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Schwarz, Lotte oral history interview

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LOTTE SCHWARZ
SEAL BEACH, CALIFORNIA
JUNE 11, 1990

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Steve Hochstadt: But that's what I am interested in, so . . .

Lotte Schwarz: What I wanted to say is before I, before we went to Shanghai, and that was before I got married, I worked for the Hilfsverein. You know what the Hilfsverein, Hilfsverein der deutschen Juden?

Hochstadt: Yes, many people have talked about it helping them to go . . .

Schwarz: Yeah. That's what we did and I worked there. I was a secretary for different provinces, for the province Hannover, Westfalen, Hessen-Kassel, different provinces. And my boss was a former lawyer, who couldn't go to, to the courts any more. You know they didn't let the Jews go into court any more. So, and he had a family with three little kids, so he was the first one, he got the, he was a representative for the Hilfsverein for the different provinces around Hannover. And I was his secretary. So he was kind of out, I mean, he was so depressed for everything, so I did most of the work. What we did was, most people came only in to, that we paid to get the money that they could go somewhere overseas, or overseas, or in the beginning, they could still go to England or France, if they had people there. But that was out later, I mean, you had to go overseas, like I did. We had to go, we didn't have anybody in America, in the United States. And when you didn't have anybody in the United States, the only way to go was Shanghai. You didn't need any permit to go to Shanghai, even it was already under Japanese military occupation. But we still could just go to Shanghai and there, of course, the Japanese regulated everything. So that's why we went to Shanghai. I was married three months, and we left and went to Shanghai. Now first, I want to give you coffee.

Hochstadt: All right. That would be fine.

Schwarz: You take milk?

Hochstadt: A little bit, please. So many people that I've spoken to have spoken about the Hilfsverein.

Schwarz: About what?

Hochstadt: About the Hilfsverein . . .

Schwarz: The Hilfsverein?

Hochstadt: So if you could tell me a lot about how, how you did your job and how it worked, that would be very helpful to me. Because I've gotten, I've gotten the side of the people who were helped by it, but . . .

Schwarz: See, in the first place, the papers, the Hilfsverein, what we mostly did was try to get through the, we were a branch from the main part, Hilfsverein was in Berlin, and we were a branch, and got all the regulations from them. And then, when they, mostly they came to apply for the money to get overseas. Many people had somebody in America. And they had the, got the affidavit to go to America, but they didn't have the money to go. So what we did is connected our

Hilfsverein, we made some research, of course, if the people had money, even through the [unclear] . Anyway, don't you write that in there. So we tried to get some money wherever they want to go. Mostly, it was either to the United States, later on some people had some relatives in Argentina or Brazil, even in Uruguay. So they went there. And all they wanted was the money. And other people had some money, but didn't have anybody to go overseas, so we tried to find a place for them, to find. We couldn't really send them anywhere else than, than Shanghai later and then most people went to Shanghai, like we did, didn't have any money any more. They went to Shanghai and it was mostly terrible. Let's have coffee first, huh? I made a good fruit salad . . .

Hochstadt: That would be wonderful.

Schwarz: . . . I just made some coffee in case I thought an old man is coming and then . . .

Hochstadt: What?

Schwarz: . . . he needs the coffee.

Hochstadt: Why did you think an old man was coming?

Schwarz: I don't know. I just didn't think of any, any younger person who would do that, you know?

Hochstadt: Oh, because of what I'm researching?

Schwarz: Yeah. I never saw a professor, like you, see, I go to Long Beach City College for years. Right now we have vacation, of course. But all the professors there, I went with one professor to Washington D.C. on a ten-day trip a few years ago. It was gorgeous. We went through the Senate, to Congress. Congressman Anderson, from here, was his friend, so he took us all over . . .

Hochstadt: Wonderful.

Schwarz: . . . we went places, we went to every meeting where nobody else could go. But he was an old man. It was, what was his name? I'll get to it. There is, oh no, wait, I open the milk, one second. It is open.

Hochstadt: Thank you.

Schwarz: And I have a few cookies and then I give you some fruit salad, okay? I made a big fruit salad. And anyways, so we didn't have anybody either. You know, my husband had some relatives in America, but they were some relatives, they just didn't want to do anything, you know. And I know he had relatives with a very famous name, but they, when we wrote to them, my husband was in concentration camp, right after we got married, and the only way I could get him out, was in Buchenwald, was when I had a ship's ticket and an affidavit to go overseas. So I tried real hard and I worked for the Hilfsverein and I couldn't do it.

Hochstadt: You couldn't find anywhere to go or . . .

Schwarz: I couldn't, the only way we could go, we didn't want to. We had no information about China or Shanghai, that anybody had gone to China before. So the Hilfsverein, later on, of course, we all went to China, twenty thousand people, you know.¹ But when I started, and so I didn't know anybody who was in China and . . .

Hochstadt: When you started working for the Hilfsverein?

Schwarz: Yeah, I worked, see, that lawyer I worked for, Dr. Schleisner, they gave him the job, that office for the Hilfsverein . . .

Hochstadt: Schleisner? That's his name?

Schwarz: Dr. Schleisner. I even have a picture from him. I looked for pictures from Shanghai. He was a very good man. But he . . .

Hochstadt: So . . .

Schwarz: . . . was so depressed that he had three little kids and he couldn't go to court any more and everything. So I did most of the work. People came in and we did work on them and they made him a memo and so, you know, so . . .

Hochstadt: When did you start working for the Hilfsverein?

Schwarz: I'll tell you what. I worked in 1933 for a large lawyer firm in Hannover, a very famous firm and I worked 'till first of April '33, and that was the time when no Jew could work with a non-Jewish place any more. So I had to quit. And then I worked, for a short time, for a lawyer who was all out. I just couldn't work for him. And then I met the secretary from Dr. Schleisner. By then, he did not have the Hilfsverein yet, and she said, "You know, I'm going to get married. Why don't you take my job?" Because Dr. Schleisner was so used to her and she did all that work, and I could do the same kind of work, so I got her job. And after a little while, we got the Hilfsverein, you know. We didn't have any business, with the, with another lawyer with us, too.

Hochstadt: So this was maybe 1934 that you started?

Schwarz: Yeah. Yeah. That was around 1934.

Hochstadt: Could you tell me then, did people start, when did people start coming to you?

Schwarz: As soon as Dr. Schleisner became the, the part for the Hilfsverein, for our, for the province Hannover, Hessen-Kassel, Westfalen, and different provinces, as soon as that was

¹ Although there were no exact counts, the number of Jewish refugees from the Nazis who went to Shanghai probably was between 16,000 and 18,000.

known. Of course, it was known right away, so that people start coming to us. And either we gave them the instructions, we gave them the immigration laws, first they, people came first, the one who knew a certain country where they wanted to be. Somebody had relatives in Brazil or in Argentina, some places, so we told him what they needed to immigrate there.

Hochstadt: Was it still possible, was it, how easy or difficult was it in 1934 to, to emigrate?

Schwarz: I'll tell you. When you had, they all had their immigration laws. And when you had, like for instance, you had a cousin or an uncle somewhere in Brazil or in Argentina or in Uruguay, then they sent you the papers. They went to their government of it and you get the papers and you had the money to go or we provided the money through the Hilfsverein, then they could go. But that was only a short time and then there wasn't anything open any more. Nobody could go to America any more, you know.

Hochstadt: Where did you, where did you get the money? Where did the Hilfsverein get money?

Schwarz: Oh, from big Jewish organizations. There were in . . .

Hochstadt: Like which ones?

Schwarz: . . . there were in Germany, were wealthy Jewish people, I think, they, they gave that, I think, to the Hilfsverein. Nobody ever thought about that, where the Hilfsverein got the money. But the Hilfsverein had the money and they paid for us, too, for my husband, and we, you know, we went to China.

Hochstadt: Did you have to, did you have enough money for everyone who needed it, who came to you? Did you have to turn people away?

Schwarz: There was never a question, when they filled all the others' conditions, that they wouldn't get the money, at least not as long as I was there. But I left in '38 when I got married in February, and I left in summer, I think in August. We left four months later. And by then, they all got some money, yeah.

Hochstadt: And then, so you were working for the Hilfsverein for about four years, three or four years. Did . . .

Schwarz: Yeah, yeah, I worked for Dr. Schleisner. When he took over the Hilfsverein, I was in there, of course.

Hochstadt: Did, did things change during that? You mentioned one change, that in the beginning you could go to all these countries if you had the papers and then towards the end, it was more difficult.

Schwarz: Yeah, yeah.

Hochstadt: Did other things change? Did more and more people come to you towards 1937?

Schwarz: We had a full house, yeah. Many, many more people, everybody came. Either they didn't have the immigration laws or no papers to go somewhere or they didn't have any money to go or both. Later on, the last few years, they didn't have anything, you know. And that's when we sent everybody to Shanghai, which was terrible.

Hochstadt: So you were, most of the people that I've talked to who went to Shanghai went after Kristallnacht. But you were sending people . . .

Schwarz: On Crystal Night we were on the ship.

Hochstadt: You were already on the ship.

Schwarz: We were on the ship already, yeah.

Hochstadt: But you were sending people, the Hilfsverein was sending people to Shanghai before Kristallnacht?

Schwarz: Very few. Very few. Wait a minute, I can tell you exactly. We were the second ship to Shanghai, each ship had about 350 refugees. And our ship, my husband and I, we were the second ship to Shanghai.

Hochstadt: What name, what was the name of the ship?

Schwarz: "Conte Verde", Italian ship. It was nice, because it was an Italian ship and we were in the tourist class, so it wasn't too bad. And, so it was okay and then when we got there, you heard of Sassoon?

Hochstadt: Yes.

Schwarz: I mean, he had, wait, I have some pictures from our little houses here. I looked for something. When I find my purse, I'll show you the picture. Sassoon must have been very wealthy. He was a tall, beautiful looking man. We had a coffee shop in the beginning for our refugee people. And he came once, because he paid everything. All the houses belonged to him and then we all had one little cubic, one little room, you know. It wasn't that a house had an apartment. Other houses didn't either, they always had just one room. And it about as big from here to here. And we slept in there and we cooked in there, if we had anything to cook, you know. We had the Chinese oven, which, the rooms had a little balcony, so 'till I got that thing going and not having all the smoke in the house, I did it on the balcony. And, but most we didn't have anything to eat. That isn't what I wanted. Here you see all the little houses. Where the cross is, is our, is where we lived. There . . .

Hochstadt: Is this in Hongkew?

Schwarz: It was all in Hongkew. We only lived in Hongkew. Only rich people who came with their own money, they went across the bridge. But we all lived in Hongkew. And most those people, when the Japanese took over when the war broke out, they came over to us, too.²

Hochstadt: Yes. Did Susan Westheimer call you?

Schwarz: Hm?

Hochstadt: Did Susan Westheimer call you? Do you know Susan?

Schwarz: She was my friend!

Hochstadt: Because I spoke to her two days ago.³

Schwarz: Where is she? Where does she live?

Hochstadt: She lives in Newport Beach.

Schwarz: Susie! Is she with her husband?

Hochstadt: Yes. I didn't see her husband, he wasn't there. But yes, when I told her, she asked me who else I was talking to. And I said, "So-and-so and so-and-so and so-and-so and Lotte Schwarz." And she said, "Oh, I know Lotte Schwarz." So she, she . . .

Schwarz: Susie.

Hochstadt: . . . she was very happy to hear that. She wasn't sure that you were alive.

Schwarz: She was a beautiful girl. She had long, beautiful wavy hair up to here. All those girls looked, you know. Her sister was there, too, in Shanghai.

Hochstadt: She was very happy to hear that you were not far away and that you were alive. She wasn't sure you were still alive.

Schwarz: Oh, yeah. [laughs]

Hochstadt: Obviously you are, I told her that you were. So she, she . . .

² Schwarz refers here to the edict of February 18, 1943, when the Japanese authorities in Shanghai forced all "stateless refugees", meaning Jewish refugees who had arrived since 1938, to move residences and businesses into a bombed-out square mile in Hongkew, the so-called Designated Area. The move had to be accomplished by May 18.

³ See interview with Susan Westheimer, Shanghai Jewish Community Oral History Project, Newport Beach, California, June 8, 1990.

Schwarz: Eat the cookie, I give you some fruit salad later.

Hochstadt: She said to extend her greetings to you.

Schwarz: Thank you. Do you have her phone number?

Hochstadt: Yes, I have her address and phone number. I'll be glad to give it to you.

Schwarz: Fine, fine. Anyway, these were all those little houses. See, each house has one window only, these were all different houses, and they started, have you ever been in Shanghai?

Hochstadt: Yes.

Schwarz: It started right by the Garden Bridge, by the Bund, where the Bund ends, there's a Garden Bridge and then Hongkew starts. And all those little houses belonged to Sassoon . . .

Hochstadt: I see.

Schwarz: . . . and every month Mr. Goldberg, or Goldenberg, I think was his name, came and got the rent, you know. We paid it, mostly we didn't have it, you know, and he was real rough. That was a time.

Hochstadt: Mrs. Schwarz, please tell me, well, it would be good for me if you could start right at the beginning, if you could say where you were born and when you were born and a little about what your parents did in Germany.

Schwarz: I'll tell you what. I go to Long Beach City College and my teacher, everybody thinks that's an interesting situation, you know. It wasn't interesting to us. Anyway, there came a lady and she want my interview. But it wasn't that I could tell her, she asked me and when she was not correct in what she said, she wrote, she read it to me later, it wasn't 100% right. So, anyway, I give you one of those interviews. It's not 100% right. And you are the last one that gets an interview.

Hochstadt: Well, that's very nice. I'm especially glad. I didn't know that you worked for the Hilfsverein, because . . .

Schwarz: Yeah.

Hochstadt: . . . it's important for me to find out about them.

Schwarz: Yeah, we, when I moved to Berlin, of course, I met my husband. I went on a vacation in the Schwarzwald during my time for the Hilfsverein, because I was so overworked and my mother was living with me, of course. And she always saved some money from every paycheck and she said, "You have to go." And there was only one place, we had that Israeli-, Jüdischer Familienblatt, you know, you probably heard about the Jewish paper, the German-Jewish paper. And there was one place which still took Jews. It was in [unclear] in the Black Forest. And I

went there. And first I met a young man there, who was from Hannover, too. He wanted to marry me [laughs] too, but he [unclear] . But anyway, he's here too in Long Beach. He married later on. His son is a lawyer here, around here. And I mean, it's really strange, you met somebody from Hannover and then you, you get together here to Long Beach, you know, from Shanghai. He was in Shanghai and then his wife died. She was very sick and then he married again. He has a beautiful home in Long Beach and, anyway, I left the Hilfsverein when I got married.

Hochstadt: When was that? That you got married?

Schwarz: In February '38.

Hochstadt: February '38, that's right, you said that. And . . .

Schwarz: And we moved, my husband really, he was an insurance person, but he really didn't have a job any more. We went to Berlin, but it was hard for him to get new insurance, as you know, and besides, after we were, just about three months, when somebody, and we had *Teilwohnung*, you call it, part of a large apartment from a Jewish couple on Kaiserdamm, beautiful neighborhood, and somebody knocked at the door. And the lady who belonged that apartment said, she went out and she came and said, "There's somebody who want to talk to you." There were two men outside. They said, "Herrn Schwarz?" He said, "Yes?" "Go with us." And it was the Nazis, you know. And it took me about a week 'till I knew where he was. I went to the police and, as a matter of fact, I had no idea that something like that could happen. My husband was very neat and very clean, when he wasn't shaved, he wasn't dressed, okay, that was impossible for him. So I packed his little razor stuff and everything, and other toilet articles that he needed and I went to the police department and I said, when he has to stay there a few days. I mean you heard all kinds of things. And I, at least, I wanted him to have his stuff. And when I came there, there was, that whole police department, that room was full of people. Later on, I met some in Shanghai too. All women and the men were taken away, it was on fourteenth of June.

Hochstadt: Why were, why were people being arrested then?

Schwarz: They were [laughs] a danger to the public or something, they said. My husband was no in danger, he was a very quiet man, you know, no danger.

Hochstadt: Do you know why they arrested your husband in particular?

Schwarz: No. They arrested everybody on that fourteenth of June.⁴ They took all the Jewish people, I don't know how many there were, and they brought them to Buchenwald. It took a long time 'till I know where he was. Anyway, and of course, I didn't have, oh, I called my, my boss, Dr. Schleisner in Hannover. And he was nice enough to come to Berlin where I was, but he couldn't do

⁴ On June 14, 1938, the Nazis promulgated an addendum to the Nuremberg Laws, which made it easier to plunder Jewish businesses. On that night, between 1500 and 2500 Jewish men who had any kind of criminal record, including traffic offenses, were arrested and sent to a concentration camp.

anything, he just explained to me how the situation was, you know, he couldn't do anything. And the only way what I heard then was, when you show them a ship's ticket to overseas, not to England or France, or anyway then you would get him out.

Hochstadt: Who did you hear that from? Who told you that?

Schwarz: I think they told me that at the Hilfsverein.

Hochstadt: So it wasn't the German police who told you that?

Schwarz: Oh no, oh no, no, no, no. No. They didn't say anything. I said, I don't know, when I said, "I don't want to be without him always." I remember I went into the police station, the Nazis said "Why don't you divorce him?" Anyway, so he was gone three months until we get the tickets and so, and then he came home after three months and we had to leave within two weeks, I think, and we went to China. We were the second ship and everybody was in the same condition, same situation, you know, so, that was it.

Hochstadt: How did you get the tickets? Could you ex- . . .

Schwarz: From Hilfsverein.

Hochstadt: You went to the Hilfsverein? You went to your employer.

Schwarz: They sent it even to us without, without even asking much and then my husband's mother lived in France, she had died already at that time, but she had a very wealthy brother, who was a French citizen in Paris. He had a big home in the, on that main street, I forgot, Maison [unclear] . Her name was [unclear] . And when we were on the ship, he sent us a few hundred dollars, we didn't ask for, but he did. So then . . .

Hochstadt: How did, excuse me, how did he send you the money? He sent you . . .

Schwarz: It was on the ship.

Hochstadt: So he arranged that the money would come to you on the ship.

Schwarz: Yeah, yeah. It was on the ship. But it was a good feeling, you know. Anyway, on the ship, we met another German, I mean, we were all together German people, and that man, had, we called it *Umschichten*, you know, you changed your, whatever you did. Like the many Jewish people worked in stores as salesmen and so, and they all did kind of different things. That man went in a restaurant and learned how to cook. And he was very good in it. And he talked to my husband on the ship, he was a very nice guy. Later on, we found out he was an alcoholic, but we didn't know that before, and when he was sober, he was the nicest guy. And he was with his wife, too. Nobody had children at that time. Anyway, and he talked to my husband and my husband said, "How about I do the business part and you do the cooking for our German refugees?" Because we knew one ship, another ship was coming and so, and nobody liked to eat Chinese. I

still don't eat Chinese, not after ten years in Shanghai.

Anyway, we opened that with the little money we had, one of those little stores. This one here was ours. We lived upstairs in one, and downstairs there was a refugee dentist. He took that one room for dentist and in the back was another room, we divided the room like here and we had the front and, that Bayer was his name, and his wife, they had the back. The one room who cooked for it. We did that for a while. In the beginning, it worked fine. Of course, we didn't have any money to stock up, so every time the Japanese soldiers came, and everything was Japanese, of course, I mean, I know some, because, see the port was right down that street, down the Broadway, the end of the Broadway where all the Japanese soldiers came, and the whole city was under Japanese occupation, of course. But they came in the store and they liked to eat steak, and we never could buy much, because we didn't have any money and soon our boy, our cookboy, besides, Bayer, he had to go later, because he drank too much, he couldn't do it any more. But we had a boy, his name was Hans. He worked for a German rich, before, there were many German, not Jews people, many German people in Shanghai. They had big businesses, import and export and everything, and that Hans worked in one of those, was a servant or cook in one of those families there. And one man came to the store, oh, he had the German beer, import or export, and he wanted us to have beer. We didn't have any of that stuff before, later on, we took beer in. Anyway, and he gave us that Hans. So he did the cooking and every time we needed a steak, he'd run over to the butcher, to his own butcher and bought a steak, you know and we made it for a while. And that was of course 'till the war broke out, '41.

Hochstadt: Could you tell me about what happened when you landed? Between the time that you landed in Shanghai and that you started this restaurant? How long did . . .

Schwarz: I'll tell you what, not very long. Because I always, I was always afraid we are getting, I was old at the time, I think I was 27, but I was always afraid we would get too old and we couldn't establish ourself any more. And one thing was, we had no idea, we didn't know about the war or anything later on. We had no idea what happened outside the world. The only radio we had was Chinese. So we really, there was one man, Fischer, maybe you heard of him, he had that, our refugee newspaper. He was a newspaperman in Germany.⁵ He had only one arm. Anyway, and he once in a while got some notices or some messages of it. But all together, we didn't know anything.

When the war broke out, and our room was upstairs in that little house there, the stairs went up like this. They were so narrow. And I was outside, and that like, there was kind of a roof outside and it was fenced where you could go out. And we heard terrible bumping and, and, like bombs and so, and then I saw fire coming from the harbor, which was close to there, too. And my husband said, "I go down and see what's going on." We had no idea. And he even got dressed and [laughs] I said, "You don't have to get dressed. Just go out and see what's going on." He said, "You never know what happen. You never know if you come back or so." So he got dressed and went down. But even when he came back up after a while, he didn't know what happened. That was when the war broke out. The only thing that we saw and heard later, that all the ships, which was very close to us, the Bund has all the ships, and they were all gone. Many American and British ships, they sunk their own ships so they couldn't be taken. And some went over, there was

⁵ Wolfgang Fischer published the Shanghai Woche beginning in March 1939.

a little island, I forgot the name, where it was not Japanese. Where other ships stopped to and they tried to reach that island. Some did and some didn't. They didn't, they were just sunk. And then the next day we knew.

And then we had to move from our restaurant, here from there, we couldn't be there any more. Japanese said we couldn't be on that side, they needed that side. Across the street was a munitions factory. That's what we, they told us before, we don't know if that's true. It was a big, gray building and we never saw anybody going in and out even before the war, we didn't know what it was. Maybe it wasn't. So anyway, we moved out here . . .

Hochstadt: So almost right after the start of the war, you had to move out from your place?

Schwarz: I don't know if it was right after the war. But it was just so that, the Japanese were never bad to us. In all those years, I mean, they, their people couldn't talk our language, we couldn't talk their language, so "Uh, uh, uh," you know. When we want to go over to the consulate, over to the, you were in Shanghai, over the Garden Bridge to the international part, we needed a Japanese permit. So they had kind of a thing there, a little, some kind of a little house or so by the border, by the Garden Bridge, before you went over the Garden Bridge. And you had to have their permit to go over, you know, when we went to the consulate sometimes. The consulate was right after the Garden Bridge, the German consulate, and we were still German citizens, you know. Anyway, and that was it.

Hochstadt: So when you, did you have to move, now there was a time when the Japanese said that all Jewish refugees had to move into the Designated Area?

Schwarz: We lived in that area from the beginning, yes.

Hochstadt: You already, so this moving wasn't part . . .

Schwarz: No, no, we went the . . .

Hochstadt: . . . of the Designated Area, it was just because you were across from the . . .

Schwarz: . . . it was because those houses were empty. We had to even repair them a little bit, because what happened was Chinese people lived in there and before we came in the Chinese and Japanese fought, and the Chinese had to leave or run away out of all those houses. And they were in a terrible, terrible situation those houses. So we fixed them up a little bit. That Bayer, who was with my husband, and my husband, they went across the Bridge, and bought little stuff what we needed to board it up. I always wondered how they found the places and the stores, and then we found a Chinese carpenter and he fixed up our little place. So we had a little room and the Bayers had a little room, and we were very glad. And then we both got children, they got twins and I got my daughter.

Hochstadt: When was she born?

Schwarz: In 1940, in February '40. We got there '38. And the same time the Bayers got twins.

But by then they moved out, they had to move out. They, behind our house, you know, we called them lanes, they were different little houses, like narrow streets with little houses. They moved in one of those, and we stayed in that one thing 'till, when the Japanese came, came there, when the war broke out, we couldn't have that place any more. Our people didn't have any more money to come and the Japanese soldier, I don't know, it was just we couldn't have, we make it any more, and we had to move out there. So we moved to Wayside which was just across from, when you were there you saw the kind of a plaza, it was kind of round, we went over to the Wayside and opened another little coffee shop. For, it was just for our people, it never went any more. We just didn't have the money and the people didn't have the money to come any more, so we moved to the Wayside.

Hochstadt: Did you keep it open? How long did you keep that coffee shop open?

Schwarz: Not very long. I don't remember, but not very long. By then we had one little room at the Wayside where only refugee lived, each one had one little room. It was close to the park there. The end of the Wayside was a beautiful park. Was it still there when you were there, on Thorburn Road?

Hochstadt: I didn't see that, I didn't see that park. I don't know if it's there.

Schwarz: It was a very beautiful park, but when the Japanese took over, we could not go to the park any more. We heard they had their munitions planted in that park, I don't know if that was true, nobody knew. But I know my daughter was, I had her in a buggy, you know, and drove around and we drove around the park, around the fence, you know, there was a high fence, but we couldn't go to the park any more. And at the end of our Wayside Street here was Thorburn Road and here was a park. There was a couple from Vienna, Berger, and they had a little coffee shop. So when we couldn't do anything any more, they kept theirs open, and I remember [laughs], it wasn't funny when I think of, we went there and there was a refugee family, Margaret Mattes, her parents. They baked little, kind of a Danish, and Margaret went around with a big thing, with a big basket and went to the different little shops, we still had our coffee shops, and said, "*Brauchen Sie heute Negerkusse?*" They made *Negerkusse*. You know what a *Negerkuß* is? It's that marshmallow, inside marshmallow and outside chocolate, we called, we call that *Negerkusse* here, [laughs] that's what we called it in Germany, it was black and white. Anyway she came and sold those things, so we sat in Bergers' little coffee shop. First we bought the *Negerkuß* and a coffee, and we had either sugar or milk, whatever we wanted. Then we didn't have the money any more for the *Negerkuß*, so we just had a coffee with a little milk or little sugar, and then we didn't have the money for the sugar any more, and then we only had a little black coffee, you know, it was less and less, 'till we didn't have anything any more. And then the Red Cross brought us, at noon in the street, they put up one kind of a big kettle, you know, and we could . . .

Hochstadt: Every day?

Schwarz: The last few, yeah, the last year or so it was every day. We couldn't do anything any more, we had kids, you know, couldn't feed them any more. Next to me lived an *Inder*, an Indian family, the real Indian, you know, from Bombay or so. And they had a cow. But there was no

place where they could put the cow outside. So the cow was with them in the house, where they lived and cooked and did everything. So every week or every two weeks, we got some kind, when we didn't have anything any more, some kind of an, oh, my husband worked in the committee for the refugees for a while, and he got a little money there, so every time he got money I bought little milk next door . . .

Hochstadt: From the cow?

Schwarz: . . . from those Indian, for my daughter, you know, she was two years old maybe at that time. And that was 'till, 'till we could finally leave. We [unclear] when it started, the people leaving, you know, I don't know how that was, who left first, or what. You got a notice when you were supposed to leave, you know. And we saw the trucks with everything . . .

Hochstadt: This was after the war now you mean, leave, what do you mean leaving?

Schwarz: Yeah, that was after the war, oh yes, all during the war we were bombed from each side. The Japanese bombed the Americans and the British. And the whole thing was in our part, you know. And at night the Japanese [unclear] down and watched that we didn't have any lights on. So I had a candle, we had only one little room and I put the candle underneath the bed and fed my daughter, and put that food in there. You know, boy, when they saw a little light, they knocked at the door and they screamed. We had to be very careful, yeah. Yeah and then, and everybody was sick from our people, because the terrible food we could buy and eat, you know, we couldn't, just couldn't, didn't agree with us any more. I was so thin. One time I was sick, we all had that terrible stomach ailment, you know. And the refugee doctors were all refugees too, they didn't expect anyone any more, we didn't have any. And he looked at my stomach, he said, "I don't even need an X-ray, you are so thin," he said, "I can look through." We just didn't have anything, and I brought beautiful things. My mother had a beautiful home in Germany, and I took all that beautiful china with me and we sold it all. The Japanese bought everything, everything.

Hochstadt: When did you sell it? Did you have to sell it right away, or could you wait a while?

Schwarz: No, you know, part I remember I sold when we bought Bayer out, when he had to go, because his drinking was impossible. And the rest I bought piece by, I sold piece by piece. There was one woman, her name was Leschnik, I never forget that, and everybody sold their stuff, and Leschniks had little store, and then the Japanese came and they bought it all.

Hochstadt: How long did your china last, when did you sell the last piece do you think?

Schwarz: I don't know, oh, early.

Hochstadt: Did it last a year?

Schwarz: Oh, it lasted a little longer probably. We started later because as long as we had the shop and had the other little shop, you know, didn't sell, but then I sold part of it, I have to say the biggest part. I think I just told you that, when we paid Bayer out. And I remember my husband

said, "Now look at all this stuff." My mother, she collected that stuff for years and years and years. I had beautiful stuff. People don't even here have such nice things. And he said, "Now look at it and take what you want to keep." And I said, "I don't want to keep anything, it's no use any more." So we sold it all, the Leschnik took it all and Japanese bought it right away, beautiful stuff. So at least, when we came here, we had two suitcases. We were three people and had two suitcases.

Hochstadt: When you were packing things in Berlin, to leave, did someone come to watch what you packed?

Schwarz: No, but I'll tell you what happened. I made a list. I still have the list. I could show it to you. I made a list and I wrote down that everything was on that list was used, and was my mother's stuff. My mother stayed in Germany, and died there. It was terrible. Anyway, I made that list. I typed it, always had a typewriter, or my husband had the typewriter, and I wrote everything down, what was, and I wrote down that everything was from my mother and it was 10 and 20 and 30 years old, you know, and I could take everything, they did not open those boxes or anything.

Hochstadt: Did someone come to put a seal on it or a stamp or something?

Schwarz: I don't remember anything like that. There was no problem.

Hochstadt: You didn't try to take silver or jewelry or things like that?

Schwarz: I didn't have, what I had in jewelry, I didn't have my jewelry. I had from my mother a beautiful brooch, she wasn't for jewelry or anything. It was a beautiful brooch and it had a diamond in and a pearl. And we sold it all in Shanghai. And I had a beautiful wedding band, which was my husband's mother's ring, with a big diamond, that was the first we sold. I didn't care any more. I never cared for jewelry. I never needed that, so that wasn't hard. It was just that you had to get rid of everything, you know just to make a living, just to buy something to live with. And at the end we didn't have anything. My husband didn't even have a suit any more.

Hochstadt: That had been all sold, too?

Schwarz: We sold it all.

Hochstadt: Could you tell me about your first restaurant, or store, you say store, was it a coffee shop?

Schwarz: Yeah, it was, first it was just a coffee shop, we called, he called it "Esplanade", this one here. And then the man who sold the beer, it was a German man, but not a refugee, he was one of the rich German people who lived here. He came in the store. And he said, we would get much more business, because with us we cooked for our own refugees, there wasn't a penny left, you know. And he said, "If you had beer and you could sell beer and stuff, you would get other people in and you would make some business." He was a nice German man. And then we took the beer

in and that was when Japanese came, you know. The port, how do you call it, the *Maru*, I don't know what, where all the ships came in. So they came in and they drank a beer and so we made a little better business. Except when the war broke out, then we just couldn't stay there any more.

Hochstadt: So most of your customers were refugees?

Schwarz: In the beginning when we called it "Quick Restaurant".

Hochstadt: Quick?

Schwarz: Bayer cooked, and his wife and I, we did the service. It was good food. It was too good. And we had, there was a butcher, one of our German people, and he made very good salami and hot dogs and everything, sold it at our market too. And we took from him those stuff and sold that, too. So that was in the beginning, but then all our people, they didn't have any money more either, they sold what they have and they couldn't come any more. And we couldn't do it any more. And then Japanese took over that part. And then they took over everything and then we just stayed there.

Hochstadt: You, when you first came, you had this . . .

Schwarz: Would you have another cookie, want another cookie?

Hochstadt: No, thank you, that was fine, that was fine.

Schwarz: I'll get you fruit salad in a minute.

Hochstadt: Okay. When you first came you had this little coffee shop, and you had some money that, that your uncle had sent you . . .

Schwarz: His uncle.

Hochstadt: His uncle.

Schwarz: Yeah, but that went into the shop . . .

Hochstadt: That went into the shop right away?

Schwarz: . . . that wasn't even enough.

Hochstadt: Did you . . .

Schwarz: Ah, wait a minute, and we got a loan from Sassoon.

Hochstadt: From Sassoon?

Schwarz: Yeah, all the people who renovated that little house and the store, that was just in the beginning. We got a loan, I don't know how much it was, from Sassoon. We had to pay every month and that Goldman or Goldenberg, whatever his name is, he came every month and collected the money. And, what did I want to say, yeah, then we renovated that place, because it was a Chinese place like all those before, and it was terrible. But it looked nice after we renovated it. But then when our people didn't have any more money and the war broke out, I mean, it was a different situation. It was a difficult situation. I mean, you couldn't do anything any more then.

Hochstadt: What you've described is that things got slowly worse for you financially.

Schwarz: Yeah, for everything, not only financially, when you were bombed from both sides, you know. The British and Americans bombed the Japanese and we lived in a Japanese district. They put us all in the district where the bombing was. And one we remembered was almost to the end of the war, it was just about over, the next few days, the last house in the thing, in our row, there lived one woman and we were supposed to go. We didn't stay in the house any more, when the bombs came too much. We had those *Heim*, you know what the *Heim* was? We called it the *Heim*, when the people when they came later. We didn't have a room any more, didn't have any money to rent anything. We got some empty schools and these kinds of places, and they lived all together, the whole family in a big room, like a big, big auditorium or the hotel . . .

Hochstadt: You never had to live in the *Heim*?

Schwarz: No, because when we came we still had, they still had the houses. But then there weren't any more and unless people came, they didn't have money either for anything any more. So they stayed in the *Heim* and women and men cooked in the *Heim*. My brother came later, too, and he lived in a *Heim*, in Wayside *Heim*. We had the Wayside *Heim*, the Chaoufoong *Heim*, and the Seward *Heim*. We had three . . .

END SIDE A, TAPE 1

BEGIN SIDE B, TAPE 1

Schwarz: The most were those three, the Wayside, the Chaoufoong, and the Seward *Heim*. There was an Alcock *Heim* later. Those were all empty schools, you know.

Hochstadt: I see.

Schwarz: And the people lived together and slept together in one big thing. And what some did, they took big bed sheets and put up posts and just put a bed sheet, big bed sheets around their little part, so at least they had some privacy, you know. And they cooked in each *Heim*, they cooked separately, I mean, the people cooked. And my brother was, I think, in the Seward *Heim*. They all had to help cooking and working and cleaning up and do all those things, you know.

Hochstadt: When did your brother come?

Schwarz: He came very few months after we did. I think three months later. He died. He lived in Kansas City. He had, he had even a good job in Shanghai. He was in men's clothing. And he worked in the officers' clothing shop, for a while, in Shanghai, 'till that was out too, I think. But he worked there for a while, and he got, once in a while he got, they had their PX there, and he got some food there. He was married, too. He married a woman from the *Heim* there. He wasn't married when he came to Shanghai. He died of lung cancer here. It had nothing to do with Shanghai, he smoked like crazy. I visited him in Kansas City some years ago and he smoked so and he coughed. He was a big guy. All my brothers were red hair and blue eyes, I was the only dark haired [laughs] . Anyway and when I was in Kansas City, he had a lovely house in Kansas City, I said "You shouldn't smoke so much." He said, "Look at me how I look, I can smoke, it doesn't do anything to me." But he developed cancer, lung cancer. And he smoked. And he died after that, about five years ago he died.

Hochstadt: What was you brother's name?

Schwarz: Cohn, my maiden name, C-O-H-N.

Hochstadt: C-O-H-N.

Schwarz: I had to teach in Germany, you know, everything was Nazi, in German [unclear] . When she called my name, she said, "Cohn, that's a *jüdische* name."

Hochstadt: Now what was you brother's first name?

Schwarz: Berthold.

Hochstadt: Berthold.

Schwarz: And my other brother lives in Israel, Heinz.

Hochstadt: Did he go to Shanghai too?

Schwarz: No, he was smarter than we did. He worked in a little town on the Weser in Germany, and he kind of saw, they arrested quite some people there.

Hochstadt: When?

Schwarz: Oh, that was already in 1933, I think, yeah, begin of 1933. So he left his job and he went to Litauen, Lithuania here now. There was, you know what *Hachsharah* is? He went *Hachsharah*, that means they change to an agriculture farm and learn how to farm there. For one year, he went there. And when he came back he came home to us, to Hannover, for a few days and packed the few little things he had. I remember our landlord, a Jewish man too, a Jewish couple, he was a butcher, and he had those big, high boots when he went and butchered the thing and so,

and he gave him a pair of those boots. That was really the only good thing he had, and he would never forget that. He said the best what he brought with him, what he had were these boots. Because when he came to Israel in 1934 there was nothing. They had to build up everything. Every tree, in Herzliyya my brother built. He knew everything. He was a really good farmer and agriculture expert, after he was there, and he's still there. He's 80 years now, he's the oldest one and he's still doing okay. He has a lovely house, I was there in Herzliyya. Have you ever been to Israel?

Hochstadt: No.

Schwarz: You should, beautiful. Herzliyya is just beautiful. He has a lovely house. When he got it, it was the Keren Kayemeth and the Keren Hayesod, they gave the money and they got the money that the people could build little houses there. So he had one room and one kitchen and they built in a big, big place. Each place was the same size. And he built the biggest yard, and he made all the other yards, with stuff to eat, you know, for the other people and so. And he has a lovely house there. He has one son. He is, of course, he was born in Israel, and he lives in a kibbutz with a family for a long time. Yeah, I was there and saw all that. His wife died, my brother's wife, of course, they were married so long and now he's alone. He said, "During the day it's fine, I'm busy with everything," but he said, "At nights it's terrible." So . . .

Hochstadt: Your other brother who came to Shanghai, why did he come to Shanghai? Was there something, was he arrested too or did he just decide . . .

Schwarz: No, you had to leave, or you couldn't, either you left, you were lucky when you could leave. There wasn't one German person left, when they left they put them in concentration camp. Besides he was three months in concentration camp, too, not quite three months. He was in Buchenwald, too. And he . . .

Hochstadt: He was arrested at the same time as your, your husband?

Schwarz: No, he lived where I come from, a little town in Germany, it's in the Sachsen-Thuringen area.

Hochstadt: What is it, what's the . . .

Schwarz: Nordhausen is the name of the town. There were many Jewish people, small town, had about 32,000 inhabitants that time, but many Jewish people. Most were wealthy, we were not, we had a good education. My mother saw to it for that. And my brother worked in a non-Jewish big men's clothing shop there. And when we left, he laughed, it couldn't happen to him, or when my husband was in concentration camp, but a few weeks later all the Jewish people who left in Nordhausen were sent to concentration camp. They were all collected, the whole city, all the Jewish people were sent to concentration camp. I don't know what happened to the others.

Hochstadt: And this is even before Kristallnacht then, that they were arrested?

Schwarz: Wait a minute. My brother came after us. We were on a ship, that was in November the Kristallnacht.

Hochstadt: So maybe that was when he was arrested?

Schwarz: And he came about three or four weeks after we did. Yeah, and people talked about [unclear] and we weren't there but . . .

Hochstadt: So that's what, he thought you were silly to leave, but then he was convinced by being arrested.

Schwarz: Oh yeah, he wasn't, he was in camp. The only way, in concentration camp, he was in Buchenwald, too, and the only time I could get out was when you have a ticket to overseas. So we got him that, and he came . . .

Hochstadt: You got him the ticket?

Schwarz: Yeah, we helped with getting that.

Hochstadt: Were you already in Shanghai when you were doing this helping?

Schwarz: Yeah, we were, when Kristallnacht was we were on the ship, I remember that. And he came right with the next ship, I think. And we wanted my mother to come before and she said, she is not going before all her kids are out, that means my younger brother in Nordhausen. Before he goes and then it was too late for her. She couldn't get out, you know. That was it. And then they took our cemetery in Nordhausen where my father was buried and I don't know what they did with it. They took everything out there and made some kind, I think, a munitions thing out of something, I heard that later. And that was it. And then we came here and my son was born.

Hochstadt: After you came here?

Schwarz: Yeah, I didn't want another child, but it happened. And first my husband worked, he had two heart attacks in Shanghai already, and he wasn't supposed to work any more. But he worked a little bit. The Jewish community center here had, you go to Jewish community center in Long Beach?

Hochstadt: No, I didn't go there.

Schwarz: I'm very active there. Anyway, they had a little stand, now it's a little bigger, for when people come in for coffee or something, was new at that time. And my husband had that for a few weeks. But he wasn't supposed to do anything or work any more, so he came home. And he died, two months after, before my son was born. He died two months before. George was born in September, and he died in July before, of a heart attack. And I worked and I worked and I worked. Never took a penny from anybody.

Hochstadt: Where did, what did you do for work?

Schwarz: I worked, when I came here I worked in Judy Crib Sheet Company was the name, we made the first fitted crib sheet for baby crib. You know, like you have for the big beds, with those fitted corners . . .

Hochstadt: I know, I've used baby crib sheets, [laughs] they're very useful.

Schwarz: Yeah, we made that thing in, for the cribs, yeah, the first one. I worked there 20 years.

Hochstadt: Where was that?

Schwarz: In Long Beach, down on the west side, and finally the new office was made. The people didn't want to come, the buyers, to Long Beach, so my boss, Maybert Meyer, he opened an office in Los Angeles in later years. And I was in charge of the factory in Long Beach. And we had for 20 years, and then everybody else made those sheets too. So we hardly had any business any more. And he meanwhile went into real estate business. So we closed the place. And that was just when my son started city college here, my daughter already was teaching. And I have to say we got some kind of money from Germany, you know that probably, that we all get money from . . .

Hochstadt: *Wiedergutmachung.*

Schwarz: Yeah, we get that, I get a nice pension every month. That's what gets me going so nicely. And of course, and then I worked, I have a good social security, because I worked 29 years. And I was never one week without a paycheck, never. So I could, my kids went to college. George quit after two years, because he had to get married, he wanted to get married. The little Catholic girl. He's long time divorced now. He didn't do so good. He's a smart guy. And his teacher, when I went to open house in Poly High School in Long Beach the last year, his teacher told me, "I hope to see him in Pasadena at the big college, because he has all the things going for him." But he didn't, he didn't want to go. After two years he married a little Catholic girl. They are long time divorced. And then he married a very nice Jewish girl, Denise Pearlman. And he worked in insurances and he did real good. But George, I don't know, when he's doing very good, then he quits or whatever. So they are divorced, they have two sons. On weekends he has the sons, they are going on 11 and 13. And during the week they stay with Denise. Denise has a good job and everything, a beautiful woman. And she said, she just couldn't stand the changing any more. I just couldn't blame her, you know.

But otherwise, and I worked after Judy Crib closed down. I still didn't have anything, because I had two kids through college. And George wasn't even ready, finished. So I went to that lady who, from Judy Crib, you know, from a smaller place like this. I had to hire people. And when the business was slow we had to let them go, and then when the business started again, then I had to call up and want new people. And so she knew me at the employment office for when we needed people. And so I called her, I knew her name, and I said, "You know, now I need a job." She said, "Come on down, we'll find something."

So I went down to her, it was at the Long Beach, at the ocean, in that county building, at

this big building there. And she said, "You know, we could find a job for you. You could work for Los Angeles County, but you have to make a test." She said, "I'll give you some things you can read, you make the test." It was Friday morning. And I said, "I make the test now, I need a job." And besides I got unemployment, of course, which was quite high. And I was already 6-, no, I wasn't 65, not true, it was later on when I had to quit after 65. So I got unemployment and I got already my Medicare or whatever, it was in my paycheck from there. Anyway, I went to her and she said, "You have to make a test." She said, "You want to come back and make the test?" I said, "No, I want to make it now." So the test was Friday afternoon. So I went in that room, it was upstairs. "The test," she said, "takes 45 minutes." Except for math, I'm no good at math, I didn't do too good in math. But otherwise was all those young high school kids, I was the first one to finish the test. And two hours later I had my job for the County. I went right on up and got a job and I worked 'till I had to retire with 65. And that was in October, and three months later they quit that 65, the County, and you could work as long as you wanted. And they tried to get me back, but it was impossible. They said they could not do it retroactive. And besides by then I got used to not working any more. I have a beautiful diploma from all five supervisors, from the Board of Supervisors, and all kinds of things. I liked the job. Everybody was nice. I made a good salary. And I got already my pension from Germany.

So then I bought that thing here, in that old age home, and I'm glad I'm living in here now, and that's it. And my daughter's a teacher in a Los Angeles school. She's good girl, beautiful, tall girl, 5'8". And she has two daughters 20 and 19. And George has two boys, and with him you still have to worry, even though there isn't much I can do any more. You can't tell a forty-year-old man. He knows [unclear]. Right now he's in Kansas City. I say, "What you doing in Kansas City?" when he called. He said, "On business." I said, "Fine." As long as he makes business. Anyway, that's it. And that was Shanghai.

Hochstadt: Could you tell me a little bit about what happened after the end of the war?

Schwarz: In Shanghai? Yeah, I tell you, the first thing what we saw when it was over, you know, we didn't know when all the things there were over. When they sank the ships, or that was when they started. What happened was people or the HIAS, you know the HIAS? And there was another organization besides the HIAS. They tried to get the people out, you know.⁶ And we all applied for, we all, we are still German citizens. Anyway we all applied for, and they told us when our ship would leave and we would go. So by then we had everything packed, everything was standing ready, we just had to go. Then, excuse me, I never talk so much. Big trucks came, passed by our main street where we lived on Wayside, all full with suitcases and stuff. And we said, "Boy, another ship is going," you know, every two weeks. "I hope ours is coming soon, too."

Hochstadt: Was that how often they went, every couple of weeks?

Schwarz: Every two weeks a ship came and left, yeah . . .

⁶ HIAS stands for the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, also known in Europe as HICEM. This organization provided aid to concentration camp inmates, allowing them to resettle in China.

Hochstadt: An American ship?

Schwarz: Wait a minute, American troop transporters, yes. "General Meigs", and all the generals, the general line. I only remember "General Meigs" right now, M-E-I-G-S, and so every two weeks another ship left.

Hochstadt: And which ship did you leave on?

Schwarz: Hmm?

Hochstadt: Which ship did you leave on?

Schwarz: The "Conte Verde", no, the "Conte Verde" we came to, "General Meigs".

Hochstadt: I see, and when did you leave Shanghai?

Schwarz: We left Shanghai in 1948, we came here. Wait a minute, we went to, when we go to Italy, no, we went to Italy when we came to Shanghai. First we went to Trieste and from there was a ship. We left Germany by train to Trieste, it was a beautiful trip. It was the last beautiful thing I saw, because we went through the Austrian Alps by train to Aust-, Trieste. And there we had to stay at the [unclear] and then from there the "Conte Verde" left. And here we came with the "General Meigs", we all came with troop transporters. And so we were . . .

Hochstadt: What did you, were you able to work between the end of the war and the time you left Shanghai?

Schwarz: No, we didn't work any more, I didn't work any more. I know I didn't. That was really fast after the war was over. War was over in, in '45, wait a minute, yes, we worked all as waitresses in different restaurants and so. I don't think we had the restaurant any more, no. We were sitting in [unclear] , yeah, so we didn't have the restaurant any more.

Hochstadt: When you say we worked all as waitresses, who else, you and who else?

Schwarz: For instance, Susie, you know, she worked as a waitress, everybody, all the women worked as waitresses.

Hochstadt: After the war?

Schwarz: And, and before the war and during the war.

Hochstadt: Was that one of the few jobs that women could do?

Schwarz: There was nothing for us to do. There was nothing for us to do. I didn't work much at that, because then my daughter was there, and, and my husband was there, so the little money. He did something, what did they do? There were some men, they sold, and he got into that a little bit,

materials for making suits, wool and that stuff. And he did that for a little while. But then he was so sick, and he couldn't even walk around any more, you know, he had those two heart attacks. And, and he was kind of big man. And he lost all his weight, it was good to lose weight, but not in a way like that, you know. He couldn't do much any more. When we came here, they told him right away he could not work any more, and I know that, I knew that. So I worked.

Hochstadt: Did your daughter go to school in Shanghai after the war?

Schwarz: Yeah.

Hochstadt: Where did she go to school?

Schwarz: The Kadoorie School, you heard about Kadoorie? We had the Kadoorie School and then some people who had some money, there was a Polish family living in the apartment in that building where we lived. They had one daughter, Fela they called her, Felicia, and she was a beautiful girl. And she went over to the, over the bridge where the rich people lived and she went to school there. But our kids went to Kadoorie School and it was a good school.

Hochstadt: Right up until the time you left, they were going to school?

Schwarz: I don't know if the schools were still open by then, I don't remember. I just know that we brought her to the corner. I think, yes, because later I remember my husband made a little money, there was a rickshaw, [unclear] we called it, you know, rickshaw driver, and he drove him, when he went with the material to selling and so, and he took Heia, too. Her name was Bella. We had to take a name out of a list from Hitler, you know, because we were still German citizens. And her name was Bella, B-E-L-L-A, according to the thing. We were the only dumb ones who did that. My friends the Gastens and others, they just took any name they wanted and didn't even go to the German consulate and registered her. But I did, I still have a German passport here an old one. But anyway, so we registered her with the name Bella, but we never called her Bella. Here she . . .

Hochstadt: You called her Heia?

Schwarz: Yeah, Heia we called her, because when somebody asked her, when she was tiny, she was a darling little girl at that time. She couldn't, my husband called her Häschen, Häsie, you know Häsie is a little rabbit. And he called her Häsie. So she couldn't say that. And she said, "Heia," when you ask her, "How's your name?" She said, "Heia," that meant Häsie, you know. So we kept Heia, she call her Heia. And she's fifty years old now. And George is forty. And her kids, here's two beautiful girls, I'll show them to you. Oh, here they are. Her friend, her friend's son, she is not married, but she has a steady friend, my daughter, a very nice really gentlemen. And his sons have a boat, so they took our two girls. Aren't they pretty?

Hochstadt: Yes.

Schwarz: This is my brother in Israel. He's an old man now. And his wife died last year. We

don't look alike. He had, both my brothers had red hair, thick red hair, not any more. [laughs] He said when he comes in the house now, he's kind of a funny guy, his wife never knows [laughs] if his back comes first or his head comes first [unclear] . Otherwise I don't have anything here. Anyway, did you get that all in your thing?

Hochstadt: Yes.

Schwarz: What do you do with that now?

Hochstadt: Well, right now I'm not doing anything special. I have some students who will listen to this and type, type it all out.

Schwarz: Oh, I see.

Hochstadt: So you'll have, and when they finish with that, I'll send you a copy, so you'll have a transcript of what you said . . .

Schwarz: Oh, I'll give you that thing, with, what was it, a senior citizen paper. See, I'm really getting famous, I get in all those papers. And this is terribly written, just terrible. That woman, I could never say anything. She wanted to do it her way, here and the picture. Here let me take this away.

Hochstadt: You were born in Halle, it says.

Schwarz: Yeah.

Hochstadt: But grew up in Nordhausen.

Schwarz: Halle an der Saale. It was a beautiful city, too. Nordhausen was 1000 years old when I was a kid, there was a big party.

Hochstadt: I wanted to ask you about the . . .

Schwarz: What?

Hochstadt: . . . the International Red Cross giving meals.

Schwarz: Yeah, that was a short time that they did that. They came with a big machine there, with a big kettle, the middle of the street and . . .

Hochstadt: This was still during the war?

Schwarz: I don't think, was it during the war, was it? Yeah, it must have been. Oh, you mean it was after the war?

Hochstadt: I don't know. I'm asking.

Schwarz: I don't remember.

Hochstadt: You're not sure. The, some of the, the *Heims* also had kitchens where you could get food and get a meal every day. Did you ever get meals from the *Heims*?

Schwarz: You get, no we never did. But everybody lived in a *Heim* get their meals in a *Heim*, because nobody there made money either any more. They all got their meal in a *Heim*, yes.
[unclear]

Hochstadt: But you, some people who didn't live in the *Heim* also could get a meal there once a day . . .

Schwarz: That could be.

Hochstadt: You didn't do that though?

Schwarz: Never, never, no. I would starve first. [laughs]

Hochstadt: You didn't want to take the . . .

Schwarz: No, no.

Hochstadt: Because the food was bad or because of the idea?

Schwarz: No, no. That, yeah, terribly depressing, terribly depressing to go there and go to that thing and get food. It was terrible. We had three, four *Heims* there. Those were bad times. And many times I just had enough for my husband and for my, my daughter, and I didn't eat anything.

Hochstadt: Mrs. Schwarz you said that, when you were talking about being a waitress, you said that was one of the few things that, the few jobs that women could have . . .

Schwarz: Yes, there were bars and so, many bars, and girls worked there.

Hochstadt: Was it harder for women in Shanghai than for men? Men could have different kinds of jobs, but it was harder for women . . .

Schwarz: They didn't have a job either. They didn't have jobs either. Where we lived in Hongkew, when we had jobs, I mean, that somebody from our people had some business and would have, we didn't have really a business. There was, for instance, one woman, Alexander was her name, Lonnie Alexander, I think. And she had a dress shop. And I remember one time next to our, where we still had, it was still in the good times, because we still had the first place, the coffee shop. I walked the street and I looked down, there was a 5 yen. And yen, 5 yen was enormously much money. And I run to my husband and said, "Boy, I just found 5 yen." And he said, "You

know what you do with it, you go right next door to Frau Alexander and buy you a dress." And for that, I think it was the only dress I ever bought in Shanghai . . .

Hochstadt: Thank you.

Schwarz: . . . and that was for the 5 yen, I think there. The yen was much worse, but we didn't get any yen, you know, I don't what money we had.

Hochstadt: Was there ever a time that you thought you wouldn't make it?

Schwarz: Yeah. It was because I just thought, you know, I don't even know if I thought that. The thing was, we didn't think at all any more. We had no idea what would happen. When I think back now, I would say, I should have thought now, soon this was over and so, we go somewhere else or what. There was no way that we thought anything like that. We just didn't know what was going on. So . . .

Hochstadt: So you lived just day to day?

Schwarz: Yeah, without thinking. As I said, the radio we had was only Chinese, maybe later on Japanese. But never any English word or even German, with all the Germans there. We had that Fischer who had that paper, you know, for a while, but he left too. He was one of the few people, who left when the war broke out and they could just, I don't know. They got a boat and they went across the Whangpu or the Yangtse-pu and left, we never heard from them again. Yeah, somebody said the boat was drowned or what, but I don't know if that's. I have the last paper the day we left, the German. You can read German, no?

Hochstadt: Yes.

Schwarz: You can?

Hochstadt: Yes.

Schwarz: I think I still have it. I didn't give it away. That was the last when we left. But we were not the last one to leave, you know. So, I don't know what happened after that.

Hochstadt: When you came to the United States, did you, how did, how did you come to the United States? That is, how did you get the visa to come to the United States?

Schwarz: The United States government gave us collective affidavits.

Hochstadt: You were on the collective visa, collective affidavits? What did you think was going to happen when you came to the United States?

Schwarz: All I thought was I have to find a job right away, because I had a daughter and I wanted to educate her and I had a sick husband and I didn't want any welfare. So, and there was one man,

Bornstein, who still lives here, he lives down by the ocean in that beautiful building there. He worked for Judy Crib Sheet and they needed always, as I said, you know, Judy Crib Sheet needs them and then they threw them out again, and then one day they need new one. Anyway, and I wanted to work and I started working there right away. And then Bornstein left, because he had a family, too, and this being laid off and going back, he couldn't do that. So he got a very good job in sheet metal factory, alright he worked there a long time. I think he did okay. And I stayed and I worked.

Hochstadt: Did you come, when you came on the ship from Shanghai did you land in San Francisco?

Schwarz: Yeah, and we were two months in San Francisco. Because my husband had, before we left he had two heart attacks, and he got two injections in here, and they were infected, and he had to be treated right away. So we stayed two months, which was really nice, because they gave us every week, not much, but certain money so we could live on. And I cooked a little bit, we had, we lived in, on Eddy Street in San Francisco.

Hochstadt: Eddy Street?

Schwarz: Yeah, they had all kinds, they call it hotels here. I mean, you have a room there, but you could cook in there and everything. Breakfast my husband went over and brought, there was a little coffee shop over at the restaurant, and bought a thing of coffee and bought some fresh rolls. That's what we missed the most from Germany, those little warm rolls for breakfast, you know, he brought some rolls and coffee and we had breakfast there. And then we went around and saw San Francisco. We took the cable car and went to Fisherman's Wharf and everything. They paid our room and we could live with what we had there. We stayed two months 'till he got better. I mean, at least better so he could travel you know. And then they went, first they ask you if you have relatives anywhere in the United States, because they want to send you there where your relatives live.

Hochstadt: This is a Jewish organization asking you?

Schwarz: Oh yes, only, yeah. And, but the only one we had was my brother in Kansas City, and I didn't want to go there. He had a wife, I think she's still alive.

Hochstadt: Why didn't you want to go there?

Schwarz: In the first place it wasn't a good climate for my husband, he had to be there and they knew that, where it was an even climate, like here, and not too hot and so. And he married a woman he met in the camp in Shanghai. And she was much older than he was. And nobody could get along with her. I mean, I never tried anything, when I saw her we get along. But she was good with my brother and she was a good wife to him. But I wouldn't want to live with her.

Hochstadt: So they asked you if you had any relatives. Then what else did they ask you then? Or how did you end up here, down here?

Schwarz: Every Jewish community was asked to take so-and-so many refugees according to how many people they have. They took the Bornsteins, they live on Ocean Boulevard in a gorgeous thing. They had one son, he is long time grown. They didn't need much support for a long time. And then there was the Rosners, Mrs. Rosner lives here in Leisure World, he died. And she worked, she got a job when she came here. She was from a very, very elite family from Vie-, from Gratz. And she had never worked before and she did house cleaning.

Hochstadt: Here?

Schwarz: In a hospital, I think it was in St. Mary's. And he went to Los Angeles and had a job, and that time we had the Red Car every day to Los Angeles for a while. Anyway, she cleaned at St. Mary's and there was one lady, a patient, and she talked to her. And she said, "You know, you didn't do that for, is that your job, and so on." Mrs. Rosner said, "No." And she told her so-and-so, of course they had her language, her dialect, too. And that lady said, "You know, I could get you in, in a better job." And she gave her the address for the federal government for some employment thing, where you have to go to and she made the test there and she worked for the federal government income tax. She went to Los Angeles every day 'till she had to retire. And she get a nice pension now and she was very lucky with that. And he went to Los Angeles for a while. And they had friends, they had a travel agency. He was a little nutty. And he worked in that travel agency. But Mrs. Rosner lives here in Leisure World. He died.

And they have one daughter. She's in Australia. When the daughter was 21 years old in Shanghai, and it was time that we could leave any day, she had a boyfriend who was an architect and he went to Australia, and she went to Australia. She, Mrs. Rosner could never get over it. She was a fantastic girl, sports and everything in Shanghai. But she did not marry that man, she married a man, oh, Mrs. Rosner would have never been satisfied with anybody, nobody was good enough, but they have kind of import-export business with musical instruments. And every two years she goes to Eastern Europe, her daughter Lisle, and buys that stuff there, which she needs, and on the way home she comes and visits her mother for a week or so.

And the Tichauers are here. He made good money in Shanghai, I don't know how. And they make good money here. They did, now he kind retired, he had a dumb thing, a kidney disease, he gets, how you call it, dialysis every second day. But they have a beautiful house here in Seal Beach, they have two sons. One works for TRW, he's an engineer. And the other one is in the entertainment business. He has a beautiful voice, and he and wife, they are engaged and busy for two years ahead always. We never knew, he was such a little thing, nothing, and when he sings, and he sings with his wife, you wouldn't believe it, you know the boy, how little he was. They called him a *misnik*, you know what a *misnik* is? Beautiful boy, man now. And all the Tichauers are retired, of course, have a beautiful home out here. They were in Shanghai. Those were the only ones in here from Shanghai.

Hochstadt: There's a man named Kurt Bengel.

Schwarz: My friend, yeah, he want to marry me. [laughs]

Hochstadt: Oh really, he lives in Long Beach.

Schwarz: Yeah, I know, he has a beautiful house there.

Hochstadt: I visited him a couple of days ago.⁷

Schwarz: See, Benger I met when I met my husband in, in the Black Forest. And he said, "When you don't, Fräulein Cohn, when you don't marry that Mr. Schwarz, would you marry me?" [laughs] I said, but I married that Mr. Schwarz. Then we came to Long Beach and the Bengers came to Long Beach. And his first wife, she died. She was, she was in Shanghai, but she had kidney thing, too, she was real big, but she was always big, and I think she died here of a kidney situation all right. And then he married this one he has now.

Before he married her, [laughs] he called me again. But I had a friend and, of course, like they all died, he died too about four years ago. American man, he was from Winnipeg, from Canada, and he died of a kidney disease, too. He had, and his son-in-law is a doctor in Huntington Beach, Dr. Sperling. And he got dialysis and every time, halt, in the first few weeks they put the needles in, they put two needles in, you know. His veins collapsed, there was nothing they could do. We walked a few more weeks, a few more months maybe. And was a good guy, and then he died, he was a widower. [laughs] And now it's too late for anything like that. [laughs] You want some more fruit salad?

Hochstadt: No, I'm fine, thank you, it was delicious.

Schwarz: That's about all.

Hochstadt: When you think about Shanghai now, how did that time influence your life, or what did you learn? Whether there things that you learned about yourself or anything else while you were in Shanghai?

Schwarz: You know, you were kind of numb in Shanghai. When you were there, you didn't think of anything. This is it and you lived from one day to another and you hope you have something to eat for your family the next day. And that was about it. And that heat in summer, oh God, was it hot! 120 degree, 110 degree. It was terrible. And when I was thinking, I was thinking to get out and that I could still make a living, you know, for my family. But otherwise, you know, we were all together and all in the same boat, so you really didn't think very much. You'd, you were thinking, when it starts getting less and less to eat, you know, like I said, when we went to Bergers for a coffee and a Danish. In the end we couldn't buy anything any more. Instead coffee we had tea, that's when I learned to drink tea without sugar and anything. [laughs] We had that. It was a bad time, but you don't know what you can do, you know. What you have, when you have to do it, this is it, and you do it. You just go on living.

Hochstadt: So did you find out, discover some things about yourself, that you could live through these difficult times?

⁷ See interview with Kurt Benger, Shanghai Jewish Community Oral History Project, Long Beach, California, June 8, 1990.

Schwarz: I don't think I could do that now, to live a difficult time, and so. I don't think so. When you get older you get weaker, you know. And you think, when you come out from Shanghai, you start a new life, you think, now this is it, it goes up again. You wouldn't think that something could happen. I always worry about my son, see, I'm a diabetic, but very much under control, I have no problems, I take an insulin shot every morning. But my son is a diabetic since he was 13 years old. And I remember, when my daughter got married, she was 23, she is 10 older than George. And when she married, and Dan, her husband was in medical school at that time, and I thought now things really getting easier, it goes up. And at that day at her wedding, George got kind of sick, and Dan, my son-in-law, who died, too [unclear] said right away, "Diabetic." And George, George developed diabetic, and we had to go through that, you know. He was in school on a baseball team and everything, he was a big guy, and I had to go to school and tell him, he can't do . . .

END SIDE B, TAPE 1

BEGIN SIDE A, TAPE 2

Schwarz: And my daughter's husband was a nut. He came here many times. He was emotionally always upset. First he said, it was his father. His father was a, came here from Russia, it's very interesting, as a 15-year-old one, before World War I. He was much older than his brother, and he went in the army. He said he was seventeen. And he came home as a master sergeant. But World War I, he was very rough. I mean, he wanted Dan, his only son, to be like he was, kind a soldier. But Dan wasn't like that, he was more like his mother. She was more, how you say, refined and educated and so. And anyway, and when Heia brought him home the first time, I thought right away, he was strange, he was different than others. And he did things. [laughs] He couldn't sleep at night, so he even, so I made every time, I, I drove myself nuts making, you know, Jewish woman [laughs] [unclear] making a big dinner. I had a very lovely house in Long Beach, besides, which I sold. I don't know why, I was afraid to live there, when both kids were out. I was afraid to live there alone and I sold the house.

Then I had an apartment downtown in Long Beach, a large, very nice apartment. But the neighborhood in Long Beach gets so bad. It was on 4th and Gaviota, close to Bixby Park, and I thought it was a practical, a convenient neighborhood. I didn't even need the car, I could take the bus all over. But it got really bad. And that's when I moved to Leisure World. And besides, Jack, my friend, moved in first. And he said, "When you move in, I'll walk with you. Every day, whatever you want to do, I'll do." And then he died.

So you think it's getting better, but things can still happen, you know. And you still have to live through that. And Jack was a good guy, a real good guy, and a handsome man. He was just as old as I was, had a wonderful family. He had three daughters, each one. He was a furrier, you know, it seems in Canada everybody is a furrier, [laughs] because it's so cold there in winter. But he had retired and his wife had died, and he had a few operations before, so his daughter said, instead of flying to Winnipeg every few months, "You are going to come here and you'll live here." So I met him in our Jewish community center right after he came here. And we were together for seven years. And he took that apartment further down a little bit. And then I took

mine. And my daughter went with me, and I'll never forget, she loved it so much here, she said, "Mother, I can't wait 'till I'm that age that I move in here." She's changed her mind meanwhile. And Jack got sick after a few years, and first he got real heavy. His face, and I was glad he, he gained some weight. What happened was, it was water. His kidneys didn't function and the water stayed in his body, you know. 'Till his son-in-law called me, he's a doctor, one day, and he said, "Lotte, kidneys you can't repair, there's nothing you can do." And besides, I didn't know he had only one kidney, and that one gets, you can live fine with one kidney when it's healthy, but that wasn't healthy either. So that was it. And that was Shanghai. You can't say nothing happened in my life.

Hochstadt: No, certainly not.

Schwarz: Yeah, that's it. Where do you teach, what college?

Hochstadt: Bates College, it's in Maine. It's a small college . . .

Schwarz: Are you on vacation now, or what?

Hochstadt: Yes.

Schwarz: Oh, it's summer, huh?

Hochstadt: Yes, the students graduated a week ago and I came right out here to do some interviews. You are my last interview, a dozen interviews.

Schwarz: And now you're going back to Maine? You don't have any family here, or what?

Hochstadt: Ah, my parents live in Laguna Hills . . .

Schwarz: Oh, oh.

Hochstadt: . . . and my brother lives in Venice.

Schwarz: Where?

Hochstadt: Venice.

Schwarz: Oh, in Venice, which is nice too. Laguna Hills is nice?

Hochstadt: Yes.

Schwarz: It's nicer than this one here.

Hochstadt: I don't know, I haven't seen this one. It's very nice in Laguna Hills. It's very pretty.

Schwarz: I know, I was there a few times. But I couldn't afford it. I would have loved to move in there. Besides, my kids said, "It's too far to move." I wouldn't care at that time, if I had the money. But it costs much more. Now they changed the conditions when you want to move in. My friend Helen has a sister-in-law, and he moved in there. She didn't have money, but her son and Helen's son together put up \$10,000. And they paid \$10,000 and she pays every month \$500. So it's not that you have to pay, like when I moved in here, I paid \$32,000 cash. It kind of scared me.

Hochstadt: That's a lot of money, isn't it?

Schwarz: Yeah.

Hochstadt: From selling your house?

Schwarz: Hmm?

Hochstadt: Was that money from selling your house, that you . . . ?

Schwarz: I didn't have money from the house, because, I had \$10,000. Oh boy, they ask you, when you put your application in, they ask you about your financial situation, everything. But when I sold the house, I had only, I got out a little over \$10,000. And that, of course, I had. And during the years it went up a little more. And now since I live here, I don't know why, but I can save more. I pay \$210 a month besides paying \$32,000 down. And everything you have to have fixed, like a light bulb and so. I had, both light bulbs went out the other day in the bathroom, so I called somebody, and they put two new light bulbs in. And then, I couldn't do that, because they are in, kind of encased, in a, in a ceiling there. And then I got a bill for two light bulbs, \$6.00, and one-third of an hour labor for \$3.00 and so. I mean, I don't care paying it, but I was surprised that you have to pay for that. One-third of an hour labor I had to pay. And it's good, you know, when something happened, you call and somebody comes in. I had to buy the new refrigerator when I came in, because the one that was here didn't work. So there's always something. But as long as I can do it and as long as the German government, but it's kind of shaky in Germany, the whole situation now, huh?

Hochstadt: Yes, well what do you think about that, about Germany reuniting? Does . . .

Schwarz: Altogether, you know, when I lived in Germany, it was united, you know. So I couldn't even imagine how it is that you have to go through a wall or something to go in the other part. Because when I think back what, my hometown, Nordhausen, is now in the eastern part. So I probably would have to go to the Brandenburger Gate or somewhere to get there. So I really wouldn't know, but the only thing is, Germans are military people. And you have to watch them. And Nazis are still there. Nazis are all over. You find them all over, here too. Here are the skinheads, you know. When I walk down the pier where I usually go every day and see beach and so, I see a few of those skinheads and it scares me. Because all they are are Nazis. They are Nazis.

Nobody ever liked the Jews, huh? Never. Two thousand years ago it started, and longer. I

wonder why. There were afraid we are too smart. So they didn't like us.

This *shalom* thing my neighbor gave me. I had a nice lady next door, she was very conservative, right-wing. And, but she was nice. She came over and we walked together. She had a heart condition and she had to move out. She moved to Arizona, where her brother lives. And when she left, she gave me this thing. I said, "Where did you get that?" I said, "That's from Israel." You couldn't believe that, that she had something from Israel in her house. So she gave it to me. *Shalom*, you see? And here live quite some Jewish people.

Hochstadt: Yes.

Schwarz: But the, the temple where I belong to, of course, has 500 members. But there live many more here. The rabbi I talked to the other day, I belong to a Maimonides Society, where we have a lecture at the center once a month. And Rabbi Gessman, the rabbi who is rabbi here now, before he was in Long Beach, when he was younger. He's retired from there a long time ago now. And he said, there are many more Jewish people here than the 500 belong to the center, and we should try to get the people to belong to the, to the temple. But I have very little connection with the other people, because I still, I lived in Long Beach so long, you know, and I belong to all the things, that's the center in Long Beach. We have a new Horizon Club there, which is for active retired people. We move, we meet twice a month, the first and the third Thursday. And, before we had, the third Thursday we had a trip regularly, we had a bus or we hired a bus, and then we'd go, we went nice places. But the buses are so expensive now, that the people don't want to pay for. So we have from the Corporation of the Arts, I think it is, they support all the senior centers, not only Jewish ones, all of them. They are from the Los Angeles County Supervisors, and they give us four trips a year. So now we wait 'till we get a trip and go with them. The other, the other day we went to, you know Heritage Point?

Hochstadt: No.

Schwarz: Have you ever heard about Heritage Point? That's what you have to know. Heritage Point is a new Jewish retirement center in Mission Viejo. And it's strictly kosher, it is built beautifully. I didn't know about 'till the other day, the Friendship Club from the Jewish community center, which is the older people, older than our group, anyway I went with them. Somebody asked me. It's the most fantastic thing. It is not substituted by County or Medical or anything like that. The people who build it, for I don't know, \$3,000,000, pay everything what's going to be there. It's a big list of the richest people in the United States. I give you a thing, you can take it.

Hochstadt: I'd like to see it.

Schwarz: You should go and see it. It's worth seeing. It's fantastic. But when you want to move in, or I want to move in, it is \$1500 a month for single apartment. Your meals are included. And each one has to come, even if you go and eat there, you can take the meals outside in a dining room. I really don't know if the \$1500 are with their meals, or if you still do your own cooking. But everything is there. They have a big room for synagogue for Friday night and for Saturday, gorgeous swimming pool, you can walk for miles there. It's just beautiful.

INTERRUPTION IN RECORDING

Hochstadt: Mrs. Schwarz, could you say something about your Jewish life in Shanghai, religious life? Was, was, was there, were you active in religious things in Shanghai?

Schwarz: Nobody was.

Hochstadt: Nobody was?

Schwarz: We had a rabbi who came from Germany and we had a man, I forgot his name, who wasn't a cantor. But he substi-, I think before in Europe and Germany too, and he had a beautiful voice, and he could do that. Now, where do I read in your paper from the, that we had a synagogue or so. See we never went, of course, where the rich people had the synagogue. We had, is a room in one of our *Heims*, or there was a movie, a movie house which was empty, and there, during the high holidays we went in there. We had a rabbi and a cantor from our own people.

But I remember one time, it was just before Passover, and I said, "Boy, we don't get," I come from Orthodox German Jewish house., we didn't have matzoh. What do we do? And it was just the day before Passover, we didn't have matzoh, and I just couldn't believe that. And then suddenly, the Russian Jews, they helped us, helped us very much. I mean, they did most of the things. They distributed matzoh, we could pick it up certain place, we had matzoh. But like the Kadoorie School and the other Jewish school was all supported by the Russian Jews who lived, of course, not where we lived. They lived, a few Russian women alone in those houses where our people lived there, they had a room or so in Hongkew. But they were poor too, and they, I don't know. There was no regular synagogue in Hongkew. Poor people don't need anything.

Hochstadt: So you went to synagogue on High Holy Days but otherwise there wasn't much . . . ?

Schwarz: Otherwise there wasn't much, no. Maybe some people did. We went to the High Holidays. We even closed the, closed the store, the little coffee shop.

Hochstadt: Was this hard for you coming from an Orthodox family and then . . . ?

Schwarz: I tell you, it was, it was Orthodox as long as my grandmother lived. She lived with us all, all my mother's married life. But then, see, they called her the *rebetsin* in Nordhausen, because when, when the cant-, our cantor was at the same time the *schochet*, you know, was a smart place. So once a week we had kosher meat. So he went down, I think it was on a Thursday morning, he went down to the, I don't know how you call that, the *Schlachthof*, or what? And he, he killed the, the kosher way the calf and, and, and beef or whatever it was. And then that was once a week., and then there was a butcher in Nordhausen, Steinecke was his name, and on Thursday morning after the cantor had killed or *schichtet* the thing, all the Jewish people went to Steinecke, and he was not Jewish, and on other days he had the, he had the other stuff. But it must have been made kosher, is his table over there, whatever you call it. And that we bought the meat for the whole week. And

then we brought it home and my grandmother made it kosher. It was the best [unclear] [laughs] , you know. And we did that as long as my grandmother was alive. And she died the year after my father died. My father was very young, he was 44 years old, or 43 years old when he died. And my grandmother said, I never forget that, she was over 80 already, way over 80, and she said, "Why couldn't I die [unclear] ?" He died of a lung disease, you know. He had, how you call when the blood comes out at one time?

Hochstadt: I don't know.

Schwarz: Yes.

Hochstadt: Emphysema?

Schwarz: A hemorrhage.

Hochstadt: A hemorrhage, I see.

Schwarz: He had a hemorrhage and every drop of blood out of his body came out at the same time. And we all were there and saw it. There wasn't anything you could do. He was in the war, World War I, and he came home sick. And the government wanted to send him to a sanatorium, lung sanatorium. And my mother needed him at home with three little kids. So she said she, she keep him at home and she does whatever has to be done. But he didn't stop smoking. He smoked secretly and openly and so, and he smoked more and more, 'till, wait a minute, how old was he? He was born in '79, 1879, and he died in '24. He was a young man. And there my mother was with three kids, 12, 13 and 14. She made it, too. But then my brother, the older one, was already, I think he had one more year school. No, he was already working, learning apprentice in a *Kaufhaus*, which he hated. He just hated all those merchant stuff and so. And then he quit, and when, when Hachsharah and all that came up, you know, that the Jewish people, when Israel, the name came up so much, so he went Hachsharah to Lithuania, *Litauen*. And he left, when he came home, to Israel. And I finished school and I even finished college two years in Nordhausen. It was a school city, all the wealthy agriculture owners around, big farms and so around the little city. We had school in Nordhausen, we had real good schools. And we had good colleges even. And I learned English, French and Spanish. Spanish I hated. I got a good grade, because the teacher didn't know much either. But she always was sitting and knitting and so, while she now forgets that, what she taught us. But French I liked.

Hochstadt: And English was useful in Shanghai for you?

Schwarz: Yeah. We used English, now when we went over in the French part, we spoke a little French, you know. But what happened in Shanghai, where we lived, 20,000 people together, nobody had to speak any other language, and the Chinese, where we bought in the market and so, they learned German, you know. [laughs] We all spoke German. And they learned very easily. "This no good, Missy, this no good, Missy," when you want to buy that. There was a woman, next where our store was, was a little plaza, and there was a woman, a poor, there were many, it was a bad time in Shanghai, you know. That Chiang Kai-shek didn't take care of any, those people

really could lay in the street, and when you picked them up or cart them, you had to pay for, to bring them wherever they were buried, or what. It was a very bad time in Shanghai for the Chinese people, too. More than for us, I say. Anyway, what did I want to say?

Hochstadt: About this little market, or near your shop, a woman in this market?

Schwarz: Yeah. Next to the, came a woman, a beggar, there were many beggars, and she had always a little baby in her thing, she had that, that, whatever cape kind of wrapped around, and there was a baby, and they [unclear] down there, there was nothing in, [laughs] and she was old. But when that baby grew up, she was standing in a corner next to where our store was, she brought another baby. And everybody gave her money once in a while. I gave her something to eat there, you know. There were very many people. Very poor, very poor people there. Dying in the street like anything, laying in the street. Nobody picked them up. Was a bad time. You want to read a book about Shanghai after, after '48, '49.

Hochstadt: What do you have? Sure.

Schwarz: I didn't even read it all. I was disappointed. I saw that book from Shanghai and I thought it was about our part and, but that was . . .

INTERRUPTION IN RECORDING

Hochstadt: . . . do this. Would you start that over again?

Schwarz: Yeah. When I got pregnant with my daughter in Shanghai, we didn't want, we didn't know how our, our doctors were, and so. And I didn't want to have the baby in one of our *Heims* there. So my husband found out around, there was one big hospital there over in the international part, I forgot the name, and then in the French part was the St. Mary's, St. Marie's hospital, all Catholic with Catholic sisters. And I said I would like to go there. So I think we made arrangements and so, when the baby was born there. So when I was ready, it was even a day or two before, and my neighbor, who lived in that little room next to mine, she had a baby at the same time, only she was luckier than I was. Anyway, I came there and the nurses spoke only French. And they weren't even nice to us. And anyway, that lady next to me, Gersten, who was, had a room next to us where we lived in the Wayside, and I was still screaming and doing, I didn't have a baby, and there she is back in her bed. And I said, "How come you're back?" "Oh," she said, "I had my baby." Daisy Gersten. And I wasn't even in, so they finally, and a few times I screamed and I was so hot and I said, "There must be something wrong." And 'till I got, and I asked a few times for a nurse or sister there, and one of the sisters who was there said, "The sisters are busy in the first class." And I never forget that.

But anyway then finally they brought me out. And I don't know if I had Caesarian or, it was very complicated. And I had a baby. And I got hotter and hotter, and they took the baby away, Heia, she was five and a half pounds, I think, so not a big baby or what. And 'till they finally took my temperature and it came out later on that at that time in Shanghai was a scarlet

epidemic. And I had scarlet fever. I got it during I had the baby. So my husband took the baby home, and we took a lady who lived, one of our refugees, who knew how to handle *Kinder*, and she stayed with the baby all the time, with Heia. And I was a few days at that hospital and they only spoke French to me. I thought I could speak French, but I couldn't, when you speak with people like that, anyway. And I said, "I want to go to the Chaoufoong Heim, to our people." By then they didn't check my breasts or that the milk had to come out, you know.

And then, one of those ambulances came and took me to our thing, but, a Chinese ambulance, but not only that, they took me, they, they stopped about three or four times and put new people in and took people out, and I can't, it took forever. And when we came to Chaoufoong Heim, where our hospital was, they had the doors open, they had my bed ready, they had everything ready, and they said, "My goodness, where have you been?" So, and, I was, I mean I was already all out. And by then, the next day or the baby was born, I don't know, when, when Heia was born, and I couldn't nurse her, oh, I was still there. I couldn't nurse her, my breasts were like this, so when I came down and they checked me, my breasts were infected like anything. And they had to be cut open so, one this side.

And the doctor who came, a surgeon, who came from the big hospital, from that international hospital over there, and when he came to me and he said, "Where are you from?" I said, "From Nordhausen am Harz," he spoke German. He said, "That's where I am from." And he was Dr. Marcuse, Erich Marcuse, who lived right around the corner from us. I mean, you go all the way from, from Germany to Shanghai, you know, and, but what I knew was that he was a fantastic surgeon and he was in Berlin at the famous West End Hospital already. And he operated on me right away and cut open the breast. And then, of course, he came and treated me and, and it healed wonderful and was okay. But they didn't, they didn't check anything like that, you know. And he even came later on, when I was still home and checked. But by then everything was alright and my daughter had, my husband had taken Heia home, you know. And I was there, but I was there for six weeks 'till it all healed. But can you imagine, in comes a doctor and operates on you and he is from Nordhausen, from that little city, and I remember when he walked up and down there, a little thin man. And from Shanghai, he went to West Point and he was a chief surgeon at West Point. And I heard from somebody else, I talked to a woman from, who was in Shanghai, Margaret, Margaret Mattes, with us, that he died a very few years ago in, in New York, where he was at the other famous, the chief surgeon there. But isn't that something? You go to Shanghai and the other man is from Nordhausen, from that little town [unclear] . And everybody knew already that he was fantastic.

Hochstadt: But you, you went to this French hospital because you thought it would be better than ... ?

Schwarz: That's what my husband thought. He made reservations and every, all the things before so, because he didn't want to go to our hospital. He thought maybe it would be better. Our doctors would have been much better, because they put a little heart in, you know. But not even the sisters, the Catholic sisters, they were not nice. When I had fever like anything, because I had already that scarlet fever, and I called the nurses so many times. She said, "The nurse is in first class." And took a long time 'till they came and I was burning up, I just felt there must be something wrong. And was that scarlet fever. So my husband took the baby home, and, and I went to the Chaoufoong, to our hospital. But, yeah, and that's where I was operated, too. And I remember, that hospital room I had, I was alone in the room in the Chaoufoong Heim, in the

morning they had to come in and light the stove. Because we didn't have anything else than an old stove there. And when they lit that stove, the smoke came out, you know, when you were sick and everything. But they were good and they had good nurses and they had good, our people, you know. And I stayed there six weeks, I think. And when I came home, you know, our, those little houses there, on that thing, the staircases are so nar-, narrow and of course they are steep up, and our room was in the second story. So it was impossible for me to go up those, one took my hands and pulled me and my husband pushed me 'till I got up to bed, you know. Because I wasn't ready to get up, and so. But from then on everything went okay. But you think you, you go to good hospital, I don't think we ever paid for that hospital after that. [laughs] I don't remember. Those are the things. And my son was born here in Torrance. That was faster. And after three weeks, I went back to work.

Hochstadt: In Shanghai?

Schwarz: No, here . . .

Hochstadt: No, here.

Schwarz: . . . after he was born. Because my husband was dead already. And my boss sent me my paycheck every week. But I felt so bad about that, you know so . . .

Hochstadt: Because you weren't working.

Schwarz: Yeah, that I get the money without working, you know. So, I, I went to work as fast as I could. I worked there for 20 years.

END SIDE A, TAPE 2

END OF INTERVIEW

Lotte (Cohn) Schwarz was born in Halle about 1911 and grew up in Nordhausen. She worked for the Hilfsverein in Hannover. In February 1938 she was married and moved to Berlin. On June 14, 1938, her husband was arrested and sent to Buchenwald. In August they sailed to Shanghai on the "Conte Verde".

The Schwarzes opened a small coffee shop, the Quick Restaurant, in Hongkew. Their daughter was born in 1940. They sailed to San Francisco on the "General Meigs" in 1948, and then settled in southern California. Lottte Schwarz worked for many years for the Judy Crib Sheet Company.

This transcript is part of the Shanghai Jewish Community Oral History Project, an effort to collect and transcribe interviews with Jews who lived in Shanghai, directed by Steve Hochstadt at Bates College in Lewiston, Maine. It was prepared with support from Bates College and the Dimmer-Bergstrom Fund.