<Begin Video, Part 1>

**Interviewer:** Today is April 10, 2001. I am here in Rome, Georgia, with Jo Marks Heyman.

I am so glad you have decided to be one of our memoirs for the Esther and Herbert Taylor Oral History Project of the Atlanta Jewish Federation and the American Jewish Committee.

Jo Heyman is originally from Albany, Georgia. I don’t think I said that correctly. I know that there’s a certain way that . . . She is one of our first memoirs from Albany [Georgia]. I’d like her to begin by just telling us a little bit about her earliest memories growing up there in South Georgia, why her family ended up there, what they did while they were there, who they were, and her siblings. She could just start with all of that.

**Mrs. Heyman:** First of all, in South Georgia, it is Albany. I never knew it was anything else until I was 13 years old and went off to Girl Scout\(^1\) Camp, where I was corrected.

My family has deep roots in Albany, even though originally my dad’s family came from Americus, Georgia, which was up the road a piece.

My grandfather [Charles Henry Marks]\(^2\) moved his family to Albany when my father [Henry Charles “Geechie” Marks]\(^3\) and his siblings were quite young children. My dad grew up and was in the haberdashery business. He was ambitious. No, not ambitious, just a very friendly person. Someone told him there was a great chance for him to go in with these people in Ocala,

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\(^1\) Founded in 1912 by Juliette Gordon Lowe, Girl Scouts of America is a youth organization that aims to empower girls and help teach values such as honesty, fairness, courage, compassion, character, and citizenship through various activities. Membership is organized by grade level.

\(^2\) Charles Henry Marks (1865-1959) was a native of Cincinnati, Ohio who relocated to Albany, Georgia in 1904. He was the owner and operator of the Rialto Saloon Company in Albany.

\(^3\) Henry Charles "Geechie" Marks (1904-1969) was born in Americus, Georgia and operated a liquor business in Albany, Georgia.
Florida. He got himself to Ocala, Florida. He went into the haberdashery business. There he met the lady who was to become my mother.

Her name was Mabel Goldman. She was born in Savannah, Georgia and raised in Ocala, Florida. Her father, Benjamin Goldman was a prominent merchant in Ocala, owning a large retail furniture store. Seems like furniture kind of runs in our family. They did meet. I heard that my grandmother had had my dad out for dinner. My mother was working in Miami [Florida] at the time. My dad fell in love with a portrait that was on the piano. That just might have been one of my mother’s flights of fancy—she was a great storyteller—but it makes a nice story. They married and lived there for . . . until the first two children were born. My brother, Charles was born in 1927—Charles Henry Marks. I came along two years later in 1929.

Two years later, my dad was asked to come back home to Albany.

By the way, Mom and Dad ran off from Ocala and went to Albany and got married. They eloped to Albany, of all places, to get married. We moved back to Albany when I was two. You probably would not believe, I do have memories of where we lived when I was two years old, the Jefferson Apartments. We lived there until I was about four years old, left there, and moved into Highland Avenue, a stucco house that had lizards on the wall which I loved and a chinaberry tree in the backyard which was wonderful to climb on.

I was always the only Jewish person in kindergarten, school, college, and everywhere. I took that as a direct sign from God that I was very special. I still have that feeling today. I loved being Jewish. I love being Jewish in a small town. I think I would be lost being Jewish in Atlanta.

My brother, I told you, was Charles Henry Marks, who, when he became an adult, was a doctor. He moved back to Ocala, went into partnership with the doctor who had brought him into this world, and who was with him until the older person died.

I have . . . I had a sister, who was about nine and a half years younger than I, named Helene. It seems that the Charles and Helene’s names run in my husband’s family and also in my family. We’ve had so many. They are always in pairs. I think maybe we had a shortage of names, or maybe we began recycling back even in those early days.

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5 Benjamin Goldman (1870-1932) owned and operated “B. Goldman,” a furniture business in Ocala, Florida.
6 Charles Henry Marks (1927-2008) was born in Ocala and raised in Albany, Georgia. He was a surgeon in Ocala, Florida for 33 years. He was a graduate of the University of Florida and Vanderbilt University College of Medicine. He was a president of Temple B’nai Darom in Ocala.
7 Helene Malaver Marks Crawford (1939-1988).
I had a wonderful childhood in Albany. We were members of Temple B’Nai Israel, which is Children of Israel. I went to Sunday School there for all the years of my Sunday School life. [I was] always the only person in my class until maybe we had some transients occasionally.

I do remember one girl named Louise Katz. Where she came from and where she went, I do not know.

When time came time for me to be confirmed, the powers that be decided that they are not going to confirm one person. I was given a certificate saying that I had completed my religious education, which was really ridiculous because I hadn’t even started it.

I went back to Albany and I taught Sunday School for maybe a year or two. I really don’t remember how long. I learned a little bit teaching that.

I was definitely not a product of a learned Jewish family with a learned Jewish background. Our family was Reform Judaism. At that time, Reform Judaism had almost reformed themselves out of the religion completely. The pendulum had swung. It had swung so much that we had Passover every year. Of course, we had a seder.

I remember that we always attended services on the High Holy Days. You might have called us High Holy Day Jews. I never took Hebrew. My brother did. Sometimes I’d sit in on his

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8 Temple B’Nai Israel in Albany, Georgia has been a Reform congregation since its founding in 1854 and was a charter member of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, now the Union for Reform Judaism. Edmund A. Landau was the congregation's rabbi for 47 years beginning in 1898.

9 Confirmation marks the culmination of a special year in the life of Jewish students between ages 16 and 18; a period of religious study beyond bar mitzvah or bat mitzvah. In some Conservative synagogues the confirmation concept has been adopted as a way to continue a child’s Jewish education and involvement for a few more years.

10 Reform Judaism is a division within Judaism especially in North America and Western Europe. Historically it began in the nineteenth century. In general, the Reform movement maintains that Judaism and Jewish traditions should be modernized and compatible with participation in Western culture. While the Torah remains the law, in Reform Judaism women are included (mixed seating, bat mitzvah and women rabbis), music is allowed in the services and most of the service is in English.

11 Passover [Hebrew: Pesach] is the anniversary of Israel’s liberation from Egyptian bondage. The holiday lasts for eight days. Unleavened bread, matzah, is eaten in memory of the unleavened bread prepared by the Israelites during their hasty flight from Egypt, when they had not time to wait for the dough to rise. On the first two nights of Passover, the seder, the central event of the holiday is celebrated. The seder service is one of the most colorful and joyous occasions in Jewish life. In addition to eating matzah during the seder, Jews are prohibited from eating leavened bread during the entire week of Passover. In addition, Jews are also supposed to avoid foods made with wheat, barley, rye, spelt or oats unless those foods are labeled ‘kosher for Passover.’ Jews traditionally have separate dishes for Passover.

12 Seder (meaning “order” in Hebrew”) is a Jewish ritual feast that marks the beginning of the Jewish holiday of Passover. It is conducted on the evening of the fifteenth day of Nisan in the Hebrew calendar throughout the world. Some communities hold a seder on both the first two nights of Passover. The seder incorporates prayers, candle lighting, and traditional foods symbolizing the slavery of the Jews and the exodus from Egypt. It is one of the most colorful and joyous occasions in Jewish life.

13 The two High Holy Days are Rosh Ha-Shanah (Jewish New Year) and Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement).
lessons. I think I learned two letters at the time. Our rabbi was Dr. Landau, Dr. Edmund Landau, who was very much like Dr. Marx in Atlanta. He came from the same school. He never wore a robe. He never wore a tallis. He never wore a yarmulke. For the High Holy Days, he dressed in a morning suit with tails. It really made a great impression on me, because every time he sat down, he would grab those tails out to the side and sit down between them. This was very interesting. I loved the choir. We did have a choir. It was made up of all non-Jewish people except for Mrs. Kopple, who was a member of the congregation and who had an absolutely terrible voice. It was never ingrained in my memory because I liked her very much.

All the Jewish people that I knew in Albany . . . It was a rather nice-sized congregation for a town that small. I was big buddies with all of them, as well as all the other people in the community. My friends my age, there were no Jewish people at all. I guess the closest one was my own cousin, Janet [Marks Sobel], who was a good year younger than I and two grades behind me in school, which was a source of pride to me.

I just had a wonderful childhood. I did run into antisemitism, I know, once. That was another reason I felt so very special. A little boy across the street, Billy Tilman, said I was a dirty Jew baby. I went home and told my mother. I lashed out at him. I hit him so hard that I knocked his glasses off and broke them. I went home and told my mother. My mother said, “You’re my baby and you are Jewish, but you are not dirty.”

Lady called my mother . . . Billy Tilman’s mother called my mother and said that I had broken his glasses and my mom would have to pay for them. We were in the middle of the Great

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14 Rabbi Edmund A. Landau (1875-1945) was the first permanent rabbi of Temple B’nai Israel, a Reform congregation in Albany in southwest Georgia. He was born in Ontario, Canada and raised in Michigan. His family was originally from East Prussia. In 1909, the small congregation of Temple Beth-El hired Rabbi Edmund Landau to lead services in Bainbridge, Georgia.
15 Rabbi David Marx was a long-time rabbi at the Temple in Atlanta, Georgia. He led the move toward Reform Judaism practices. He served as rabbi from 1895 to 1946. When he retired, Rabbi Jacob Rothschild took the pulpit that Rabbi Marx had held for more than half a century.
16 Talit or Talis is a prayer shawl fringed at each of the four corners in accordance with biblical law. The wearing of tallit at worship is obligatory only for married men, but it is customarily worn also by males of bar mitzvah age and older.
17 Jewish men cover their heads during prayer with a small skull-cap called a ‘yarmulke’ or ‘kippah.’ Orthodox Jewish men wear it at all times to remind themselves of God’s presence.
18 Bertha Hirschberg Kopple (1902-1967) was a native New Yorker who lived in Albany, Georgia.
19 Janet Marks Sobel (1930-2011) was a resident of Livingston, New Jersey who was born in Albany, Georgia. She was a graduate of Georgia State College for Women. She moved to New Jersey after marrying Bernard Sobel in 1953.
Depression in those days. My mom said, “No way. Teach your son to keep his mouth closed.” I certainly did close it for him that time.

I really cannot remember any other overt signs of antisemitism or being treated differently at all from any other child in school, dancing school, expression school, or all the different activities that I took part in.

Interviewer: You said that there was not a lot of Jewish children in any of your classes and, many times, you were the only Jewish child. How big was the community growing up? Do you have a recollection of how large the congregation was?

Mrs. Heyman: I think our congregation must have had 50 to 60 families or maybe even more people. There just seems to have been a . . . not a productive year the year I was born.

Interviewer: Rabbi Landau, can you tell me a little bit more about his personality?

Mrs. Heyman: He was a wonderful little man. He was a very learned man. He was a reformed, almost out of the picture. I don’t know what they were taught in those days. He did read Hebrew. We did conduct part of our services in Hebrew, enough that I was able to learn by rote the prayers and memories of those. Also, it was lovely because all the songs had the transliteration under them, so I was able to respond.

Dr. Landau was a gentle man. There was a goodness that radiated from him. He seemed to . . . Everybody had to respect him. Not that he would come down heavy on you, because he never would. It’s just that his very presence commanded respect.

His wife was a love.

Interviewer: Tell me a little about her.

Mrs. Heyman: Miss Rosalie. In Southern ways, everybody is not Mrs. Landau or Mrs. so-and-so. It’s Miss so-and-so or Aunt so-and-so. Miss Rosalie was a much stronger personality than Dr. Landau. She seemed to be able to coordinate and organize just about anything. She spent her life doing that.

Interviewer: She was Rose Geiger Landau?

Mrs. Heyman: Exactly. She had brothers and sisters, too.

The Great Depression was a severe worldwide economic depression in the decade preceding World War II. The time of the Great Depression varied across nations, but in most countries it started in about 1929 and lasted until the late 1930’s or early 1940’s. It was the longest, most widespread, and deepest depression of the twentieth century.

Rose “Rosa” Heller Geiger Landau (1886-1969) was born in Albany, Georgia. In 1904, she married Rabbi Edmund A. Landau. She had been one of Rabbi Landau's first confirmants at Temple B’Nai Israel after he was hired by the congregation in 1898. She was a music teacher.
Interviewer: Tell me a little about the Geiger family.

Mrs. Heyman: I can’t remember too much. You must remember, I left home when I was 16 years old and never went back really.

She had one brother that never married. She had another brother who married Lillian. I remember Lillian Geiger from my way back years as being a very good bridge person. [She] played a lot of bridge with my mother, but was at every Jewish function. We did not seem to have many group Jewish activities. I remember that my mother was very active in those days in the Sisterhood and also the Hebrew . . . Ladies’ Hebrew Organization, whatever it was. She was very active. That really didn’t make any difference to me one way or another. I remember that we did celebrate Hanukkah only at the Temple, not in our homes. I remember that I was Esther, the fattest little Esther you ever saw, in a play. The lady across the street, Frances Adler. . . . I thought she was a grown-up lady. She probably was 18 or 19 years old. [She] lent me one of her formal dresses to wear as Queen Esther. I was so tubby that they zipped up my flesh in the dress. That made a lasting impression on me.

I remember little art shows that we had at the Temple where all the students would enter their little drawings, and I did a matzah. I title it “Matzah with Butter.” Someone asked me

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22 Victor Gerard Geiger (1895-1974) was a hotel manager who was born in Albany, Georgia.
23 Sydney Ignatius Geiger (1882-1967) was a post office clerk who was born in Albany, Georgia.
25 Bridge, is a trick-taking card game using a standard 52-card deck. It is played by four players in two competing partnerships, with partners sitting opposite each other around a table. Millions of people play bridge worldwide in clubs, tournaments, online, and with friends at home, making it one of the world's most popular card games. (2015)
26 Hebrew for ‘dedication.’ An eight-day festival of lights usually falling around Christmas on the Christian calendar. Hanukkah celebrates the victory of the Maccabees in 165 BCE over the Seleucid rules of Palestine, who had desecrated the Temple. The Maccabees wanted to re-dedicate the Temple altar to Jewish worship by rekindling the menorah but could only find one small jar of ritually pure olive oil. This oil continued to burn miraculously for eight days, enabling them to prepare new oil. The Hanukkah menorah, or hanukiah, with its nine branches, is used to commemorate this miracle by lighting eight candles, one for each day, by the ninth candle.
27 Frances Adler Gans (1915-2001) was a native of Albany, Georgia, where she graduated from Albany High School. She moved to Panama City in 1950 from New York City with her husband Maxwell “Buddy” Gans to found Panama Beverage Company, which remained in Panama City until its sale in 1999.
28 A Jewish girl who becomes queen of Persia as told in the Book of Esther or "Scroll of Esther" [Hebrew: Megillat Esther], the last of the Five Megillot [Hebrew: scrolls], which are parts of the Ketuvim, the third major section of the Tanakh. It is a firsthand account of the events of Purim. With the help of her cousin Mordechai, Esther thwarts plans by the king’s advisor, Haman, to slaughter all of the Jews in the empire. Haman’s ten sons were killed in the fighting that followed. The story forms the core of the Jewish holiday of Purim. It is read twice in the course of the festival: on the eve of Purim, and during Purim day. It is read in the original Hebrew from a parchment scroll.
29 Matzo, matza or matzah is unleavened bread eaten in memory of the unleavened bread prepared by the Israelite during their hasty flight from Egypt, when they had not time to wait for the dough to rise. Leavened products are forbidden on Passover and there is a commandment to eat matzah on the first night of the festival of Passover. The sages concluded that after eighteen minutes the dough ferments making the dough rise and ultimately forbidden.
where was the butter? I looked at them and said, “It’s all melted. You can’t see it.” Those are just little things out of my childhood.

I loved Sunday School. I loved playing in the big sandbox. We used to have a great big standing sandbox that was on legs inside. We did the desert. We would move Moses through the desert a lot slower than he really moved. I remember the stories.

Interviewer: Was it Rabbi . . . You seem very proud of your Judaism. Was it Rabbi Landau and being a part of that small congregation that first gave you that feeling of . . .

Mrs. Heyman: I don’t really know. I don’t think so. I think it was the fact that I was always different than other people. I took great pride in being different. I still do. I know that my husband [Lyons Joel Heyman] said he sang Christmas carols. I knew every word of every Christmas carol, but I made it . . . One year, I decided—no one told me to do this—that I was not going to sing Christmas carols in school. I was going to make an example of myself. I loved being in front of a crowd. I told the teachers I was sorry, I was Jewish . . .

<End Video, Part 1>

<Begin Video, Part 2>

Mrs. Heyman: . . . and I just did not sing Christmas carols. I was given the honor of sitting on the piano bench and turning the sheet music. That was the way I stood out, too.

Interviewer: Did you feel always that you would try to marry within the faith?

Mrs. Heyman: I really never thought about it one way or another, except I will say, I think, deep inside, I always knew I would, even though when I came to dating age I dated many non-Jewish boys. I dated some Jewish boys. I usually didn’t really care for them. I can call you names: Leon Polstein, Walter Goldsmith, Billie Schatten, who grew up in . . . his mother

30 Lyons Joel Heyman was born on January 25, 1928 in Atlanta, Georgia. He moved to Rome, Georgia as a child when his father Charles Heyman founded Fox Manufacturing Company in Rome. He was a graduate of Darlington School in Rome and Vanderbilt University. He worked for Fox Manufacturing Company. He succeeded his father as president, and subsequently chair and CEO, of the company. He has served as president and board chair for the Southern Furniture Manufacturers Association (SFMA), the largest furniture trade association in the United States. He is a life member of the Greater Rome Chamber of Commerce and has been a vice president of the YMCA and president of the Rome Rotary Club. He has served on the National and Southeastern regional boards of the Anti-Defamation League. He has been a member of the board and past president of the Rodeph Shalom Congregation.

31 Leon Louis Polstein (1922-1988) was born in Albany, Georgia. He was one of the founders and chairman of the board of the Colonial Shoe Company, a manufacturer and importer of shoes. He graduated from Emory University and the Columbia University law school. He was on the legal staff of the Atomic Energy Commission in Oak Ridge, Tenn., and practiced law in Savannah before moving to Atlanta in 1954 to work in the wholesale shoe business. He was a member of the board of Ahavath Achim Synagogue, national vice president of the United Synagogues of America, a trustee of Jewish Theological Seminary, trustee of Alpha Epsilon Pi fraternity and a member of B’nai Brith. During World War II, he was a lieutenant in the United States Army Air Corps.
lived in Albany for a while, and he moved to Atlanta. They were all nice, but nothing terribly exciting there.

I still kind of inside knew that I was a Jew. I certainly wasn’t going to sully the waters.

**Interviewer:** You mentioned that your family originally were in Americus, Georgia.

**Mrs. Heyman:** My dad’s family.

**Interviewer:** They were in Americus?

**Mrs. Heyman:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** How did they end up in Americus?

**Mrs. Heyman:** I don’t know. I know that my father’s [grand]father, my great-grandfather, Henry Charles Marks, came to this country from Lorraine—like Alsace and Lorraine, from Forbach, Lorraine—and moved to Cincinnati [Ohio]. I don’t really know if they lived somewhere before they moved to Cincinnati or not. He and his wife—I can’t remember her name—Mrs. Henry Charles Marks produced ten children. They had five boys and they had five girls. My grandfather was one of the five. Everybody had the name Charles in the name. We really did keep the same names all the time.

My dad was one of three children, the oldest being Stella Marks Stern. No, he was one of four children. Then his brother, Raymond Charles Marks. My dad was Henry Charles Marks.

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32 Walter Martin (1926-2000) was born in Albany, Georgia and was the owner of ‘s Boys and Men’s Shop in Albany. He served in the United States Army Air Forces during World War II.

33 William Eugene Schatten (1928-1998) was an Atlanta doctor and philanthropist who was born in Nashville, Tennessee. He was one of the youngest Emory medical school graduates, finishing in 1950 at the age of 21. A child prodigy, Schatten originally planned to become a concert pianist. Instead, he performed plastic surgery and invented surgical techniques. Schatten was president of Ahavath Achim synagogue and the Atlanta Jewish Federation and a board member of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. Schatten was one of the key supporters in launching a Jewish studies program at Emory and the Woodruff Library's Schatten Gallery bears his name. For his service he received many honors, including the Anti-Defamation League's Abe Goldstein Human Relations Award in 1985.

34 Henry Charles Marks (1828-1907) was born in Forbach, France. He lived in Muncie, Indiana before moving to Cincinnati, Ohio during the Civil War years. He served as president of Congregation Shearith Israel in Cincinnati. He was a delegate to the First General Convention of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (now Union for Reform Judaism) in Cincinnati that created the Reform organization on July 8, 1873. He served as an executive board member of the UAHC from 1874 to 1879. He was a merchant and a partner in Leon, Marks and Company in Cincinnati.

35 Forbach is a town in France, in a region that was part of Germany from the end of the Franco-Prussian War until World War I.

36 Helena Wortheime Marks (1838-1918).

37 Estelle “Stella” Marks Stern (1892-1969) was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and lived in Albany, Georgia.

38 Raymond Charles Marks (1893-1958) was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and moved to Albany, Georgia in 1904. He was a manager at the Rialto Saloon Company, a family business in Albany, Georgia. He served in the United States Army during World War I.
He had a younger brother, who was Joe Charles Marks,\(^{39}\) from whence came my name. At the age of 21, Joe was killed while riding a motorcycle. I was born approximately a year later.

How they got to Cincinnati, I do not know. Until this day, I still have distant relatives that live in Cincinnati. I knew most all of them at one time or another I had met. There were a few I did not know. I know my Uncle Nathan\(^ {40}\)—we called him Uncle Nate—came . . . No, Uncle Lape—his name was Leopold\(^ {41}\)—moved to Albany, too. I did have an Uncle Lape there.

**Interviewer:** What did the family do in Albany? What was their . . .

**Mrs. Heyman:** I can only speak of my grandfather and my father. My grandfather may have had some other business before this last business. He had a poolroom, a liquor store, and a bar. We pride ourselves greatly on the fact that, after Prohibition,\(^ {42}\) my grandfather had liquor . . . Georgia liquor permit number one. That was a big thing in our family. My dad went into that same business. It was called the Rialto. To this day I still have people remind me of the Rialto. It seems like it was a big gathering place for the people.

By surprise, about 30 years ago, I got a call from my cousin Buck Stern\(^ {43}\)—who was alive at that time—from Albany. He says, “Jo, I want you to go to Atlanta and go to . . .” I cannot remember the name of the restaurant. He sent me a copy of the restaurant menu. Something was Broad Street Sandwich, named after . . . Monroe Street Sandwich, named after the Rialto, and then a sandwich named after my father, whose nickname was Geechie. It was wonderful. There was a Geechie Sandwich.

I went down to meet this man, and we had dinner . . . lunch there. I didn’t get to meet him, but I left word that I had been there. He wrote me a beautiful letter talking about the days of when he was a young man and how nice my dad was to him.

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\(^{39}\) Joseph “Joe” Charles Marks (1908-1928) lived in Albany, Georgia where he was employed in the family business, Rialto Saloon Company. He died in a motorcycle crash.

\(^{40}\) Nathan Henry Marks (1866-1916) was born in Cincinnati, Ohio and relocated to Covington, Kentucky.

\(^{41}\) Leopold “Lape” Henry Marks (1859-1935) was born in Muncie, Indiana, and lived in Cincinnati, Ohio, and Albany, Georgia. He was in the wine and liquor business and was the owner of American Queen Saloon in Albany.

\(^{42}\) Prohibition is the legal act of prohibiting the manufacture, storage, transportation and sale of alcohol including alcoholic beverages. The first half of the twentieth century saw periods of prohibition of alcoholic beverages in several countries. Nationwide prohibition did not begin in the United States until 1920, when the Eighteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution went into effect. Prohibition became increasingly unpopular during the Great Depression along with a demand for increased employment and tax revenues. The ratification of the Twenty-first Amendment brought an official end to prohibition in the United States in 1933.

\(^{43}\) Eric Julius “Buck” Stern, Jr. (1921-1998) was a resident of Albany, Georgia who was born in Demopolis, Alabama. He was co-owner, with Walter R. “Bob” Kimbrell and his brother Charles Marks Stern, of Kimbrell-Stern Funeral Directors in Albany.
That was the business they were in. Later, Dad went into the automobile business, too. Dad was really a sucker for anybody that wanted him to do anything. He was probably the kindest man that ever lived and would . . . [He] just was a friend to everyone.

**Interviewer:** What year did you leave Rome?

**Mrs. Heyman:** Rome or Albany?

**Interviewer:** Albany.

**Mrs. Heyman:** I left the Fall of 1946 to come to college, to come to Shorter College, an all-Baptist school. There again, I was the only Jewish person, which was pretty normal. I followed my best friend, Patty Higginbotham. There was a Jewish girl from Thomasville, Georgia, who was there my first semester. Her name was Marilyn Rosolio, from Thomasville. Marilyn made it through the first semester. I guess it was just too Baptist for her. She left. She married a Furchgott boy, who played football for Georgia Tech. I think she died quite early in life. That’s when I moved to Rome.

I had an absolutely marvelous time at Shorter. I loved being the only Jewish person. I just thought it was wonderful. I would go to chapel if I wanted to. Then one day, that same thing hit me. I decided I didn’t have to go to chapel if I didn’t want to, so I didn’t. The Dean of Women called me in. She was used to that. I said, “I’m Jewish, and I am not going to chapel. I just think this is wrong. If you have a rabbi here, I’d be happy to go.” There wasn’t anything she could do, so I just didn’t go to chapel. However, I was known to go to the Baptist Church on Sundays. One day they passed out little tiny matzahs and some wine. I had some little tiny matzahs and wine. It

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44 Shorter College is the former name of Shorter University which is a private, coeducational, liberal arts university located in Rome, Georgia. Founded in 1873, it is a Christian university affiliated with the Georgia Baptist Convention. In 2010, Shorter College changed its name to Shorter University to reflect the institution's growth and expansion.

45 Baptists are individuals who comprise a group of Evangelical Christian denominations and churches that subscribe to a doctrine that baptism should be performed only for professing believers (believer's baptism, as opposed to infant baptism), and that it must be done by complete immersion (as opposed to affusion or sprinkling).

46 Patricia “Patti” Higginbotham McDonald (b. 1928) lived in Deland, Florida and Albany, Georgia.

47 Marilyn Rosolio Furchgott (1928-1985) was born in Thomasville, Georgia and later resided in Baltimore, Maryland. She attended University of Georgia in Athens.

48 Maurice Herbert Furchgott was born in Charleston, South Carolina in 1924. His family moved to Atlanta during his childhood. He attended Boys’ High and was a graduate of Georgia Institute of Technology, where he played football for the Yellow Jackets. He served in the United States Navy and was stationed on an aircraft carrier during the Korean War. He relocated to Baltimore, Maryland where he owned and operated a sales promotion company.

49 The Georgia Institute of Technology (commonly referred to as ‘Georgia Tech’ or ‘Tech’) is a public research university in Atlanta, Georgia, in the United States. It is a part of the University System of Georgia. The educational institution was founded in 1885 as the Georgia School of Technology as part of Reconstruction plans to build an industrial economy in the post-Civil War Southern United States.
wasn’t until later that I found out I had done something terrible. I don’t think the curse remained with me. It was okay.

**Interviewer:** There you met your husband.

**Mrs. Heyman:** Lyons had just graduated from Vanderbilt.\(^50\) He graduated, I think, in December. He had that mid-year graduation. That was in 1947. I met him February 2, 1948. I had just gotten off of... I’m sure he doesn’t want me to tell you all this. I had just gotten off of some restriction or penalty at Shorter for doing something I shouldn’t have done, like being in somebody’s room at night after taps, or whatever it was. I met him at a drive-in on a Sunday afternoon. A very good friend of mine came up and got me because she had felt very sorry for me. Until this day, she’s one of my best friends right here in Rome, Georgia.

A bunch of the boys, were at Buddies Drive-in and they came out to the cars. “Hey, Jo, can you get us dates up at Shorter tonight.” I said, “Sure.” I got out of the car. I went to the telephone booth. I started calling Shorter. I rounded up dates for everybody. This young man had on a Norfolk\(^51\) jacket. I did not like it because he wore it belted. He says, “You don’t have to get me a date. I’ll date you.” I said, “No, you won’t. I have a date.” I got him a date and that turned out to be my future husband. That’s how we met, in a telephone booth at Buddies on February 2, 1948.

**Interviewer:** You moved to Rome.

**Mrs. Heyman:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** Became a Roman.

**Mrs. Heyman:** Absolutely.

**Interviewer:** What are your early recollections about the Jewish community of Rome when you first came here?

**Mrs. Heyman:** When I first came here and started going to the Temple, it was at that transition stage where it had just recently become Reform after being Conservadox\(^52\) for all those years. It

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\(^50\) Vanderbilt University (informally Vandy) is a private research university in Nashville, Tennessee. Founded in 1873, it was named in honor of New York shipping and rail magnate Cornelius Vanderbilt.

\(^51\) A Norfolk jacket is a loose, belted, single-breasted jacket with box pleats on the back and front, with a belt or half-belt. It was originally designed as a shooting coat that did not bind when the elbow was raised to fire. It was named either after the Duke of Norfolk or after the county of Norfolk and was made fashionable after the 1860’s. The style was long popular for boys’ jackets and suits, and is still used in some (primarily military and police) uniforms.

\(^52\) Conservadox is the term occasionally applied to describe either individuals or congregations located on the religious continuum somewhere between the Conservative and Modern Orthodox wings of American Jewry. "Conservadox Jews" are largely a North American phenomenon, although similar trends can be identified in Israel.
was not an Orthodox synagogue. It was not quite a Conservative synagogue. They really didn’t know what they were. They didn’t have a permanent rabbi. It wasn’t until they went to HUC seeking a rabbi that they became a Reform temple. My impression was that it was a small, very small, building in comparison with the one in Albany, which was destroyed by a tornado. Another one later rebuilt, the one we married in.

It seems like mostly, when we would have services, I would say one-half to two-thirds of the pews would have people in them. They were a lot older people. There were very few younger people in those days. It was very viable. There was Sisterhood and there was Hadassah. There was a Men’s Club and B’nai B’rith. There was a Sunday School. We didn’t have any children then. As our children were born, I became more and more interested in our little synagogue.

You see, I’m part of a mishmash, because I don’t know whether I’m Reform, Conservative, or kind of a mix of them. I am now.

I taught Sunday School. We didn’t pay our teachers in those days. Goodness gracious, it took us enough to pay the bill for the lights to have on. I taught the kindergarten, of which our older son was one of the students. I remember teaching them the Ten Commandments in the simple form.

and Europe. Congregations of a "Conservadox" persuasion have formed affiliations such as the Union for Traditional Judaism in the United States and the Canadian Council of Conservative Synagogues.

Orthodox Judaism is a traditional branch of Judaism that strictly follows the Written Torah and the Oral Law concerning prayer, dress, food, family relations, social behavior, the Sabbath day, holidays and more.

A form of Judaism that seeks to preserve Jewish tradition and ritual but has a more flexible approach to the interpretation of the law than Orthodox Judaism. It attempts to combine a positive attitude toward modern culture, while preserving a commitment to Jewish observance. They also observe gender equality (mixed seating, women rabbis and bat mitzvahs).

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR) is the oldest Jewish seminary in the Americas and the main training seminary for rabbis, cantors and communal workers in Reform Judaism. It has campuses in Cincinnati, New York, Los Angeles and Jerusalem.

Hadassah, the Women’s Zionist Organization of America, is a volunteer organization founded in 1912 by Henrietta Szold, with more than 300,000 members and supporters worldwide. It supports health care and medical research, education and youth programs in Israel, and advocacy, education, and leadership development in the United States.

B’nai B’rith International (Hebrew: ‘Children of the Covenant’) is the oldest Jewish service organization in the world. B’nai B’rith states that it is committed to the security and continuity of the Jewish people and the State of Israel and combating antisemitism and bigotry. Its mission is to unite persons of the Jewish faith and to enhance Jewish identity through strengthening Jewish family life, to provide broad-based services for the benefit of senior citizens, and to facilitate advocacy and action on behalf of Jews throughout the world.

According to Jewish tradition, the “Ten Commandments” are ten categories that contain 613 mitzvot (Hebrew: commandments). The ten categories are significant because they form the basis of man’s relationship with God and man’s relationship with his fellow people. While God directly gave the Ten Commandments to the Jewish people, it was Moses, who also led the Hebrew slaves out of Egypt, that received the tablets and brought them down from Mount Sinai.
The rabbi right then was a student. He came into . . . The student from HUC that would come in approximately every other week. He came into my room. He says, “What have you children been learning?” I had seven or eight students so we had quite a large Sunday School class. He said, “Who here will volunteer to say the Ten Commandments?” My son, be still my proud heart, stood up and said, “I will.” So Lyons Junior stood up.

He said, “Start me, Mom. Start me.”
I said, “Okay. I.”
He says, “I. What’s next?”
I said, “Am.”
He says, “I am. I know it Mom.”
I said, “Okay, Lyons, give us the first commandment.”
He says, “I am a Jew.”
I don’t think that was a commandment, but I think he learned something. I was delighted. He knew that much.

I stayed in the Sunday School for a very long time. The Israelites were on the desert for 40 years. I think I was there with them every year because what I taught was history. After I got out of kindergarten, I went into the history phase of it. I learned as I taught. We have very good friends here, Louise and Murray Stein, who were Conservative. They taught me so much, practically all I knew.

Interviewer: Do you feel very much a part of the Jewish community?
Mrs. Heyman: Absolutely. In every way I feel a part of it. I love it.
Interviewer: You are also part of the greater Rome community. How does that mesh?
Mrs. Heyman: There was never any problem on the integration. In fact, I was invited to become a member of the Junior Service League. That was a great decision of mine. I just felt like I was going to be a token Jew. Whereas I always liked to be different, that was a little much.

59 Louise Shirley Stock Stein (1923-2018) was a life-long resident of Rome, Georgia. She was a graduate of the University of Georgia in Athens, where she studied journalism. She was a president of Rodeph Shalom Congregation in Rome.
60 Murray Stein (1924-2009), a native of Savannah, Georgia was a dentist in Rome, Georgia. He held a doctorate in dentistry from Northwestern University in Chicago. He served in the United States Army during World War II. He served three terms as president of Rodeph Shalom Congregation in Rome and taught in its religious school. He was president of Rome’s B’nai B’rith chapter.
61 Junior Leagues are education and charitable women’s organizations aimed at improving their communities through voluntarism and building their members’ civil leadership skills through training. It is an international organization with 293 different chapters.
I decided I was going to refuse them. In those days, they had never had a refusal. The sponsors, whom I didn’t even know had sponsored me, came to me to beg me to accept this invitation. One of them said to me, “Why don’t you want to join us?” I said, “Because the Service League has had a reputation of excluding Jewish people.

Mrs. Heyman: I don’t want to be a token Jew. I think that’s prejudice and discriminatory.” This girl said to me, “Do you realize by not accepting, you are the one that’s prejudiced?” That got me. That really got me right between the eyes. I did join. I had a wonderful time. I eventually was on the board. I was chairman of the Follies. That’s our money-raising project every other year. I rose to a rather high prominence in the Rome Junior Service League. The nicest thing that it taught me was how to be a part of an organization, how to behave myself at meetings, and how to conduct a meeting. It helped me so much with my other community work.

Interviewer: You were here, throughout the Sixties and throughout the Civil Rights Era?

Mrs. Heyman: Yes, I was.

Interviewer: What are your recollections of that?

Mrs. Heyman: That the black people had to do what they had to do. I was all for it. I really was all for it. Unbeknownst, I think, to very many people in Rome—I might be the only one privy to this information—there was a couple . . . At this point I am not at liberty to give their names. There was a Jewish couple here who worked very hard for the Civil Rights issue. In fact, I am sure that within this next year, and this is 2001, that there will be a book published of what went on in Rome during that time and how they played a prominent part in it. I wish I could tell you, but I’m sorry, I can’t.

Interviewer: As a young girl growing up in South Georgia and in Rome, later, how did the separation affect you? Do you remember the separate drinking fountains and separate washroom facilities? What were some of your thoughts about that?

Mrs. Heyman: My gut feelings? I took it for granted that’s the way things were because I never knew anything but. I do remember questioning the fact of two water fountains in one of the five-

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62 The American Civil Rights Era generally encompasses events beginning with the Brown v. Board of Education Supreme Court decision in 1954 and ending with the Fair Housing Act of 1968, which was a follow up to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.
and-dime\textsuperscript{63} stores [as] they were called then. One with a sign over it saying white, and the other with a sign over it saying colored. That didn’t hit a very happy chord with me. I would sometimes drink from the colored one. That was just my defiance. I had . . . Most of the black people that I knew, or African-Americans as they call themselves today, were in menial roles. I never knew anyone of prominence. I don’t really think there was, except for the funeral home director named Poteat.\textsuperscript{64} Other than Poteat, I don’t think there was.

I was rather color-blind, even as a child. My grandmother had this lady come and do her manicures. She was very light-skinned. Her name was Stella, like my aunt’s, but I called her Aunt Stel. Her name was Estelle. I thought she was Aunt Stel. I loved her. I had a real mammy\textsuperscript{65} because she was mammy to my father’s brothers and sisters and my father. Then she was nurse to me. Her name was Mammy. It wasn’t until she died that I found out her name was Elvira.

You see, it was just . . . The children I played with back in this alley behind my house were all black children. If they invited me to eat lunch with them, I sat there and ate lunch. We used to make pipes out of pecans and reeds. We could smoke rabbit tobacco\textsuperscript{66} together. I just had a wonderful life. I really did. All this was during Great Depression years and . . .

**Interviewer:** Do you remember what some of the other families in Albany did? I know that part of your family was in the funeral homes [business].

**Mrs. Heyman:** Yes. My first cousins had . . . that's My Aunt Stella . . . Not Aunt Stel, but Aunt Stella's two boys, Buck, who was Erich Stern\textsuperscript{67} Junior and his younger brother, Charles\textsuperscript{68}— there's that name again, we don't give up on names—started in high school to work for the Thomas family, who had Albany Funeral Home. They realized that they liked the line of work, so they both ended up going to Cincinnati to embalming school. [They] went to see all the aunts

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\textsuperscript{63} The concept of the variety store originated with the ‘five and ten,’ ‘five and dime,’ ‘nickel and ten-cent store’ or ‘dime store,’ a store offering a wide assortment of inexpensive items for personal and household use. The originators of the concept were the Woolworth Bros. in the late 1800’s.

\textsuperscript{64} Walter Poteat (1890-1965) was an undertaker and the owner of Walter Poteat Funeral Home in Albany, Georgia.

\textsuperscript{65} A mammy is a U.S. stereotype, especially in the South, for a black woman who worked in a white family and nursed the family's children.

\textsuperscript{66} Rabbit tobacco is a common name for Balsamweed (Gnaphalium obtusifolium), a common tobacco substitute used by children in rural areas.

\textsuperscript{67} Eric Julius “Buck” Stern, Jr. (1921-1998), also known as Erich, was a resident of Albany, Georgia who was born in Demopolis, Alabama. He was co-owner, with Walter R. “Bob” Kimbrell and his brother Charles Marks Stern, of Kimbrell-Stern Funeral Directors in Albany.

\textsuperscript{68} Charles Marks Stern (1926-1981) was a resident of Albany, Georgia who was born in Demopolis, Alabama. He was co-owner, with Walter R. “Bob” Kimbrell and his brother Eric Julius “Buck” Stern, of Kimbrell-Stern Funeral Directors in Albany. He was in the United States Navy during World War II.
that were left and all living together in the Alms Hotel in Cincinnati, those that were widowed. I got news about them, too. Let's see. Charles and Buck. When the Thomases died . . . There was another boy. There were three of them. He was Catholic. His name was Bob Kimbrell. When the Thomases died, they left the business to those boys, and it grew into a wonderful business. Today, Buck and Charles have both passed on but Charles . . . One of Charles's sons, David, is running Kimbrell-Stern Funeral Home in Albany.

Interviewer: What about some of the other families? Do you have any recollections?

Mrs. Heyman: Absolutely. I have so many recollections. The Hofmayers had a haberdashery store about two doors down from the Rialto. The Rialto was on Pine Street, which is right in the heart of our little town.

There were the Goldsmiths, who had a lovely woman's store. Myron Gold . . . What did I say? Gold? Goldsmith was the name. He and Walter [Goldsmith] worked there. That was one of the boys I dated.

Uncle Charlie Robinson, who had married . . . My Uncle Raymond [Charles Marks], my father's brother, Uncle Raymond, married a lady named Dorothea Sterne. Her sister, Carrie Sterne, was married to a man named Robinson. They had a drugstore. They both worked.

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69 The Alms Hotel opened in 1891 and expanded in 1925 in Cincinnati, Ohio. It was owned by Frederick Alms, one of three brothers who founded the Alms & Doepke Department Store, once the second-largest store west of New York City and the largest in Cincinnati. The Alms Hotel housed a ballroom, the WKRC broadcast studios, the Tokyo Garden and Mermaid Lounge. The original building has been demolished and the second building was converted to 200 units of public housing and is now known as the Alms Hill Apartments.

70 Walter Robert “Bob” Kimbrell (1920-2000) was born and resided in Albany, Georgia. He was co-owner, with brothers Eric Julius “Buck” Stern and Charles Marks Stern, of Kimbrell-Stern Funeral Directors in Albany. He was a member of St. Teresa's Catholic Church in Albany. Her served in the United States Navy during World War II.

71 David Marks Stern was born in 1941 and is a life member of the Episcopal Church. He is the co-owner of Kimbrell-Stern Funeral Directors.

72 Kimbrell-Stern Funeral Directors is a funeral home in Albany, Georgia that began as the William H. Wilder and Son Undertakers in 1880. The name was changed in 1906 to L. Vannucci Company and to Albany Undertaking Company in 1914. In 1950, the company was sold to brothers Eric Julius “Buck” Stern and Charles Marks Stern, and Walter Robert “Bob” Kimbrell, when the name of the funeral home was changed to Kimbrell-Stern Funeral Directors. In 1990 ownership was transferred to longtime employees David Marks Stern (son of Charles Marks Stern), R. L. (Bucky) Brookshier, Jr., William I. (Billy) Coleman, Jr., and S. S. (Sandy) Mackey, Jr.

73 Hofmayer Dry Goods Company in Albany, Georgia was founded in 1870 by Jonas Hofmayer (1832-1900) who was an immigrant from the Kingdom of Bavaria (now part of Germany). After his death, the business continued under the management of his sons Louis (1872-1952) and Phillip (1874-1919).

74 Martin (1892-1961) was a resident of Albany, Georgia where he founded and operated ’s Boy’s and Men’s Shop.

75 Walter Martin (1926-2000) was born in Albany, Georgia and was a manager at ’s Boys and Men’s Shop in Albany, which was owned by his father Martin. He served in the United States Army Air Forces during World War II.

76 Dorothea Sterne Marks (1895-1942) was a teacher at the Broad Street Grammar School in Albany, Georgia. She was a graduate of the Georgia State Normal School in Athens, Georgia.

77 Carrie Sterne Robinson (1887-1979) was a cashier at the Robinson Drug Company in Albany, Georgia, a firm co-
They were Jewish. The Lonsberg family had a music store.78 They sold records. That was wonderful to go in there and play records.

Let me see. There was the Farkas family. That was a very old family in Albany. They started off originally back in the days before the automobiles. They had a livery stable where they sold and rented horses and mules. This went on for generations. Edwin Farkas, who was one of my generation, was another boy I dated, too. I had a good time. He had an uncle whose name was . . . What was his name? The one that I had that great romance with? This is all from a child's eyes. Was it Mack? Yes. Mr. Mack Farkas.81 He never married. He lived in the family's old home on Monroe Street.82 It was a huge, Victorian home. He lived there with the Meyers from . . . Mrs. Meyer83 was his sister. Her husband [Joe A. Meyer]84 had a tire store. I remember they sold tires because I had a little route I used to take on Saturday afternoon. I would go visit all the people and get bubble gum or popcorn. I used to go over to Mr. Mack Farkas's. He would take me out in the backyard. They had the most beautiful yard. They had a goldfish pond. I knew my mamma would kill me if I got wet. He would tell me to take off my shoes and socks, hold my skirt up, and to go on into the water, and I did. It was wonderful. It was just wonderful. He would have the maid bring us out sandwiches. We would have sandwiches. I just had a great time.

I would go to the movie. The young man that ran the popcorn machine, because his family owned all the movie houses,85 was Joe . . . It slips me right this minute. It's a wonder I can even think of my own name. Joe . . . I'll get it a little while. Joe Gortatowsky is correct. I used to wear a little leather beanie86 all the time. All I had to do was turn it over and it made a wonderful bowl. Joe would fill it full of Old Maids. You know what Old Maids are? You know, the ones that

owned by her husband Charles D. “Charlie Robinson and her brother-in-law Raymond Charles Marks.
78 Charles D. “Charlie” Robinson (1889-1949) was a druggist at the Robinson Drug Company in Albany, Georgia, a firm which he co-owned with his brother-in-law Raymond Charles Marks.
79 Robinson Drug Company.
80 Lonsberg Book and Music House was a business in Albany, Georgia, that was owned by Charles Lonsberg (1869-1937) and after his death was operated by his son-in-law Lorin C. Tassman (1897-1993).
81 Mack Farkas (1885-1971) was one of eight children born to Sam Farkas (1854-1915). Sam immigrated from Hungary to Albany, Georgia in 1972 and established a horse and mule business in Albany. After Sam’s death, his sons Mack, Sigo (1889-1971), George (1898-1972), and Edwin (1895-1972) continued to operate the business, the Estate of Sam Farkas.
82 Possibly the Sam Farkas House at 328 Broad Avenue, now on the National Register of Historic Places.
83 Gertrude Farkas Meyer (1887-1873)
84 Joe A. Meyer (1882-1968) owned Pennsylvania Tires and Batteries in Albany, Georgia.
85 Adolph Casper Gortatowsky (1879-1962) and his brother Isaac “Ike” C. Gortatowsky (1884-1974) were the owners of Gortatowsky Brothers and the operators of the Liberty, Albany, and State Theaters in Albany, Georgia.
86 In the United States, a beanie is a head-hugging brimless cap, with or without a visor, made from triangular panels of material joined by a button at the crown and seamed together around the sides.
didn't pop, okay, popcorn. Free. I had free popcorn. I didn't get but 25 cents a week for allowance, so I had to be very frugal. [It] costs me, I think, ten cents to get into the movie. There went almost half of my week's allowance. I had to have some for penny candy in school.

After the movie, I would go diagonally across the street to Mr. Joe Meyer. He always had chewing gum for me. Then I would go down about a half a block to Thomas Funeral Home. They would have lemonade and stuff, and I would have that. Then I go across the street to the Meyers - to the Farkas homestead. That's where I had the sandwiches. Then I just had another block and a half to walk down that same street, and I would be at my grandmother's. She always had worlds of food. I just ate my way through Albany. I had a wonderful time.

Interviewer: Were most people that were in business in Albany, were they in the mercantile business or do you remember some unusual professions?

Mrs. Heyman: The livery stable was rather unusual.

Interviewer: Any farmers or politicians? Do you recall Sam Brown? 

Mrs. Heyman: Yes, of course I do. He lived on the same street. I really could have visited them, too, on the way home from the movie. Yes, indeed. He had a . . . There was a young . . . There was a couple that lived with them in an apartment upstairs called the Kuhns. It was Miss Rose and Mr. Charlie—that name again—lived upstairs. I don't know what kind of business they were in . . . he was in, but they were very successful. They never had children. They kind of adopted my mother and her family. That table was hers, just for an example. Lots of other things I have around the house she left to me. Yes, she was a dear lady.

Let's see if I can think of . . . Yes, I remember Mr. Sam Brown. [I] always liked the name because of . . . The Rosenbergs had a big department store there. I didn't make that circuit from the movie. If I had, I would have gone by the Rialto, where I was not allowed to go.

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87 Samuel Berner Brown (1855-1922) was born in Atlanta and moved to Albany, Georgia at the age of ten. He was a successful businessman, community leader, and mayor of Albany from 1901 to 1902. He was a president of Temple B’Nai Israel in Albany.

88 Rose Ries Kuhns (1896-1979) was a resident of Albany, Georgia who was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. From 1943 to 1949, she was a board member and volunteer chairman for the Albany chapter of the American Red Cross. She was vice-president of the Temple B’nai Israel sisterhood.

89 Charles S. Kuhns (1887-1969) was a resident of Albany, Georgia who was born in Tallahassee, Florida. He was a buyer for a wholesale dry goods business.

90 Rosenberg Brothers Department Store was founded in Albany, Georgia in 1896 by Jacob “Jake” Rosenberg (1870-1938). After his death, the family business was managed by his son Joseph Rosenberg (1904-1999) and his grandson Ralph Rosenberg (b. 1931). During its heyday, it was one of the largest and most successful stores in southwest Georgia. The business closed in 1991.
I am trying to remember if there were any Jewish lawyers. Walter Goldsmith's brother\textsuperscript{91} was a physician, but he didn't live in Albany as a physician. He moved. I don't . . . Yes, he did. He lived there for a while. Yes.

**Interviewer:** Your family's firm, there was a bar and poolroom.

**Mrs. Heyman:** A poolroom, a bar, and a liquor store.

**Interviewer:** How did it survive during the Prohibition years?

**Mrs. Heyman:** They certainly couldn't sell liquor, could they? I really don't know, unless it was the near-beers and the poolroom that probably pulled them through. Nobody had any money in Prohibition time. Let me tell you. You are talking about a little bit before my time, okay?

I was very popular because all the boys thought . . . in high school all the boys thought I could get them free beer. I couldn't, and I didn't.

**Interviewer:** How has growing up and living in a small community affected how you viewed the world and your life in general?

**Mrs. Heyman:** Growing up in a small town, I thought the limits of the world were Albany, Georgia, and Ocala, Florida, and the long road between. Then I went off to Girl Scout\textsuperscript{92} camp, which was in Mentone, Georgia, on the Alabama line. I realized there was another state. Up to that time, I thought there were only two states Then I found out there was a third. I was very closeted. It was a very much a *To Kill a Mockingbird*\textsuperscript{93} town. That's all it was. I really never ran into hate. If I did, other than Billy Tilman, then I wasn't smart enough to realize it. I don't ever remember hearing my mother and dad . . .

<End Video, Part 3>

<Begin Video, Part 4>

**Mrs. Heyman:** . . . say anything about it.

**Interviewer:** I have a question, kind of an unusual question. There's been so much lately being published about lynchings in the South.

**Mrs. Heyman:** Yes.

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\textsuperscript{91} Abram Oscar Goldsmith (1920-1988) was a physician in Albany, Georgia.

\textsuperscript{92} Founded in 1912 by Juliette Gordon Lowe, Girl Scouts of America is a youth organization that aims to empower girls and help teach values such as honesty, fairness, courage, compassion, character, and citizenship through various activities. Membership is organized by grade level.

\textsuperscript{93} *To Kill a Mockingbird* is a novel written by Harper Lee that was published in 1960. The novel depicts racial injustice in the fictional town of Maycomb, Alabama. The title is symbolic of the destruction or injury of innocent characters in the book.
Interviewer: Do you have any recollection of that happening, it being the atmosphere that surrounded those kind of horrible . . .

Mrs. Heyman: To my knowledge, none of that took place in Albany. If it did, it was out in the fields and peanut fields around. I don't know of any lynching. I know, of course, the one in Marietta [Georgia]. I remember as a child, going down to the river, to the Flint River, and going to mass baptisms, which was wonderful. I don't . . . I'm sure there was plenty of hate there because this was an agricultural town at that time. It was not . . . It was really mostly mules, cotton, peanuts, and pecans. I'm sure there must have been. I am sure that most black people in those times were still treated like slaves that were being paid. I don't know. I'm not telling you it didn't exist, because it probably did. I just didn't know about it.

Interviewer: Your children don't live in Rome.

Mrs. Heyman: None of them.

Interviewer: Do you wish they would have stayed here, or are you happy that they are in a larger community?

Mrs. Heyman: I am happy that they are in a larger community, for many reasons. Of course, I would love to have them here, but I think they are better off where they are. They knew they were Jewish. My husband and I worked on that very hard. We formed a chapter of NFTY here. [We] would cart the kids around to Columbus, Georgia, and to see Fiddler on the Roof in Atlanta, just so that they would know they were Jewish people.

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**Footnotes**

94 Leo Frank (1884-1915) was a Jewish factory superintendent in Atlanta, Georgia. In 1913, he was accused of raping and murdering one of his employees, a 13-year-old girl named Mary Phagan, whose body was found on the premises of the National Pencil Company. Frank was arrested, tried, convicted and sentenced to death for her murder. The trial was the catalyst for a great outburst of antisemitism led by the populist Tom Watson and the center of powerful class and political interests. Frank was sent to Milledgeville State Penitentiary to await his execution. Governor John M. Slaton, believing there had been a miscarriage of justice, commuted Frank’s sentence to life in prison. This enraged a group of men who styled themselves the “Knights of Mary Phagan.” They drove to the prison, kidnapped Frank from his cell and drove him to Marietta, Georgia where they lynched him. Many years later, the murderer was revealed to be Jim Conley, who had lied in the trial, pinning it on Frank instead. Frank was pardoned on March 11, 1986, although they stopped short of exonerating him.

95 North American Federation of Temple Youth (NFTY) is an organized youth movement of Reform Judaism. Funded and supported by the Union for Reform Judaism, NFTY exists to supplement and support Reform youth groups at the synagogue level. About 750 local youth groups are affiliated, with over 8,500 youth members.

96 The Broadway musical Fiddler on the Roof was based on Tevye and his Daughters (or Tevye the Dairyman), a series of stories by Sholem Aleichem that he wrote in Yiddish between 1894 and 1914 about Jewish life in a village in the Pale of Settlement of Imperial Russia at the turn of the 20th century.
Our son, when he went off to University of Georgia,\textsuperscript{97} joined a Jewish fraternity. Our daughter Deborah,\textsuperscript{98} who was at Tulane,\textsuperscript{99} was rushed, She decided she was not going to join a sorority because she was going to do her thing. If you knew my daughter, Debbie, she's still doing her thing. Our son, David,\textsuperscript{100} he probably didn't know what the word fraternity meant, but he joined the fraternity that was “the Engineers.” They never came home and said anything to me about anyone saying anything to them that was antisemitic or derogatory toward them.

I know that our older son Lyons\textsuperscript{101} did not like being different. I reveled in it. He didn't like it. I think marrying Gail Goldstein\textsuperscript{102} from Atlanta made him . . . He became . . . I said he was born again. He really has been born again. All our children are fiercely Jewish. Our youngest son is not married to a Jewish girl, but he is fiercely Jewish.

\textbf{Interviewer:} I asked your husband earlier, and I’ll ask you, are you concerned about the Rome [Jewish] community and its future?

\textbf{Mrs. Heyman:} No, I am not. I have very good reason for feeling that way. It is true that we have lots in the young group, particularly, of mixed marriages. He did neglect to say that some of them had been through actual conversion, mostly women that are the non-Jewish member. A lot of them are not but have adopted all the Jewish ways. They consider every child they have as Jewish. Because Rome, Georgia, has the luck of being the medical center for this part of our county—northwest Georgia, north of Atlanta—we've got every facility here medical-wise. The only thing we don't do are transplants. We'll probably be doing that next week. There are a lot of young professionals that have moved in, a lot of young doctors and dentists. I think a lot of them will be putting down roots. There was a period of time—since the time we moved back to Rome as man and wife and until the last eight or ten years—that the only new Jewish people that came

\textsuperscript{97}The University of Georgia, founded in 1785, also referred to as UGA or simply Georgia, is an American public research university in the city of Athens in the U.S. state of Georgia.
\textsuperscript{98}Deborah Heyman Harris.
\textsuperscript{99}Tulane University is a private, nonsectarian research university located in New Orleans, Louisiana.
\textsuperscript{100}David Marks Heyman.
\textsuperscript{101}Lyons Joel Heyman, Jr. was born in Rome, Georgia and is the founder and CEO of 7 Hills Transport, a trucking company with headquarters in Cartersville, Georgia. He completed a baccalaureate degree at the University of Georgia in Athens, Georgia and a graduate degree at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
\textsuperscript{102}Gail Goldstein Heyman is a dental hygienist who is a native and resident of Atlanta, Georgia. She is a graduate of Northside High School and Medical College of Georgia. She was a past president of the sisterhood at Rodeph Shalom Congregation when she lived for several years in Rome, Georgia. She is a community activist who was recognized for her service by the Martin Luther King Humanitarian award, Woman of Distinction award, and Children's Legacy award. She is a co-founder of the Fragile X Association of Georgia and a National Commissioner of the Anti-Defamation League. She serves on boards of the Jewish Federation of Greater Atlanta and Jewish Family and Career Services.
in town would maybe stay a year or two. Then they would go on to Atlanta or somewhere. What's the name, Greene, Melissa Fay Greene\(^\text{103}\) who was married, and still is, to Don Samuel,\(^\text{104}\) who is a lawyer in Atlanta. She, as you know, wrote the *Bombing of the Temple*.\(^\text{105}\) They lived here. They were living here when their first baby was born. They were like so many young couples. They lived here for a while and moved on. A lot of them were brought here by some of our big industries, and they moved on. Now we are getting people whose roots are going down and who are reveling in their Jewishness.

I went to temple just two weeks ago. We don't have [services] every Friday night. We have it, but not many people come unless the rabbi is there. I would say two-thirds of the service was in Hebrew.

I've taken it upon myself to learn Hebrew like I did as a child, by transliteration. I'm forever w/ swapping from the back of the book to the prayers to the back of the book. It's fine. I'm learning. We've adopted a lot of Jewish customs that we never did before. It's just, I think, a happier place. The *Oneg*\(^\text{106}\) are wonderful. The gatherings are wonderful. This year I'm on the committee for the one hundred twenty-fifth reunion. It's going to be a blowout. It's going to be wonderful. Lyons and I were co-chairmen for the one hundredth [reunion] and that was really something to see. This year is going to be something to see, too.

**Interviewer**: Is there a Jewish cemetery here?

**Mrs. Heyman**: Yes. We have . . . One of the original seven hills of Rome is Mount Aventine,\(^\text{107}\) I think. Yes, it's Mount Aventine. The whole top of Mount Aventine is our Jewish cemetery, which is very beautiful. We really should take you up there. It's just beautiful. The cemetery committee keep it in pristine condition. The only thing is that we are running out of space. We

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\(^{103}\) Melissa Fay Greene (b. 1952) is an American non-fiction author in Atlanta, Georgia who is the author of *No Biking in the House Without a Helmet, Praying for Sheetrock, The Temple Bombing, Last Man Out*, and *There Is No Me Without You*. She was born in Macon, Georgia and was raised in Dayton, Ohio.

\(^{104}\) Don Samuel is a criminal defense attorney and partner in the law firm Garland, Samuel & Loeb, representing a variety of white-collar and non-white-collar criminal defendants. He is married to author Melissa Fay Greene.

\(^{105}\) *The Temple Bombing* is a book written by Melissa Fay Greene about the 1958 bombing of the Hebrew Benevolent Congregation (The Temple) in Atlanta, Georgia.

\(^{106}\) *Oneg Shabbat* literally means “enjoyment of the Sabbath.” Originally it referred to social and cultural activities on Saturday afternoon. In the United States it is known as “Oneg” and refers to the social activity following a Friday night or Saturday morning service.

\(^{107}\) Mount Aventine in Rome, Georgia was named after one of the seven hills of ancient Rome, Italy. The view of the city of Rome from Aventine Hill was depicted in *Rome, From Mount Aventine*, an 1835 oil painting by J. M. W. Turner. Rome, Georgia is referred to as the City of Seven Hills, which includes Mount Aventine, located between South Broad Street and the Etowah River in Rome. At Mount Aventine’s highest point is a Jewish Cemetery dating back to the early 1800’s.
have a space in another cemetery that's been marked off for Jewish burials. I've got my space on Mount Aventine next to Lyons and his parents. That's where I'll be. When his father bought the plot, he took us up there to see it. He says, “Isn't this a wonderful site.” He says, “If viewed from here, this plot, I'll be able to see all of the city of Rome.” I said, “Dad, not unless you sit up.” If I sit up, I'll be able to see all of Rome.

Interviewer: Thank you very much. I enjoyed this interview. Thank you.

Mrs. Heyman: It was my pleasure. Thank you.

<End Video, Part 4>

INTERVIEW ENDS