Elsie Miller Legum Transcript

EE: Today is Thursday, April 19th, 2001. This is Elaine Eff, Oral Historian for the Jewish Women's Archive. I am interviewing Elsie Miller Legum of Baltimore. We are in her home at Seven Slade Avenue in Pikesville, Maryland. Elsie, why don't we talk by just telling me about yourself and your family, when you were born, and where you were born?

EL: I was born April 21, 1915, at 865 Hollins Street, which is West Baltimore. I was the fifth child. Two had died – oh, no, one died afterward. One infant had died before I came along. There were three boys, one infant died, and then I was born. Grew up in a family of nine, six boys and three girls. Today, three boys are gone, and we have three boys and three girls left, as far as the Shapiro family go. I don't know what else about me. That's the beginning of my life [laughter] – 1915. I went to elementary school on Hollins Street, just two blocks from where I lived. From the sixth grade, I went to the eighth, Edgar Alan Poe, Number One School, which is Fayette and Greene, and then to Western High, [and] graduated [in] 1932. Went to every reunion until they – until our fifty-fifth, then we didn't have a leader, and no more reunions. I used to look forward to our reunion.

EE: Tell me about your family. Tell me about your first memories of life as a Shapiro.

EL: A Shapiro? Well, having a big family was really a lot of fun. It was like partying all the time. I played piano. Two brothers played piano. Two brothers played violin. We had a living room and – what did we call? – one room they called a parlor, and it was adjoining the rooms like a sliding door divided. We had musical sessions. We sang. It was fun growing up with a big family. I didn't realize it then. Now to me, it was just part of living. In those days, there was no TV. There was no TV. I guess we had radio. I

don't even remember radio. I do remember the horse and buggy my father had – not the family beyond me. They don't remember the horse at all, but I do remember it. I think the name was Tony, the horse we used to love. Davidson Transfer was two blocks down, where they used to have horses. I think our horse was there, at their stable. I'm not sure. It wasn't Davidson Transfer then; it was the Davidson family that had horses at that time. For recreation, families got together, visited all the time. No such things as trips until later – later, after I guess I was a teenager, that we did family trips. But at that time, the recreation was going to Druid Hill Park. I remember rolling down the hills. But it was always with a group. It was a party all the time, so many of us in our family, and it was fun.

EE: I want you to tell me about your parents. What are your memories of your parents? Tell me about your mother and your father.

EL: My mother was a very, very smart woman, really always – I would say preach – always telling us about life and Jewish religion and the good things to do, the right things to do. I know she always put emphasis on telling the truth. We all, every one of us in my family, grew up that it was the biggest crime to ever lie. That is a fact. That I know. My mother was ahead of her time as far as health – concerned with vegetables. Not the right thing to do to force, but my mother really put emphasis on eating, cleaning your plate, talking about how you have to clean your plate – no waste. Of course, they were rough times; I guess that was why. She had to stretch meals. I don't remember. But I knew she always put emphasis on eating and manners and behaving right. That's one of the reasons why I eloped, really and truly. [laughter] Because if a boy – that was my generation, actually. Because if a boy would put his hands – meaning nothing – on your knee or like an embrace, that was not the proper thing. You had to be very proper. Really and truly, put such a fear – we had to look into – I used to do that to my girls, and my girls would be upset – to look in the mirror, and you're proud of how you conducted yourself. Otherwise, you had to be upset with yourself. She made you feel like you had

to be on good behavior, almost too much though, that I would – felt like she was on my back too much, all of us. The younger parts of my family didn't have to go through what I went through. As far as lipstick, I had to do that after I got out of the house or wipe my lipstick off, and things like that. But my mother loved – my mother was very well-read, much more well-read than I was. I mean, I've got some of her books today, Shakespeare and books in German. My mother was on the border of Germany and Lithuania, and she could speak – knew German. She had a lot of books in German. She loved Shakespeare. She was very well-read. She really always wanted us to read. It was very important to read. I think she made us all feel that it was very important. Before I got to the stage where I liked reading, it was a chore that I had to read. My father was a sweet, loving guy, never heard him raise his voice. My mother was the domineering factor in my family. My father, we have an argument – not arguments, we have disagreements in the family with my brothers talking about my father, then the father that I knew. They feel my father was just as intelligent as my mother. As a matter of fact, I went to a party, my sister's anniversary this past week, and we had that discussion. My brother Herbie went across the country with my father because he was stationed in – I forgot where in Texas. San Antonio. Is that Texas? Yeah. When he came home for a visit, he drove across with my father back to his base and was saying that the girls didn't know how intelligent my father was. But my personal contact was really with my mother, not with my father. I considered my – my father always agreed to everything my mother said. She was like the leader. I really don't have information from my father. I get it from my brothers, what my father did. My rapport was always with my mother. And yet, my mother had rapport with the boys just as well as the girls. My mother was a very unusual person.

EE: What was her name, and tell me–

EL: Cele. Cele Blumberg. She talked about when she came over, how she was on the ship, and how she was dressed. She left home because her father remarried when her mother died. Her mother died in childbirth – and remarried her aunt, her mother's sister,

who, when the step-children came in the picture, weren't treated right. My mother came here as a young girl, fifteen.

EE: And where did she come from?

EL: She came from Lithuania and lived with a good – from Lithuania – oh, Covna – C-O-V-N-A. I don't have the date. I don't remember the date. But I know my father came from Russia in 1905. My brother did a family tree. Well, that's when I moved to Forest Park. I'm trying to think how old I was when we moved to Forest Park. I was fourteen. I went to Western because I had started Western already. I must have been not fourteen yet. I'm not even sure because I was a year ahead of myself on account of junior high, skipping that year. But we moved to Forest Park, and I went to Western High.

EE: All right. Let's talk more about your mom.

EL: Yeah.

EE: Why don't you describe her physically, and what you know about what stories she might have told you about coming to this country?

EL: When she came to this country, she came with a landsman of her father's. That was Jacob Miller, who was a manufacturer of ties in Baltimore. That's who she lived with. As a matter of fact, when I got married, he was under the chuppah – my legitimate wedding, I should say. He was like a member of the family. As a matter of fact, he's the one who introduced her to my father. She worked in his tie factory until she married my father because she had my brother right away, nine months later. The only work she ever did after that was with my father, together, because from the little confectionery store my father had, they went into the furniture – used furniture. Then, as they accumulated money, they bought property. When they bought furniture – if a person was selling furniture or moving out of town, they would either put their house up for sale, or my mother would sell the property. My father was always doing the outside work, and my

mother ran the inside. She was a hard worker. I was told she carried rugs on her shoulder, worked up all hours, nursed us all in the furniture store – all these stories that I heard – that she worked around the clock. Different relatives over the years have backed up all these stories and talked about how strong and how hard she worked. I don't know – grew up as far as – we grew up having fun and a happy family. We were taught togetherness, family unity, and the love. To this day, it's been instilled in all of us. My family, to this day, I think, has a special relationship with all of us. As a matter of fact, tomorrow, my brother from Washington is coming to take me out to dinner – Morty and Lenny, who live in Baltimore. We have a closeness just like when we were little, all of us. We have never – I won't say we didn't have disagreements. We don't have to agree with one another, but we've never had arguments or anything like that, a very unusual love that – I think it's followed through in – my children remember my grandmother with the same kind of talks that I had with my mother. My children remember the grandparents the same way. My father would smile and agree, but my mother was like the leader, and I still say, the dominating factor. As a matter of fact, I told my brothers that they all married girls who were just like Mom – dominating. My sisters-in-law don't agree with me, but my brothers really do. It's a very strong force there, which really is on the good side of everything, as far as happiness and joy. I feel very, very blessed. I think that's important – very important to all of us Jewish women of the Twentieth Century, I really do. I know I've seen other families that get together, certain celebrations, but the basic strong feeling, I don't feel, is really there like we have. I think we are all very lucky, and I contribute all this well-being to my mother, really. She instilled this not only in me – even my mother's grandchildren, my children, [and] my little one will talk about things that my mother would talk about. I mean, that's the impression that she's made on all of us. When we have a Seder today, the first thing – my brother who leads the Seders – we have sixty-eight at our Seders, brothers, sisters, children, grandchildren. Before the Seder is started, makes a tribute to my parents, to my mother and father, that made this possible. They felt that family unity was very important, and it

has continued, as my mother and father did today. When I'm no longer here, I know and feel very strongly that my children absolutely will continue that. I don't know what I can say on behalf, because they was very, very special, special folks.

EE: Tell me a little about what you remember about the Jewish content of your lives. You talked about how hard your mother worked and how strong a woman she was.

EL: Yeah.

EE: When did she have time to instill Jewish values?

EL: I don't know whether she was up at night. I don't know when she ever did this. Our shul – the first shul was Franklin Street Shul – no, it was Poppleton Street Shul, which was closer to us, a small shul. I don't even remember my mother going to shul when we were all small. I remember my mother cooking and dinners. My mother baked. No such thing as even buying bread. We never had white bread ever in our house. My mother baked all kinds of breads and challah. I mean, you walked in our house Friday night, I mean, you knew it was Shabbos. You knew about the candle before it even got – we didn't even call it Hebrew school, we called it cheder. I don't even know how to spell the word. But it was mainly boys. The girls weren't – there weren't many girls in the class. Girls really didn't go. But we all went to cheder, and that was on Franklin Street. That was Franklin Street Shul, and that's where my mother moved over there. That was quite a walk, like eight or nine blocks that we went there. My mother went to – I remember my mother in shul then. I must have been ten, twelve, I don't know. But I went to cheder. I wasn't happy there. The boys used to get hit with rulers or something. I remember the boys getting hit. I was always afraid. But they never did hit girls there. I can't say it's like today. My children, who will go to different kinds of Hebrew school – Reform. My family was Orthodox, I mean, as far – but my parents rode, they didn't walk. I shouldn't say that. When I was little, I really don't remember. We walked then. We didn't even – we'd go back then. I learned to read, but I can't read today. You didn't learn like you learn

today. Even Reform, my kids – I mean, really, when they come out of Hebrew school for their bat mitzvahs and bar mitzvahs and all, it's beautiful the knowledge that they have. I didn't have any of that. I know the letters, but I don't know how to read. I keep saying that I'm going to take a course. No, I keep saying I'm going to take a course and read. I've got a son-in-law who was always Reform, Harry Blum – never tasted gefilte fish until he got into my family. He now is taking Hebrew lessons because he wants to read. He has transferred from Oheb. All my children belong to Beth Tfiloh except Joan. Joan still belongs to Oheb because her husband feels he wants to sit with his wife. He doesn't like the separation. But the other girls all have joined Beth Tfiloh with me. And Harry and Billy are learning how to read Hebrew, and I said I would like to too. And I haven't found time. If I give up some of my social activities, cards or what-have-you, I'll make time. But I really am very anxious to learn how to read. I love the songs. I see my father. I can hear my father conducting services. It's very beautiful, the warm feeling that is there. I think that gives us our strength and our security. Of course, it's wonderful memories that I have, with all that. My father always with his schnapps, Friday night, and the prayers, and with my brothers. Well, my brothers all were bar mitzvahed and all. We were really Orthodox, but of course, there was no place to ride. We didn't have a car in my early days and all. But later on, even though my father went to shul every Shabbos, he rode, he didn't – but they always had a kosher home.

EE: You said you remember your father praying in Hebrew or leading a service?

EL: My father –

EE: Where did your father do that?

EL: No, our family, at the table. My mother always had bread and candles. I remember her explaining because I didn't understand the hand movement with the candles, because my friends' parents didn't do that. I didn't understand that. I didn't know if it was a cult or not. I mean, my mother had to explain, really. I remember the first time I saw

that with the hands, it seemed strange to me. I must have been very, very young. I don't remember the explanation that she even gave if you want to know the truth about that. But we always had – my father had a beautiful voice. He wasn't a chazzen, but he sang like a chazzen. I had one brother that had my father's beautiful voice, and he conducted the Seder after my parents died for a long time. Now each brother takes a turn. My brother Herbie, who lives in Washington, is going to pass it to my youngest brother from here on in. Morty Shapiro is going to be conducting services now.

EE: How old is your youngest brother?

EL: Morty is seventy-two, I think, yeah. He's going to be seventy-three [in] May, or seventy-two. I'm not sure. I think I had the dates down, didn't I now? Seventy-two or seventy. I think seventy-two, because Herbie is not seventy-five. Yeah, Morty is seventy-two.

EE: Do you remember how old your mother was when she got married, how old your parents were?

EL: Different children – the age – say different ages. I don't know whether my mother tried to make herself younger. My mother was ninety-nine when she died, I know that. But she was fifteen, then I heard fourteen. But I know she was married. She had a baby, a first child. She was just seventeen. So the exact age, no, I'm not sure.

EE: Can you tell me a little about the neighborhood, the first neighborhood you lived in, about Hollins Street?

EL: Hollins Street was really beautiful. It wasn't Jewish, all Jewish like East Baltimore. There were a lot of Jewish families. Wyman Park – I don't know if people will remember that or not, but across from us was Baltimore – Hollins Street is one block below Baltimore Street. The home we bought was from Meyerowitz, who was very big in real estate. I think the Meyerowitz family is still in town. I don't know. They were a wonderful

family because they helped my father, as far as starting in real estate. And I remember this home that we bought. Well, there were nine of us, three stories. But they were row houses – but opposite us was Wyman Park, and it had a brick wall all around it. And on Baltimore Street, Progress Department Stores was built. Today it's all stores. The park was knocked down, after we moved. And it was like a castle in there. Was it called Wyman Park? I don't even know.

EE: I don't either.

EL: But it was beautiful. I remember after we moved they knocked that down. That's when they built all the stores on Baltimore Street, you know, all the chain – next door to us were Lithuanians. On Baltimore Street, 800 and 900 block, they were all small businessmen. My father opened up his first store there. There was a delicatessen. Grand Rapids Furniture Store opened there, right on the corner. Doris Himmelfarb's father, that was Sirkus Hardware Store. There were lots of small, independent Jewish families. But it was a mixed community. It wasn't all Jewish. But we had Poppleton Street Shul. We had Franklin Street Shul. They all (inaudible). But I knew nothing about East Baltimore. I never met – because I went to Western. I didn't even know Eastern High until I got to Western, did I ever even hear of Eastern High? But I used to drive my mother to Lombard Street. That's what I knew about East Baltimore. All the Jewish people – and the fish market, when it came to the family, my mother and father bought fish that they'd bring home, that were live fish in the bathtub, they used to swim, these big fish. I used to help my mother take – gefilte fish, take this fish off the skin, not like today when you go and get it all ground and things like that. My mother really was in the kitchen all the time but believed in being home. That was very important, very important.

EE: What did you do when you went down to Lombard Street? What do you remember doing there?

EL: Lombard Street? Waiting for my mother and looking. And everything smelled too good, the corned beef. And nothing tastes or smells like it did in those days, oh. Oh, you saw live chickens. And everybody was buying. That was like for the holidays that we did that.

EE: Can you describe Lombard Street, sort of take a little memory walk down the street?

EL: Yes. I remember the dairy store. I remember Attman's. It's still there, Cohen's Delicatessen. I went to the Peabody – oh, talking about my mother, I had a lisp – I still have a lisp, but I guess you can hear. And my mother was like a perfectionist, not only in behavior and how you conducted yourself, but with reading and being a perfect lady, you know. She sent me to the Peabody for my lisp and talking. I remember, "What now, brown cow," and oh, that's how I grew up – not the other sisters, but that part there. Lombard Street is just – the east side, I guess. You know, later on, I learned the East side reminded me of Lombard Street, it really did. People lived upstairs above the businesses and all. They bought the live chickens and took the chickens to the schachet – I think that's the right word. And you went in the back. I didn't like that as a child. I didn't like it. And they did something to the chicken's neck, and you'd see the chicken actually die. And that's how they bought chickens. But this was holiday time. Otherwise, my mother shopped the market, which was Hollins Street, right there, with baskets, baskets of food. Of course, we had a big family. When she bought corn – I don't think anybody ever cooked corn – she had like a restaurant pot, where you ever got that (inaudible) – my brother Ted used to eat five corn, I remember that. So you can imagine a family of nine how many corn it took. That's how my mother was. My mother was always in the kitchen cooking and baking.

EE: Do you remember her going to the market? Did she shop daily?

EL: You know, I don't even know. I don't know. I don't even know if the market is open every day. I could easily find out. I'm the oldest member in my family now, so I have to

ask the youngest one, not the older ones anymore. The older ones are not living.

EE: Do you have any idea why your parents move to Hollins Street, to that neighborhood?

EL: Well, my father's little confectionery store was on Greene Street, where the University of Maryland is, so they were familiar with that. My mother lived with the – with her landsman, Miller, Jacob Miller, and that was on Parkin Street, which is a small – oh, Lithuanian Hall was on the corner of Parkin Street, big Lithuanian Hall. As kids, we used to look through the window and look at these Lithuanians. And I remember I saw olives for the first time in my life – my mother never had olives home – and almonds. We used to peep through to see the bride and them dancing. Well, Parkin Street is on the corner, and around the corner, Jacob Miller lived. That's where my mother lived. They were in that area, so it was convenient. And Meyerowitz, who was, well, for those times, well-to-do, was the one who helped my father go into business. He backed him up with the money, I remember, as far – it was such a low interest, whatever it was. I think they sort of arranged a deal that they bought – that Jacob Miller knew Meyerowitzs, who were well-to-do. I don't know where the Meyerowitzs moved. I don't know if they're even in Baltimore because I've never been in touch after my parents – there're younger people, but my family, like, we didn't have contact with them. But I know through Jacob Miller they bought this house. It was like a palace. I remember a long hall downstairs. You look at row houses, you don't picture it big. But our second floor, there were five – we had a bathroom that when my oldest brother was in law school – well, he wasn't in law school. He must have been – he had a party. I remember the girls that were in the – it must have been the graduation party – in the bathroom. There were like five girls. They said, "Oh, it's like a hotel. It was a big, big house inside, well built. We owned it – didn't sell it until three years ago when we got out of the real estate business. That was one of the houses that was in our real estate. The Shapiros disbanded the real estate altogether because we feel – nobody to run it. First of all, it grew so big, so many

properties, and then I lost my brother Leon who worked with my brother Morty. Morty is a graduate lawyer, but he never practiced law because he went into my father's business. He was like the lawyer for my father.

EE: What was your address on Hollins Street?

EL: 865. 865 Hollins Street. It looks better today, I think than our home on Forest Park, which was a mansion to us then. [laughter].

EE: Tell me about the neighborhood. Can you describe the Hollins Street neighborhood when you were growing up?

EL: It was more gentile than Jewish. Further down Hollins Street, there were bigger homes, bigger than ours, and there were Jewish families there. I had one Jewish friend and two gentile – oh, Catholic church was across from us. I don't know the name of the church. Directly across the street was a park, and then it's the alley – I guess you call it an alley, nothing in the alley there – and then the church, which went down to the corner. Then across from the church was the – where the sisters and all were down there. That's another thing, another window – we used to look into the Catholic church and all the – I remember that, yeah.

EE: Were you aware of being Jewish versus all the Gentiles?

EL: Oh, definitely, because of my home, because of my father, yeah, yeah. But my friends – I was friends with the Feldman's who has Progress Department Store there. They didn't have the Jewishkeit – her mother lit candles, but the kids weren't there. When I saw her mother light the candles, she must have said a prayer, but she didn't do what my mother did. That's why it was always different. I felt like my mother was more Orthodox until she got older, until she moved to the Diplomat.

EE: Until she moved to –

EL: The Diplomat, when they sold their home. That's before my father died, but my father wasn't well. They moved to the Diplomat Apartments. And that's when my brothers wouldn't let my father drive. But he drove on Shabbos, it didn't matter anyhow. But everybody would say, "I thought your father was so religious. I've seen him on the corner getting on the bus." [laughter] And that bit. He wasn't that religious.

EE: So can you describe – if you closed your eyes and tried to think of the Hollins Street neighborhood when you were a little girl – and I'm not sure how long exactly you lived there, or when you moved. But tell me that and tell me what you –?

EL: I was there until I was like thirteen. I thought the neighborhood was fun because even though there weren't many Jewish kids, we played games that my grandchildren never played. We played Red Line, where you hid. I don't know what you call the game, you spin – I remember, you turn around, and then you stay in your post – Statues. Did you ever hear of that? You did, really? Yeah. My kids, I don't think ever – maybe my grandchildren – you never went outside [if] you didn't have friends to play with, even though they weren't all Jewish. Except for Lil and one other girl, most of them were gentile. But actually, we weren't outside – I mean, there's no grass or anything outside; it's a sidewalk, and it was cobblestones. I remember when they paved the street. I remember cobblestones there. But most of our entertainment was really in our house. We had a playground in our school. We used to go – oh, that's where I met the friends at the school in the yard. We had a playground.

EE: What school was this?

EL: Number Ten, on Hollins Street, the next block. As a matter of fact, my granddaughter [in] August got married. I met someone who went to school with me in the sixth grade, remembered me from the sixth grade, and said, "You haven't changed. You look the same." Can you believe – that's eighty years ago – [laughter] – that I look the same, [laughter] How wonderful. You know anybody named Alperstein? Well, they were

[on] Hollins Street. That was a big family. They had eight; we had nine. They had brothers who were friendly with my brothers. They were all boys in that family. I think just one girl. But the Alpersteins were in my class, and Morty was in my husband's class and all. So even though that was like 1200 block, [and] we were 800, we all were at the same playground in the school. That's what we did for entertainment. In the summer when schools were closed, you had – I guess it was a teacher, a playground teacher, and that's what we did. Carroll Park – I would go with my brothers, who played tennis. I never played tennis. But we moved to Maine Avenue. My brothers built their own tennis courts. They all played tennis, but I already was married – married secretly, but I was married. I was the one member of the family that never played tennis. But it was a good neighborhood to grow up in. There certainly was no distinction between – though we had a bad habit. When we walked in front of the church, we couldn't walk on the pavement. We had to get off the curb because we were Jewish. This is maybe one of the girls that said that. I don't know for how long, but I remember as we crossed the street, not where the preacher and everything lived across, but the church part, you stepped off the curb, and you walked in the street and got back on the pavement like we couldn't walk on the Catholic pavement. Look how crazy kids are, and yet we peeped through the window. On Hollins Street, behind our house, was an alley, and Black people lived in that alley. I remember saying hello. I never knew any distinction or was afraid. We never locked our doors on Hollins Street. No matter what time our brothers came home, our doors were always open, always open. I remember the street very vividly. To the left of it – across from us was the church, and I say, "the wall," and then these homes right next – but my association wasn't there. My association was on Baltimore Street. My girlfriend had this big store. I loved walking in the store. They had a jewelry case. I remember walking to the jewelry – to the counter. She had to sit while they would eat dinner [and] had to come down. It's amazing when I sit there and think – I don't think Black people – I don't remember them ever coming to the store. I don't remember anybody walking into the store. But she sat there – maybe [there] was a bell to ring for somebody to come down.

But I remember – my association was there in the store with her, and I looked forward to it like a ball.

EE: What store was that and what was her name?

EL: That was Lil Feldman, who now lives in Florida, that I hear from once a year only. The Feldman family had this big store. That's not Progress. Progress was the big department store that – I forgot their name that owned that big store. I don't know. But on Baltimore Street, I remember the hardware store. I remember the delicatessen store. I remember the hat [store]. Of course, I went shopping with my mother, and my mother loved hats. My mother – every picture I have here, she has a hat on – loved hats and gloves. Well, that was the style then. My mother loved dressing up. I'm supposed to look like my mother – supposed to – not as tall as – my mother wasn't tall, but not as short as I am. That's about all the visual because my contact wasn't close friends.

EE: Let me ask you a question. Were there stores that Jews went into and stores that Jews did not go into?

EL: No.

EE: Or did everybody who lived in the neighborhood –?

EL: Everybody, everybody. I don't think there was any distinction. The only place you had your Jewish feeling was in your home. I mean, my gentile friends – of course, we were young then. We were young then. Even in Forest Park – when we moved to Forest Park, it was a mixed neighborhood. It was never a ghetto. East Baltimore was – you didn't find a gentile. I'm not talking about Eastern High School. But I don't think there was any distinction. If it was, I don't remember it at all.

EE: How would you distinguish East Baltimore from West Baltimore?

EL: It's a terrible thing to say, but I felt like East Baltimore was beneath us. Maybe I was a snob, I don't know. East Baltimore was – I looked upon as – not poor. I didn't think of it in dollars, but I think it's not as classy as West Baltimore. I always was proud to say, "I'm West Baltimore," not East Baltimore, for some reason. And yet, I didn't have any contact with East Baltimore. I didn't know anybody. But if I went to the Peabody or I took piano, it was always somebody from West Baltimore. My association was never East Baltimore. Although my mother had a friend, Mrs. Cohen, who owned Cohen's Delicatessen, was my mother's friend from East Baltimore. My grandmother had the first mikveh – this is what I have been told – the first mikveh in Baltimore. She was on Eden Street. When we used to go there to visit – not a nice thing to say – my brothers used to go and peek where the old ladies would be in the pool. They weren't old, but they liked to look at the naked women in the pool. They would be in the – it wasn't a hundred women there, like two or three at a time. I remember my brothers all peeping. We stood by my grandmother because we couldn't wait to see what we were getting from her. She gave us pennies, pennies, but to us it was a lot, maybe ten pennies.

EE: Your grandmother?

EL: Yes.

EE: So your mother came over –?

EL: My father brought his mother – my father brought all his family, all the Shapiros. All the Shapiros. My father was the first one. And he brought – he didn't bring his mother over until he brought most of his brothers, though. Shapiro's Food Store. You familiar with that? That was my father's youngest brother. He brought Uncle Bernie over. And Uncle Bernie came over with – we called her Bubbe – came over with Bubbe. My grandfather died. I don't remember him except his funeral. I think he died only a couple years after he came here. But my grandmother had the first mikveh. I don't know how. She was smart enough. She ended up buying houses, like my father did. It seemed like

the whole family, they all bought property. They were smart enough with whatever – she must have made enough money in the mikveh. I think they made fifty cents. I don't know what they made. I really don't know. I heard that once – fifty cents or a dollar. But she's supposed to have had the first mikveh in Baltimore. That's what they said. You know what a mikveh is?

EE: Tell me.

EL: A mikveh is where – well, today they have them too, that before you get married, I mean, if you're Orthodox and religious, you go – I never went to a mikveh. But you go to a mikveh, and you bathe, and you have to go every month, I think. I don't even remember the reason. But I knew before you get married it was important, because some members of my family went to the mikveh – not my sisters, not my siblings, but different members of the family. But a lot of people don't even know what a mikveh is. But there's one opposite the Eden Street Shul. And I think that's where my grandmother lived – I'm not sure. I'm not sure.

EE: Were there no mikvehs in West Baltimore?

EL: No. If there was, I was never told. I was told my grandmother had – they came to her from all over. That shul in Glen Avenue has a mikveh. That shul wasn't built then. There were in East Baltimore, I guess. But I don't know. All I knew was my grandmother. When we came to visit my grandmother, my grandmother gave us pennies. She accumulated pennies. She gave us ten pennies. It looked like we were getting a fortune. [laughter] I know my brothers used to run and peep there. She always had candy for us. That's one thing my mother never had. Candy wasn't healthy. Maybe she couldn't afford to buy it, I don't know. But really, I loved white bread. My mother would never have white bread in the house. I guess I didn't appreciate her cakes. I loved the bought stuff, the sweets and the chocolates. My mother used to make coffee cakes and things like that. But later on as years went by, my mother's breads and

desserts were delicious. My mother made her own candy, carrot candy. My children remember the carrot candy before she got to the nursing – and grapefruit candy with – of course, even candy stores sell it today. But those days, I didn't even like it. I wouldn't even eat it. She used to use orange peel and grapefruit and make the candy. That would be our candy for holidays and all. But I don't remember too much of my youth. I remember my high school days. I fell in love very – well, that was my last year. And really, to be a proper girl, I had to elope because you can't do things. You can't even embrace at all. That's what I did. But that wasn't unusual in our day. Not only friends but in my family, I'm number four that eloped. My mother didn't have a wedding until she came to – Phil, Teddy, me, and then Faye – four all eloped – until my brother Eddie got married did we have a wedding in the family. I was married secretly almost three years – two and a half years. My father-in-law did not want my husband to date one girl. He was only eighteen; I was sixteen – actually, almost seventeen then. But he didn't want him to date just one girl. Imagine, eighteen years old. I thought he was so mean. But it was great. I even dated a couple of times. My husband waited for me until I came out. My kids all know that story too.

EE: Did you tell them the story?

EL: My kids? Oh, sure, it came out. I went through a wedding. I went through a legitimate wedding. Jacob Miller was under my chuppa on Maine Avenue – under the chuppa in my mother's living room. After we were married legitimately, somebody put in the Jewish Times – my husband confided in one guy. You probably know him, so I won't say anything – that announced it. Didn't think there was any harm because I was married legitimately. And that's when it came out in the Jewish Times. My parents were upset that I made them spend, I think, five hundred dollars on my wedding. Why did I make them spend that money on the wedding if I was already married? And then, according to my father, my Jewish wedding wasn't legitimate because I was married already, and I never said I was married. But I was married [inaudible] Justice of the

Peace; it didn't mean anything. But that was my secret wedding that none of my friends and all – and I think that's what made me popular, witnessing my secret wedding. No one kept it a secret that long. People eloped. Everyone in my family eloped. When they came back, they announced it, and they lived together.

EE: Tell me about meeting your husband. Actually, we haven't even talked about your father. Do you realize that?

EL: Well, my father, I'm telling you – my relationship was not like with my mother. I think my children feel the same way. But if you're going to talk to my brothers, they're going to tell you I'm totally wrong. Herbie said my father was just as intelligent as my mother. I said Pop didn't read. Mom read books that I couldn't even begin to read. I don't have my mother's knowledge. He said, "You are so wrong. You don't know. I went cross country with Pop." And this is – he'll tell you – did you know? – well, you're too young, but (Mattie?) Rubinstein – no, she doesn't have her doctorate, but Hy and Ellen were her parents. They were killed in that automobile accident – well, the mother was then. They lived at 3900 St. Charles Street. When he got in the car, the car swerved across the street and she died instantly. Well, (Mattie?) is married to my brother, Herbie Shapiro. Herbie is good friends with Paul Dorf. He's older than you, so you wouldn't know that crowd. You know my sister-in-law Lenny Shapiro? You don't know Lenny? Well, Lenny is older than you, I know. Lenny is Phyllis's age. But they, too, also tell me how they knew my father. They were sisters-in-law, and they knew my father better than I do.

EE: Tell me what you know about your father coming over to this country.

EL: I don't know very much. I know my father came over because he wanted to get out of going into service. When he came over, his father had an ink factory in Russia.

EE: Whereabouts in Russia, do you know?

EL: Minsk. That I learned as a result of this. He had some money. When he came over, he didn't come over as a pauper. That's how my grandmother, I think, had money too. He had a horse. I don't know whether he rented the horse. I don't know if they rented – but he was a salesman, and he sold silverware and blankets. He traveled the countryside. He said, "I thought you didn't speak English." He said he showed, "You didn't have to talk." I said, "But people understood?" Yes. They paid, and it was cheap. It was just like Montgomery Ward, who did such a big mail order business. You went, and you delivered. I don't know how. It didn't take him long when he bought this little confectionery store.

EE: Where did he travel? Do you know where he traveled?

EL: Well, he said the country – like Ellicott City. That came out later. He didn't know it was Ellicott City then. He tells me where Glen Avenue is on Park Heights, it was all country there. He traveled there. They were farmers, he claimed, country people; it was all country. It wasn't houses then. I don't ever remember streetcars not going past Glen Avenue like that was the end of the city line or whatever there. Anyhow, he made money, and he opened up this little confectionery store, ice cream, and dessert. The University of Maryland school was there already. I didn't know that school went back that far. Of course, it was small then, whatever they had.

EE: Which corner was it that he was located on?

EL: I don't even know. Maybe I could find out. I didn't even ask. But he said – they all said where the University of Maryland is. There was a confectionery store, Brotman's, wherever that was. Do you know Rose Brotman? No, you wouldn't know Rose Brotman. I don't know. Somebody in her family ended up with a big confectionery. That was my father's store that he gave up when they went into the furniture business. How they got into the furniture business, I don't even think any of my family knows. None of us know. But it was used furniture, and that was on Baltimore Street. We were eight – Hollins

Street is right behind Baltimore Street, just one block. It ends at Fremont and then becomes Redwood there. But it goes all the way up Hollins Street. I don't know how far. It goes all the way up. Where was I? I mean, what am I talking about?

EE: Talking about your dad.

EL: Yeah, but I mean, the furniture store is 700 block. There was a fire department and my father's store. As a matter of fact, I was locked in with my brother Ted in the furniture store one night. They had the police department looking for us. We were playing with the mattresses in the back, the warehouse part. It was used furniture – these were not – I guess the mattresses were new. The mattresses probably were new. But it was used furniture. And we used to play there. We used to play store and all. My brother Ted, who is no longer living, was a wonderful, wonderful brother. He's the one when I was thirteen and had straw rides. Belonged to a club – oh, I did belong to a club on Madison Avenue. Madison Avenue Temple. Is that still in existence? I don't even know. Is it? Madison Avenue Temple. I belonged to a club. How did we walk that far? I have no idea if one of the parents – no, no parents took us. I remember we had a straw ride. I didn't know any boys. I didn't have any boys I could ask. My brother Ted would always get dates for me. My oldest brother, Phil, was the one who introduced me to Sidney Miller. Sidney Miller lived five houses down from us in Forest Park. It was a different number of the block, but it was one long block, and at the path, they changed the address. Should I tell this story [of] how I met Sidney Miller? Because I went to Camp Louise. I forgot about that. Learned to smoke there – not at Camp Louise, but I met a girlfriend who lived in Philadelphia. And then I went to Philly and spent time with her, and that's where I learned to smoke when I was in Philly. She had parties with boys. Now she's going to come to Baltimore. And every night, something is going on. I didn't know that many boys. I knew one boy that I could have – my brother Phil got me dates with my girlfriend. Sidney Miller was supposed to be for my girlfriend, but I liked his looks, and I took him and gave her the guy that I knew. That's how I met Sidney Miller, who lived five

houses down the street from me. It was love at first sight. At that time, I was fifteen, I guess. Yeah, had to be. That's where I am.

EE: Tell me about your move from Hollins Street to Forest Park.

EL: I thought it was an estate. [laughter] The grounds – we have a corner house. Was a lot of ground. My brothers did build a tennis court on that side.

EE: Where exactly did you move?

EL: Maine and Granada. If anybody went to Forest Park, you had to walk up Granada. We had this big walk-around porch all around. Every age, every eighteen months or two years, there's a different age group. All my family beneath me – my sister's eighteen months younger than me went to Forest Park. And every age – so you pass the Shapiros, everybody knew the Shapiro's house. It wasn't my friends so much because I had already had my life. I met Sidney six months after I moved into Maine Avenue, so I was involved there. But Faye, who was next to me, her friends – every one of my brothers went to Forest Park. It was a party at – my sweet sixteen party was on Maine Avenue. We had a paper in Baltimore then. I think I told it to Allison, Brevities, it was a little newspaper. Like today you have Owing Mills Times, Towson Times, things like that. This was called The Brevity, and it was the news. My sweet sixteen party was supposed to be a surprise party, but I knew about it. I didn't own up that I knew about it. Ruthie Benjamin – she was Ruthie Benjamin – she's in a nursing home today – did it with the other girls of my sorority. Oh, I was in Western High Sorority. That's right. And I was active in – when I moved. I was glad when we moved from Hollins Street because my friends were all in Forest Park then. There weren't any friends really there. All my girls joined the same sorority. They had the same sorority in Forest Park. What was it, Alpha Lambda Phi, I think – or Phi Sig, Phi Sig – I don't even remember anymore. But whatever.

EE: You had sororities when you were at Forest Park? When you were at Western?

EL: Oh, sure. God, I can tell you people older than me who are sorority sisters of mine. Yes indeed. Same sorority when my kids got to Forest Park. Joan, Carol – they all pledged the same sorority.

EE: What were sororities like when you were in high school? What was the purpose? What were they –?

EL: Social, social. Oh, the sorority is one of the best – I mean, to me, I think – I know I don't like the privilege and that bit, and it wasn't so hard. I remember when Phyllis was in high school, I was worried that – as far as making sorority. It was important to make a sorority. I mean, you were in or out. don't like the competition. I don't like what it does. It was different. It wasn't that kind of competition. If you didn't – in my day, if you didn't make the sorority you wanted, you got another sorority. You weren't left out totally. Today, it's the few, the chosen, or whatever. No, my sorority was very important to me. All my social activities were sorority then. And the same thing, Sidney – my brother knew Sidney because – I forgot the name of the fraternity. Phil went to law. He never passed the State Board. His fraternity had a junior chapter. Sidney Miller was in the junior chapter. That's how I met Sidney, through my brother Phil, who introduced us. So sorority, in those days, I think was more important – today, everybody is against it because of certain people that are left out. We didn't have drugs or drinking or anything like that. Oh, the boys did drink beer in the parties – no, I'm wrong – yeah, yeah. They did. Right, right. But the girls didn't drink then. I remember when liquor came in. I was legitimate, and I couldn't swallow the stuff. I wanted to feel good like everybody else and suffered to get the stuff down my throat. Now you don't have to ask me twice a take a drink. [laughter] But as far as moving, I was very happy. My days were really with school and sorority and friends. Our family was smaller. My brothers married young. Phil's wife's mother – Gussie's mother was dying, and Phil was in law school. That's why he

never became a lawyer; he didn't pass the state board because they got married. Teddy got married [and] moved to Washington. Well, one of the brothers died as an infant there, and then I came along. I married young. Our big family – the violin and the piano and the singing wasn't part of our lives then.

EE: But you moved into a larger house, didn't you, in Forest Park?

EL: Yeah, but I still had a share a room with Faye. I shared a room with Faye when I lived on Hollins Street; it was the same thing. On Forest Park, when Phil and Teddy got out, my mother rented the third floor, made an apartment, made a private entrance and all. The second floor had five bedrooms. My mother didn't need any more bedrooms. It had two baths on the second floor. And that house was big, big.

EE: Now, why did you go to Western if you lived right around the corner from Forest Park?

EL: Because before we moved, I started Western, and Lil Feldman, who was my friend then, went, and the other girl, Kramer, went to Western. They were my Jewish friends. They were talking about moving. I don't think it was signed and sealed. Actually, I had started Western. I was pledging already. My first year, I was pledging sorority.

EE: How were Western and Forest Park compared when you were going to school?

EL: Well, I loved Western. I think it was just fun days.

EE: But were there –? Did people –?

EL: How can I compare? I never–

EE: Did people describe them as –? Were there different kinds of students that went to each of the schools?

EL: I don't think so.

EE: Were there academic distinctions?

EL: I don't think so. It wasn't like City or Poly. Poly, I think, engineers – you had to be smart – different course – I'll say one thing; there wasn't a Jewish girl that took the commercial course. We had commercial course – I don't know if Forest Park had commercial courses or not. My sisters went to Western, but they were academic. But there wasn't a Jewish girl, to my knowledge, or people that I knew, that took the commercial course. We all took academic. Had to take Latin.

EE: Did you ever think about going to college?

EL: Yes. I was skipped from the – Ann Adler, who was president of Hadassah – you probably know her daughter. She opened up Sweet Treats with Faye Adler. What was her name, Faye Adler's sister-in-law? Her mother, Ann Adler. Faye Adler. What's the other –? The sister-in-law opened up Candy Street. Well, Ann Adler was my sixth-grade teacher at Number Ten. She passed five girls from the sixth to the eighth. I gave that to Allison. We skipped the seventh grade. I don't think I was that smart. But the other girls – you know Sylvia Gimbel? All the other four girls went to college. I took courses with my sorority sisters, Mildred Poland. You know Morty Poland? Sue Ellen? Well, he's a younger brother to my girlfriend. She lives in Florida. Mildred Poland was going to take – she had a job offer in New York, and she was going to take courses at Hopkins. We took psych. She took a lot of courses. I took two courses, psychology and English. For six months – more than six months – I didn't finish the year. Maybe it was winter. I took two courses. My friends took four courses. But the girls who went from the sixth to the eighth all graduated Goucher. I can name all those girls, all graduated Goucher. I never did go on to college, except for those courses.

EE: Who were your classmates who graduated from Goucher?

EL: Tillie Snyder. I don't know her marriage name. Sylvia Gimbel. The others weren't my friends. One of the gentiles was a boy. There were five of us that skipped. Well, Sam – he was a builder or something in real estate. Well, he graduated [in] business. He graduated. He was the one boy and four girls. They all went to Goucher.

EE: Now, you were in high school, and you were already married? You had already –?

EL: I graduated [in] June, and I got married that August.

EE: And when did you –?

EL: When I eloped. That's when I eloped, now.

EE: Now, when exactly did you meet Sidney?

EL: No, wait a minute. I was sixteen at – no, my legitimate wedding was August. I graduated in June, and then I was almost seventeen. I was out of – I graduated [at] seventeen. I was almost seventeen when I moved. I was sixteen on my elopement, and he was eighteen. He was almost nineteen. His birthday – Sidney's birthday was March. He was eighteen. It was after his birthday but before I was seventeen. Oh, here I go with my hand. Terrible habit. My mother used to say, "Don't use your hands."

EE: What was Sidney doing?

EL: University of Baltimore.

EE: And what was he studying?

EL: Business. He was in Morty Alperstein's class. After school, he used to work in his father's store, Miller Brothers. My father-in-law was more ready-to-wear than the store that Miller Brothers became as far as merchandise. He had a big tailoring department. In those days, people who had money had things made to order. The Cone artists – I

don't know which one. I had that written down – my father-in-law used to make her clothes. Many a time, I was in the car with my husband when we were married secretly, and he delivered to what – I think it was the Esplanade or the Marlborough. I know it was Eutaw Place, that I'd sit in the car, and he would deliver to them. He had ready-to-wear, but it was on a small scale. And then my father-in-law died young. He was in the hospital for tests, and he wasn't even seventy. But my husband died at fifty-two. Dropped dead on Bonnie View's Golf Course. Never sick a day in his life. They wanted to do an autopsy, but they claim everybody dies of a heart eventually. They claim he was dead before he hit the ground. It turns out the Miller history is very bad. My father-in-law was suffering with back pain, was in the hospital for a test, and had a heart attack. Morton Miller died of heart. Norman, who was a pediatrician, was a baby brother. And Norman was how old? Norman, I guess, was close to sixty. He died in the office with patients. The Miller history. That's why my girls are very concerned with their boys. They watch the fat, and they're all on their guard because they feel like it's genetic. But when Sidney died, nothing was ever done in those days to know that. Never sick a day in his life. Then when Sidney came into the business with his father, they bought the next-door building, which was a florist shop. He opened up sportswear, separates, and it became more of a ready-to-wear, and the tailoring department became the smaller department of the store.

EE: Tell me about where the store was located, and who was the clientele.

EL: The first store my father-in-law – when he opened his business, he was a furrier. All the Millers, all his brothers, two became manufacturers – one became a manufacturer, and one worked with him, manufacturer of coats and suits. That was Nathan Miller. They were all tailors. They all had golden hands, as far as fitting and all. My father-in-law was the first in his family to come over also. He opened up – I don't know how he ever knew to open up on the 300 Block West Baltimore at North Charles Street, a small little store. Then he moved to the 1100 block when Sidney was in – before Sidney was in

college. He had been in business for about fifteen years and built up a tailoring department and fur department. He was known, my father-in-law, as far as – he was a designer, and he knew about fit. I never knew how deformed I am, that one arm is shorter, and things like that. But that's why people in those days – they didn't have a junior department, they didn't have half sizes or petites, and all, like that. So if you wanted things and you knew about fit, you had to have your clothes made to order. That was really very big. But the tailoring department became smaller and smaller. The fur department became bigger, and retailing became bigger. And that's where Sidney worked after school. When he graduated [from the] University of [Baltimore] – he didn't graduate. He did not graduate. He had six months to go. And that's when my – his father became sick. He did not graduate. He said he knew how to do the books, the advertising, and all that bit. He was very successful as a merchandiser, as a buyer, and as a salesperson. He was very well-loved by customers. To this day, I meet people who will talk about Sidney Miller, really. My father-in-law, without question, was really loved by everybody in the business. He was a real gentleman. He used to take my daughter, when Phyllis was little, over to the Belvedere to show her off. I prayed so hard for a girl because my mother had four sons, no daughter. Everyone said I over-prayed. But my husband wanted a son, and he never got a son. [laughter] I was so afraid I wouldn't have a daughter. It was very important to me. But it's been a wonderful life.

EE: Who shopped at Miller Brothers? Who were their clients?

EL: Originally, it was all gentiles. Very few Jewish people shopped Miller Brothers. But then Charles Street became like the Fifth Avenue in Baltimore, lots of shops. And then Jewish people started shopping at Charles Street.

EE: What year would that be?

EL: Oh, I can tell you it had to be like forty – I was married. No, I moved in '33. I was married in '33, so I graduated in '32. Yeah, it was after I graduated. Yeah, right. It must

have been like ten, twelve years later, I guess, that Charles Street was a really very busy thoroughfare as far as shops. Actually, our clothes weren't really young enough. Jewish customers had very good taste [and] wore high fashion. The trade was well-to-do society. I'll say the blue bloods. But they were very conservative in taste. That's how Miller Brothers really dressed their customers. And the Jewish trade – I think as Sidney Miller got into the business, realized they loved fashion. They loved high fashion. And merchandise really came down in price – not for the wealthy. The wealthy wanted to be plain as anything. But when you started with the Jewish trade, a lot of people could get wholesale, they wanted discounts. Miller Brothers never did that. So it took a long while, really, to build up the Jewish trade. I think when Sidney died we had as much Jewish trade as gentile. I think it was just evenly divided. At that point, we didn't have Black customers yet. But he died – we did with Sidney Miller. But at the time, Michael Miller, my father-in-law was living, Black people never even entered the store, never even went – well, a delivery man and all. So I guess there was – I don't know.

EE: But wasn't that a period where there was segregation in shopping, all the department stores?

EL: Definitely. But Baltimore wasn't the South, where you had gentlemen only, or that bit. But I mean, you went into Hutzler's – do you remember Blacks in Hutzler's? I don't recall. I really don't. I know when Sidney Miller was there, and I know when I worked in the business, I had some very, very good Black customers. A lot of the big political and –

EE: When did you work at the store?

EL: When Sidney died suddenly, dropped dead.

EE: How old were you?

EL: I don't think I was depressed, but I was in shock. My baby was nine and a half. She really got the worst of me. I was feeling sorry for myself and what-have-you. I had a

sister-in-law who was one of the presidents of Franklin Simon Stores, who said, “Elsie, you own a piece of this business; you’re going to work in the business.” I said, “I never sold a handkerchief. I don’t know how to sell.” “Well, you’re going to learn.” And my son-in-law, we opened – Sidney opened up Towson when my Phyllis got married. Harry took me to New York because he was managing the Towson Store. Took me to New York, and it was the best therapy. I loved it. I’m a people person, and I love people. I was really lost in the fashion and going to New York, and I think the best therapy I could ever have. Better than anything because I went to plenty of therapists prior to that. With my daughter, who took her father’s death – she was really on the bridge of mental health. I was feeling very guilty because she got the worst of me. If I was on the phone with friends and working, I got away from all that and pretty clothes. I really lost myself in – and my daughter got better because I was better. So that’s what I’m saying. When I started working, I got finished with the therapist, and then really, that was my therapy. I loved it. I love it to this day. I wish I had a job today. That’s what Joan keeps saying – “Mother, volunteer.” I said, “Well, it’s a little different working for yourself, at your own time and at your own convenience. My house is not the same as before. I get moving and on my feet all day. But I love selling. I would take a job selling, I think, volunteer selling in a thrift shop or something like that. I don’t know. I got a birthday coming up – eighty-six. I’ve got to do more than what I’m doing.

EE: Let’s actually stop now because the tape is about to run out, and I think this is a good time to stop, perhaps.

EL: All right.

EE: This is interview one. I have a funny feeling we’re going to have to continue this after your birthday.

EL: Okay, fine.

EE: This has been a treasure. I wish you a wonderful eighty-sixth birthday.

EL: Thank you.

EE: Don't over-celebrate, so we can continue this.

EL: Oh, thank you very much.

EE: Thank you.

EL: I enjoyed it. You're bringing me back to Memory Lane.

EE: All over. How's that? So I think we have a few more hours.

EL: All right.

[CD NUMBER ONE/THREE ENDS. CD NUMBER TWO/THREE BEGINS]

EE: This is Elaine Eff interviewing Elsie Miller Legum for the Jewish Women's Archive in Baltimore. Today is April 30th, 2001. And we are in Mrs. Legum's home at –

EL: Seven Slade –

EE: – Seven Slade Avenue in Pikesville.

EL: Pikesville, right.

EE: This is our second tape, so we'll continue where we left off if that's possible. Actually, we left off on Maine Avenue.

EL: Right.

EE: You'd moved from Hollins Street to Maine Avenue.

EL: Right, right.

EE: So why don't you –? What I'd love to talk about is when you moved from Hollins to Maine –

EL: Right.

EE: – I guess the impression that – why don't you just tell me what Forest Park, the neighborhood was like at that time, and what kind of people live there, and how it was that the –

EL: It was beautiful, beautiful. It was like the country to us. We had lots of ground, so much ground that we put a tennis court there. Double garages. Having six brothers, they were all sports-oriented and loved playing tennis. And to me, I felt like I was moving into real country. It doesn't look like that today; it's changed quite a bit. I'd already made friends at the – I was like thirteen or fourteen, I think, when I had moved to – not thirteen; I was fourteen because I'd started Western High School already, which I continued. I didn't change to Forest Park. Most of my family, being so close to Forest Park High School, went to Forest Park High School. However, I enjoyed it. I loved my beautiful home and big family. And things continued. Large dining room, family dinners together, all the time. My mother insisted dinner – that the family had to eat. If the boys had a ball game, it had to be before or after. It was a lot of family togetherness. As a matter of fact, my brothers played violin, piano. We had our own musical. No TV. We did have radio and records that we played. It was a traditional Jewish family, I feel like, growing up. Very, very nice. Only I was the one that had to take the streetcar to go to high school. My social life was out of Forest Park to Western, to Park Heights Avenue, where most of my friends were. I became active in the sorority. And growing up, like all teenagers, is more and more away from home, more and more with your friends and your social activities.

EE: Tell me about sororities. What were those like?

EL: I don't even know if they even have sororities today. Do they have? Really, I don't even hear about it. It really is a tough thing because you're worried whether you're going to make it. It was a lot of stress, really, in those days. If you weren't picked for sorority – I mean, everything revolved around sorority, your social life, your friends, and all. I was very fortunate. I had brothers who I think girls were all interested in. I was popular because I had brothers that they had access to, so I got bids to all the sororities. The ones that my friends took, I took. As a matter of fact, all my girls joined the same sorority as they grew up and got into high school – the very same. But I don't know today if they still have that. But it was fun. All my social activities were there. My husband belonged to a fraternity.

EE: Do you remember the names of the –?

EL: Mine was the Alpha – Phi Sig, I think. Yeah, Phi Sig [Phi Sigma Delta]. Gosh, I don't remember my husband's fraternity. No, because my brother had belonged to that same fraternity too. But in those days, really, that's where social activity – we didn't have the money to go out to dinner and do things like that. I remember my date – my first date with my husband. I mean, this is no joke. We had a coke with two straws; that's the extent of our social evening then. So the parties and things with sorority and fraternities was very important for those few years. I don't know if later on it was – I really have to discuss it with my kids. I don't know if it became that important with them. But with me, that was my lifestyle at that time.

EE: And these were exclusively Jewish sororities, weren't they?

EL: Yes, yes.

EE: Was that unusual? Were there other sorority systems?

EL: If there were, I wasn't even aware of it. I didn't have one gentile friend. It wasn't that I was a racist or anything; it's just when you went to Western, there were certainly more gentiles than Jewish people, but automatically – just automatically, you're just drawn to, I think, your own, for some reason. There was no hate or anything. As a matter of fact, as far as Black or anything, there were Blacks in our alleys where we lived, where we came from in West Baltimore. You didn't associate, but it was no hate like you hear today with – I don't know. Completely different. We didn't keep our doors locked, even on Maine Avenue, when we moved to Forest Park. It was wide open.

EE: Tell me, what did the neighborhood look like?

EL: It was not a ghetto. On our block, I will say it was just as many non-Jews as Jews. And very friendly. Everybody was very friendly. As the years went on, it became more and more Jewish people, though. But when we moved there, there were a lot – there was even a minister at the end of the block, I remember. Beth Tfiloh was on Garrison Boulevard. That's where my father went. There weren't as many of the synagogues like they built up over the years, but Beth Tfiloh was there. I don't remember any other synagogue. There may have been, but I know that's where our family went. That's where my brothers were all bar mitzvah and all. It was a very mixed neighborhood, but congenial, absolutely. I can't say there was any feeling at all, as far as against Jewish. But it was not like Pikesville is today. I think it would be difficult to find a non-Jew in Pikesville today. But it was a beautiful, beautiful area, [with] successful businesspeople. I felt like we were on top of the world with this home. It was like – today, it doesn't look that big, but it looked like an estate to all of us at that time. The streetcars didn't go out that far. I think it stopped a couple blocks before on Liberty. It didn't even go up to Garrison Boulevard, I don't think. I know the streetcar didn't. You had to walk. Even though Liberty Heights was a car line, the streetcar stopped, it was, I think, at Garrison Boulevard. We lived beyond that. It was really like country. And the lawns were well-manicured. We didn't have nurseries or gardeners, but having so many brothers and all,

they all worked on the lawn. I guess we couldn't afford gardeners. I don't know. They did a good job. But all the lawns looked beautiful.

EE: It sounds like your family made a jump from Hollins –

EL: Oh, definitely.

EE: – to Maine Avenue.

EL: Yes.

EE: So, were you aware that it was an especially affluent neighborhood?

EL: Oh, definitely, definitely. Very affluent in comparison to what we – I mean, West Baltimore was completely different altogether. My mother worked with my father in the business, and she felt that she had to be home, and it was better for the children. And she wanted Temple. When we lived in West Baltimore, we had a long walk to the synagogue. This was convenient. This was only like six or seven blocks that we had to walk. It was definitely an improvement. I think we all felt like we were very wealthy. It was like an estate as far as the home was concerned. We had a lot of fun. I mean, it was so many of us that you were never by yourself. If you didn't have a friend, it was always something going on in the family. And home cooked meals. Our Friday night meals were so important and impressed me so much that I – even though sometimes it was hard, when I became a career girl, to have Friday night dinners, Thursday night, my family will tell you, I'd be in the kitchen to 2:00, 3:00 o'clock. Friday night dinners were really very important. And my grandchildren, the grown ones – not my great-grandchildren today, because I'm out of cooking – but they know that Friday night meals were a must as far as my house – not one year, but this went on all through their college, my grandchildren's college. I always had Friday night dinners.

EE: Okay. So we're talking about another period now.

EL: Another period when I had grandchildren, yeah. But I'm talking about my parents' Friday night. My mother made it a must. It was something that we – I guess it's traditional with the Jewish families. But with my mother, you didn't take no for an answer. You knew you couldn't make any plans on Friday night. Friday night was family night. No matter – maybe if it was important, I don't remember. But I know that we couldn't make plans, my brothers or any of us, Friday night. Not because they were religious – because my father did drive. But Shabbos was important as far as family togetherness. And it was stressed so much to, I think, all of us in the family that I did the same thing. If you ask my grandchildren about growing up, they will remember Friday night dinner and what I made more than anything about me [laughter], really and truly.

EE: Tell me what you made.

EL: Well, I used to do my own baking. I would never buy dessert. I mean, it had to be very important because I could never do what my mother did. My mother used to bake her own bread. It wasn't fancy cakes, but everything – we didn't have TV or anything. The families would visit – my dad's brothers and relatives and all. Everything homemade would be put on the table. You could smell [on] Thursday, the baking start in our house. I can still have the aromas, really, of the smell with the cooking and all. Well, I didn't cook like that, but my Friday night dinners with my family, I – oh, the one thing I made because my kids couldn't afford – rib roast. That's where I learned about rare meat. I had sons-in-law, and they taught us about – that's when I no longer was kosher.

EE: Oh, okay.

EL: I no longer was kosher when my daughters got married. I bought rib roast, something that I never had in my house, and they loved it rare. And to me, it was raw; I couldn't eat it, but I learned to cook rare. This is something I had every Friday for my new son-in-law. Plus, the chicken, always a chicken. My kids used to love the chicken. I baked apple pies and lemon meringue pies, and their favorite cake. Whatever birthday

went on, they all had a favorite, and I'd bake that cake for them. But every Friday they will tell you, I had a – I don't know how many courses, but it was a forever eating dinner. It was a lot of fun – a lot of work, but a work of love. It was great. Because I was career – I was working then, and I was a buyer. It wasn't easy, but I never gave up until I got – well, then I lost my husband and went through all that bit. And then, when I got married again, I no longer had Friday night dinners. But that went on until the kids were in high school, actually. It was wonderful. Wonderful years. I don't know where the years all went.

EE: How did a Friday night dinner differ from a holiday dinner, from the High Holidays?

EL: Well, actually, the holidays, we went to my mother's for a long time. My mother lived to [be] ninety-nine. When my mother was in her seventies, even her Seders – her home in Forest Park was a big home. We used to take the dining room table into the living room, even rent tables and chairs. We had everything. The holiday usually was at my mother's. And today we have the same thing, only it's not my house. I have four daughters, and each holiday one will take – not the Seder. The Seder we have at the club. There are sixty-eight of us at Seder. Nobody can have that. This is all children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren. There are nine members in my family, plus the machuntenesen. And when my mother and father were living, in the later years when we got huge, Bluefeld used to have the Seder. And we always had it at Bluefeld. When Bluefeld went out, then we rented the room at Schleider's. Schleider's did the Seder. A couple of my brothers used to complain about the food. I hate to say this; they called it "slop." And we said, "Don't say anything, Pop is happy. And it's just that we're together." But the food was just not good. But for a couple of years until my father died, that's where we had our Seders. But for holidays, when it was just like the immediate family, my mother would take part; it would be at my mother's. And then after I lost my parents, and my girls are married, well, each daughter takes a holiday. I have the breakfasts. But two of my daughters go to their in-laws. So I have my baby's family and my oldest

daughter's because she doesn't have any in-laws. Her mother-in-law is a widow, just like me. So it's Phyllis, Fiola and her family, and my baby, my family. The other two go to their in-laws. I have to share all my blessings with the in-laws, too. [laughter] But it's wonderful, the togetherness. We have Thanksgiving at Joan's, and this is all the family, and they all do it – no, Thanksgiving is at Midgie's. Joan has Rosh Hashanah, and Phyllis has the other night of Rosh Hashanah. Each holiday is at one of the daughters'. We take turns. And unity is very important. I say, what my mother did, I followed more or less the same pattern, and my children, the same thing, do. Now, my grandson is getting married, and we're all going to California. One is not going and not the other, and it's really very difficult for some of them to go with their type of jobs and all. But we're all going. What we do, we all do together, which is beautiful. I hope it continues many, many years after I'm no longer here like I did after my parents were no longer here. It's just beautiful. I love the memories, and I love the years. It really is a traditional Jewish family, but not all families do it for such a period of years. I mean, when my kids were in college at College Park, University of Maryland, unless it was something very special, I insisted Friday night they come home for dinners. They weren't happy about it lots of times because, to me, a date wasn't important, or if it was a special party or something like that, but I felt like I wanted them to maintain the same thing. They're like that today. I mean, now, the Shabbat dinners are much – I didn't call them Shabbat dinners in those days. It was just a Friday night dinner. But it's very important to – two of my daughters, I'll say, as far as the Shabbat dinners – the ones that are grown up don't have the time or go away. I know it's important to Joan [and] it's important to Midgie as far as the family dinners. Very lucky, very lucky.

EE: It sounds to me as if family, in a sense, was almost a religion in itself. I'm curious how – and I can tell from our conversations that your religious affiliations changed the synagogues you attended.

EL: Yeah, yeah, right.

EE: So I'm curious how the synagogues might have fit in – the formal worship might have fit into your religious plan as well. How did that happen?

EL: You're right. You're right. Now, when my first – oldest daughter got married, she married Harry Blum, who was Reform. He belonged to Baltimore Hebrew. She went with him because he did not want to be divided. He wanted to sit with his wife. Same thing Carol Glick – number two; number three, same thing. My number four married a religious – not Hassidic, but an Orthodox Jew. And she joined Beth Tfiloh. As a matter of fact, her children go to Beth Tfiloh School ever since preschool, her children. Over the years, just three years ago, four years ago – wait a minute – three years ago, Carol and Phyllis joined Beth Tfiloh. They always did come to Beth Tfiloh, Yom Kippur, for memorial services to be with me, and of course, special events in the family. But Phyllis and Carol joined Beth Tfiloh. Joan still belongs to her Reform because her husband does not want to be separated during services.

EE: Now, when you were growing up –

EL: Yes.

EE: – when you lived in West Baltimore, you went to the Poppleton Street Synagogue?

EL: Poppleton and Franklin Street, there were two shuls.

EE: So then what happened as you moved and –?

EL: When we moved to Forest Park, my father automatically joined Beth Tfiloh. We loved it. We loved it. As young girls, we liked the boys there. I mean, I didn't read well. I didn't really go for the prayers and that bit. I went, really, socially. I have a sister eighteen months younger than me. And my gosh, we used to dress up, and it was like

going to a party. We loved Beth Tifiloh. Rabbi Rosenblatt's services were all in Hebrew. I really didn't understand. I never went to Hebrew school there. But services were not like they are today in the Orthodox – golly, who's our rabbi now at Beth Tfiloh? I can't think of his name. Oh, he's wonderful. Everybody loves him. But it's different in Orthodox temples now, in all of the Orthodox temples, where the rabbis reach out to the young and all like that. It was more of a social thing at Beth Tfiloh, although we did belong to a club there, too, until I got involved in high school.

EE: What do you mean, a club? What kind of club?

EL: What was that called? It was more like a social club. Oh, that was more training – no, I'm going ahead of myself. That is when my daughter was going to be bat mitzvah. I was a parent already. You didn't do it individually, for girls like they do today. The mothers all came and planned. They did it in a class of thirty or thirty-five girls. I called it a club. They serve refreshments like you do Friday nights now after services. It was that kind of a thing. But I was not really a shul goer. I was not really religious. I mean, when I was married, I started out kosher. I started out kosher, but I had a brother who opened up a fancy store in Washington who sold to the embassies. At one time, it was the White House. The food stores didn't carry gourmet like they do today. Do you recall Hopper McGaw's on Charles Street? Well, he had that kind of a store, only with the meats and all that kind of a bit. That's where I learned [about] crabmeat and shrimp and all that. So I was no longer kosher. My parents didn't approve of it, but we just didn't discuss it. They probably knew what was going on, but there was no issue because over and over, we were told it was not good, and the Jewish laws are for health and all that bit. I did not keep a kosher home, but I –

EE: How did your mother respond to that?

EL: My mother was a very bright woman. When she couldn't convert any of us differently after trying to tell us what's good for our health, she really acted as if she didn't

know what went on. And none of us really – if my mother came for dinner, I'd buy kosher meat. I would not give her something that was not kosher. But my mother herself changed after my father died. She didn't buy or cook non-kosher meat, but that wasn't important to her. My mother died – how many years – I have to look at the numbers – before my father? But she knew beforehand, but she never made an issue because she knew that none of us were kosher. I think today, more people are getting back to being kosher than ever, as far as the young go, because my daughter married a kosher guy, and her home is kosher, but they eat non-kosher food out. At one point, they wouldn't even eat non-kosher food out. And yet, there's so many who were never kosher [who] today are kosher. I don't know how you feel about it, but I'm not kosher; I can't consider myself religious. I consider myself a good Jew, though, a traditional Jewish mommy.

EE: What differences did it make in your life when you went from keeping a kosher house to not keeping a kosher house?

EL: Easier. Easier. Certainly less expensive. I mean, they were rough times financially. During rough times kosher meat is very expensive. I wonder now how young couples – golly– I would buy a brisket for ten dollars where it would cost like eighteen or nineteen, I mean, really double. I love non-kosher food. I love crab cakes. I hate to say it, but really, I enjoy it. I know, I know, I have to be honest about it. It never did me any harm, thank goodness. You know, I'm healthy. My mother said it would do you harm. It's not healthy.

EE: What difference did it make in your housekeeping?

EL: It didn't make any difference. It didn't make any difference. Every Passover, I used to buy new dishes. When you have children, over the years, your dishes break. I'm talking about not-good china – everyday set. And when Passover came, I'd buy new dishes. Then you use these dishes. So when I was not kosher anymore, I never had to buy new dishes. I used all the dishes that I'd accumulated. I've got at the top of my

closet now – over the years, I must have fifty cups and saucers for the different sets that I had then. No, it was just a gradual thing, really. In the beginning, you eat out; you don't even have it at home. But I did like the idea of not spending so much money when things were tight financially. And oh, my gosh, lamb chops, you can buy – although my kids tell me even when I was kosher – I used to give lamb chops for lunch. They love lamb chops. They weren't good eaters, but what they liked, they'd eat and all. I don't know. It was just easier, I think. I think peer pressure – I think the people I associated with, they weren't kosher and all. Today you have peer pressure, I think, the other way, more so on being religious than not religious. I don't know. I don't think that's important. I think religion is really in here in your heart. I mean, to be a good person, that's important.

EE: So you didn't really suffer any repercussions from–

EL: No.

EE: – your community? Did you feel personally that you were–

EL: Not at all, no, because none of my friends had families as Orthodox as I did. A lot of my friends didn't approve a lot of things. They thought I was a fool to cook or have the family over. Really, I was criticized a lot. They will deny it now if I have the discussion. But really and truly, I said, I have to do it. What do you mean, you have to do it? Who compels you and all? But I felt guilty if I didn't. Lots of times, I was tired or maybe didn't want to, but I'd feel – I felt like that was my religion, I guess.

EE: All right. Well, actually, we've never really – we've moved ahead without getting to the creation of –

EL: No. But I mean, that's who I am. Living in Forest Park, I was only – well, I was married already. Talk about unity; that's the big thing with the Trust. I never went and told you about that. My parents, when they set up their will, had nine children. I think it was a question of $90,000. In setting up the will, instead of giving each child ¬– that's

another reason why I feel unity of family is so important – $10,000. I remember my parents said some will get a new house, some will get new carpet, some will get new drapes, and the money will go. I'm not leaving any money – children, grandchildren, anything like that. It's going to be in trust for all the family. I want the togetherness of the family. I think my parents stressed this, but my mother was the dominating factor there. Because my father felt like, oh, for old age, you don't do all – or give all this. I mean, this was not good times when this was done.

EE: When did they set up this Trust?

EL: When I was sixteen – no, I was married, sixteen. I was not married too long. My husband is dead thirty-five – had to be thirty-five years ago, because my first husband [died] thirty-five years ago. It's called the Shapiro – well, Shapiro Family Trust. I guess it's a trust, yeah. my father had property. The property, of course, was maintained by my two brothers who ran it. My brother, Morty, is a graduate lawyer, but my father needed him after he passed the bar. He worked for my father. My brother Leon who died two years ago, two and a half years ago, worked with my father, and they maintained the property. To make a long story short, my family – no short stories – my mother wanted Seder togetherness, Hanukkah togetherness, and a weekend together. My parents were in Atlantic City. My mother really didn't want to go, but my father loved the ocean, and they went for one month. My father would love to go for the whole summer, but they went for one month. If you came to Atlantic City, you got a free weekend. Well, in those days, all of us never turned down a free weekend. We went to Atlantic City. They were at the – I think it was called the Breakers then or something. I had brothers who complained – it was a kosher hotel – and didn't love it. But we had a free weekend. The Trust was a weekend – we go to Hershey now, by the way, every year since my parents died. We used to go to Host Farm after my father died. Do you remember Host Farm? I wonder if my kids remember Host Farm. That's where we – the kids will remember starting out. Although they will remember Atlantic City, older ones like Joan and all. The

younger ones, I don't think, will remember. But to this day, we have those three things – I see nieces and nephews that I would never see, the ones who are out of town. I have a niece in Florida who comes up for Hershey. Nobody turns down a free weekend. It's just wonderful. We show movies. That's why we have sixty-eight at our Seders, all our children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren. We don't have many (machuntenesen?) left. My mother's – Fiola Blum is the only one. Well, I've got – I couldn't imagine what that was. I think it's so wonderful that our family has that togetherness. The children, the cousins – really, you hear of so many families not talking, or they don't see one another. In our family, the cousins really love one another. They're not together too much to get involved with anything. Everything is equal. Oh, and then my mother always distributed checks, Hanukkah, to everybody. And everyone is equal. I mean, whether this one is wealthy or this one needs it more, we'd say it made no difference. Whatever the distribution would be equal to all. And we still have that. I guess the money does keep a family together. It's not that much money, but the important thing [is] the unity of a family. To me, we all say – I have friends who even – I have a friend who lives in Florida who tried to do this – has lots of money – you may know her, and I won't mention names – would like to set this up. It's very difficult to do later, but when the children are young and just married like when my parents did it, it was a wonderful, wonderful thing to do, as far as bringing the family together. This is when we lived in Forest Park. We looked forward to Hanukkah. You were with your cousins and all that. We have some talented people in our family. Do you know Lenny Shapiro, who runs Diversions? Before Diversions, she studied the Sorbonne, and she knows how to dance and all. She would take the little ones and put on shows. We have movies of all this that they'll be able to show to generations later on. She'd take tall hats – on the kids. My kids – Phyllis, Joan, they were little – with canes. Even me, who has no voice – I can't carry a tune – got me to sing with a tennis racket. I mean, really, it's been a lot fun. A lot of fun. Wonderful, happy, happy memories. I hope all the generations that come on have the same pleasures.

EE: Now, how was the Trust administered? How does the –?

EL: My brother Morty is an attorney, and he really handled it as far as the accounting goes. As of two years ago, when my brother Leon got sick, all the real estate was sold. All my brothers who had their own properties, whatever my husband was in then – all the property was sold, and the assets of that are all in the Trust. Hopefully, the trust will go on and on. The stock market is not doing so good now, but we feel we have enough love, no matter what, that we will do it if we have to pay for it ourselves. I mean, it's a weekend. It's not like it's thousands of dollars. Everybody sends their kids to camp or what-have-you. Times are different. That was Depression era that we went through, and property was tough. My parents worked hard, really, and thank goodness saved it and did a beautiful thing. Well, everything is not in the stock market, I'm sure. Right now, they did a beautiful thing. Really, I feel very proud. They're choosing different executives, not one, and two of my sons-in-law have been selected, Richard Lessans for one, and Lowell, who is a tax lawyer. Irv Walker, who's my sister's son, is a bankruptcy lawyer. Irv Walker is very known in his field. Lowell Herman, Midgie's husband, my son-in-law, is a tax lawyer. So the brothers feel it should be with the – since this happened to my brother Leon, with the property, and all, they feel it should be with the youngest. And they've got – well, it's two from our family at this point, but usually, it's – it's the first time they've done this, but it's going to be the young down. I don't know how many years each they will have. They are the three executors now. And hopefully, it will continue. We've got intelligent, successful guys running it, and it will continue. But I wouldn't even want to think it would ever go out. But if it would, I think there's enough strength of love and unity with my family, I just hope it will go on. No one could say it's the money because no one gets more than the other one. It's not the money. That's a small part because it's not that big, the money, the distribution. But the big part is that we get together.

EE: Are there any other uses that the trust has been applied to?

EL: Oh, yeah. Are you talking about the charity? Definitely. My mother had relatives. Well, some were killed. But those that got – she has a sister that's in Israel. We have a couple of relatives who are in Chicago that came over, and she's had a lot of bad luck. I've never met them, but my brother Herbie, who's a dentist in Washington, corresponds. It was very difficult at first because they wrote in Hebrew – I don't know whether it was Hebrew or Yiddish or whatever it was. He had a hell of a time getting people to be able to read this. And finally – oh, it's very interesting – he could tell you a lot. He's in the process of working a family tree right now. These are relatives that they contributed – I don't know how much. I don't think it's a fortune. But whatever it is, he gives a check for that. Everyone has their own pet charity, so it's not to a charity, it's its members – relatives who have struggled that my parents – well, one my mother was in contact with – that was years ago – that are still living [in] Chicago – and her son – they had bad luck in Israel. And who's the other one. There are three relatives I know that the family helps out when they can. And they're most appreciative. We have pictures.

EE: How are decisions made?

EL: How were the decision made? Well, because when my – I was the one that was – oh, wish I had these letters. I just gave my brother the last letter. I'm the one who was contacted – I'm named for one of my mother's aunts. When she was in Chicago mourning my mother, the letter from my mother's house was forwarded to me then. That was in Chicago when she came down. Jacob Miller also – who's no longer living – you know the Millers and the tie people? They were landsmen from my mother's country that gave my brother a name. My brother Herbie could talk to you about that. He deals in – now, I get cards from her. What holiday? Oh, Passover. I just had something from her wishing me a happy Passover. She always thanks us for what we do. The decisions are [what?] my mother would talk about. My mother used to wrap up clothes, get a bundle, and ship clothes to (Europe-vets?), oh, many, many years ago and all. This is their children. It's the next generation, I think.

EE: Right. I'm just trying to get a sense of how decisions are made within the family trust to support the –

EL: Well, actually, my brothers. My brothers handle it.

EE: Do you ever have meetings or –?

EL: We used to have meetings every month – every other month. We still have meetings. What's wrong with me? But we don't have them that often. Now, we just had Seder. And they said we haven't had a meeting for a couple of months. Well, isn't it silly? June the 17th, Father's Day weekend, we're all going to be in Hershey. We're going to be there. So the meetings really are put off now. We don't really have them. And they are at home. I had the meeting before Seder here. We do have a meeting scheduled, but it's after June, after Hershey. Because then we're going to have Joan's son's wedding. So if something comes up, let's say if we see each other too much [laughter], I don't know, maybe. But everyone is really busy. We had lots of meetings prior to selling the real estate and the different things. And then they had different – what do you call it? – like Warner and Company, different companies coming that wanted the business for the investment that we had. The only way I know who we have is the check comes from the company. And I'll say, oh, the meeting is really – the board, the executors, and my brothers, I'm sure, are all there. I only have three brothers left now. Three died. There are six of us living. But I say, the three new executors, the young ones – and I know my brother Morty is on top of it, and Herbie too, I'm sure.

EE: So a meeting is a meeting of the board, not of the whole group?

EL: Our meetings are social. Our meetings are really – what are you having? We don't have delicatessen a lot – don't eat delicatessen anymore. It really is a party. It is a party. But an easy party – nobody cooks, that bit. But really, our meetings are social unless something big comes. The last meeting, when it was here, was when the stock market

started not doing good. That was an issue they talked about that you don't have to worry everything is not there. We'll still get together. We'll still have – they say, just don't worry. It is something that can't end for I don't know how many years. My mother wanted it to go on. In other words, say there were some of us that felt like they wanted the money out of it, what's left, if you have a hardship in that, you can be helped. I don't think they ever had to do that. We've been very lucky, lucky. But nobody can get their money out – it's got to go on. I could get (Ludu?) on the phone, and he could tell me how many years. I know it's not ninety-nine years, but it's a long time. My mother's idea was the family should go on, which is really – more people have said it's so brilliant, and I don't have that kind of wealth, and I can't do any of that for my grandchildren. It's something you have to really initiate really early. But it's the most wonderful thing, and at least my family will all know, and my children will all know. And dear God, they should all be well for just lots and lots of years and have the thing.

EE: How much money are we talking about?

EL: It was nine children and $90,000. That was all –

EE: When it started.

EL: That was my mother and father's fortune. They had property, but that was the money that they had. My father didn't want all of that. He said half for our old age. We got to think – and my mother said, no, no. Business is good. And it all went. It was $10,000 for each child put together.

EE: Right. But now, what's it worth today, do you think?

EL: Let me get Morty on the phone.

EE: No, that's okay.

EL: I'd like to know myself.

EE: That's all right. We'll talk next time, and then we'll get this one.

EL: Yeah, yeah, okay.

EE: That's okay.

EL: No, I'd like to know myself. I really –

EE: It's just interesting that–

EL: I don't think – the beauty part of it – I don't think anyone even cares. I mean, they know they can't get it. It's there. It's like somebody else's. Really, the only thing we have is our togetherness. I really don't even know. It could be a million. It could be not as much as I think. Maybe it could be more. I think the properties were almost a million, I think. But I know it's lost a lot; it's down. But they claim it hasn't lost anything. Until you sell it, nothing is lost.

EE: Right.

EL: I don't know. I'm not in the stock market. I don't know the business, so nothing is lost. The important thing was the family, and we've had that.

EE: Has it ever been used for education funds or scholarships, nothing like that?

EL: No. If someone – well, Joan is on the board with the scholarship fund. So she takes care of the college funds for those that can't afford – what's that called?

EE: Jewish –

EL: Yeah.

EE: Yeah, I know what you mean.

EL: The scholarship. It's a big thing for the Jewish kids who can't afford college.

EE: Right.

EL: I just got a letter. They're having something here. You sponsor – oh, these kids are so grateful who can't afford college. You want me to get something – it's called "Scholarship Fund." What is? Ann Neumann belongs to it. Ann Neumann was –

EE: Yeah, and then there are a lot of small family endowments as well. [inaudible]

EL: No, no. This is nothing with family. These are students who cannot afford college [and] who are bright. These are all Jewish students. It's called a scholarship – no, okay, all right – who can't afford college, because the last time I was taken to something when Joan was being honored, they were so grateful that – I mean, this one became a doctor. I mean, really, these are bright kids. They're all Jewish. That I know.

EE: Let's move on a little.

EL: Okay.

EE: Because I want to get back to Maine Avenue.

EL: Yeah. I thought we finished Maine Avenue now.

EE: No, because now we have to get you married.

EL: Oh, well, I eloped at sixteen. I was on Maine Avenue.

EE: Right.

EL: Yeah.

EE: But I want to get to your starting–

EL: I was married already, I thought.

EE: Right.

EL: But we got there.

EE: But we want to get you starting your own family. We haven't moved into your own house yet.

EL: Oh, oh. Well, Maine Avenue, after one year, I moved from my mother's to my own apartment on Forest Park Avenue, three blocks from my mother.

EE: What was your address?

EL: My mother's was 4101 Maine, right on the corner. I was on Forest Park Avenue, right behind School 64. They were little row houses, a second-floor apartment. I became pregnant with my – no, I didn't become pregnant right away because Phyllis wasn't born until – well, I lived one year with my mother. I was married three years secretly. The second year I became pregnant and had my daughter, my first child. Depression was very hard, and my expenses increased, I guess. By the time Phyllis was a year old, I think we were struggling. I'm not sure if we were struggling or – my family, being in real estate, always said you don't pay rent for nothing; you own your house. I ended up really financially, too, I know – because we did have a financial problem. I put my furniture in storage for [the] little furniture I had and moved to my in-laws, who were five houses down from my mother and father, I should say. I was supposed to be there one year, and we would then buy a house. I ended up being there – Phyllis was four years old, I think – four, four and a half ¬– before we had enough money to buy our first home. That was Boarman Avenue. And lived on Boarman Avenue, I think –

EE: 1943, I think it –

EL: Oh, well, then you've got – oh, I had these pictures taken. You told me – from the pictures that I – this is my mother's pin. This is my mother, you see, with a hat. My mother always wore hats. And that's a pin that I wear.

EE: Oh, you look a lot like your mother, don't you?

EL: That's what they tell me.

EE: That's great.

EL: I've got one – I moved to Seven Slade here. No, when I moved to Phillips Drive. I guess you've got one of –

EE: No, here. You said you lived on Boarman Avenue.

EL: Yeah. Right, right.

EE: 19 –

EL: Well, it couldn't be '62. Must have been – my husband died in '66. And I was on – and he lived five and a half years in my home. It must have been '60. What have you got there? '61, it must have been. Oh, you got moved to Phillips Drive. Oh, oh. I thought – I'm sorry, I thought that was Boarman Ave – '62. I was thinking '61. '62 could be right. Yeah, '62 could be right, yeah, yeah.

EE: All right. So you moved over to – so you moved to your in-laws on Boarman Avenue when –

EL: I got moved to Boarman Avenue when –

EE: When you moved from your in-laws to Boarman Avenue. Actually, tell me what it was like living at home when you were secretly married. That must be –

EL: That was no problem. Everybody thinks it was so difficult. In those days, I mean, we'd snatch – we didn't live together. We found ways to be together, but I was always worried about getting pregnant. Nobody would believe I was married. The strange part is when I wanted to get pregnant, I had difficulty. I couldn't get pregnant. Did all that worry for nothing. We managed. Don't ask me how we managed. I mean, we were together out whenever we were. We didn't live together, naturally, but nobody knew we were married, not even my sister. One of my husband's friends, I didn't know my husband had told. Even when I was married legitimately, no one knew that I was married secretly until someone put an ad in the Jewish Times about my secret marriage. I claimed my husband's friend did that. And he denied it. But he must have told it to someone, and that's how it came out. Otherwise, no one would ever have known I was secretly married.

EE: Is he still alive?

EL: Uh-huh.

EE: You're going to have to get him to write a sealed document.

EL: He wouldn't agree to that. As a matter of fact, he just had a stroke not too long ago, but he's doing all right. But no one would ever have known. I planned on keeping it a secret forever. And my parents were upset because I made them spend money for a wedding. It wasn't a big wedding. It was a wedding at home. But times were tough, and I was already married. And my in-laws – I mean, that was a rough time – not how I managed. I mean, it was easy managing. People who are not married manage like I did, but I felt safe being married secretly. In those days so many people did it, but they announced it. In my family, three – no, two brothers older than me both eloped. I

eloped. And then my sister, who's eighteen months younger than me, eloped. But they all announced it after – the day they came home, they all announced it. I just had to keep mine a secret because my in-laws did not want my husband to take out one girl. They thought he was too young, which he was, [and] felt like he had to take out a lot of girls before he made up his mind. My husband was a very possessive, jealous person, didn't want me to date. In those days, you had to be so proper, that I said, "Only if I'm married." That's what we did, in a heat of passion, I guess. [laughter] I don't know what else.

EE: You must be a great secret keeper. You must be a wonderful friend.

EL: Well, that is different. That was a matter of life or death. I had no choice [laughter], I think. I don't know if I can keep secrets today – no, no.

EE: What do you think would have happened had you told that you were married?

EL: My in-laws would have been furious. They weren't happy that he – I mean, he had to lie and say he was going out with somebody different. And they were justified in their thinking. Their son was eighteen. They wanted him to do the right thing. He was going to the University of Baltimore and going to Miller Brothers after school, working with his dad. They had ideas. Sidney didn't finish the University of Baltimore. I never put that down because that was his last term, because he became involved in the store then. And my father – he wasn't doing well in school. He was a social guy, too, too much social work, I guess, and all. But actually, he had another subject to make in order to graduate, really then. But I could never announce it, oh, golly day. That was rough because my in-laws were very unhappy about that, very unhappy about that. I always felt like I could never be trusted.

EE: What was your wedding like?

EL: At home. Well, it was a big home. They rented tables and chairs. Epstein was the Jewish caterer then. I remember the name because she was a cousin to a cousin to

another cousin. In the living room or the dining room – I don't know what they did with the furniture. It was a big walk-around porch. I guess they must have put that out, I don't know. Anyhow, it was dinner. My family, you had to have soup and everything. It was dinner. I wasn't dressed as a bride. I had sense enough not to be dressed as a bride. Nobody even recognized me at my real wedding. I got my first color job with my hair. [laughter] When my mother-in-law walked in, I was not platinum, but from a brown head, I was a blonde. That was the hysterical part. Crazy. The whole thing was really crazy. We went to New York for our honeymoon. My husband, who, well, from the fraternity had learned to drink, was so high. He got on the bike and was riding around. A couple people who were at that wedding, relatives, could tell you, really, it was really crazy. We were stupid, or I don't know what when you look back on that. Anyhow, we went to New York for our honeymoon for four or five days. I'd never been to New York. It was wonderful. Then I lived home for a year until I went to my own apartment. From my own apartment back to Maine Avenue to my in-laws' home. And that's where we stayed until I bought my home on Boarman Avenue.

EE: Where exactly was Boarman Avenue?

EL: Boarman Avenue starts, I think, someplace on Park Heights Avenue. I lived at the very end. This is right behind Forest Park High School. My kids only had one block to go to Forest Park High School. Right off of [Eldorado]. I was the last house of – and it was a mixed neighborhood. Schluderberg also Nattans lived right across the street from me. He was vice president of Read's Drugstore then who was married to Schluderberg. Her father – well, he ended up divorcing her, but her father gave them that home. That was gentile. Half my block were gentile.

EE: Who was Schluderberg?

EL: Esskay Did you know Esskay? Esskay Bacon, Esskay Ham? Esskay is still in business today. But he ended up divorcing her years later. They had a daughter. There

weren't any children Phyllis' age there. I only had one daughter when we moved there. She was best friends with the Nattans girl, who was Catholic. And this Catholic girl went to Beth Tfiloh because that's where our families belong. Phyllis went to her Catholic church with her. They were best girlfriends. So Phyllis really had only a Catholic [friend] until a couple of Jewish people moved in who had children when we moved there. Oh, next door to us were Jewish, Shapiros, my maiden name. They had two boys who were really like brothers to Phyllis. But the girlfriend she had was Nattans. Boarman Avenue was a happy, happy – detached small brick house. It was a duplex. In order to be able to afford it, we rented the second floor. It was built as a duplex, our home.

EE: Was it just built when you moved into it or –?

EL: It was brand new. Somebody who owned cabs bought it. The marriage didn't go through. So they bought the house, they were supposed to get married, and I don't know what happened. It was on the market, and we bought it. Nobody lived in it. It was a brand-new house. Half the block – at the beginning of the block off of Granada Avenue, there were big cottages. But these were four brick homes. Oh, God, there was a big – oh, God, I can't even remember his name there. The people who made herring. Who's famous for – Katz? Katzes was a another Jewish family – Katz Herring. Katz and Scherlis, I think. Jewish families started moving in. Nattans moved out when he got married again too. We lived there until, I say, I bought my castle.

[Recording paused.]

EE: Just in time.

EL: So Boarman Avenue was a happy, happy, happy time.

EE: Tell me about the neighborhood where –

EL: At the end of the block where I lived, the last house of Boarman Avenue, the back of Eldorado – Eldorado is this way, and I'm Boarman Avenue this way – their backyard there. Davidson Transfer – Rose Davidson was a neighbor there.

EE: Well, what I want to know is when you went out, if you walked to shops, or you walked anywhere. Where did you go? Where did you walk to?

EL: We walked to Garrison Boulevard. That was big Jewish area – Jewish bar, butcher shop. Gottlieb's Dairy was there. And Read's, of course, was on the corner. I don't know. There were all sorts of – Clayton Dress Shop. Names you don't even hear of. There were several in the city at that time. And there was an A&P, which is now Superfresh, that was on Liberty Road. Liberty Heights, it was called, not Liberty Road. You had anything you wanted. There was a baby store, a beautiful baby store on the corner. The school was on the corner, 64. They still have reunions. My brothers all went to elementary school there. Paul Dorf, who was my brother Herbie's best friend – they're still friends. They have reunions from elementary school. I never had reunions from elementary school. And Garrison Junior High was right within walking distance. It was a wonderful area, as far as children there. As I say, Jewish people moved in, and it was really like a Jewish community, although lots of gentiles remained. It was not like Pikesville, but it became heavily – years after we moved there because, at first, it was more gentiles, I think.

EE: Did you go to the movie theaters in the neighborhood?

EL: Oh, that's right. I remember going to that theater. And then on Liberty Heights near Gwynn Oak Avenue, which was also walking distance, was the Ambassador. Do you remember Forest Park? Oh, you do remember Forest Park, do you. Yeah. I wonder if my kids would remember all that.

EE: Did you go into town much? What did you do?

EL: I'm on Boarman Avenue now, right? Thursday night, Hutzler's would be open until 9:00 o'clock, Miller Brothers, my store. I took the kids; we went downtown every Thursday night, ate in Hutzler's downstairs, and then we'd come up and see Daddy before we'd come home. We loved to shop downtown – Hochschild's and Hutzler's. That's where I'd meet friends for lunch. Oh, Hutzler's had lots of dining places. That's where I learned the Chinese – we used to eat Chinese. Remember that? And then the Quixie, where you went downtown. We dressed up. We wore gloves and a pocketbook. You didn't go downtown like you go today. I think even – well, I didn't wear hats. I don't think the young – but I know my parents, in-laws, and older people all wore hats when they went downtown. I think we wore – I don't know about the young [inaudible], but I knew you were dressed up.

EE: How did you get downtown?

EL: Oh, I drove. I drove. My first car, when I bought it on Boarman Avenue, was from a girlfriend. I didn't have a car when I first moved because I remember with the stroller, pushing and walking down Garrison Boulevard. But I remember how excited my girlfriend, who I said was wealthy because she had a car – and I never had a car – was buying a new car. What the dealer offered her to trade in her car, my husband gave her, and I had my first car. But she'd trade her car in every so often. It was not new, but it was not old. It was like three, four years old. I became a lady, and I had my own car. And until this day I drive, and I have my own car.

EE: Who taught you how to drive? How did you learn to drive?

EL: My husband taught me to drive. I'm very lucky because I really – they didn't even have learning schools in those days, I don't think. But I remember turning the corner and going right up on the pavement. I was very lucky nobody was on that corner there. But he taught me to drive. I never did learn to ride a bike, but I learned to drive. I finally learned to ride a bike, but it's not easy. It took me a long, long time.

EE: How did it change your life when you started driving, or did it?

EL: I guess I went to more places. We took the kids, and we used to go to – I think it was Bay Shore – to the beach when my husband worked. I remember taking the beach umbrella. My friends and I would take turns with the car, and the kids. At that time, I only had Carol. Carol was – let me see. When we moved to Phillips Drive, yeah, I had Carol. I didn't have Midgie, but I had Carol and Joan. I had three children, and my friend had two. And we went – and that was years later – to the beaches. We went to the pool, Druid Hill Park Pool – no, in Forest Park. Yeah, we went to the pool, I think. It was Glyndon Pool when they were born. I went to Druid Hill Pool when I was a kid. With the girls, we went to Glyndon Pool.

[Recording paused.]

EE: Okay. I think we're ready to resume.

EL: What?

EE: We're ready to resume.

EL: Okay.

EE: Okay. Actually, we were talking about downtown and sort of your freedom.

EL: Right.

EE: But I'm actually very interested in the business, in Miller Brother's Store.

EL: Well, I didn't work in the business in those days.

EE: But you worked – what did you do during that period?

EL: During that period, I was a mother. I did everything at home with my children. I had four children. And socially, I didn't do – I did volunteer for the Heart Fund every year, also the Mental. I was the one – I wasn't on Boarman now; I was on Phillips Drive then when I did all that because I knew the area that I had there. The Heart and the Cancer Fund – well, I didn't do all three. I did two, and then when the Mental – I gave up that area, or it gave me up. I just had the two, then. It didn't involve that much time. I did the collections of the area. And there were some telephone calls with the Associated ¬– when they called in – what do you call that, for the drive, on the phone?

EE: Fundraiser?

EL: Right. I did that for quite a few years.

EE: What kind of volunteer work did you do with Jewish organizations?

EL: The Jewish organizations? I was busy with my mother with Talmudical. I mean, I was really the chauffeur. I wasn't active as far as doing anything for the – but my mother was active in the Talmudical and Bais Yaakov. She was active, and I was really the chauffeur. But it took a lot of time. I was the driver and all for my mother then. And then I was busy with my children, with the activity, with the school what-have-you – ice skating. I remember the kids – they didn't play sports like they do today, but ice skating and elocution. You don't hear that today, but I know in that era, my children took elocution lessons. I remember "What now, brown cow," and all that bit, and piano, and Hebrew school. I don't know. I was a busy, busy girl. My claim to fame was I was a good cook. I used to love to cook. My husband enjoyed good food. And didn't eat out like we do today. I guess I had a busy schedule between my mother and with my family. I was never bored, that's for sure. Then later, as the children got older, I got involved with cards. I learned to play cards. So I got into a card game, and then I was in two card games. Joined a club, took up golf – not good at it. I joined Bonnie View. As a matter of fact, my husband died on Bonnie View Golf Course. My first husband. He was fifty-two,

1966, he died. But I've always had a full, active life without doing anything specifically big. I was not an important – I was not a leader. I think I'm more or less a follower. My kids think I'm a leader, but I don't feel I'm a leader. I think I'm a follower.

EE: So when did you first work for a salary, for pay?

EL: For a salary? Miller Brothers when my husband died suddenly. I had a sister-in-law who was one of the vice presidents of Hecht Company, who said, "You own a piece of this business. You're going to learn what goes on." I responded, "There's no way I could work." I had never sold a handkerchief, had never worked. There's no way I knew how to sell. She said, "Well, you're going to learn." My son-in-law, being in the business, married to – Harry Blum, married to my oldest daughter who worked in Miller Brothers, the Towson branch, took me to New York, under her direction. We visited her in the showroom and the market. My son-in-law took me to New York. And really, for one year, I was a basket case – not much help. I would cry easily [and] didn't get very far until finally meeting people, and the excitement turned out to be the best therapy I ever had. By the time the year rolled around, I learned to go to New York myself and be in the showroom and buy, and I became a successful buyer and worker. That's where I was until I got married the second time. Six years later, I met Aubrey Legum and got married, but continued with my career. That was my first love. But very lucky that I met a nice guy who put up with me that I was – had a very busy, busy life with New York and retailing, that I really loved. I really loved. Wished the business were still there that I could work – not for somebody else but for myself, with all the conveniences of yourself. And when business got bad, Miller Brothers went out, store by store. We moved from Phillips Drive to Seven Slade.

EE: We haven't even gotten to Phillips Drive yet.

EL: Oh, well this all happened on Phillips Drive. I'm jumping the gun then. [laughter]

EE: Well, there's a lot to talk about.

EL: Yeah. Oh, I'm jumping the gun. Well, we moved from Boarman Avenue when we bought Phillips Drive. That was 1962, I think.

EE: Yeah.

EL: '62. And there is when I began with some volunteer work – although Boarman Avenue I did, with the Associated – what do you call that drive when –they still do the telephone calls and all like that? And then they used to serve – I remember I used to – me, I'm the eater. I'm always looking at the food. When are we going to eat? When are we going to eat? And then I was busy with the kids on Phillips Drive. It was a big house to maintain. And that's when I did all the cooking and all. And then my husband died in '66.

EE: Well, we're making things move much faster than they actually did, I think. So why don't you tell me – I actually want to talk about your work as a career woman.

EL: As a career woman, it's hard to put into words, but it's very exciting, especially for someone who never sold. I was well-liked and successful because I was very honest. I could not put a dress on somebody that looked horrible and say you look good in it and sell. Really, I got a reputation as being a very good salesgirl because I was so honest. I loved buying. These were happy times. I think Reagan was president at that time. I'm not sure. But things were getting better. We were out of the Depression then, at least as far as Miller Brothers. Retailing was really good. And it was exciting going to New York. I mean, for me, who never drove to Washington myself to get on a train and go to New York, I had made a big step. I was complimented, and I think that was good feedback. I became more secure with myself [and] stopped feeling sorry for myself.

EE: Who else did you work with?

EL: As far as buying?

EE: No, in the store.

EL: In the store you worked – I went to New York and did the buying myself. At the beginning, I was with my son-in-law until I was on my own. Then he had too much responsibility with my husband not there. Because my brother-in-law came in, who was not a retailer. As a matter of fact, that was the beginning of the downfall of Miller Brothers after my husband died. He was never a retailer, and he disagreed with my son-in-law – the talk about the business. Harry could not get along with him. Here we were so successful and everything, and Morton wanted to do things, which he did, which was not right. He opened up Eastpoint, [which] wasn't Miller Brothers' image. That went bad. He opened up Westview; that was not Miller Brothers' image. I wasn't a good buyer because I couldn't buy that cheaper merchandise. The better merchandise didn't sell there. That was very bad. Things were bad after my husband dropped dead because Morton really did not know. My son-in-law couldn't work with him, left, and went with Fiola Blum, his mother, with real estate.

[CD NUMBER TWO/THREE ENDS. CD NUMBER THREE/THREE BEGINS.]

EE: Today is May 24th, 2001. This is Elaine Eff, and I am interviewing Elsie Miller Legum for the third interview for the Jewish Women's Archive, Weaving Women's Words. We are at her home in Pikesville, Maryland. So Elsie, let's sort of pick up, perhaps where we left off, and talk about some of the things that we haven't really gotten to yet. What I'd love to have you talk – to hear about is your sort of – you talked about getting married, your first marriage to Sidney Miller. But you didn't really talk about – you talked about how you met, but you didn't really talk about your courtship. I would love to hear about that.

EL: Well, the courtship, we were attracted to each other immediately, love at first sight. We were two kids at the height of our passion. He lived five doors down the street, same block, and we saw each other practically every night. When it got hot and heavy, his parents didn't want him taking out one girl. Anyhow, we became very involved, and because we became involved, we said we could get married, [but] no one would know about it. We didn't have sense enough to know that it involved more than just making love. We went to Elkton, came back from Elkton for the day, and we eloped and kept it a secret for two and a half years. Became engaged two years later, then a half year after that we got married. That was the courtship that just went on, wherever we went, in the car, whatever could be. Even though we were married, his parents still objected to him seeing one girl. But it didn't matter. It worked out good. I feel very lucky because a couple of my friends who also eloped at Elkton all ended up in divorce. We certainly didn't know or have a good sense [of] judgment. I guess we were lucky, truly lucky. No one knew we were married secretly until we were legitimately married. After we were married a year, someone put an announcement in the Jewish Times.

EE: Right. We've talked about that.

EL: Oh.

EE: What I really would love to talk about is: First of all, what were the morals, the mores, social mores of the time?

EL: At that time, a boy could not be too possessive of a girl. He had to be very cautious where he put his arms, never embrace, not put his hand on your – especially in my family. They were European, very, very strict. I had brothers that criticized friends that I had. Girls were really called 'sluts' because they were in love, not that they weren't – didn't do anything wrong, but if they were natural and laughing and having fun, everyone assumed they'd go all the way and all that bit. We were lucky. We managed, I guess, being so close together. He didn't have a car. He borrowed his dad's car whenever he

could, and we managed that way. I can't say it was easy, but it was fun. [laughter] And enjoyed it. And then we got married. I lived at home.

EE: Wait. I want to back up.

EL: Okay.

EE: You haven't really told us anything about your dating, what kind of dates you went on. What was your first date like?

EL: Well, I was young. Don't forget, I was only sixteen at this time. My marriage – I already hit seventeen. I didn't realize I – because it was only a couple – I was married [in] August, and I [had] just turned seventeen, but I didn't date that much. I had brothers. But I did belong to clubs. We had clubs. The "Y" was downtown on Mulberry Street, I think. We played all kinds of games. We had hikes. We had straw rides, and with school, I had lots of friends. To this day, I have lots of friends. I think friends are very important. I didn't really date that much. I had another boyfriend at the time I met Sidney Miller. But I was so much in love that really I didn't – I said I didn't have dates. I wasn't asked. It was just automatically [that] I was involved with Sidney Miller. Especially being married secretly, I mean, the boys were, you know, out of the picture. There was no one really interested. People suspected. They called it "going steady," but people suspected that we were – I can't say they knew that we were married, but they suspected either that I wasn't behaving properly or we were very close. I didn't realize how obvious it was. We were two passionate kids together all the time until everyone accepted it. And married secretly, things sort of got smooth. We understood – we were very private, and that was fine. He had lots of friends. I had lots of friends. So socially, we were really busy. His fraternity, I remember, (Rosnew?) Castle – I don't know if that's still in existence. On the way to Annapolis, a weekend convention, Annapolis had parties at the – what's it? – The Academy? A lot of Baltimore girls all went to Annapolis overnight. We were allowed things like that because the girls were supposedly very, very proper. I did

that with my husband because he was involved in the fraternity and friends and all. I ended up – my second marriage – with somebody from Annapolis. I was really involved when I was young with that Annapolis bunch there. But anyhow, after we eloped, things just went smoothly. Had a small wedding. I had a second wedding because I was only married by a Justice of Peace. Had a small wedding at home. Rabbi Rosenblatt, who was very big in these days.

EE: Okay. I think we covered that.

EL: Yeah.

EE: So tell me about your dates with Sidney. Where did you go when you went out with him when you first met?

EL: Oh, the dates. He had no money – had no money. Gwynn Oak Park was a park in Forest Park on Gwynn Oak Avenue that had rides. We had very little money. I would pretend I didn't want to go on this ride or that ride because of the money. But he – I remember, the race – they called them 'Racer Dips.' I don't know what you call them today. We roller skated there. He didn't have the car that often. The car was more when he was eighteen, and I was seventeen then, that he got the car more often. We roller skated. That's like about four or five miles, Gwynn Oak Park. Did you ever go to Gwynn Oak Park and that? I know that we went bowling. They had bowling in those days. Didn't bowl much because of the expense. He'd order a Coke. I knew there was no money. We'd get two straws. I sipped very little. I was very considerate and very polite. And we really just shared everything. I mean, I can't say it's exciting – everything was fun. You're in love at sixteen, seventeen. I don't think it's a feeling you can really explain. It was just wonderful. As far as dates, I didn't have lots of dates like a lot of my friends had. But our family, we're not musical, but we all took piano or violin. We had sort of our own band. None of us could carry a tune in my family – there was one member or two. But we really were together. It was family. There was no TV in those

days and family was together. Your parties – and my mother always baked. It seemed like it was always a party just with us and relatives. You really visited and spent time like that. We had discussions. On Friday night, you couldn't make plans. You could make plans after dinner, but you couldn't make plans for dinner. Friday night – we didn't call it Shabbat dinner. But Shabbos dinner, you had to be home for that unless it was something very urgent. None of us could make plans for that. I had brothers who were older that would like to socialize, but they knew that Shabbos, you couldn't do that. My mother baked, baked – her own bread, her own challah, her own cakes. We had parties – wasn't really a party, but it was like a party, and that was our celebration, and we loved it. Didn't think we were missing anything. Nothing like today. I know as my girls got older and their grandchildren – I mean, they're running out all the time. I mean, really, it's – unless you're very religious, I guess, that you – my youngest does have Shabbat dinners. I go there. But the others – oh, Joan does too, she tells me now. I forgot. We're getting more religious today than we did years ago. And I think it's true of most of the Jewish families, as far as being – not observant, not riding, but Orthodox, more Conservative than Reform, I feel. I really don't know. I'm not truly observant, but I'm a good Jew, I think.

EE: What do you think that's about, the change?

EL: I don't know if it's our lifestyle. It has to be our lifestyle. I don't think families are together as much. I don't think families have dining rooms. All of the homes – we're in apartments and things where everybody's around the table at the same time. Everybody's in a busy life. The young ones have their lifestyle and go. I don't think there's anything we can do about it, but I think it's important to have it. I feel fortunate that I have it. I think everyone misses a lot, especially if you have a big family. I can't see a big family with six brothers and all, what togetherness you'd have if everyone ran out like that. I didn't date much. I know when I needed a date for a straw ride, I had a brother who got me someday to go with. I was plumpish. I was no beauty. Not that I'm

a beauty today, but in those days, I wasn't popular. I had friends who were really popular. I was lucky that I fell in love young and I had a boyfriend.

EE: Tell me about your girlfriends.

EL: The girlfriends that I had were really my neighbors. Where I grew up in West Baltimore, it wasn't like East Baltimore. There were lots of Jewish families. West Baltimore Street had Jewish families, but there were a lot of Lithuanians, actually. And there was a factory in South Baltimore there that a lot of the people worked and all. When I got into junior high school, I skipped. Ann Adler, who used to be president of Hadassah – did you know her? Do you know Judy Hyatt from Sweet Treats? That was her mother. She was my sixth-grade teacher. And she a wonderful, wonderful teacher. I was never a brain. But she took five girls and skipped us from the sixth to the eighth. I was always a year ahead of myself in school, too. Five of the six girls – not me – all went on to Goucher and graduated Goucher. I didn't. I went to Hopkins with two of my club friends, and we took courses. I'm talking about after we graduated high school. I didn't last long because that's when I was in love, and I wasn't concentrating on studies or improving my education, which I regretted later on. As a matter of fact, they're all trying to get me to do a computer, learn computer, and do it. They're telling me I've got to get this. I don't want to buy a computer at this point. [laughter] I don't think I could handle it. And really, I'm being pressured into this, that it's very important, the things that I didn't do, I ought to do now. But at eighty-six, I don't feel like I should get involved with that.

EE: Do you feel like you're missing anything?

EL: Not really. I mean, my daughters tell me that I am. Why is it important? "You're going to email. It's going to be fun." Who am I going to email? All my family lives here. I have one granddaughter in New York. I have a grandson, Joan's son, in California. My daughter said, "You can email Gregory." I said, "I talk to him on the phone. I've had a talk. What is the fun?" "Well, it's the world today. You've got to learn." They firmly

believe that at my age, I would be developing my mind, and that is good in itself. But I can't see buying it. It's not me. I'm not intellectual, and that part. Common sense, I think, is important. I read a lot and I do what makes me happy. But I guess I've gotten lazy. I must have always been lazy because intellectually, really, I always would love, I think speaking well, being articulate, having a vocabulary. I used to have a dictionary and look up to understand, and I developed that – I would have had a quality of something I love. I don't have that now, and I really miss that. I love to hear how you speak, really smooth and all. But anyhow, this is where I am.

EE: How do you think –? So, in other words, you were really on track to go to Goucher College with your girlfriends, but you didn't.

EL: Oh, I wasn't even interested then, no. Not at all. I think I was very lucky that Ann Adler included me in this group. Intellectually, I don't think I was smart. Do you know Sylvia Gimbel? These girls today all graduated Goucher. I know them. Most of them are – well, three of them are Woodholme bunch. I guess I've been envious. I mean, I'm never envious of money or anything, but I think that is a very important thing, and I think it's very nice. My kids know how important I feel it is as far as they're concerned. I didn't do anything educational-wise. But I've always taken public courses. I took public speaking. I remember calling Dale Carnegie, and it was too expensive. It was more than I could afford. After all, when I was first married, I wanted a child. We were married secretly, so it was announced [that] I wanted a child, and I couldn't get pregnant. It took me almost two years. We were married almost seven years, six and a half years before I had my first child. Can I go on with my second child? Because they're ten years apart. And when she was three or four, I couldn't conceive. I made the rounds in Baltimore. The head of Hopkins – oh, I forgot his name. I can't think of his name. He was head of Hopkins. And before I got off the table, he said, "Mrs. Miller, you could never conceive, and if you do, you will never carry through. You need a hysterectomy." I said, "Hysterectomy? I'm here to get pregnant." "Well, there's no way you can get pregnant."

I ended up with his protege, a Woodruff. What was the first doctor's name? Oh, golly day. He was head of Hopkins. He wrote many books. I always threatened to walk in with my harem, which I never did. So there's ten years difference between my first and second. I could never get pregnant when I wanted to. So I was reckless, and it was understandable. My fourth, my husband always kidded and said, "I don't think it's mine. It can't be." She was really a diaphragm baby. See, I always got pregnant when I didn't want it, and when I wanted it, I always had a difficult time. But when I had my first child, it was a depression. It was a very, very rough time. We were in an apartment in Forest Park and really couldn't make ends meet. The ready-to-wear business – my husband worked for his father; he was a young kid, too, learning the job. He had graduated [from the] University of Baltimore – what do you call it? B.A. – a business course. Anyhow, we ended up putting our furniture in storage and moving to my mother-in-law's because the third floor was empty. It was like an oven, a hot box. We used to take the mattress off the bed and put it on the floor. This is a big cottage on the third floor. It was like an attic, I guess. We were supposed to be there one year, and we ended up there – Phyllis was three. Every time we wanted to move when things got better. "Well, you don't want to move to another apartment. Go buy your own house. You'll save your money, and you'll buy your house." We ended up buying our first home – this was on Boarman off – right behind Forest Park High School, right off of Eldorado. It was a duplex. We had a tenant who paid – oh, Roosevelt came in, so you didn't have to have a lot of money down; that's how we could afford the house. The tenant paid off our mortgage. It was rough those first couple of years. Then the second child was in my bedroom, that first floor, until I had my third child, did we take over the house. We lived there – Phyllis had finished College Park, I don't know even how many years. I wrote down things. I don't know what I did with all my papers. When I married Aubrey, I didn't have –

EE: Let's finish with the –

EL: We lived in Forest Park until my – whatever, until 19 – no, until we moved to Pikesville. That was Phillips Drive.

EE: I want to hear about – tell me if you had any second thoughts about the birth of any of your children.

EL: I didn't have – oh, I didn't want the fourth. I wanted to commit suicide. I didn't have the courage for an abortion. I wanted an abortion. I had a couple of friends. Probably a lot of people who had abortions, which are illegal. One place I remember was being raided. I didn't have the courage of my convictions. It's the same thing – I want a facelift. I don't have the courage. [laughter] I'm not a brave person. I don't want surgery. [laughter] That's the honest truth. [laughter]

EE: What was –

EL: I had it. And my husband was on cloud nine. He was going to have this son. He wanted a son. The third child, when Dr. Radman told him it's a girl, he said, "You don't mean me." My friend, who was with him at that time, said he was horrible, horrible. He didn't want this baby. It can't be me. It's got to be a boy. It can't be a third girl. I think I got the – that's when I got the letter like I was keeping up with Eddie Cantor with a girl. He was delighted. I was not delighted. Today they don't let me live it down. I'm still friends with a couple of the girls. When I was so depressed, she had a luncheon and a card game, [and] they all announced – and she served wine. I think that's one of the first functions [in the] daytime that we had wine with lunch, and all – that I was pregnant. And they're saying congrats, and I burst out crying. They won't let me live it down. They talk about that now. It was the talk of Baltimore in Pikesville. I was forty years old. In those days, to be forty, to have a – it was like disgraceful. Today you don't have babies until you're forty. But in those days, it was really – even my mother had all her children – had her children before she was forty. She did have a thirty-nine. But she's been a joy ever since. I mean, naturally, I'm very glad. She wasn't a joy when her father died because

she was the idol of his eye. I think he always felt guilty about wanting a boy so bad. She was the baby. The others were sort of older, and he really catered to her. She was really the idol of her – she used to make him sit down, and she'd perform, and that's her art thing and art school. Whatever she did, she was like on stage. When he died, it was very tough. She got the worst of me because it was a shock. He died at fifty-two. Never sick a day in his life. It was really tough then. But she's grown up to be a lady and given me lots of joy. I'm very lucky, very. God's really been very good to me. I can't be more thankful or blessed in anything. I'm very lucky, six years later, that I met Aubrey. His sister was a nurse years ago, and my sister-in-law, Lenny's mother, was a nurse. She moved to Eleven Slade, and she had a housewarming for her apartment. I didn't even want to go because I was working. I had a career. I was a salesgirl and a buyer at that time. But my family from Washington and my brothers all stopped at my house. "You're going to go. You're going to go." And that's when I met Aubrey's sister, who introduced her brother to me. I was very lucky and met Aubrey. We got married – I didn't want to get married. Oh, everybody knows. My girlfriend Millie, Brenda, all of them – Allison – they knew I did not want to get married. My kids were happy. They didn't have to worry about me. I had companionship. But I loved going out, and I loved my job. I was on cloud nine. But when I had an ultimatum that I was going to lose him, I didn't want to lose him. We got married. I was very, very lucky for twenty-two years.

EE: Tell me about Aubrey.

EL: He was very – well, Allison can tell you – kind, sweet, giving. He loved my family. I mean, really, I think my family influenced it because he was so welcome. I think my kids were glad to get me off their back at that point, really. But Aubrey was – had a temperament that was just different from mine, different from my first husband, who was a work-alcoholic excited. Aubrey was very calm and happy with everything, really and truly. He got the skin thing, melanoma. He had it. I didn't know that he had anything on his leg. And my friends, Sylvia and Buddy Mazer had an – I think it was her fiftieth

anniversary – whatever. He's [been] dead seven years. They had an anniversary. They loved Concord and Grossinger's. It's not my style. Aubrey always wanted to go, and I really never wanted to go. I don't like sitting on the rocking chair and eating all that food. But he loved it. He always went when he was married. Sylvia said, for the anniversary, we'll take a ride, and we can just spend the weekend there with them. It so happened that weekend – it was a rainy weekend. Nobody got into the bathing suits, so I never saw anything he had on his leg. When we came back from Concord, he said, "I'm going to see the doctor. I've got something on my leg. My leg is bothering me." And when he came home, he said he had to go to the hospital. They had to take it off. I don't know how long he had it. I've never seen it. He had it taken off. And it had metastasized, and they made up, like a month later, for surgery. I didn't even know what the word "metastasize" meant. I didn't even know what melanoma – I knew skin cancers because I've had many of them, which are not fatal. He went in for that. I think maybe six weeks later whatever date they gave him – he never came out of the hospital. It went that fast.

EE: Tell me about him. What was his status when you met him?

EL: When I met him – that's one of the things why I didn't want to marry him. He lost all his money. He was a gambler, a compulsive gambler. That's one of the reasons he got divorced. And had big business, his dad's business, in Annapolis. [He] had property and a big beer business that his brother took the beer business over. He did save it. It didn't go bankrupt, but Aubrey lost everything. His wife and he ended up getting divorced. When I met him – that's why he was so happy. Well, he would have been happy because everybody would have liked him. I mean, he became a car…the first job he did when he came to Baltimore was as a car salesman. Of course, he had relatives in the car business, and he was very well-liked in his family. He had all kinds of awards from Ford and a couple of trips he had won and all. Things were normal. He never had the money to give me diamonds or trips, that's for sure. But he gave me more than that. He was good company, a good sport. He wasn't frugal with the little bit he had. He liked

good dining. He had had it with his lifestyle. But I know some friends who have frugal husbands with the lights or as far as eating different places. I wouldn't have been able to stand it. But the reason I didn't want to get married – I felt like I was not going to support – I remember I think Allison was around, or Brenda, because I was so close with my friend. I said, "What do I need it for? I'm not going to support anybody." But my family convinced me, if I didn't marry him – I still had my maid, I had live-in help because Midgie was home, and if I went out and all, I had somebody here. When I moved into this building, I sure didn't need it. She still lived here, but this was my home. It was isolated in the suburbs like that. They convinced me, my family – I still have my home at the same expense. I have my help. Whatever I do, you would draw a plan, and he'll share with you. And you do that – when it came down to that, that's the way it was. So I didn't get the luxuries of anything, but he did share. I didn't have to support him. As a matter of fact, he wouldn't even have wanted it. If I wanted to give a gift or anything because I could afford to do anything then when he couldn't. My friends and their kids and all knew it too, and they all loved him in spite – I was criticized a lot because I wasn't so nice in the beginning. I was aware – I can't explain why. But it turned out really and truly, after the first couple years, that I was very, very lucky. As a matter of fact, people said I was better, that I was calmer, I wasn't as crazy and all. Our marriage was good. Twenty-two years. It didn't seem like twenty-two years. It was too soon. When I was going to marry him, I could not live in my home. I knew it wasn't his home. My first husband had worked so many years. It was my palace. I said, "We're going to get rid of my home." He said that was fine. Well, of course, it had to be fine. It was me. We moved to Eleven–Seven Slade. At that time it was a rental, and it was fine. We shared expenses. We paid rent. I don't even remember. I can look it up, but rent was – I think it was two-seventy-five a month. I'm pretty sure. Gas and electric included. That's how our apartments are – it was built as a – yes, it was built as a condo, not as individual – no, it's a condo now. It was built as an apartment building. It was a rental at that time. And then after about four years or – married five years, it went condo. And Aubrey said. "The

money I've accumulated, I'm not going to put in any house how. I said, "Well, I'm not going to buy it either. Then we're going to move and find an apartment." And then, my family being in the real estate business and all, my brother Morty – you know my brother Morty – said, "It's such a bargain. You're going to buy it. If you don't want it, I'll buy it. It will go into the real estate." I ended up buying the apartment. I own the apartment. We didn't have rent to pay anymore. [laughter] And everything was fine until he died. And after he died, having the business – I had never worked in the business. I have a sister-in-law who was in retailing [who] said, "You're going to go to the business and learn retailing". I said, "I never sold a handkerchief. I don't know how to sell."

EE: Wait a second.

EL: Miller Brothers. That was my husband–

EE: I thought that was when Sidney died.

EL: When Sidney died, yes. Yeah, yeah. You're right. I was working when I met Aubrey, yeah.

EE: Right. Tell me about Aubrey. I understand he was a lot younger than you were, and he had a family.

EL: He had a family, but he didn't–

EE: How old was he? What was the age difference?

EL: Aubrey, when he – in those days when we got married, '72 – when did I get married? Married Aubrey, oh,'72, May 24th – in the Sun paper – yeah, married Aubrey, '72. That's when you got married?

EE: That's today. Today's your anniversary?

EL: Your anniversary?

EE: Yours. May 24th.

EL: Oh, God, now, I don't think of it.

EE: [inaudible]

EL: I don't think of it.

EE: [inaudible]

EL: I do think – thank you – I don't even think of it like that. I do, of course, when he died, the date, in Yahrtzeit, and I light a candle. But I don't know the anniversary. I still think of my first marriage. I got two dates – when I eloped, December the 30th – we always celebrated New Year's. August the 11th is our legitimate wedding. Those days is my anniversary.

EE: And you were telling me about – you're going to tell me about Aubrey.

EL: Yeah, but where was I with him? No, it was something very important I wanted to say then. In the Sun paper in those days, they announced marriages. They don't do that today. They have names and ages. I never read the paper – marriages and that. I think they had divorces, too. I don't know. That night, I was bombarded with phone calls, "Who are you kidding? Who are you kidding?" I said, "What are you talking about?" In the marriage [announcement], you're saying you're fifty years old. I said, "What are you talking about?" Aubrey got the marriage license. He was fifty, and he put my name, fifty. But he knew how old I was. I mean, all my friends knew. It was a joke. Many a time, Allison was there and heard it come out and all. He put my name in. I was not fifty-seven yet. It's six and a half years difference that he was younger. But he didn't look young. He was a big guy. He was tall, like my first husband. He was 6'1". He had gray

hair – not all gray. He actually had a lot of dark in it, then it turned gray when he died. But I never felt older. I had more energy. I had more energy than anybody – nervous energy I got, I guess. Aubrey loved to rest. Aubrey liked to relax. Aubrey changed his whole lifestyle. He never ate salads. The Legums said, "That's rabbit food." I said, "You've got to be kidding. We eat salads at every meal." Oh, he learned – well, crab cakes and shrimp he ate, but he never ate sauces. He never used shrimp in a cocktail sauce. He changed his eating habits completely. People in Annapolis – they wouldn't recognize a lot of the ways that he changed. But Aubrey never liked to drink. When I married him, he never drank. Being in the beer business – they had a big beer industry there – he learned to drink and learned to like a drink. As a matter of fact, he got so drunk at Bonnie View once that he was almost going to jump in the pool. They had to save him. But he never liked it that much to do that again. That taught him. Because I liked to drink. I enjoy my drink. I'm not an alcoholic either, but I like my drink.

EE: That's an interesting subject because Jews and alcohol are usually sort of polar concepts. Nobody ever thinks that Jews drink.

EL: Oh, oh. I didn't know that. Oh, come on, the Russians that drink vodka all the time? They have wooden legs. I never drank until – when did I start to drink? Gosh, it wasn't even legal when I got married. They used to go to the door, I remember when my husband was in the fraternity and get it. It was illegal when they used to drink. And the fraternity guys, I don't know if they were like that. I didn't see Phyllis when she dated at parties. I guess they did the same crazy thing the guys all did. I remember we had a party in our home, and the cans of beer or the bottles of beer – it was wild. Anyhow, it was a good, good life. And now I just consider myself lucky, lucky, lucky, lucky. Got a good clean bill of health from the doctor today, so I feel I'm celebrating. Got a lot to celebrate. Take a drink on that. [laughter]

EE: Tell me about your girlfriends. Who's your best friend, or do you have best friends from earliest times?

EL: Well, a couple of my very best friends are gone already. I've always traveled with younger girls. Millie Brown is three years younger. I play cards, and I'm friends with people my age today in the building, but my friends are all younger. I don't know if you know Gladys Sauber. Did you know Gladys Sauber. Gladys is five years younger. All my friends are three, four years younger than me. I've lost a couple of good friends. Millie is three years younger than me. We belong to Bonnie View. Didn't want to belong to Bonnie View. Sidney Miller did that. Sidney Miller was friends with Millie's husband, Gene Lipitz, who was president of Bonnie View. They golfed together, in those days, I think a public course. But Gene belonged to Bonnie View. And Sidney came home one night and said, "I signed up for Bonnie View." I was furious. I said, "Bonnie View? How could you do that?" Our daughter Phyllis had married the Blums. Harry grew up in Suburban Club. And she didn't have any children yet. And I said, "We're going to have grandchildren. We've got to go to the club where our children are and grandchildren." He said, "You don't join a club for your children. It's who you play golf with. You join a club for golf." And, of course, Gene had convinced him. I knew Millie and was friends with her from the club, but not intimate. And after so many years as couples and sitting at the club and all, we became really good friends. But then Gene died at age forty-eight, her husband. I was sympathetic and a good friend, but not intimately, because Millie came from – when she moved to Baltimore, she was married to Gene. My husband met Gene because we were in the fur business, ready-to-wear, but also fur business. Gene came from Philadelphia. His uncle was a furrier. It was Mitchell's on Lexington Street. He worked there, and from the Fur Association and all, retailers met each other. They had meetings and all that bit. So that's how the friendship – and it was more or less business and social – the club – but not intimately. After Gene died, of course, I did my duty, and I was a friend, but not close. But when Sidney died three years later, very – I mean, no young person had lost a husband. It was rare in those days. You hear today

all ages die suddenly and all. We knew the pain. We became very close. We slept at one another's homes, and we traveled together. 'Diversions' had come into existence, and everything that 'Diversions' did we liked because it was a very personal way. We weren't with all strangers. My sister-in-law – at that time, it was Carol Sibel and Lenny, and what's the – and Gloria, the one who lost her eyesight. What's Gloria's last name? Her husband has Alzheimer's. It's the three that started 'Diversions.' Then when they got tired of it, Lenny bought them out, and Lenny ran 'Diversions.' Thanks to 'Diversions,' I went to Europe, saw all the countries I would have never – I'd never gone with either husband. And went to England, I can't tell you how many times. We went to Spain, all the different – we went to Rome. We went to – oh, we spent two weeks once in Italy – Amsterdam – no, we didn't go to Turkey. Holland, Switzerland, all Europe. I didn't want go – my ulcer was bothering me, and the retailing. I didn't want to go to the Orient when they went. I said it's too far; I'm not going to go that far from home. So I didn't go to the Orient. But Millie met Cecil and got married. They were wonderful. This is before I met Aubrey. They got dates for me as a widow. Good friends. They had a place in Florida that I visited. Our friendship became – because we shared so much together. When you share that kind of pain, it's more than a good friend. Unfortunately, she's had a stroke. Our communication is not the same at all. And we're totally different, as far as – I'm sure you have friends too that you don't have to agree with, but you can be agreeable to disagree whatever. And anyhow, I miss the communication. We have lunch every week. I talk to her every day. But it's not talking. She – her problem – can't talk on the phone. She can't sit. I feel like I can't desert her, but I feel – well, she's not the same. The stroke – it's just not the same. Allison, I knew grew up with my daughter. I love her to pieces. She was always understanding, very sympathetic. I mean, you really saw – there were plenty of times. When I couldn't stop smoking, Allison gave me the lecture like she was my mother to stop smoking – encourage me. I'd say, I can't. I'd stop once for three months. I stopped once for six months. I can't tell you – I'll never forget. I paid two hundred and fifty – what was that? to stop smoking – that group called? That's when

I stopped [for] one month. Took my first cigarette. You smoke now?

EE: Tell me about smoking. When did you start smoking? What was the social environment?

EL: Oh, I started – I was [inaudible] no. I was smoking. Sidney Miller smoked too. He loved – if you're at a party – a cigar. Later as he got older, it was a pipe too. But I started smoking when I was fifteen, fourteen – fourteen. I used to wash my mouth out with soap so my mother wouldn't know that I smoked. My brothers, if they saw me someplace, would always threaten me. They could get me to do anything because they'd threaten me. They knew that I smoked and I wasn't allowed. Same thing with the lipstick. All the younger sisters they could use it. With me, when I was fourteen, I got hell. I wasn't – they were very strict with me. That's why I think I eloped. You couldn't do anything. I mean, you couldn't – I'd be afraid to stand next to somebody. God forbid to hug and embrace to be close. I mean, you're having sex already. [laughter] I don't know what they thought. But whatever, that's the point.

EE: But did many of the women during that period, many of the women your age, many of your contemporaries smoke cigarettes as well?

EL: I have one friend that smokes, Riva, who is a very good friend to Millie. Riva, as a matter of [fact], she's coming in today. She's been in Florida all winter. She lost her husband too. She lost her husband about four years ago. Riva Raines, you know her? D. and H. Supply House, vacuum cleaners, you know, a big, big business. Riva still smokes. You know Virginia Weiss? She was Virginia Frankel. It was Virginia, Riva, and Millie, like sisters, very close. Of course, this happened to me. I became a fourth. But it was Millie and I, and I'm social with the others. But I'm close with Riva now. I don't pick her up at the airport because the airport is a hassle to go. She's getting a cab to come in. But we eat dinner. I'm sort of out. I've gotten into another card game since she had – but I would never give her up for the people I meet and play cards with because I'll

have Riva here now, say, four months. Very close with her. Riva, Virginia, Millie, and I have lunch. I guess we'll continue. I don't know this year. But every summer, Fridays, we have lunch together. And Millie gets on their nerves. They've been loyal to a point, but it's not easy. Millie does things that – I just feel it's not Millie; it's another person. They don't want to make it regular. I mean, she'll do things – the mind just isn't there. It's very sad. This is Allison's mother. And Allison is a doll. I mean, how she handles and all, really and truly, it's very difficult. I don't know how she does what she does. I've got a sister who's ten years younger than me, diagnosed with Alzheimer's. Just put her into the Marriott there, and her daughter – she has one daughter too. I just admire people – yeah, I'm very good and very understanding, and I know this is not my sister [inaudible]. But it's so difficult, so – just like it's so difficult to lose those that you love, it's so difficult to handle people because Allison's got to say, "It's not my mother." When I call Millie, it's the same conversation. "You feel okay?" "Fine." "I'm glad." "I have a doctor's appointment today." I said, "You know, with the Associated, Elaine Eff." "You told me already." I said, "Okay." She can only stay on the phone one minute. And yet, what I don't understand – I never discussed it with Allison because I feel she's got a big burden. It doesn't matter. It's not Millie. If I'm not well – when I went through my cancer, she's more than sympathetic. She'll call. I call her every day. She doesn't call me. But when I was sick, or if you're not well, or if somebody in my family – she'll call. It's like, does she enjoy that, or is she concerned? I mean, I don't know. I don't ask her. But I said, tell Allison, "We don't really [communicate]." "Elsie, that's the way she is. She hangs up. She can't talk on the phone." So I don't say anything. It's sad. It's not the same person, not the same person.

EE: Tell me about your bout with cancer?

EL: With who?

EE: With cancer.

EL: With cancer, I had to hit eighty years old. I had an eightieth birthday and went to the doctor. Everything is fine. (Rosenshein's?) supposed to – very good, good examination, everything's fine. Two weeks later, I go for my mammogram, and the mammogram picked up cancer. They said it was small. I had radiation. But breast cancer is very, very scary. I went through the radiation, and thank goodness, they keep – so far, everything is okay. They put me on Tamoxifen. I got another problem, but they didn't diagnose it. I had bleeding rectally. Didn't feel good. My blood test showed I was anemic. They knew I was losing blood, not externally, internally, but they didn't know where until I had a colonoscopy. This was 2000. This December will be two years – was it? This December will be two years. December the 16th will be two years that the colonoscopy – actually, the colonoscopy didn't pick it up at first. It did not pick it up. I had an ulcer years ago and things with my stomach, and I had the head of Hopkins, he was head of Hopkins – what do you call the stomach – Gastroenterology Department – Milligan, who was my doctor. They didn't pick it up. But I had to get seven pints of blood.

EE: What was it?

EL: I'm losing blood. They didn't know. They did not know where. I was anemic. It was five pints of blood and two pints of iron. And the iron was low. With all this, I wasn't losing weight. I don't want to lose weight this way, but you'd think I'd be losing weight. I didn't lose weight, and it didn't affect my appetite. But I didn't have the energy. I mean, I was tired, tired all the time. And never had a problem sleeping. I like to sleep. Some people who have sleep problems, really, I think, bothers them more. But I like to sleep, so that didn't bother me then. But anyhow, Milligan retired. He was disgusted with medicine. The government is running – the government is behind the scenes with – are you married to a doctor by any chance? And he was going to retire. He's young. He's in his late sixties. I don't think he's seventy. Maybe he is seventy. He was going to either do research or travel, that's what he said. They brought a doctor in, and he wanted me to stay with the office. I was introduced to him. My kids said, "Mother, you've been with

him all these years, and he never found anything. You've got to try another office." Dr. (Bedine?) was recommended. I made an appointment with (Bedine?). Really. I wasn't even due for another colonoscopy because I had it, and supposedly nothing showed. It's a weird story, this story, because this was like six months later, seven months later. When I saw (Bedine?), he wanted to do a colonoscopy, and my children couldn't understand it because it wasn't even a year. He said, "Well, I would use a pediatric scope because she has lots of scars from ulcers and things like that. And I like to have my own." When I did the colonoscopy with him, he picked up colon cancer. Maybe it just started, but I feel like it was there because I had this bleeding and wasn't feeling right, and they didn't pick it up. The pediatric scope picked it up. I was operated on that. This coming December 16th will be two years that I was operated. A week before Christmas, practically. And thank goodness, I'm recuperating. So far, I'm doing good. You're right. And here I am.

EE: Good.

EL: April, I had a birthday. I'm eighty-six, and very thankful for all the good things. Lost members in the family. From six brothers, I have three brothers left. Genetically, I mean, that doesn't sound good. One brother had a brain tumor. Teddy was sixty. My brother Phil was ninety-one – just died last year. My brother Leon was just seventy-five; he had lymphoma. Now, my younger sister, who is seventy-six, diagnosed with Alzheimer's.

EE: Tell me something about the way – if you think there are any differences between the way that we look at or get treated –

EL: Medically?

EE: – for illnesses today, or the way your children look at it, or the kinds of doctors or treatments they get versus what you believe you've gotten for yourself?

EL: I don't know. I don't know how to answer that because before I had Koppel, I had Allan Bernstein, who I felt I could have him maybe any hour. I felt he was more than my doctor [and] that I could discuss private things with him. I knew he was a Hopkins doctor, good and very thorough. My pediatrician – same thing. Today it's different. They don't come to the house. When I had my first ulcer attack, Allan Bernstein – I lived in Forest Park then, and he lived where Woodholme Club is, on that street there, Naylor's Lane. He came over in his pajamas [at] two o'clock in the morning, and held my hand, thought I needed surgery, gave me a needle to calm me down. I ended up with diverticulitis, but they didn't rush me to the hospital and all. I think today you'd be in an ambulance, and you go. I don't think you can get that personal – at least the doctors I have today. I know Rosenschein – I don't even ask all the questions anymore. As long as my picture is good, I don't know whether it's better or worse. I know one thing; it's very obvious doctors aren't happy. I saw my internist this morning. She acts like she doesn't have her act together. [laughter] I mean, she's pulled in so many directions. And I thought, "Just find out." She took the pressure, and everything was okay. Why didn't she get my mammogram? I said, "I just had it done, you know, a week – they promised they'd send it to you, Dr. Khouri." You go to Khouri too? Everybody I know goes to him for the mammogram. But I don't know – how do you feel about medicine today? I know knowledgeable – I mean, it's better today, there's no question about it. With breast cancer, I would have been dead. I mean, as far as the prevention there – I mean, people say that the radiology is not good or chemo for other – but gosh, people are living that have it, so medicine has come a long way. How about a heart bypass and all that? That's what they thought when I was anemic and all, they did – what the hell they call that, with that tube in you, to examine – they thought it was my heart. And that showed okay. What's that word that they use when they examine the heart?

EE: Endoscopy?

EL: No, no.

EE: No, wait, angiogram?

EL: Angiogram. Is that when they – they put you to sleep? I don't know. But everything there was okay.

[Recording paused.]

EL: – moved to [inaudible]

EE: All right. We're going to switch subjects now.

EL: Okay.

EE: One of the things we've left out is about your move from Forest Park up to Pikesville. Tell me why you did that, where you moved, and what that was like.

EL: When I was in Forest Park, that was the suburbs. This is just further out.

EE: Where did you move? Tell me about that.

EL: Moved to Phillips Drive from Boarman Avenue. That was – I'll say, my pals, but I had friends living out there already. I had friends living on Stevenson Road. Right across from our home was a friend, Ethel Rubin, who now lives in Florida. As a matter of fact, she and her husband have been separated for – not divorced, but they're separated. [laughter] You know Ethel Rubin and Herman Rubin? Crazy. They lived across the street from me. It wasn't as big a move as I did from Hollins Street to Maine Avenue. That was like – I mean, that was moving to the suburbs, and Hollins Street was like the city. That was big. But Phillips Drive was like a palace. My husband worked many years before we thought we could ever afford that. We were lucky that we could get that house because it was the last one on that block that was available.

EE: Was it a brand-new house?

EL: Yes, brand new.

EE: Tell me about it. What was it like?

EL: Oh, it was beautiful, beautiful. 3603 Phillips Drive. As a matter of fact, when I moved, it was sold to Kohn from Hochschild-Kohn. She had a child that was handicapped, and they built a swimming – I didn't have a swimming pool. They built a swimming pool, heated swimming pool. This child had to swim. I don't know what she had, but they needed a pool. The home was beautiful. Had a hard time selling it because it wasn't for young couples. It had no basement. But it had four bedrooms, and it had the big family room off the kitchen. And then we had a small den and a big living – oh, it was just lovely. The grounds were beautiful. We had a wonderful, wonderful – oh, God, my dog, Lucky – don't tell me what kind of a dog – a police dog. What do you call a police dog?

EE: German Shepherd.

EL: German Shepherd. How could I think [inaudible] who drowned in my neighbor's pool. We were all supposed to go to Florida. And we couldn't find – we used to let her out in the morning, then she'd run back. The ice broke. She was chasing something. They didn't have fences around pools in those days. You know Eleanor Markley? It was her pool. She lives catty-corner to me across the street. We couldn't leave for Florida like we were supposed to. It was just so depressing. The kids were heartbroken, all of us were. When Ed Markley went out in the back for something, he saw where the dog tried to get up from the ice. He chased something, and the ice must have broken, and then he couldn't get up with the ice. They found my dog frozen there. That was really sad. We ended up taking all the kids, and we all – that was my vacation, then, with the whole family to Florida. It was like sitting shiva for Lucky.

EE: Lucky wasn't very lucky.

EL: No, you're right. My kids, after they all got dogs, nobody would use the name Lucky anymore.

EE: Well, what was it like, moving out –? That was a new area that was just being really developed, wasn't it?

EL: Yeah, yeah. But the people – it wasn't – my house was new because the builder – you know Harriet Finkelstein? – built two homes, hers and mine, that were identical. It was a different builder. Joe Berkow's house was different there too. It was new, but it was a couple of years – these other homes were already there. The caterer Bluefeld – that was Woodvalley. It was new, but they lived there maybe two years before I got there. It was bad times. They just didn't sell these homes then. But I remember when we moved, and I was moving here, my family's in real estate – Fiola Blum, the realtor and all. It was hard selling my house because it didn't have – if you had small kids, it was like open and all. You see, my daughter was nine years old when we moved there, my baby. When I said a hard time, it took like six months. I remember, here I'm moving to a rental, and I'd have to pay rent if I moved or not, but I didn't sell my house yet at that time. But I didn't – it wasn't such a drastic change, I don't think, for Maine Avenue. It was just nicer and newer. Oh, by the way, in Forest Park, Blacks were starting to break in too, not on my block yet, but Blacks were starting to break in too. That was scary. The other block of Boarman, off of Garrison Boulevard, there were small row houses up there. My house was detached brick. The guy who worked for Read's – Schluderberg married Arthur Nattans. A.J. Nattans lived right across the street. I mean, that's Boarman Avenue. They were Catholic. My Phyllis went to church with Susie. Susie was her friend. I had gentile friends too on Hollins Street when I grew up, as well as Jewish friends.

EE: So would you say that Forest Park –

EL: And I would go to church.

EE: – that Forest Park was beginning to deteriorate?

EL: Yes, yeah. It wasn't Black yet in my block like it is today, but the row houses off of Garrison Boulevard, which is from where I was – what's that, like six blocks up there? I was off of Eldorado. Eldorado, then Granada, and then whatever, and then Garrison Boulevard. That first block there was row houses. A couple Blacks had moved in there.

EE: What class of people were moving in?

EL: Oh, I don't know because I didn't even go up that end. I always went right down Eldorado to Liberty Heights. One block below Liberty Heights is Maine Avenue: that's my mother's street. That's where I was. My mother and father still stayed on Maine Avenue. They came in – my father – they were all White on that block, yet. Oh, when I ever looked at Maine Avenue, whatever happened to our house, it's unbelievable. They made it like a jail, a fence and a gate, metal and all black. It'd take you – have you been to Forest Park lately? I don't even think Forest Park High School is there anymore, is it? You went to Forest Park too?

EE: Yeah.

EL: Well, you must have gone with one of the kids in my family, brothers.

EE: Well, Carol. Carol is my age.

EL: Carol. Let me see which brother had a birthday. Carol just had a birthday. Carol has a birthday in two days. Carol is going to be sixty-three.

EE: No. Carol is –

EL: I mean, fifty-three. No, the baby in my family is my brother Morty. Morty, May the 18th, just had a birthday. He's seventy-three. He's married – and Lenny – Lenny is not seventy. I think Lenny is like sixty-eight or sixty-nine.

EE: Tell me what Pikesville was like when you moved up there. Had you started to shop there and go to Pikesville when you moved up there – before you moved up there, or was it a whole new sort of [inaudible] –

EL: No, I shopped in Pikesville. I used to – well, I had live-in help – why did I have live-in help then? Oh, no, I didn't have live-in help when my husband was living. That's after he died. I don't remember so much with Sidney. He lived there six years. I remember the snowstorm. I remember the living room, the fireplace. Oh, the kids loved it. We slept in the living room. We had a big snowstorm. He took the pans, and he cooked over the fireplace. I remember things like that. But oh, now, I remember him planting. He loved flowers. I just did my patio because when I moved here, on account of my Midgie, Sidney had a vegetable garden and had to have a first floor. No way could I make it feel like my home. You were going to get elevator that would be like hotel living. I had to have a first floor. And right by this window here on the ground, she had vegetables. I remember that. But I don't remember my social life there at all. I remember Ethel and Herm across the street. That's where I learned to drink. We used to have cocktail hour. I think that's when I started with drinking. My kids weren't happy. Carol had to go to Franklin with a bus. I remember that. I don't think Joan went to Franklin. Pikesville was built. Joan, I think, is one of the first classes that graduated from Pikesville. I could be wrong about that. But Joan went to Pikesville when Pikesville was new. I remember her graduation. I remember those things more than my living, I think, because Sidney only lived six and a half years on Phillips Drive. Did I complete furnishing it? I don't even remember if it was – yeah, yeah, we had all our furniture then. But I've got things that I couldn't fit in this apartment, like this table in my living room. My husband was very unique, had wonderful taste, much better taste than I had. Really and truly, I'm not just saying that. I remember him calling and saying, "I've got a table perfect for our living room." I said, "What's it look like?" The decorator that was going to have a table with chairs around it – that's the idea. This table I'll show you as we go out. I had two sofas down there. Anyhow, I said, "What's the table look like?" He said, "A great artist did it.

You wouldn't know the name of the artist." I didn't know the name of the artist. But he puts it in the ground, and it's made of slate, pewter – what's the other thing? I forgot. It's different colors. I said, "Sidney, it sounds like a Christmas tree." No way do I want a table like that. He said, "You've got to see this table. It's the most magnificent thing. You can put anything on it. You can't burn it. You can't stain it." I said, "It sounds" – slate, pewter, and copper and gorgeous blue, like enamel. I said, "Really, it sounds so terrible." I said, "This is a customer of yours." Chambers had – oh, it wasn't the Chambers the way it is today; they had a storefront. This was in the window. He said – I said, "Mrs. Chambers" – the old lady, the mother, not Lee because Lee later finished with me – "is a customer, and you'll never be able to return it, and I know I'm not going to like it. I'm not going to come down and say I don't like it if you picked it out." He said, "No, I'll be able – I'll have them send it out with the agreement if you didn't want it, it would come back." I said, "Okay." Well, it's the prettiest thing that I own. This is a Laverne table that I know is priceless. I thought he was ridiculous [for] what he paid for it. It's worth five times as much today. Really, I didn't even know how much it was until after he died. In the papers, it was – in the bill – I had no idea it was worth like that. I loved it more after I found out that it's a – I know a lot of people that buy that. And today, these things are really priceless. He had really wonderful taste. ¬ In front of the sofa, the table, I picked out a long table – everybody had these pretty legs and all like that, but he didn't want that. With Lee, they did these tables – if you saw those tables originally, they look like nothing. It's going to be finished in this wood, and the legs are going to be painted. Chambers, of course, knows what they're doing. I knew nothing. I thought I knew everything. I thought my taste was good and all. I learned that I knew absolutely nothing at all. everything that Sidney liked was really, really good, the good things like that.

EE: Let me ask you a silly question. Do you think there's such a thing as Jewish taste?

EL: Yeah, without question.

EE: Or Pikesville taste?

EL: Absolutely. Honey, I've learned that in clothes. I learned that in clothes. I mean, you know, Miller Brothers had very few Jewish trade. I mean, Mrs. Blaustein was a good customer. In those days, wealthy people – they didn't have half sizes. They didn't have a junior department. Wealthy people had clothes made to order. If you had money, you had things made to order as far as fit and all like that. This is all the Jewish – wealthy Jewish people had things made to order. You might know a lot of these names. Mrs. Jacob Blaustein would never wear anything but black [and] navy. My father-in-law made almost everything that she wore. Many times I was in the car where my husband would deliver. The Cone sister – of course, she was big and fat even in those days. I sat in the car when he delivered to Marlborough, I think it was. It was Eutaw Place, the apartments there. Many a time, I was in the car that he had to deliver something there. The Jewish customers – as we developed Jewish trade, Charles Street became like Fifth Avenue of New York. There was one shop – I don't know. You were so young – one shop after another. Jewish people started shopping [on] Charles Street. Well, you couldn't get things – they wanted to have the best. I remember – what's her name? – Jeanette Beck and the other one. If they got for one, they knew who they sold to. They couldn't give – God forbid, you go to an affair, somebody should have that dress, well they'd commit hari-kari. The Jewish customers couldn't get enough. They wanted to be seen with everything on it, really flashy. The wealthy gentile – what's this wealthy woman from the oil company? Where they used to have – she's dead now – the tulip every year where you – on Charles Street.

EE: Sherwood.

EL: Sherwood Gardens. You should see how that woman dressed. You wouldn't know – I mean, the woman was a millionaire and all. Mrs. (Lesperance?), her husband jumped off – is it Read Street, where the doctors were in an office? People used to – wealthy

people, when they sold their homes, when their children got married, a lot of them lived near – he jumped off the roof and committed suicide – I remember that – because of the stock market at that time. I mean, there were – I don't know what it's going to be with the young – including my children. As far as the country clubs and as far as the lifestyle, I think they say they – everybody knows it was a Depression and all. But they didn't know – they didn't grow up when I know things were tight in my family. I knew that my father was in real estate. I knew people who lost their properties, and my father was holding on to dear life, and thank God we survived. They saved pennies. My parents never vacationed or anything like that. I often wonder – I know if I had to live in one room if everybody's well – I often wonder how – will my children be able to cope, really and truly? Because – and you read about it, but you don't really know unless you've lived through times like that. I really mean that. I think some of my girls will, but I don't think all of them will know. I mean, they say, "Of course, we know," but it's far away like it never happened. I don't know. I don't know. But really, you talk about Jewish taste, there's no question about it. There's no question about it. You can come into every home, and the same thing, and the collection and that with the – I mean, those that have the money. I'm wearing the same dress when Joan's daughter, my number three daughter, got married two years ago, after I was in the business. When my granddaughter was getting married, and as the mother of the bride, she wanted to shop [in] Washington. That's fine with me. We went to Neiman Marcus, and what is the other one called? Saks Jandel. I know there's expensive clothes. I just never bought clothes for thousands of dollars. I mean, to me, being in business, and we sold better clothes, but we weren't – Miller Brothers was not designer. People who had things made to order spent more in the tailoring, but we had better clothes, but not designer clothes. I just can't see – maybe I am a frugal person and really don't know it. Anyhow, there was a dress there – there was a color to follow. My daughter loved it on me and wanted me to buy it. I said, "Joan, at my age, I can't see investing that kind of money." "Mother, you have other grandchildren." I said, "I don't know. Every wedding is a different color. What's it going to be?" "Mother, you look

gorgeous in it, rah, rah, rah." And I bought the dress. Joan's daughter got married two years ago. This past year, I had two weddings. I had – yeah, two weddings. Carol, my number two daughter's daughter and son got married. I said, "For what I paid for that dress, it's a lovely dress." I can't find anything any prettier, and I think the children should understand that color means nothing. It's a neutral color. At my age, I should wear it. Well, my grandchildren were wonderful. They didn't fight me. Maybe they weren't happy with it, but I wore it to both weddings. Now I've got a fourth wedding coming up. This is Joan's son that's getting married this October. And I went [to] Washington just a month ago. Joan is shopping now for the dress. "Well, mother, you got your money's [worth]. You've worn it three times." I said, "I know, but it's perfectly good. Where am I going to wear a long dress again?" To hang. I think it's a lucky dress. I wore it to my grandchildren's wedding. And she's very understanding, "If that makes you happy." I'm wearing it again. Now, I have a friend – I don't know if you know Sylvia Cummins or not. She lives in this building. None of my friends got invited to my weddings because weddings are costly, and my friends don't know my grandchildren. My children feel their friends who know their children and all have priority, and especially when they don't give a wedding, they're limited to how many they can ask anyhow. Anyhow, my friend has two grandchildren getting married. One is August, and one is November. I'm telling the other girls in the gang, "We have to go. [We're] going to get two dresses." I said, "You're going to get two. Well, what are you getting?" I said, "Well, I'm wearing the dress." "Well, you're going to wear it to both, the same people, the same thing?" I said, "I don't care." And really, they look – I know they think this is ridiculous. Maybe they think I'm in poverty. I don't know. I can afford to buy a dress, believe me. I'm not wealthy-wealthy, but I don't have to borrow to buy a gown. But it doesn't make sense. And really, waiting on Jewish customers and used to see – it's terrible to talk like that – how they are when it comes – it's got to be the splashiest. It's got to be the best. That turns me off. I really don't like it. So I don't know. They're not going to convince me just because they think it's so terrible. I'm wearing the same dress. Now I can say I got my money's worth out of

my dress. [laughter]

EE: And I would say I think we got our money's worth out of this interview. I've had a wonderful time.

EL: [laughter] That's a nice finale.

EE: I've had a great time. Thank you so much.

EL: Thank you.

EE: It was a treat.

EL: Thank you. Well, I enjoyed it. I enjoyed it. I hope the people who ever read this enjoy this really as such. And Elaine, you're very special, really. I'm very lucky to have had you. You made this very uplifting. You made me really look forward to this. Yeah.

EE: Thank you. I'm luckier. We're done. We're done.

[END OF INTERVIEW]