olds?

A. Four year olds. You'd love to see how the four year olds was playing. It was. . .

Q. Really?

A. Absolutely remarkable.

Q. You'd think the violin would be. . .

A. Appearance. . . not from the. . . they don't play from music, they play by ear, by ear. And the parents. . . parents come with them to the teachers and they learn it. Then they can practice with the children at home. There were all the parents, too. Very, very. . .

Q. Who is the teacher?

A. There are different . . . I don't know the names of different. . . even to this. . . this week, Wednesday I was supposed to go with the little four year olds, Kurtzman family, they. . . they. . . they have a little girl four years old who was supposed to do a rehearsal, so she invited me. So I invited them for lunch here, and then after lunch we were supposed to go to the rehearsal. So in the meantime I got a call that the bingo, we have the Hillel School bingo is in the Moose. . . Moose and they were shorthanded and they want me to come. So, I. . . I felt that this is more important and I changed. The little was so disappointed, and she says oh Aunt Jenny won't go with us.

Q. How long have you been a member at the senior citizens group?

A. Of the JCC?

Q. The JCC.

A. Oh, I'm a member when JCC was on. . . was Central Avenue. Sure. I've been a member for long, long time. For years.

Q. Well, have they always had an active. . .?

- A. They. . . oh, they had the swimming pool, which I love. And they had. . . they don't. . . they don't have what they have now, but they had classes they used to have very interesting Hebrew class. . . Hebrew class and Hebrew speaking people, meetings. They. . . they always were active, the JCC. The Jewish Community Center always had. . . they used to call Jewish Young Men and Women Association, they changed the name to J. . . Jewish Community Center.
- Q. So ever since you turned, what, 65 you've been active in their senior citizens Friendship Club?
- A. Yea, after I was retired and then oh not long ago I joined the senior citizens before. I used to. . . I used to go all over. I used to take gym and I'm a very active. . . I try to do all these things. Dancing, gym, dramatics.
- Q. Do they go. . . oh, dramatics?
- A. Dramatics. They had in. . . they have all kinds of activities. Very. . . I. . . I like it when people write, we play cards, we enjoy it very much. Thursday is our such a very large group. One of them is the women and one of with the men. Monday men and women are together. Then we eat together and then a program together. But Thursday we meet separately, have our own group, and we pay our own. . . I think it's a dollar a year special to be a member, the membership, and for the JCC we pay. . . everybody pays \$13 each, senior citizen membership.
- Q. That's a special rate.
- A. Special rate, absolutely. The rest pay \$150.
- Q. Yea.
- A. But for senior citizens. . .
- Q. Do you ever go for trips outside Rochester?
- A. Yea, yea. I went to Toronto with them. I was in Quebec and in Montreal. And I was with them in Florida. I go with them on this. . . next week is

- A. (Continued) going to be a trip to. . . to. . . they go every week, but I don't go every week. The next one's going to be to Hamlin Beach, I go with them. And to Niagara. . . not Niagara Falls, but Niagara. . .
- Q. On the lake?
- A. Niagara. . . what. . . ?
- Q. Theatre? No.
- A. I cannot remember the name. But they have. . . have a very nice trip. And so they make it very cheap. To. . . to Hamlin Beach the right. . . is nothing 'cause if anyone want to have lunch \$1.50 they give you a whole box lunch. And if you want you can bring your own lunch.
- Q. Yea. About how many people belong to the group?
- A. Oh, my. . .
- Q. 100?
- A. More than that. Lot. Active in it. . . more than 100.
- Q. Mostly people you've known all through the years? People that you've known since. . . twenty years ago?
- A. No, no I meet 'em there. No, the most of them I met there. Most of them I met there. Just a few that I know. Neighbors. . . my neighbors are going. And. . . and a lot of friends I knew before. But most of them I didn't know. But then. . . their. . . own. . . we are very friendly. We made really friends. We have gymnastics. . . Thursday we have gym first. And my. . . then after gym there's no more time to go swimming so I go. . . I have lunch. After lunch I go swimming. And after swimming, you see, it's dramatics usually, but this not. . . so I go back out.
- Q. Dramatics. . . dramatics in Yiddish?
- A. No, no. They. . . Esther's husband used to. . . you know Esther? You remember she. . . Schaeffer that was blinded? His daughter, she used to do

- A. (Continued) that. She's a very capable. . . but now she's going to work on the television station with somebody else work with dramatics. And they have it there, and a tennis instructor, Monday's tennis. And it's really a remarkable thing for senior citizens.
- Q. Yea.
- A. To come people that can hardly walk, they come there and they enjoy from ten o'clock till three.
- Q. That's nice.
- A. The bus comes, there's a special bus that stops by. . . on Main Street and stops right here. And whenever they stay. . . and it's on the way to the JCC and they take 'em right to the place, to JCC and at three o'clock it comes and takes 'em back.
- Q. You also said you're active in Mizrachi?
- A. Yea, I'm Mizrachi Women. I'm a life member of Mizrachi Women. And every year I. . . my mother in Israel would pay \$54 for being a mother in Israel. And it is developing a very nice relationship. I wouldn't say that. . . that too many belong. It's not like Hadassah, not like Pioneer Women, but there . . . we are developing very nicely. And we get a convention in . . . in Washington, was last year. I was to convention. We have many conventions. And there were no when I was. . . at that time in Israel. But they had a convention in Albany, very nice. Mini-convention.
- Q. What types. . . what types of things go on at the convention? Talks on Israel?
- A. Talk and they. . . it's instructions how to lead a. . . lead a. . . how for the presidents. . . for. . . for . . . for people who are forming. . . they give instructions how to lead the. . .
- Q. Have you ever been the President of Mizrachi?

- A. I . . . I was . . . I'm the Chairman for National Fund Chairman. I'm selling the trees.
- Q. Oh.
- A. Yea, and if anyone needs a tree they call me up and they send all over, in town or out of town, I send out the trees. And collecting boxes.
- Q. Oh. . . oh the little box.
- A. Little box. Yea.
- Q. Do you go around to people's houses to get the little boxes?
- A. Sure. Sure. And those that don't have a place for boxes. . .
- Q. Pushkeys, right?
- A. Pushkeys, that's right.
- Q. It's been a long time since I've seen them, but. . .
- A. Yea, I can show you if you don't have the. . .
- Q. Right. Right.
- A. Sure. And I get a lot of money from the blue boxes.
- Q. And then that goes. . .to the Welfare Fund?
- A. It goes to Israel to. . . it's a special, special fund so it goes to Israel to buy trees to keep building some. . . and to buy land to build buildings for those newcomers from Russia, those that will need houses. The state. . . this money nobody touches, even in the. . . in Israel where you send, they don't spend on anything else but for to buy land and to. . . and to plant trees. Israel needs the forestation. This did not. . . Israel did not have trees in it before the war. And it's so important, you know, what trees means to Israel. So, now it's. . . it's . . . I was how many years ago for the first time, it was probably fifteen years ago. This year what a thing! You cannot even recognize it. Now it's. . . it's a country with trees, with flowers, with everything. And this is all comes from the money.

Q. Do Rochesterians buy more trees now than they did ten years ago or. . .?

A. Yea, lot more.

Q. A lot more.

A. Memories, for good occasion there are special beautiful trees for happy occasions.

It's like a picture. It says for happy occasion. Later on I'll show you it.

I'll show you the trees for happy occasion, how beautiful they are. People

can buy them. Three dollars a tree in memory. A lot of people buy trees.

Q. Well, who do you give the money to though? I mean how is it organized?

A. I give to my. . . I give to my Treasurer. And the Treasurer sends to New York the national office.

Q. To New York.

A. And the national office buys trees for Israel.

Q. Are you served in leadership capacity in any of the senior citizens groups?

A. I'm on the Board with the Hillel School Sisterhood. I'm on the Board of the Mizrachi. And I. . . I was on the Board at Beth Shalom but I'm not anymore.

I belong to all organizations.

Q. Oh, what types of things does ORT do in Rochester?

A. In Rochester see they do a marvelous job for Israel. They do for the whole country. They do a very nice job. Collect a lot of money and . . . and they. . . it. . . I. . . I think in Roch. . . I don't know, I'm not so familiar, but I think Rochester did more. . . it was I think a little weaker now than it used to be. But they are in other cities, in New York, big organization in Florida. It's a big organization.

Q. It's mostly money for. . .

A. Mostly for Israel.

Q. Technical training to send . . . I don't know what the initials stand for,

ORT.

A. ORT. That's just what it is. Technology something or other like this.

Q. I just don't . . .

A. I don't remember.

Q. It. . . because they're not as . . .

A. ORT are not so active, see that's why I don't know. I don't belong too many years, and. . . and I miss the meetings. Sometimes I forget. They meet now Mondays, they have afternoon and evening groups. I go to afternoon groups. So, they meet in JCC. Like last Monday I think they meet and I forgot all about it. I was in JCC and I forget to go into ORT. So, that's why. But I'm very active in Mizrachi and in Hillel School, because those are. . .

Q. What are. . .

A. . . . those on the Board. . .

Q. Is the Hillel School. . . what are some of the things that . . .

A. It's a private school.

Q. Right.

A. Public school, just like any other school but it has a double program, Hebrew and English. I was teaching there seven years, for seven years in the kindergarten and nursery. And now they have all grades to eighth grade. And the curriculum is the same as in public school. They. . . the standards is very high. And now they a lot of them continue high school, Hebrew in the. . . in the private schools for Hebrew and English.

Q. How. . . how many people serve on the Board? Hillel School.

A. Hillel School? They have I think about 18, 20.

Q. What sorts of topics do they have to decide on? Everything?

A. They have to set programming at meetings. They have to set programming. They have to set how to. . . how to get more money. And they. . . they have to decide how to cultural programs. And how to. . . how to help more,

- A. (Continued) get more money for the . . . for the Hillel School.
- Q. In terms of curriculum, is it New York State . . . do they also take from the New York State public school curriculum? A general framework of . . .
- A. It is . . . it is . . . sure, public school . . . they have the . . . they have to have the license . . . they have to have the license from . . . from . . .
- Q. Certified teachers.
- A. Yea, certified yea.
- Q. Are . . . were you certified in your . . . ?
- A. Sure, I'm certified teacher, yea. I was a certified teacher, Hebrew. I was a certified Polish teacher, I was a certified Hebrew teacher.
- Q. Did . . . would you ever have considered teaching in a public school? You know, like No. 20 School or . . . ?
- A. I . . . no. I just taught in . . . in Poland at public schools for many years. And when I came here I . . . I went to Hillel School. I joined . . . I was teaching in Hillel School. Never was teaching in public school. First of all, after being a foreigner, it was hard for me to get a position in . . . in public school anyways. And I would have to get . . . I don't have the English for English teacher license. I have for Hebrew teacher and for Polish teacher like . . . so I'll have to go in again and get English teacher's license. I had enough of that. I had to first to . . . when we . . . after the First World War the Germans was in our city and they opened German schools. So I have to get German license. See, I had a . . . had a Russian license, 'cause I . . . I finished the Russian gymnasium, Russian seminar. And then I had to change to German. And then they changed after the . . . the Poland became independent, the schools was in Polish. So I had to get a Polish license. So it was enough for me.
- Q. Since you worked your entire life, and you said . . . I'm sort of interested

Q. (Continued) in what your opinion is on Women's Liberation.

A. On what?

Q. Women's Liberation and women working and. . . ?

A. I think. . . I'm very for. . . very much for it because I think a woman is just a person like a man. And I. . . I. . . I. . . and I. . . I'm. . . A woman can accomplish as much as a man. The whole mind is not work on his mind. Why shouldn't she be the same. . . have the same platform as the man? Naturally I'm for that. . . when children are little, when they are little, she should devote more. . . more time to her family. When I was. . . see by young. . . I was at the. . . they. . . they had conditions in Poland and I had to go even when my child was only almost four, but I had a steady maid. That. . . there it was easy. And the maid used to bring me even to school to nurse the child, so. . . so it was not so hard, although it was. . . it's not. . . it's not right. The mother has to be. . . I still think has to be with a child. But like my daughter also, she's also a Hebrew teacher. But she. . . till the children, the first child, was. . . last child was six. . . see she had three children. When the last child was six years old she did not want to go teaching. So one was ten and one was twelve and one was six. So then she started teaching, she took a position in Hebrew, so position. Afternoon, but the children were in school. So she organized them. She used to pay the oldest child \$5 a week, you should take care of everything. Left everything in the Frigidaire. And you should give 'em the meals, and you should wash the dishes. And when I come back I should not see what you ate. The other one she paid \$5 a week. You should help the sister. And the baby she gave \$2 a week, six years old, you should be a good boy. And it worked out beautifully. And anyway, Lila gave them money and they did a good job. And when she came back she didn't know what they ate. The dishes were in

- A. (Continued) place, and it worked out nicely. But still, and she worked only from three till she got home eight o'clock. The children were in school. And when she came in. . . she went away the children were not yet home and when she came back, the little one was sleeping already. That's how she ordered, that the little one should be in bed already. So, but it was hard. But, what I. . . I feel that it's right because a woman should try to be the same way always the man.
- Q. Right. Do you think a Jewish woman has a special role in the home?
- A. What do you mean? What do you mean by special role? She has a special role to keep her home. The Jewish. . . Yiddish culture is that what you mean? The woman is harder for her, Jewish woman, than for a Gentile woman because she has to keep the home kosher. It's harder on the. . . it's more dishes, you know, they have to have special for the dairy, a special for the meat. And she has to wash it, and she has to. . . even in shopping it's harder. She has to see where **everything** gets kosher. But, it's not much harder.
- Q. Yea. Let's see. Are women being Bat Mitzvahed in the Orthodox. . .?
- A. Bat Mitzvah? No, in the Orthodox they don't believe in that. The Orthodox. . . they. . . in order to keep with them. . . to. . . to. . . you mean for competition that she should feel. . . so they have her Bat Torah. What means Bat Torah, when they are five years in school, it's like a graduation. But not a Bat Mitzvah. Bar Mitzvah is very important.
- Q. So really in. . . in Jewish lore, Jewish ritual. . .
- A. It's only for the man.
- Q. It's really unequal.
- A. Only for the man to be a Bar Mitzvah, but not for the women.
- Q. How do you think that affects women's consciousness or women's, you know, opinions of things? See, that they're sort of unequal. . .?

- A. I'll tell you the truth, as far as here goes the Bar Mitzvah and the Bat Mitzvah, so I don't think the child has a feeling of really what Bar Mitzvah should be. They have a feeling of getting presents, of having a party, more than any others. Almost all of them, not only most of them, but almost all of them. In the old country I have a brother, he was only son. And. . . and my father was . . . was a very well situated, and we could have a Bar Mitzvah. We didn't. We took the boy to Monday or Thursday when they listen to Torah, and he said the prayers and this is the main thing and then we took a few people, gave him a little wine and a cake and that's all. We had no ceremonies, wouldn't know about it, no presents. And they didn't know about it. Here they came a commercial.
- Q. Yea. But still it does represent, I mean, a privilege and something. . . an honor?
- A. Absolutely for the child and they looking forward to it. And they're waiting for it. It. . . it does sound to the child. . . but it's not a necessity.
- Q. Yea. I guess. . . I guess what I'm asking is whether you sort of . . . Jewish life tends to create two identities for a woman. On the one hand she's equal and she should go out and work and be her own person. But on the other hand, according to Jewish law, she's still second.
- A. A woman has her mitzvot, her. . . her things that. . . like. . . like. . . like lighting candles, like going to mixer. A woman has her own mitzvot, her mitzvot. A one. . . a man has his mitzvot. It's not that the woman is. . . in Jewish life the woman is not minimized by no means. Just the opposite. We have . . . there's. . . like Deborah. . . and the. . . prophetess, we have prophetess in women just in men. The women was very highly protected and very highly respected in Jewish life. But, there are special laws for men and special laws for women.

Q. Yea. And in terms of education. . .

A. And the laws are according to. . . women cannot. . . cannot do the same as men. For instance, like now they want to . . . women go and get also the aliyas, the program, read a portion of the Torah, she should get the honors. According to Jewish law they are not because a woman is not always clean to go up to the Torah.

Q. Go up on the bima, yea.

A. On the bima and the Torah. . . when we have menstruate we. . . so it's an . . . it's not there. . . to touch the Torah. So there are special. . . that's why the Jewish law goes according to the ability of a man and from the ability of a woman.

Q. But when. . . but when you think about it that way it. . . it makes them unequal. I mean. . . I mean it makes them separate, but it also makes the woman almost. . .

A. If they are educated in the Jewish law they don't think that way. Then. . . then they learn what a woman's. . . what a woman should do and what a . . . what. . . what a woman's privileges. . . privileges are and what a man's privileges are. And. . . and they see that it's not minimized. A woman is not minimized. A woman is very highly respected. But those that don't learn the Torah they don't know. So they think, oh, why . . . the men are more recognized than we, it's not true.

Q. Are women encouraged to educate themselves as much as men?

A. Absolutely. Absolutely. Absolutely. The first women were already studying the. . . even Deborah, she was a prophetess, she was studying, she knew the Torah. We have a lot of very, very highly educated women even in Talmudic time. And it's just in the Kreaschma it says you should teach your child, it does not say to teach your boy, you should teach your child, teach 'em all the

- A. (Continued) time. When. . . when you go on your work, when you are lie down your couch, get up teach them. It means. . . it means the child will be just as well educated, otherwise it'd be teach a boy.
- Q. Yea. Let's see. Maybe. . . well, I wonder what the influence of that's been on Jewish women in general to. . . that most Jewish women. . . 'Cause you see a lot of Jewish women who don't work and who. . . who don't pursue their own careers.
- A. You mean they don't try to be independent? They don't make themselves independent?
- Q. Right.
- A. It depends on the character of the woman. And it depends also on the upbringing. Some children are brought up the way that . . . that girls should do nothing, that the man should work for her and that she should only stay in the house and. . . and all cook for the man and. . . and take care of the children. It depends, but in. . . and it depends on the woman's make-up, too. Some. . . some women they are. . . they are born being independent. And I feel that it's a treasure to be independent and to walk with the man together. That's how you. . . you respect yourself more when. . . when you work. You. . . you are respected by people more. You can do more things. You. . . when you go among. . . you are among people you learn things but not. . . not sitting with a book, but by. . . by experience. So I feel that it's very important that a woman should try to be independent, to take the same. . . to feel the same way as a man. That they should be educated, that they should work whenever. . . whenever they are needed to help. If they. . . if they don't need to jobs for make money they should try to get to work in institutions that help out people, and belong to organizations and to work social work and do people. . . to work for humanity.

Q. Yea. Do you. . . I don't know the name of the group, but you know some really religious Jews or even the Mayasharim or. . .

A. Hasidim?

Q. Right. The women are really. . . don't you think they are preserved backwards.

A. Backwards. Backwards you think? No. . . not all of them, they are. . . they are old-fashioned, but not backwards. Some of them are very smart and they really bring up their children wonderful. They, themselves, are not educated, did not have the education, but in olden times they did not believe in women's education. Very old times. Not many. My parents believed in women education just as a man. I was educated just like my brother. But. . . but in very old families that they lived. . . that the girl should. . . should not go to . . . get too much education, they should know just how to read the . . . and be able to go to shul. Even then they don't know how to read the sidul. They. . . they come to shul and they. . . they just very . . . they read English but . . . but they don't know anything. But this is very wrong. But old times they believed that only the boys have to be educated, and the boys have to do all. . . all the work and the woman has to be just a housewife.

Q. In. . . in Poland when you were growing up was your family Orthodox, as Orthodox as you are?

A. They were Orthodox, but they were not. . . they were not Hasidim, they were not. . . They were strictly Orthodox, but they were not old-fashioned.

Q. And they had dealings with non-Jews?

A. Absolutely my parents were merchants. My father was a merchant with. . . with Germany. They used to. . . grains they used to buy from the mills and from the all kinds of grains and they used to deliver it to. . . to Germany. Or mushrooms, all kinds of feed. They used to deliver their loads to Germany,

A. (Continued) and it was a big merchant.

Q. Did your mother work also?

A. My mother helped. . . helped father in the business.

Q. Was that usual or. . . was that customary for women to help their husbands in. . . in their shops or their . . .?

A. It was. . . in. . . in the worker. . . women. . . the women raises. . . they . . . they have a store so they help. The women always helped in store. In the. . . if it was. . . they were capable, they all helped.

Q. Yea.

A. But most of it. . . most of them did. . . the men were working and the women had. . . all time they had children, as many as they could have. As Orthodox. . . many Orthodox women, they . . . if they did not use any pills, they just had as many women. . . as many children as they could have. And they. . . they were . . . it was easy. They had a job to do.

Q. Why do you think they had such big families? Because it was a blessing to have lots of children?

A. Because it's not . . . it's a blessing. That's right. It's a. . . it's not allowed to. . . the law is not allow to prevent from having children. You have to have as many children as you can.

Q. Do you think that law has modernized?

A. Sure. Most. . . it was modernized by me in my age to prevent myself from having many children.

Q. Yea, yea.

A. Even my age was a lot of modernized.

Q. In Poland? I mean . . .

A. In Poland. . . in Poland I had, surely I. . . I came from Poland with my girl was already 12 years old. And I have a child here, but I. . .

Q. Would you consider yourself though among the more educated Jews in Poland?

I mean most. . .

A. Yea, yes. Because I graduated. . . very, very few in my age. . . my age were graduated from high school. Very few my age graduated . . . and I graduated from college, from seminary.

Q. Yea.

A. See? See, very few. . . in my city were maybe . . . maybe. . . maybe 10 that were. . . because in our towns, small towns we did not have any high school. We had to go out of town, we didn't have any college. We had to go out of town. And it was not easy.

Q. Well. . . your. . . your town of Kolna was already a city though, it was a fairly. . .

A. It was what?

Q. A medium-sized city?

A. A small city.

Q. Small city?

A. Small city.

Q. So that when you read stories by Sholom Aleyhem or you read about the shtetls, that's really. . .

A. Yea.

Q. That's the same type of. . . ?

A. The same type of people, yea. That's right. The. . . the shtetl here in Yiddish is only the Joseph. . . the Joseph Avenue. It is not exactly the same type of. . . but is the type that we had in. . . in the old country, small. . . small stores. And they. . . and they were. . . women and men working there in the store. And people were not too rich. See, it was the same type. When our city was fortunate city because we were near the German boundary, so most

- A. (Continued) of the people were trading with the Germans. So they like. . . they were rushes of horses, good horses was a very, very big business. And grains was a very big business. Mushrooms. And a lot of things that the boundary gave a lot of people. . . a lot of work to people who were working. But it still was a very poor, poor. . . a rather poor people, too.
- Q. Do you remember the Russian Revolution in 1917? Do you remember hearing about it? Or. . .?
- A. 1970?
- Q. Seventeen.
- A. 1917. . .
- Q. You were. . .
- A. 1917 was the war, First World War. Not the revolution, was the First World War.
- Q. And then.
- A. 1914 it started. 1913 was my child born. I was married already, yea. So it was. . . that was very. . . it was not like the Nazis, but when the Germans. . . when they occupied we were on the boundary, so they occupied our place the first. And then. . . then when they were farther down, Warsaw, to . . . they stayed by four. . . I think three, four years. Till the end of the war the Germans stayed. And they were. . . they gave business to people and they worked to the. . . with some people to the friendly. . .
- Q. I wanted to ask I guess when the Germans occupied the town. . .
- A. So they opened German schools. They opened schools for the Jewish people. The Polish, taught them Polish. And the Jewish people had to teach everything in German.
- Q. Why?
- A. 'Cause that's how they wanted. Geography in German, arithmetic in German,

A. (Continued) history in German, everything in German. And we had German principle. . . not principle but . . .

Q. Overseers? Supervisors?

A. Supervisor. I forgot what the . . .

Q. Superintendent?

A. Inspector. Inspector it was called in Polish. Superintendent, that's right. And. . . they watched us, and they. . . they watched that we should teach them. . . they should love Germany. It was not easy.

Q. Were restrictions harder on Jews do you think? More strict?

A. It was . . . it was with the Polish too, they were strict with Polish, the Polacks too. It was not easy, it was occupied for years. But, with this business with Hitler it was not compared to. . . to the Second World War. No comparison whatsoever.

Q. In terms of. . . of. . .

A. Friendliness.

Q. Friendliness. Well, because I mean during the Second World War there. . .

A. The Second World War they. . . they just killed the people and burned them. But it was not . . . they. . . they. . . did some of more of the things in the First World War, but not as many, very seldom.

Q. Did you have any dealings with the French? Because. . . well during the Second World War, you know, the French were fairly anti-Semitic and. . . and there was not. . .

A. I was not in Second World War, I was here.

Q. You were here already.

A. Yes. But the First World War the. . . after the. . . that's how they finish World War. . . the other French and the English and America, they together defeated the Germans.

Q. Were there curfews?

A. Bolshevism started at that time.

Q. Oh.

A. Started right before. . . after the First World War, by the end of World War Bolshevism started, and they came into our city. Oh, they were murders right from the beginning.

Q. The Bolsheviks?

A. The Bolsheviks. Right from the beginning murders. And they. . . everybody was so much afraid of them. They. . . they wanted. . . know. . . they came in to our house, they said they were for get. . . and that scared naturally. . . and they ask my husband what time is it. So he told them what time. Give me the watch. Whatever they saw that something they lacked, give me. We gave them it with pleasure because we were like. . . they pushed and punched my husband. They were very rough.

Q. Why I wonder? They. . .

A. Well, because they were Bolsheviks. Well, now they. . . they . . . it's Communist, the Bolsheviks are the Communists.

Q. How about Jews who had some feeling, sympathy for Communism as a philosophy?

A. In the beginning. . . the beginning a lot of Jews thought that Communism is such a wonderful program. There will be. . . everybody will be alike and. . . and the Jews will. . . won't . . . after all when we were with the Polacks it was not so easy, and the Jews will be at the same. . . on the same platform. And a lot of them they joined them and . . . and when to Russia to help them. But then they were disappointed.

Q. Yea. Is that one of the reasons why Mr. Panitch emigrated was because of the Bolsheviks?

A. No, no. No, he emigrated because he couldn't find proper work. He was

A. (Continued) teaching and it's a small city, he did not make a nice living by teaching there. So he came here and became a teacher here.

Q. I'm gonna put the tape on the other side.

END OF TAPE 1, SIDE A (Interview II)

Interview with MRS. JENNY HOLLANDER
July 11, 1976
By Nancy Rosenbloom

Interview II
Tape 1
Side B

Q. Economic reasons. This is Side B. Today is July 11th. I'm Nancy Rosenbloom and I'm interviewing Mrs. Hollander. We were talking Bolshevism also. Well, so this is after the war the Bolsheviks came in the early 1920's? Would you say?

A. Yes.

Q. And how long. . . how long did they stay in the town?

A. They were. . . they didn't stay long. . . they went to Russia and they organized the Communist Party.

Q. And they stopped. . .

A. They were all over. . . all over.

Q. Was there any feeling do you think in Poland that. . . that even though Jews didn't like the Bolsheviks that Jews were more sympathetic to Communism?

A. Jews were more than Polacks. Polacks were very much against it. This Communism. They were afraid of them, and they really was rough with the Polacks. But, the Jews felt. . . they felt more at home with them.

- Q. And do you think the Poles resented the Jews because the Jews felt more at home with Communism? Was there any kind of feeling that. . . that Jews and Bolsheviks were collaborating?
- A. I think so because they used to call the. . . the Jews, you are a Bolshevik. You see, I think they. . . in our. . . inwardly they. . . they were thinking that every Jewish was a Bolshevik. And Bolsheviks are our worst enemies.
- Q. When. . . yea. . .
- A. Anti-Semitism was before that, too.
- Q. Yea.
- A. The Polish were always anti-Semites. But, after that it became even worse.
- Q. When you emigrated to the United States, were there also Poles, Polish people, emigrating to the United States at the same time?
- A. To America?
- Q. Yea.
- A. A lot of Polish people emigrated.
- Q. So. . .
- A. I had a cleaning lady, she was from Poland. A lot of Polish women emigrated here.
- Q. So in your foreigner class at No. 9 School was it a mixed class in terms of. . .?
- A. I think there were mostly Jews.
- Q. Jews. I guess. . . I guess one of the things I wondered was whether if. . . if
 \ . . .?
- A. So hard now, we did not remember. . . so hard now. . .
- Q. Right. Is that if Polish people were a little bit anti-Semitic in Poland, when they came to Rochester, let's say, do you think they brought those feelings with them? So that if in their minds in Poland. . .?
- A. I couldn't tell you because I don't know. The woman that worked for me was

- A. (Continued) a very good, very fine person. But, I . . . I don't think they . . . here they . . . they even . . . I think it's much that anti-Semitism is . . . does not exist so much as it . . . they . . . because they are . . . in different days they are the same level, I think the opposite, I think they look up to the Jews here.
- Q. Even though they're the same people? And they have the same ideas, but in . . .
- A. Absolutely.
- Q. . . . a different environment. . . ?
- A. Absolutely. Absolutely.
- Q. . . . it's a totally different. . .
- A. Different, yea.
- Q. So that.
- A. Sure there are a lot of anti-Semites, I'm positive, among the Poles now, too. But, it's a different way. There . . . here they don't feel so . . . they don't feel so free to . . . to show their anti-Semitism. Because they . . . they look up to the Jews.
- Q. Because they've succeeded?
- A. They . . . they . . . they think that the Jews are privileged, you know privileged, than they are.
- Q. In what sense?
- A. In the sense that the Jewish people are more educated. That they . . . that Jewish people are having higher positions than they, so they look up to the Jewish people.
- Q. When you came over did HIAS help you at all? HIAS?
- A. No. I . . . My husband . . .
- Q. Your husband brought you.
- A. My husband was here for four years before I came here. And HIAS didn't

A. (Continued) have to help.

Q. Was it easy to write letters back and forth?

A. Yes, very easy. Just like now.

Q. And to send money through the mail?

A. To send money, just like now.

Q. To telegraph money.

A. Just like now.

Q. And when you arrived did he go to New York to meet you?

A. My husband came to New York to the HIAS to meet me. . . to the airport.

Q. To the airport.

A. To the. . . not the the airport. . . to the. . .

Q. Ellis Island. . . did you come through Ellis Island?

A. Boat, yes. Everybody comes to Ellis Island.

Q. Did you already speak English at that time?

A. No, I didn't know a word of it. No my husband and his sisters came and met me and that's all. It was very easy.

Q. In terms of getting you out through. . .?

A. See a lot of Jews at that time emigrated illegally. And. . . and not on the Polish quota because the Polish quota always was filled out. So they. . . they used to . . . to have. . . like my husband came on German quota, he was not a German citizen. . .

Q. How did he do that?

A. There were agents that were. . . it was not legal, cost a lot of money, but they. . . they got him through.

Q. Who did he have to contact in order to do that?

A. There were special agents in our. . . in our city.

Q. Other. . . other Jews?

A. Yea, other Jews.

Q. And then they would talk to. . .

A. And in Germany. . . and to Germany. . . German Jews they. . . and then they tried to get him through the. . . to the border on the German side. And then from there the . . . the Germans would. . . some of them were caught.

Q. What would happen if you were caught?

A. They send 'em back or if they are citizens, if they are already a citizen then they. . . they jail him.

Q. Here in America they'd jail them?

A. My husband was. . . he had a trial. Some. . . some came and there were people that came and told them that they are not. . . came illegally. And. . .

Q. This is after you were all here?

A. After we were here, he became a citizen. He was already a citizen. And then there came a letter to him, and it was written out everything. Everywhere he was born, house that he was born, name, everything was written out. Somebody told.

Q. Who?

A. People that were told. . . they were paid for it and they told what agent. . .

Q. Other Jews?

A. I. . . we don't know who, see? We don't know. So what we had a trial here and. . . and the lawyers here. And Rabbi Bernstein did a lot for us at that time. He saved our lives. And. . . and lawyers. And it was. . . the case was dismissed because it was not enough evidence.

Q. Evidence. This was like in the 1930's? Or later?

A. Oh, I don't know. I came in 1934. . . probably 1935. . . '37.

Q. Do you think somebody told in Poland or somebody told in Rochester?

A. Somebody told the . . . the American Embassy.

Q. Embassy.

A. And then they. . . they. . .there was a law. My husband was not the only one. There were a lot in New York and here, all over. There were a lot of people that travelled illegally. And he was a Polish citizen and he came as a German citizen.

Q. Oh, he had to come. . .

A. The Polish. . . the Polish quota was already closed so they wouldn't let in to America.

Q. So. . . so. . .

A. So it was. . . but the German quota was always open. But not many Germans came here.

Q. Oh, right.

A. So they had already. . . they would have let in more people. So he came. . . The Germans. . .

Q. Did he come alone or were a few people that came?

A. He came alone. He came alone. They had more people. . . they had more people come, but everybody came by himself.

Q. By himself. So that was. . .

A. There was special agents, there was special people that worked for that.

Q. You said before when I was talking to you before that you took. . . you said . . . but when you left Poland that you might come back. Was that all part of a . . . a plan just to fool them into thinking. . .

A. About me?

Q. . . . that you might come back to teach back in Poland?

A. They wanted me. . . they wanted me. I got from Buffalo from the . . .

Q. German Embassy?

A. From the . . . the . . . what do you call it? The main body in Buffalo?

Q. Immigration service?

A. No not from the immigration, no. From the council in Buffalo. They wrote me a letter 'cause they were waiting for me. And that I should come to teach because the position is open for me.

Q. Back in Poland?

A. Yea, in Poland, sure. So, I didn't. . . so I didn't come.

Q. Yea. I didn't realize that.

A. See, I was a tenure. . . .had tenure. I had tenure in Poland.

Q. Tenure.

A. I had teaching. . . teaching so many years and. . . and so 'cause told them I was going on vacation. I came in July, vacation.

Q. They didn't realize. . .

A. They paid me for vacation.

Q. They didn't realize your husband was here?

A. No, they knew my husband, but maybe they knew and maybe they didn't know. It doesn't matter. They. . . they were. . . they knew the time away from vacation and I should come back.

Q. Well, when you left though you took everything.

A. I didn't tell them that I'm not coming back.

Q. Did you take everything with you? Did you tell. . . ?

A. Absolutely.

Q. You just didn't tell your school that you weren't coming back, but your friends you. . . ?

A. School knew that I. . . my inspector. . . my. . . they knew that I'm going . . . to. . . to America, but he didn't know that I'm not coming back. I had down that it was a vacation.

Q. Was it pretty risky? Was it a. . . ?

A. No, no. I had a right to go wherever I want.

Q. It was free?

A. Absolutely.

Q. It was like a venture?

A. I think I would have told them that I was not coming back, but I would not told them. . . it didn't matter. It was absolutely free. I came myself, free person. Like a legal. . . legally.

Q. Legally.

A. Yea, legally. With my daughter.

Q. Why. . . why did not German Jews emigrate in the 1930's? Before Hitler. . .

A. They. . . they were comfortable. They didn't want. . . they had very comfortable in Germany.

Q. A lot more comfortable than in Poland?

A. Not a lot but moreso. Germany at that time was a very, very friendly with Jews. They. . . the greatest merchants were the Jews. In fact, the. . . they had. . . they had. . . they gave us religious freedom, very nice job. It was wonderful to the Jews.

Q. Mr. Panitch never considered just going to Germany though?

A. No.

Q. He knew he wanted to leave Europe to come to America?

A. Sure. Not everybody could become a German citizen. From Germany. . . become a German citizen. And he wouldn't like it. He wouldn't consider it.

Q. Why?

A. There was no reason for us to come to Germany. Here he had two sisters. And they. . . and they helped him. And we came here. And most of people didn't come for. . . did not emigrate to Germany. They emigrated to America. America was very promising.

Q. Do you. . . do you recall when you first heard. . . you were already in

- Q. (Continued) America, but when you first heard about Hitler and. . . and the fact that the Jews were being. . .?
- A. We did not realize that it was going to be like this. We thought it was going to be like the First World War. You know, naturally not that we didn't. . . nobody even there, these people did not realize that it's going to be a Hitler. It's. . . it's a thing that nobody even could imagine, could dream of. . . could imagine that a thing like this could happen.
- Q. Yea. When do you think they first started realizing what was going on?
- A. When they started taking people. . . they started taking. . . they thought they were taking them to work and they took them to the crematoriums.
- Q. Yea. Was Rabbi Bernstein fairly vocal in terms of educating the community of what was going on or. . .?
- A. Rabbi Bernstein was an exceptional person, that he was. . . he was everything. He did so much for. . . never told anybody. He did so much for people. They would never know. For us he saved our life. And we were not the only ones. He's an exceptional person.
- Q. Yea. People would just know to go to him if they. . . if there was. . . ?
- A. Not. . . that always at noon we'd. . . we weren't in his field. My husband was a Hebrew teacher here, Talmud Torah, we were in this field, so we knew. . . and somebody told us to go to Rabbi Bernstein. We went to other people, too. And we had a lot of people that helped us out. The lawyers, too.
- Q. Was the case here in Rochester?
- A. The case was in Rochester, yes, yes.
- Q. That's really interesting.
- A. It was a very, very hard case. It took a half a. . . a half a year, did not. . . was not in one day. And we went through very, very hard time at that time.

Q. He could. . . could he. . .

A. 'Cause you see he was a citizen, so they would jail him. See, others. . . other non-citizens they send back.

Q. Did they actually send a fair number back?

A. Absolutely.

Q. They did. Did those people. . . were they ever able to come over legally or. . . you just. . . you never know?

A. This. . . this I don't know.

Q. Yea. I was talking to. . . this is on a different topic. I was talking to somebody else and they mentioned the Mothers Club at the Jewish Children's Home?

A. Yea.

Q. Were you active in that?

A. Yea, I was. . . I was a member of the Mothers Club at that time. They did a marvelous job. They used to take care of everything that's going on in the home. They used to make Bar Mitzvahs for the children, the same Bar Mitzvah as for any other child. They used to play like little mothers of the children. They used to bring 'em goodies. And they. . . if they . . . they needed something. . . although they have. . . in the Home they have everything plentiful. They had. . . they used to clothe them. They used to go in National. . . they used to go in National every child got new clothes once a year. They used to go to the shoe store, I forgot where, every child got new shoes twice a year. So, and they. . . from the stores they used to send things, they had plenty candy. They had. . . but still the Mothers Club they used to knit things for them, they used to . . . First of all, the membership. . . everyone would pay membership and they. . . they gave moral support not only financial support, they gave also moral support to the

- A. (Continued) children to comfort them. If there was problems they. . . so there was some people chosen that they should talk to them and help them out. They were. . . they were a marvelous group. They were very devoted.
- Q. About how many mothers were there?
- A. Oh, there were about 100.
- Q. 100.
- A. There was a big. . .big group. A big group. Very big group. They collected a lot of money.
- Q. Another thing that somebody was telling me about was Rabbi Solomon's seder. I wondered, was Rabbi Solomon's seder near the Talmud Torah?
- A. Yes. Yea, on Thomas Street.
- Q. Right next door?
- A. On Thomas Street, this was Baden Street. It's very. . . it's not next door but it's very near. Joseph Avenue. . .
- Q. Were those the same types of school?
- A. Same type of school but this was a more private school. The Talmud Torah was a civic school, and Rabbi Solomon's was a private. . .his own school.
- Q. Oh, Talmud Torah was a city school?
- A. City school, yes.
- Q. Oh, I didn't realize that.
- A. City Hebrew school, yea.
- Q. City Hebrew school. So in other words it was the forerunner of Hillel School? It was the same. . .
- A. Hillel School is a private school. Has nothing to do with Hillel School.
- Q. Oh, Talmud Torah was like Beth Sholom or Beth El before?
- A. No the Talmud Torah was. . . no. . . even Beth Sholom, Beth El children pay tuition. Here, the children paid very little, the city supported.

Q. Like city schools?

A. The city. . . was a city school. The Jewish people, the Jewish community supported that school. The Community Chest. . . the Community Chest, the. . . the drive, United Jewish Appeal. They. . . they supported this school.

Q. What about the Hebrew school that met at the old JY? Was that the same type of thing?

A. Which?

Q. The old JY when it was in a house?

A. Yea, that was in the. . . on the. . . on . . . the big JY on Central Avenue.

Q. Yea, was that the same type of thing as say a city school? You mean any Jewish child could go to the Talmud Torah?

A. Talmud Torah, yea. And there they didn't have to pay. . . they paid a dollar a week or something very little. And those that couldn't pay, they didn't pay anything. The city supported that school.

Q. The Jewish community?

A. The Jewish community. Not the city, the. . .

Q. Not the. . . not Rochester. . .?

A. Jewish in the city. . . Jews in the city.

Q. Yea. About how many students were in there at the Talmud Torah?

A. How many children?

Q. Yea. A lot like. . .?

A. A lot. There were. . . at that time all the. . . every Jewish child went to Talmud Torah for most. . . and then they. . . and then they built up the Talmud Torah on Field Street for children from this side, too. Not build, but they had. . . they didn't build, but they had a home there on Field Street also a part. . . it was a branch of Talmud Torah.

- Q. Is that when you moved over onto Field Street? To teach at the Talmud Torah?
- A. There was a branch. No he went to Baden Street. But we moved anyways.
- Q. How did he used to go down to Baden Street everyday?
- A. The bus. That's the way it was. Shabbas they didn't. . . Shabbas they walked. They had Shabbas services every Shabbas, he'd go down.
- Q. He walked? He used to walk down to Baden Street?
- A. He walked to Field Street.
- Q. Field Street or Baden Street? Field?
- A. Field. From Field to Baden, from Baden to Field.
- Q. Were there a lot of people that went from this side of the city down to Baden Street, or just a few?
- A. No they used to go to temple. It was. . . there was Temple Beth El and Temple B'rith Kodesh, they had. . . they. . . they . . . most of them used to go to the temple schools. And from Joseph Avenue. . . the Joseph Avenue had. . . it was not like now Joseph Avenue, it had a lot of people. And there were used to be 100, 150 children. They. . . they used to have six, seven teachers there.
- Q. Who were some of the other teachers? Mr. Verniker?
- A. Verniker, sure. Bruce was the principle, Mr. Bruce. And Lebovick was one that. . . there was a lot. . . oh, there was a lot of teachers there. More . . . more teachers from out of town.
- Q. Did you ever consider teaching there at Talmud Torah?
- A. No. First of all there was. . . I came and I didn't know the language. First of all I wanted to learn the language. And so I went to school with my daughter together. And . . . and then I. . . I had. . . I wanted to . . . a rest. I had enough. I wanted a rest. But when the. . . this was tempting to me, the school. . . when the school started, the Hillel School then I started teaching again. And I needed the money because I had a sick child.

Q. When was the Talmud Torah closed?

A. It was closed. . . let's see. . . I don't remember exactly what . . . what year it was. Twelve years ago I think.

Q. Oh, that recently? 1960's?

A. Probably, I don't know. 1960's. Yea.

Q. When did Mr. Panitch die? 19. . .

A. Fifteen years.

Q. So, 1960. . . '61?

A. Oh, it's not fifteen. . . sixteen. . . about 12 years.

Q. 1964, yea. When did he retire from the Talmud Torah?

A. Not long before he died. Two years.

Q. What. . . what grades did he teach?

A. All grades. There it was all grades.

Q. Because it was. . . it was. . .

A. It was a. . . it was a very learned man, very educated. He was teach any grade, he knew Hebrew perfectly. That's why in Hebrew he was very educated, very.

Q. Did you travel to Israel together, you and Mr. Panitch?

A. One time. One time together.

Q. Was that the only time?

A. It was. . . one time . . . yea, it was the only time it was together. There was my sister's anniversary, fiftieth anniversary. So we travelled together.

Q. Was that the only time he went to Israel? At the Talmud Torah were the classes mixed in terms of ten year olds and fifteen year olds and were like all the ten year olds together and . . .?

A. No, sure they were classes.

Q. They were. . . but traditionally. . .

- A. No, not traditional. They were all. . . as I say, all ten year olds, nine year olds, twelve year olds, et cetera. Separate. . . they were separate classes. First grade, second grade, . . . five years.
- Q. 'Cause today, you know, they mix everyone together, eight year olds. . .
- A. They don't mix together, no, no. They don't mix today. They started in the afternoon school, they start from eight years up to thirteen. First grade, second grade, third grade, fourth grade, fifth grade. Thirteen they graduate and then. . . then they go on higher if they want.
- Q. Yea. I guess I was . . .
- A. Not mixed. No, don't mix.
- Q. I guess I was thinking of the city schools. They started to. . . they don't pay so close attention to how old you are.
- A. Oh, the city schools, yea. Hebrew school. . . Hebrew school they are all regular.
- Q. Very routine. Let's see. What else was I gonna ask you? Do you think that the Jewish community in Rochester is fairly unified? One community? Or do you think it's sort of. . .?
- A. What do you mean by one community? I. . . I don't. . . it can't be one community. The Orthodox are separate and the Conservative and the Reform. See, they. . . they mingle together when the social world, but social activities. But when . . . when it comes to Zionism, then they are together, unified. But, otherwise, go to the temples, each one according . . . go to his temple. But when they unify when they. . . there's a war for Israel then they. . . they are together.
- Q. Do you think that your ideas towards Israel have changed since you've been in America?
- A. Never. Never. My ideas was. . . not only since I came to America, when I

- A. (Continued) was in the old country I work for Israel, work for National Fund just like. . . like even more than here. I used to go out with the. . . we had flower day and we used to go through the whole city and collect money, always I was the same Zionist as I was I am now, too. I am very ardent Zionist. And I. . . I would do anything for Israel.
- Q. Does Israel come first, or. . . you know, sometimes people say are you an American first or an Israe. . . or a Zionist first or . . . ?
- A. To me they're both the same. They're both countries. . . both good countries. America. . . I'm American. So when it comes to America I work, I do anything for America, too. But well-being of America. When it comes to Israel it's the same thing.
- Q. Because I've heard people. . . I was telling you before we put on the tape that some people don't think Israel was . . .
- A. America first.
- Q. Right. Going into Uganda.
- A. No, I don't. . . I don't think we are. . . we are patriots and just American and Israeli the same way. It does not. . . it does not minimize. If you work for Israel it does not minimize the patriotism for America.
- Q. I agree. Do you think America gives Israel enough support in terms of diplomatic and foreign?
- A. It depends who is. . . I'll tell you. According to me, America tries very much. And I feel that they can't even. . . even they want to do, it's hard for them because they. . . America is a country that has to live with all the countries. They. . . they cannot. . . they cannot show sympathy. . . more sympathy to one country than to the other, it's hard for them. You see? With Israel it's a hard job for America, but I feel they do very well accordingly. And I'm really thankful to America. G-d bless America for doing such a

A. (Continued) wonderful job for Israel.

Q. Yea.

A. They could do more.

Q. More. Lot of people. . .

A. . . . they could do more. It depends who is the. . . who is the ruler. But, . . . but it's hard. It's a hard. . . I. . . I don't. . . I don't blame them many times because they cannot show. . . show so much partiality.

Q. Yea. Otherwise they'll get. . .

A. America is with the whole world.

Q. Yea.

A. You see, it's the best country in the world.

Q. Yea. Let's see. What would. . . I guess one of the last things I was going to ask you is, this is one of the questions we're asking everybody. What do you think the future of the Rochester Jewish community is? The future, what's in store?

A. I don't think I'm competent to . . . to foretell to answer this question. It. . . it's very hard to say. Rochester used to be a very religious, a very Orthodox city. A really Jewish city. Rochester is now not the same as when I came here. When I came here the Jewish . . . there would be. . . especially the Orthodoxy was very strong here. Now it's much less. And it's more modernized. If you. . . I don't think. . . I don't think the. . . I think that the Orthodoxy is less than it used to. . . than it was. And maybe. . . but now it's working up. We have, for instance, in the little shul. . . a little temple Beth Hacknesset on St. Regis. And they are the highest officials. It's a very Orthodox temple. This is most Orthodox temple in the city. And the highest officials belong there. The highest. . . I mean the. . .

Q. Who?

- A. I mean the doctors and lawyers and the most of them are young people and everybody has a . . . is very educated and has a professional. . . most professionals, the most members are professionals. So this is a good sign. And they send their children to the Hillel School, which is a more Jewish religious school. It's not strictly a religious. . . it's not an Orthodox school. From the . . . we have a lot of children from the Reform temple. So. . . so it means that Jewishness is not. . . not mean. . . not vanishing.
- Q. Yea. Do you think intermarriage poses a real problem to the Jewish community?
- A. Oh, inter. . . oh, very, very big problem, intermarriage. Very, very many marriages. There's no question about it. A big problem.
- Q. Why do you think?
- A. Why because the upbringing. Because the . . . the people. . . nobody is. . . the people tell the children all people are equal.
- Q. Yea.
- A. I have a friend and she had one son, brilliant boy, beautiful, handsome as handsome could be. Best in school. He got out he's a musician, everything. So he married a Gentile girl. And his parents are not. . . not religious. So, for them the father did not want to go to the wedding. He says, what did you teach me? You told me that all people are equal. Now you tell me that I cannot marry. Well, they are all equal, she's the same as the others. So he said to his parents, his education. We have the home, home and the way they're bringing every children. . . they bring every children. . . so naturally and then they bring a Gentile girlfriend to the house, and they tell them. . . so naturally they should have expected.
- Q. But. . . but don't you think Jewish traditions or law has that contradiction in it? 'Cause it does teach you that all people are equal. Jewish tradition does.

- A. Absolutely. Jewish. . . Jewish traditions do not teach to marry a Gentile girl. Gentile. . . or Gentile boy. The intermarriage. . . intermarriage is very much forbidden in Jewish life.
- Q. But it does teach that people. . .
- A. People are equal but not. . . not . . . they are equal in social life, equal in education, they can go together. . . Jewish law does not teach that other people are not our. . . are different than we are, and that they have to be respected. But. . . but Jewish. . . Jewish tradition teaches us that we should stick to our. . . to our religion, to our. . . stick to our nation. It's very, very much forbidden, the intermarriages.
- Q. Do you think that young Jewish people have a real understanding of their ethnic identity or of their cultural identity? Or do you think that might be part of the problem?
- A. They don't have. They don't have.
- Q. That's why it's so easy for them. . .
- A. They don't have that. They don't have. This is the problem. They don't have. . . most of them, the major. . . the very few, very small percentage, have the traditional education. That's the whole problem. Because you cannot . . . from. . . as far as Jews from the religious Jews, a very small. . . it happens sometimes, it just happens, intermarriage. But, it's. . . but from others, it's. . . it's everyday. Every hour.
- Q. Yea. Like. . . like from Beth Sholom, for example, a very tiny percentage?
- A. You think Beth Sholom is so religious, but the children is not as strict a religious. . . not all. . . it's a religious synagogue, but not all people that come to . . . to Beth Sholom are religious people. But. . . but naturally a smaller percentage than from B'rith Kodesh or from even Beth El. But, . . . but take from Hillel School, I'm positive that there won't be

A. (Continued) intermarriage from Hillel School. It's the upbringing.

Q. Yea.

A. It's the education you give 'em.

Q. Does Hillel School actively try to go out into the community, get more children to come?

A. Absolutely. Absolutely. They. . . they have all. . . all the time appeals, and they have people that try to get more children. They, in fact, get every year more children now. Last year we got about 25% more than we had before.

Q. But you said some of them are Russian Jews? Israeli.

A. Very few.

Q. You're right. You said Israeli children.

A. A few Israelis.

Q. Mostly Rochester?

A. Very few. All Rochester. . . all Rochester. And maybe a few, maybe five children or six children from Israel. Very few. All Rochesterians. And from better families.

Q. Professionals and . . .

A. Most of them professionals. And then there are non-professionals also, but most of them are professionals. You have a few. . . but, the rabbis or cantors children, those that are religious people, they give. . .if they can. . . only can afford, and if they cannot afford they get. . . they get scholarships. That's what we work for, all children should be able to that want to go to school, they should go to that school.

Q. So on the one hand I guess you're saying that. . . that the Rochester Jewish community still has a vibrant. . .

A. It's like every community. Not different than any other community as far as Jewishness is. . . It used to be very Jewish, but no more. When I came on

- A. (Continued) Saturday you hardly find a Jewish store open. Nothing. Now, bakeries are open, everything is open.
- Q. You wouldn't do shopping on Saturday would you? No.
- A. I'm religious.
- Q. Yea. Do you. . . can you think of any other stories to tell or. . . ?
I can't think of anything else to ask.
- A. Either can I. I think everything was caught up as far as today. And Rochester is a nice. . . this I can tell you, Rochester is a nice city, nice city. Very nice city, friendly. When a newcomer comes here to Rochester they always, always are approached with friendliness. And they. . . they do everything they can. And when the Russian. . . but the Russians that come here, they are not allowed to. . . a few Russian people, they. . . they get for them homes, they get for them jobs, and they. . . they got for them schools for the children. And Rochester. . .
- Q. Have you worked with the Russian Jews?
- A. I don't work I just talk to them.
- Q. Oh, you talk to them.
- A. Yea, I talk to them. They are very satisfied. One family are very satisfied. They came and they got for him a nice apartment. And the children were right away sent to school. And those that needed. . . and they got a. . . they try to get a job for the husband. And they are very satisfied, very happy.
- Q. What kind of a job did he get?
- A. Depends what their background. . . what their ability is. This. . . this one is in a architecture, they got him a very good job.
- Q. Young family?
- A. Young family, yea. They have young children. Also come the young families.
- Q. Do they old?

A. The old. . . the old died out and they killed them. Russians killed them.

Q. Here do they live together in the same area?

A. No, no. . .

Q. They're spread out through the city?

A. They get a home for them. No, not a special. . . there's no area. . . ghetto.

Q. Yea, I wondered whether they were all in a. . . one apartment building or. . .
in the same area?

A. No, no, no.

Q. How do they learn English?

A. They. . . they send them to school. They go to school. The older people,
the. . . it's hard for them. They used to have, but now they don't have it,
they used to have classes for the foreigners. I don't know if they have now
for foreigners 'cause this I don't know. They. . . they all learn from the
children. The children, send 'em right to school.

Q. OK. I can't think of anything else to. . .

A. That's all then.

Q. OK.

END OF TAPE 1, SIDE B (Interview II)