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**Jewish Historical Society Oral Histories**  
**Ida Spiegel (1 February 1994)**  
**Ann Litowitz (1 February 1994)**

**By Christopher Penrith**  
**April 2020**

**Link to audio file:**

<https://archive.org/details/JHS62Side1/JHS+62-+side+1.mp3>

<https://archive.org/details/JHS62Side1/JHS+62-+side+2.mp3>

**Summary Information**

Tape Number: JHS 62  
There are 2 versions: A 1-hour version and a 40-minute version.

Length: 60:00  
Interviewer: O. [Orvil "Ozzie"] Zuckerman  
Interviewee: Ida Spiegel  
Date of Interview: 1 February 1994  
Place of Interview: Greenwood House

0:00 There is about 4 minutes of static with some speaking in between, which I could not make out.

13:00 The static ends at 13:00 minutes.  
"We had a beautiful big wedding" – woman, possibly Ida. Lived with her parents for a while before meeting her husband and sometime after meeting her husband. Talked about family life and Hermann living with them and went to work at King's Furniture. "A car you didn't have in those days, but he had a reputation, when I tell them I am Mrs. Hermann Spiegel, rings a bell. My father had the store." Wants to talk about family life. Talking about family getting involved in the community. Talking about brothers and their occupations.

15:30 Talking about relationship between Ida and Herman, been together for 3 years.

18:00 She talks about her participation in community organizations.

- 20:00 Talking about kids and grandkids. Sees them, 5 of them went to college and left Trenton. Complains about some of the kids' life choices and their inability to hold a job.
- 22:00 Talking about where she lived before she moved to her current place. She lived on Morris Street then Belmont Circle, and then Ewing, then back to Trenton. She would like to be in her own home [seems to be in assisted living or some kind of home where she needs attention and she's not happy about it].
- 24:00 She's talking about a reunion at her nephew's place in his showroom [assume it is a family reunion]. There were hundreds of people there and they were a very close family. Her husband was in the air force.
- 27:00 The interview seems to be about to end. They exchange contact information.

The rest is a report about various stock prices on different food products.

Length: 40:45  
 Interviewer: O. [Orvil "Ozzie"] Zuckerman  
 Interviewee: Ann Litowitz  
 Date of Interview: 1 February 1994  
 Place of Interview: Greenwood House

- 0:00 Introductions are being made. Starting with the early part of her life. She is talking about Kindergarten. She was born in 1903 and started school in 1909 when she was 6 years old. She used to be in a lot of plays in grade school. She had a positive experiences.
- 2:40 Mother was from Kiev, father was from Poland in the late 1880s and 1890s. They went to Philadelphia, where she was born, then moved to Trenton. Father was a house painter; it was difficult because he couldn't work during the cold. Grocers would extend credit, people would help each other in the community back then. Every Jewish family had a lounge where they would allow guests to sleep; it was a close-knit community.
- 5:30 Her father died during the First World War; talking about the 1918 flu pandemic which had no cure. After he died, she had to work at a department store in the housing department. She moved to different department stores and demonstrated merchandise. Moved to glass department and then moved to the service department where she learned switchboards. She moved to the ready-to-wear department and was training to become a buyer. Stayed until 24 when she got married.
- 7:45 Talking about high school and the social life between boys and girls during high school. Teenagers would hang out at the YWHA [Young Women's Hebrew Association] where there were a variety of activities because they had nowhere else to go. She was offered a chance to go to a drama school in New York, but wasn't interested in that.
- 9:25 She met husband on Market Street. They started a family business. Talking about family and where they are now. She bought a house on Greenwood Avenue where she lived for 40 years. They were not too active in Jewish organizations, as her husband worked a lot and she

was busy with the house and the children.

- 13:00 Father was a member and a secretary of the Workmen's Circle. Formed approximately 1915. She went to all the events with her parents. Her father had to go everywhere on foot, as they didn't own a horse. He was only 39 when he died. He partnered with a guy who had a truck before he died. Her husband walked, too. They needed trucks to deliver food.
- 16:45 She is listing her friends and their families. Her friend had a father who was a tailor who finished men's trousers. She lived across the street.
- 18:00 Her husband died when he was very young, and her mother went blind. She had to take care of her. She didn't get involved in any organizations. Her grandfather-in-law was a rabbi who was an Orthodox Jew. She could get along with them because she spoke Jewish.
- 21:00 She is talking about living in an old age home and not really liking it. She broke her hip and her kids talked to her about needing to live in a place where she could get help. She likes it there and takes part in activities. Talking about kids and grandkids. She is lucky to have good kids, 4 grandkids and 6 great-grandkids.
- 23:00 Talking about the war years and the YWHA. She doesn't recall seeing soldiers at the Y. There was nothing going on. A lot of immigrants worked at the textile factory; a lot of textile factories that girls must work. She didn't graduate from high school because she was the oldest and needed to help. Book talk - she doesn't like Danielle Steele; she likes books where she can think about things. Talking about books and book publishing. They are still talking about living in a nursing home.

Lady benefit society

- 32:00 Talking about the last years of her mom. The last two years of her life, she was having mini strokes. She had to take care of her mom.
- 34:00 Talking about the different activities at the nursing home. There's an aerobics class at her home that plays Yiddish songs.