

KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH CHARLOTTE S. SACHS

CONDUCTED, EDITED, AND INDEXED BY THOMAS A. SCOTT

for the

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Interview with Charlotte S. Sachs
Conducted, edited, and indexed by Thomas A. Scott
Monday, 1 June 2009
Location: Mrs. Sachs' home in Atlanta, Georgia

TS: Charlotte, why don't we just begin by you talking about your background of where you came from and where you went to school and things of that sort?

CS: Okay. I was born in Breslau, Germany, which is now totally Polish; it's near the Polish border and is now Wroclaw. It's completely Polish now; they kicked out all the Germans.

TS: So it's actually in Poland?

CS: Yes, it is part of Poland now, but it wasn't when I grew up. I'm the youngest of four children, and at this time I'm the only one still living.

TS: When were you born?

CS: I was born October 15, 1917. I was delivered at home, and I grew up in a middle class family. In Germany at that time high school started in the fifth grade, and you had to pass an examination before you were admitted to high school. You paid for your high school except it would go on the basis of the oldest one pays full and then it comes down, and I don't believe my parents had to pay for my education. I did not quite finish high school in Germany. In 1935, after Hitler had come, I took a short course in housekeeping and then came to this country in 1936 and found a job as a maid. That was quite common at that time for immigrants to take jobs as maids.

TS: Did your whole family come over?

CS: No. My brother next to me in age, older than I, came first in 1934 because my aunt had lost a son, and she asked for one of my brothers to come over.

TS: What was his name?

CS: Helmut.

TS: What was the family name?

CS: Stein. He went to work for my aunt and for my uncle in dental supplies when he first came. My mother came next, and my mother renewed her American citizenship at that time. My mother came in 1935.

- TS: She was born in America?
- CS: She was born in Germany of American citizens, and that made her an American citizen. By marrying my father, she lost her citizenship, but got it back when she came in 1935.
- TS: What was her name?
- CS: Martha. I came as a child of an American citizen in 1936.
- TS: So she came before you did.
- CS: Yes, and because she was an American citizen and I was not of age, I came non-quota.
- TS: Non-quota, okay. I was wondering . . .
- CS: At that time the quota was very strict.
- TS: I was wondering if it was difficult getting out of Germany.
- CS: No, I didn't have any difficulty. I didn't want to come because all my friends were still there, and I was a terrible brat here. My mother threatened to send me back; of course, she wouldn't have done that.
- TS: Well, it was smart to come at that time.
- CS: Yes.
- TS: Did that make you an automatic American citizen?
- CS: No, I had to wait my five years to become an American citizen.
- TS: Did your father stay in Germany?
- CS: My father stayed as long as he could because my sister was retarded, and we were hoping that she could pass the entrance requirement, but she never met it, and we didn't have the finances to guarantee that she wouldn't become a ward of the state. So she died in Theresienstadt as a victim of the Nazis.
- TS: Oh, my. So your father stayed with her to take care of her.
- CS: He stayed with her, and several of his sisters were still living there.
- TS: What was your father's name?
- CS: Arno. My sister's name was Eva.

TS: Did your father ever get out of Germany?

CS: My father got out as a husband of an American citizen. I think it was about 1938, but I don't know for sure.

TS: It was very fortuitous that your mother was an American citizen.

CS: That's right. She had gotten it back almost immediately when she came over, and my oldest brother was interned for awhile, but was able to get out. I don't remember why, but I imagine it had something to do with my mother's American citizenship too. He was in Buchenwald, interned, but fortunately not killed.

TS: What was his name?

CS: Wolfgang Stein.

TS: So Wolfgang, Helmut, Eva . . .

CS: The oldest one was Wolfgang. Then comes Eva who didn't make it, and then come Helmut and I.

TS: So you came here in '36 and you worked as a maid.

CS: Yes.

TS: Where were you living at that time?

CS: In New York. My mother was employed a little better than a maid because she had experience with retarded people, so she had a job with some outstanding citizens. In New York, the maids lived downstairs usually in a special area, and she lived there very comfortably. I spent my time when I was off with her. In 1937 I entered the nursing school. My mother said as a nurse you will always have a good job, and so I entered Newark Beth Israel Hospital in the school of nursing.

TS: Okay, in '37 you start nursing school.

CS: I graduated after three years.

TS: And back then nursing school meant going to a hospital didn't it?

CS: Yes, it belonged to the hospital, yes. In fact, I went there once afterwards, and it had changed. It doesn't exist any more, not for a long time. The hospital does, but not the school of nursing.

TS: By the way, what did your father do in Germany?

CS: In Germany he owned a lumber yard. Actually, my grandmother was the owner of it. Her husband had died very suddenly in 1891.

TS: So your father's mother owned it?

CS: The lumberyard, but he worked there and one of his sisters worked there. He was one of seven [children], two boys and the rest were girls. Of the girls that were killed by the Germans were the youngest, the two next ones and the oldest son. They were killed by the Germans; they didn't get out.

TS: It would have been a lot harder for them to get out than for your father, I guess.

CS: Well, my aunt and uncle were physicians and able to get out. My Aunt Edith was the one who became a saint.

TS: A saint?

CS: She was the very youngest of the family. The oldest one was a bookkeeper; his son is still living here.

TS: What do you mean that she became a saint?

CS: A saint; my aunt is a saint. She was canonized by Pope John Paul II in 1998.

TS: Oh, so your aunt was Catholic.

CS: She became Catholic by conviction, and she was canonized in 1998.

TS: My goodness, I didn't realize that. And her name is Edith?

CS: Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross.

TS: But her name before she took the name Teresa . . .

CS: She was born Edith Stein.

TS: What did she do to get canonized?

CS: She was a philosopher. You're not Catholic are you?

TS: My wife is. I'm Presbyterian.

CS: Well, in order to be canonized you have to show two miracles but since she died in a concentration camp, they only wanted one miracle. A little girl had taken an overdose of Tylenol and survived. That child lived in Massachusetts. She survived, and they counted

that as a miracle because the parents prayed to my Aunt Edith. I still have it easier to say my Aunt Edith.

TS: I guess. But she died in a concentration camp?

CS: Yes. They had moved her from Cologne. I saw my aunt on my way coming to this country. I stopped in Cologne where she was in a convent. They moved her in 1937 to Holland, but the Nazis took her and her sister. One of her sisters had become a layperson in that convent, and they moved them both out with ten minutes' notice and took them to Auschwitz.

TS: So you lost most of that part of the family then, it sounds like.

CS: Yes, well, we're still very fortunate that as many got out.

TS: Right. And I guess Edith wouldn't have even tried to get out, other than Holland.

CS: Actually, she had asked the Pope to intervene, but it did not happen. She is supposed to have said to her sister, "Rosa, let's go and die for our people." Because she considered herself still Jewish, but she was definitely Catholic. The Pope said something about that in his sermonette.

TS: That's an interesting story.

CS: Both my husband and I and a lot of the family, about ninety-five people, went for the canonization. Only the nieces or nephews were invited to come to meet the Pope.

TS: You met the Pope?

CS: Yes. One of my sons [Martin] also went because he was support for my husband who was very frail at that time. When he got to the Pope he said, "I'm a Jewish carpenter," which he actually is.

TS: That's great. That's good.

CS: Tell that to your wife.

TS: Sure. What year was this that you went over for the canonization?

CS: In 1998.

TS: So not long ago.

CS: Yes, it's a while ago by now. I still get an occasional request to talk about it.

- TS: That's great. So you studied to be a nurse. I guess right about the time World War II is breaking out you're getting through your nursing training.
- CS: Yes, I graduated in 1940, and I got married. I stayed a year at the hospital, and then I got married in 1941.
- TS: What is your husband's name?
- CS: Bill Sachs, William Sachs.
- TS: I remember him. Okay, so you got married in '41.
- CS: I graduated with the highest grade point average and got a scholarship to Columbia University in New York. I went there, but broke my leg the first semester, so I couldn't finish the semester. But anyhow I was there.
- TS: What was the degree when you graduated?
- CS: Bachelor of Science. I graduated from Emory University after moving to Atlanta.
- TS: I mean, when you got through with Beth Israel in Newark.
- CS: After passing State Boards, I was an R.N. Then I got married and lived here.
- TS: And then later on you're down here and went back to Emory to get a master's?
- CS: It took me a long time to get my degree because I was having babies and stuff like that. I worked in various hospitals. I did private duty and staff nursing at various hospitals including Emory University Hospital. That was my longest term of work experience.
- TS: I had heard that you were a nurse in World War II, in the military.
- CS: No, I was working then and had young children.
- TS: Right, so you were just working in hospitals around New York?
- CS: No, New York I didn't work in the hospital at all because in '40 when I graduated, I stayed at the same hospital, Beth Israel Hospital, for a year, and then I got married.
- TS: So then you're staying home and having children and taking care of the family.
- CS: Right. Well, I wasn't always home. I did private duty. My husband kept the kids in the evening. He had more flexible hours than I did.
- TS: What was he doing during this time? What was his career?

CS: He was a chemical consultant.

TS: How did you all get down to Atlanta?

CS: He was already in Atlanta when we got married. The Selig Company as such does not exist anymore....

TS: The Selig Company? Sure.

CS: The chemical part of it.

TS: How did you and Bill meet?

CS: He had some friends who knew both of us, and they said we deserve each other! And we were married for sixty-some-odd years.

TS: Well, I guess you did all right then.

CS: Yes.

TS: So he was working for the Selig Company so you moved down here shortly after you got married?

CS: Yes, immediately.

TS: Immediately when you got married.

CS: We had no money to spend in hotels and stuff.

TS: Right, I understand. Okay, so we're in the 1940s, and you're down in Atlanta and raising a family. When did you decide to go back to school?

CS: Well, I went to Georgia State for a number of years taking one course or two courses at a time. My husband got his degree at Georgia State as the first one to graduate at that time, the highest grade point.

TS: He had the highest grade point?

CS: Yes. Then I went to Emory. There was some scholarship money available, and I went to Emory and got my bachelor's degree in [1959].

TS: This is a Bachelor's of Nursing in ['59].

CS: Yes. I went to work after that for the DeKalb County Health Department. In 1961 I got my Master's Degree in Nursing.

TS: So you're working for the DeKalb county health department and going to school to get the master's.

CS: I worked for them for a few years. I worked at St. Joseph's for quite awhile teaching there. Then, I heard about the associate degree programs. That was a fairly new thing for nurses to get an associate degree in nursing, and I heard about the opening at [Kennesaw]. But that was a long time later. I didn't start there until '68.

TS: So St. Joseph's had their nursing training program, and you were teaching in that?

CS: Yes. And then when I heard about the associate degree opening at Kennesaw, which at that time was a junior college, as you remember, I opened the Nursing program in '68.

TS: That's right.

CS: As I said in my little reply at the gala [WellStar School of Nursing 40th Annual Celebration, 24 January 2009], Dr. [Horace W.] Sturgis, when he interviewed me, said, "The grade point for admission is 1.6. Do we have to lower it for the nursing students?" I said, "Lower it?! If anything it has to be raised." And I was very right. Out of the first class of thirty-six students, one quit the day after orientation leaving thirty-five, and they gradually quit or failed. By the time graduation came six of them graduated out of the first class.

TS: Six of the thirty-six?

CS: Six out of the thirty-six.

TS: So you were tough.

CS: Then, the next class more graduated. The first few classes nobody failed the state boards. That was a big thing, and it still is, I'm sure, but I was very proud of that. Everything went fairly smoothly. I was on the Board of Nurse Examiners for awhile, for one session. I think it was two or three years. I was chairperson of it for one year. Then came the time where I was reduced to faculty instead of the director.

TS: When did that happen?

CS: I'm trying to think. I was sixty, something like that. I thought to myself, they should have just said, "We'll keep you until you're sixty-two, and then you can get Social Security." But when they didn't want to argue with me about it, I decided to stay on until I was sixty-six.

TS: So you were the director of the program until about 1979? That would have been when you were sixty-two years old.

CS: Yes.

- TS: And then stayed on until . . .
- CS: I retired in '84.
- TS: Let's talk about what Kennesaw was like when you came here in '68. It was a very small school.
- CS: Very small school. They didn't have much over a thousand students yet. I went out for an open house after I had been appointed. It was muddy. Dr. Sturgis greeted me, and he had forgotten that he had already hired me. I said, "I'm your Director of Nursing." He made a few faux paux, but after all, he wasn't that much older than I, probably by about ten or fifteen years.
- TS: Let me see, I think he was born in 1912, if I remember correctly.
- CS: So he was only five years older than I. But, anyhow, it was a very informal thing at that time. The person who my boss was was Dr. [Wesley C.] Walraven [Associate Professor of Biology and Chairman of the Division of Natural Sciences and Mathematics]. In retrospect, I would say he was a very nice guy, but being a biologist [he expected biology to play a big role in the students' lives]. If the Nursing program had been in the history department, history would have played a big role in their lives. Being in the science department, biology was the thing. Before they could take Human Anatomy and Human Physiology, they had to take a General Biology course. They took Chemistry for Nurses, and how they squeezed everything in, I don't know. Many of the students were really not prepared; they had been accepted but had never had a science course, and no wonder the attrition rate was so high. But by the second year, the biology course was omitted, and they went directly into anatomy and physiology, and it was a little bit easier program. They still had chemistry and I agree that they needed that. They still had all the basic courses: English Composition, Principles of Sociology, General Psychology. I don't know if they got a history course.
- TS: Not in the beginning. American history was an option for a few years in the 1970s.
- CS: Are they still taking a history course?
- TS: Yes, everybody who is working for a bachelor's degree, Nursing and everything else, has to meet the General Education requirements of an American and a World history course.
- CS: But you know, to get the degree you need a certain number of hours, and for nursing where they take a lot of hours in the nursing course, that's a little difficult to squeeze in.
- TS: Sure.
- CS: But anyhow, the students did quite well in general. Still a few flunked out. Somebody at one time failed a Nursing course. Dr. Sturgis was still there and insisted that during the

summer I had to give the woman—she was really an elderly person—almost as old as I am—but he knew the husband. Politics is in there. He made me take her to the clinical area and let her show me that she knew the stuff. But if I take the best-qualified nurse one-on-one, I can almost guarantee you I can fail her/him. I mean, I'm not saying I intentionally failed her, but she did enough wrong that I felt she was not safe to be a nurse. So she quit. She was very sorry, and I'm sure Dr. Sturgis was very sorry, but we had a faculty member who quit because of that. It should never have happened where we were made to take her back to pass her. And that happened once or twice with sociology professors who changed the grades, their own grade in order for somebody to pass, and I think this is not quite kosher.

TS: I remember when you were being criticized back then for having high standards, you made the comment that you don't want people working on you in the hospital that don't know anything.

CS: That's right. It's too critical. Today it's much more critical. When I go to visit someone in the hospital, I have a friend who is in the hospital with four big things hanging down, I mean, it's so difficult today. I couldn't go back for—well, I wouldn't want to, at ninety-one I don't start again.

TS: What kind of search was there for the directorship? Did you get interviewed by all the administrators on campus?

CS: No, as far as I remember it was only Dr. Sturgis. I know I didn't have much competition. One person had applied, and I knew her, but I don't think there were very many people applying for the job. It was a new concept to graduate people in two years, thus almost every one of the nursing graduates in the associate degree program took three years because they couldn't manage it. There were a lot of middle-aged women who came who had been L.P.N.S. (Licensed Practical Nurses).

TS: Well, I've done several oral histories with faculty members in the Nursing program, and I know one of them, Janice M. Long, was in Texas, and she went the same route you did, going to a hospital in the 1960s to learn her nursing. She was talking about how novel the idea of an associate degree in nursing was. So Kennesaw must have been fairly early nationwide, weren't we?

CS: Yes. I went for a workshop to Florida where an established program was, and I also went to New York State where there was a very established program to learn as much as I could about it. One of my faults was that I didn't stand up enough for what I believed was right. I was overwhelmed. With Dr. Sturgis you could not stand up very much, at least I felt that way. Since he was the biggest boss at that time, I'm certainly not shy, but I was raised in a country where authority was so definite, and when I said to him, "We have to raise this grade point," I wouldn't have gotten further.

TS Well, your reputation was that you stood up for the Nursing program.

CS: Well, I had to. I mean, somebody had to stand up. But in the beginning, with the three biology courses, I should have said, "You can't do that; that's too much." But I wasn't experienced enough to really speak up. Yes, I spoke up, and I have no regrets about that. Not even when I was shafted and [one of the administrators] perjured himself. I had told him something, and he denied that he knew about it.

TS: In terms of a grade for a student?

CS: No, it wasn't about grades. I had filed an HEW complaint on salary. A person in another division with a similar academic preparation received more salary. Whatever or whoever it was, he perjured himself. I never looked at him again.

TS: So he perjures himself in court?

CS: No, it was at the college. There was a hearing.

TS: A hearing. That HEW sent out an agent or something?

CS: I don't know whether HEW sent it out or if it was just Toby who was there.

TS: Toby Hopper? [Eleanor T. Hopper, Assistant Dean of the College during part of the 1970s; Dean of Student Development during part of the 1980s]

CS: Yes. Is she still there?

TS: No she's retired. So this is like a sex discrimination case against somebody or . . .

CS: Yes, I don't even think I have the papers any more; I'm pretty sure I don't.

TS: At any rate, there was a hearing.

CS: I had a lawyer, and she was very good, but if somebody perjures himself, there's not much you can do. His was a higher state than mine. I'm not bitter any more; I've been very fortunate. I have a good retirement [plan.]. I've got Social Security.

TS: But this is about equal treatment, is that what the complaint was?

CS: Yes, that's right. [A male faculty member who] died fairly recently, two or three years ago, [had] an educational background very similar to mine. He had nothing more than his master's degree.

TS: And he was being paid more?

CS: Higher than I, considerably. Well, anyhow, that's past.

TS: Okay. Did you win your suit or your complaint? Did they do anything to equalize salaries?

CS: No. That must have been already after I had been told that I would be shafted.

TS: You would no longer be the director?

CS: Yes. And Judy took the directorship.

TS: Judy Perkins [Dr. Julia L. Perkins]?

CS: Yes. I think she may have had something to do with it; she was very, very ambitious. But I'm sure she did a lot of good.

TS: Why don't we go back and talk about who some of the faculty members were in Nursing back in the early days when you were directing the program in the early years. June S. Walls, I'm sure was there.

CS: Yes. Well, June wasn't in the very early years. [Ed. Note: June Walls completed her M.N. at Emory University in 1970 and is first listed as a faculty member in the 1971-72 catalog.] In the early part there were two [Emma F. Clark and Frances A. Morgan] and one [Morgan] left because she didn't get the raise she expected, so she left after the first [two] years. The other one [Clark] stayed several years and then her husband moved. Each time we got somebody. June I think was ahead of L. Annette Bairan [who joined the faculty in 1972]. I saw in the paper yesterday, there was something about Annette and her husband.

TS: Oh really? Something about them in the newspaper?

CS: It was in the Atlanta paper. There were a number of faculty. I don't remember all their names. If somebody would mention them, I could say, yes, they were there and they were wonderful or I didn't like them. Dr. [Herbert L.] Davis [who replaced Wesley Walraven as Chairman of the Division of Natural Science and Mathematics in 1970] had his own mind, and we had one faculty member whom he absolutely didn't like. See that's where I should have stood up and said, "What kind of a reason do you think?" "Well, she didn't play tennis." There were several of them whom he didn't want to reappoint because they didn't play tennis. I know of one who didn't play tennis. This kind of thing I should have been more insistent that there has to be a reason. I know you don't have to give it to them, but I should have known why he let them go.

TS: This is a faculty member in Nursing that he let go?

CS: Yes, only in Nursing. There was nothing else that concerned me. Oh, if somebody had been very bad in their biology teaching or something like that, I probably would have tried to do something.

- TS: But that's pretty serious if you're the director and they fire somebody and you're not even consulted.
- CS: He wouldn't consult; he would say, "I think we better not keep her." I don't know, there probably weren't more than two or three. One I told you left because Dr. Sturgis made me stay in the summertime. I mean, I was there anyhow in the summer, but to retest somebody, I should have refused. But I had no real reason to refuse; I was there anyhow. I was being paid for the summer. It was more of a philosophical thing that I should not have been told. Well, anyhow, all those things are so long ago.
- TS: Well, are there any faculty members that you'd like to talk about that you thought were particularly good faculty members in Nursing or that you were close to?
- CS: Well, Annette Bairan was one. In her own way, she had to work very, very hard, but she worked very hard and got to the place where she is. I don't know anybody who worked as hard, I don't believe, as Annette. I don't think I've ever told her that, but in retrospect I surely remember. June Walls was a very good educator. Then there was Beverly J. Farnsworth [who joined the faculty in 1979]. She was in mental health, and she was very good. I can't think of anybody now, you know. I'd have to see some names before I would remember.
- TS: Well, let's talk about some students. Before we started you mentioned one, for instance, that you've stayed very close to.
- CS: Yes. M. Jerdone Davis.
- TS: Why don't you talk about your relationship with her?
- CS: For years she would visit me. I lived in another house then when my husband was still living. She'd come visit me every so often, and we just remained in a relationship. Then, maybe two or three years ago, her mother died. She called me, and she was grieving, and we met. Ever since then we've been real good friends. She picked me up one day and took me to her home in South Carolina. We talk to each other, e-mail to each other, even though she's closer to my daughter's age than to mine; and they also became very good friends. We are planning to go up to see her in a few weeks. I don't remember the date, but my daughter keeps up with that. But every so often I meet somebody in a doctor's office or in the hospital who says, "Oh Mrs. Sachs, I remember you." That happened just last week when I went to my doctor's on Friday, and the nurse told me she was a nurse from Kennesaw and that she remembered me. That happens every so often. The two ladies who spoke at the Gala, Jerdone has told me that they were very good friends together and they studied together during that time while they were students.
- TS: When was Jerdone a student at Kennesaw, do you remember? Was that early or toward the end of your teaching career at Kennesaw?

CS: Oh no, no, much earlier. She did a lot of nursing here. She graduated in 1972. I interviewed everyone before they became students. When she came to me, I told her, looking at her transcript, that she had a very poor transcript. I said, "We'll accept you, but you have a good chance of not making it because of your poor history." She tells me all the time that was the reason why she worked doubly hard to show us. As I said, she got the doctorate in Christian education, and I'm sure she had to study for that.

TS: I think that was before we had the tape on, so that's worth mentioning that she went on. So she got a doctorate in Christian education?

CS: She teaches in South Carolina. She counsels students. When she's in town, and I go to services at my synagogue, she'll go with me. I haven't been with her to church, but we're planning to be there soon over the weekend, and we'll probably go to church with her. Other outstanding students during my time at Kennesaw Junior College include Genie E. Dorman, Nancy M. Ballard, and Janet D. Martin, all straight A students.

TS: I've seen you before down at the Temple in Atlanta years ago when I was doing some lectures during the week on Georgia history. Is that the synagogue that you were talking about?

CS: No, I don't go to the Temple any more. I go to a small temple in Roswell. I don't remember why we changed, but my daughter went to that small temple, and so I said I'd go there too.

TS: Which one is that? What's the name of it?

CS: Temple Kehillat Chaim. It's an interesting synagogue. It's a very comparatively small one.

TS: But a Reform congregation?

CS: Yes. Wow, you're knowledgeable. But, anyhow, well, I can't think of more faculty members now. I don't think too many are still there. I was surprised that Judy was still there.

TS: Well, she's been retired for a few years now. In fact, we did an interview with her in 2005, but she's been retired for some time now.

CS: Well, she was very, very assertive. When she wanted to come to the faculty, she was in California at the time before that, getting her master's degree, and she'd call up again and again. You know, it's a long process to be appointed. I remember waiting and waiting. But anyhow . . .

TS: I think she grew up in Marietta, and so that's probably why she wanted to come to Kennesaw. Why don't we talk a little bit more about the Nursing program? You talked

about how as long as you were director you interviewed every student that came into the program.

CS: Yes.

TS: So you got to know them very well, I assume.

CS: Yes. Most of them I got to know pretty well, and I probably had some idea who was going to make it and who was not going to make it. I was not telling everybody if I thought they wouldn't make it. I may have said, "You're going to have to work quite hard." And they would have had to work. Everybody had to work hard in order to get through. I don't know if I could have made it. Some of the young women came from far away, considering. One student, she was fairly early in the program, came from the intersection of GA 440 on I-85. She lived within a few miles of that. She never passed state boards. She tried and tried and tried, and never passed them. She finally gave up. It's a shame to spend that much time and effort, but there was nothing else we could do.

TS: Sure. Where did you place the students? A lot of them worked at Kennestone, I guess.

CS: At the time I left, we had students at Kennestone, at Cobb General, Northside, Scottish Rite, and St. Joe's, all of those places. I don't know where they place them now because the other programs are using the same places, and it's got to be difficult to place them at the time that they could go and no other students went. You can not expect patients to be cared for as a student's learning experience.

TS: Right. Particularly, not only putting people in jobs in those places, but for the training they had to be in the hospitals too.

CS: Yes.

TS: Now, there's a very close relationship between WellStar and the School of Nursing, in fact, it's named the WellStar School of Nursing.

CS: Yes.

TS: What was the relationship with the hospitals would you say, when you started? I mean, it was a brand new program so how did you go about establishing a good relationship with the local hospitals? Did you spend much time out in the community?

CS: I don't remember with Cobb General, except that I knew all the nursing directors there. At Kennestone it was very easy. They were very eager for us to come in. Not only that, within a year I would think, very short time, they opened up an ICU, which they hadn't had before. It wasn't strictly because of the nursing students, but I said, "We've got to have it." They really had to have it regardless, but it happened while we were sending students there. As I said, at Cobb General I knew the director of nursing, and it probably wasn't very difficult either. That was a time when we needed nurses very badly. Then

comes a time, it's been that way historically, you prepare all these nurses, and then boom! They have enough nurses, and the next class doesn't find a job. But right now—and I see that in the papers—there are so many old people who are still in nursing. For example, the classes that graduated in '70, the first class, there were only six graduates. They're old by now. Most of them weren't kids. There were older women who wanted to become nurses in their forties and fifties. So they are by now ready for retirement or have retired.

TS: Probably so.

CS: Right now there's a big shortage again I see in the papers.

TS: Apparently so because it's a high priority in the University System, that's part of why we've got that sixty million dollar building going up.

CS: Another one?

TS: Well, the Health Sciences building that they're building right now is for nursing. They've just started construction.

CS: Well, the present Nursing building is real new.

TS: The present Nursing building is the old Science building, but was totally renovated. They're just putting up the foundations now next to the Central Parking Deck for the new Health Sciences building, but it's going to be a sixty million dollar building, and it's going to support the doctoral program in Nursing.

CS: Yes. I'm amazed that they're getting that because Emory has one, Georgia State has one, and I always feel at times we overdo for the purpose of our glory. I don't know how many doctoral students Emory had. I just read their magazine. I get it regularly. But they get a lot of out of the country. Oh, one of our early graduates got her Ph.D. She started with an associate degree. She went overseas somewhere. She was at June Walls' funeral, as I was, and Jerdone came in and we went to June's funeral. That was a shock.

TS: Yes, it sure was. Were you involved in the development of the four-year nursing program?

CS: No. Judy was in charge of that.

TS: So you continued to teach in the two-year program until they phased that out?

CS: Well, the two-year program lasted a little longer. [Ed. Note: The last class in the associate program was admitted in the fall of 1995]. I was there and spoke to the last class of the junior college; they invited me to speak to them. The four-year program must have started [by then]. I know they had a bridge program for practical nurses, and they

had a bridge program from two year to four year somehow. But I wasn't involved with it any more.

TS: Did you think it was a good idea to go to the four-year program?

CS: Yes. I think educational-wise it's a very good idea. I have some doubts about the doctoral program, but I wouldn't say that in public.

TS: You mentioned a little bit earlier that a lot of the students were non-traditional in the Nursing program. Would you say they were the typical students over the years, those that were beyond the traditional age?

CS: I may be wrong, but I would think that there probably was almost fifty-fifty of new graduates and fifty-fifty of older people, middle aged or older than that. I would think.

TS: So it's an interesting mix and not totally unlike the whole college. We always had large numbers of the older students in all the programs, but it sounds like maybe even more so in Nursing.

CS: That could be. I didn't know that. Well, of course, some of the older students came from Nursing to you for the history courses and Sociology, so if they are in the Nursing program you automatically get some older ones.

TS: Right. Did you see any change in students over the years from when you started in 1968 and when you retired in 1984?

CS: I think by that time they came knowing already that you've got to study very, very hard. I think there was a difference in that—that they can't make it without studying.

TS: So as time goes on they're more serious when they come.

CS: I think so.

TS: I wonder if the fact that we became a four-year school made a difference in their thinking.

CS: Probably, too. Because they had to have more general education courses than before, but not very many because it got more in-depth in nursing for the bachelor's degree.

TS: The students had to be enrolled and take some classes first before they got into the Nursing program anyway, didn't they?

CS: I don't know for sure how it's done there. In many schools they start with some nursing courses in the first two years. Now Emory definitely has two years of general education and then they go into nursing, and I think that's pretty exclusive.

TS: But as long as you were there at any rate, somebody would come here for the first time to Kennesaw and go automatically into the Nursing program the first quarter they were here?

CS: Yes.

TS: Okay. Well, you retired in 1984. What have you been doing since then?

CS: Well, did you see my swim stuff there?

TS: Oh, did you go swimming this morning?

CS: Yes, I swam eighteen laps this morning.

TS: Where do you go to swim?

CS: The Jewish Community Center. I was there early this morning, and I didn't realize that they had day camp. So there was a long line to get into the facility. The pool was okay.

TS: Once you got in the door?

CS: There weren't a lot of kids. I go swimming at least twice a week; and I do other exercises twice a week; and I volunteer with blood pressures once a week at the Benson Center.

TS: At the center?

CS: Yes. And on Fridays I'm at the bread gang. We sell day old bread and cookies and stuff like that that goes back into the facility. I go to my temple for lunch-and-learn on Wednesdays and for Torah study on Sunday. So, you see, I stay busy. In between I go to various doctors. They are happy to hear that I swim, and you've got to keep your doctors happy. Learn that for your older age. You've got to keep them happy.

TS: I'll try to remember that! Well, I think I'm about out of questions. Can you think of anything that we should have covered that we haven't that you'd like to talk about?

CS: No. I think in general I'm proud that I was able to establish a Nursing program. I'm happy that it has grown, that it has good leadership, and that it isn't as stressful, apparently, any more. It was very stressful for me from the beginning. You had to fight for everything. You, yourself, said that you had to fight for the nurses, and that was very stressful. I started getting high blood pressure when I was there. I still have it, but now I can control it better.

TS: Well, you were one of the few female administrators on campus back then, maybe the only one in the late 1960s.

CS: That's true.

- TS: Did that add to the stress do you think?
- CS: Maybe, but I didn't think of that. I don't think I ever thought of that. In retrospect, I didn't realize that I was the only female administrator. I don't think I ever thought of that, but I may be wrong. You forget so much. I forget a lot of things. Fortunately, most of the time, my daughter might remember when she's here. She's in the public school system.
- TS: Anything you want to say about your children for the interview?
- CS: Well, my oldest son, Harvey, has been a very successful person. He has a Ph.D. He had a little German. For his Ph.D. he had to pass a German exam and did, although we never spoke German in front of him.
- TS: What was his Ph.D. in?
- CS: The Ph.D. was in searching for the underwater microscopic organisms. I don't remember the term any more. But that's not what he does now. He's now in energy control. His wife worked for AT&T and went out of that, decided to leave, and she tutors kids in math. Her Ph.D. is in applied math.
- TS: What's her name?
- CS: Susan. They are very happy. They have good financial backing and have a huge house and both of them are bicyclists. Their son has a bachelor's degree, and he has just recently returned from seven weeks in Shanghai. They weren't ready for him, so he had to wait around until they got the tools and everything he needed to work with them. I can't tell you exactly what he does, but his new wife was quite upset that he was gone so long. Then comes Martin. Martin has a bachelor's degree. He was a very difficult child, but he's now a wonderful, wonderful person. He's the one who told the Pope that he is a Jewish carpenter. He lives in the Blue Ridge Mountains.
- TS: Is he really a carpenter in the Blue Ridge Mountains?
- CS: Well, yes. And his current girlfriend I think will be his last. She has a Ph.D., and she's worked for the state even, and is a wonderful person. We are very fond of her. He's settled down. He's going to be sixty-three this year, and Harvey will be sixty-five this year. Jeanette is the baby, and she is in the school system between the parents and the social workers and the teachers and the kids, something like that: IST. She doesn't teach, except right now she'll be teaching summer school to those kids who flunked the required test to progress to the next grade to help them pass.
- TS: So those are your three. Well, thank you very much for the interview.

APPENDIX

Letter from M. Jerdone Davis, 31 July 2009

Recently, Mrs. Sachs allowed me to read your interview with her. What a privilege to be a part of her history and to read how that history developed. I wanted to take the opportunity to share with you how she impacted my life. When I was a young adult I had flunked out of a private women's college and had excelled in taking business courses in a business college. I had become a file-clerk typist at Emory University Clinic in the Department of Orthopedics and was quickly advanced to be the secretary of one of the surgeons.

During my work there, I continued to yearn to be a nurse (which is a long story). I applied to KJC to be in the nursing course, and Mrs. Sachs personally interviewed me. The statement I remember her saying in her German accent was, "Well, Jerdone, you've made a mess of your academic career." However, Kennesaw being a junior college had to admit me on probation, and I had to prove that I was college material. I made dean's list most of my ADN experience. Mrs. Sachs mentored me in the field of nursing. Evidently, she saw potential in me and nurtured that by challenging me, taking me with her to community outreach functions & GNA lobbying situations at the state capitol, and she took me to state nursing association functions. She taught me everything I have used in Christian discipleship ministry regarding building friendships with younger mentees.

In 2002-3 I earned my Ed.D. in Church Leadership and Ministry. My dissertation in part was on mentoring. I dedicated the dissertation¹ to my mother and to Mrs. Sachs. I cite this because of the Preface that mentions Mrs. Sachs. I don't have a copy of the exact words at my fingertips, but would like for her to be recognized as the nursing mentor that she is and has been.

As she said in your interview, we have remained good friends through the years—there was a period of about five or six years where I lost touch with her. I might tell you that she continues to mentor me in her "youthfulness." Not only is she community minded with her continued work at the Benson Center, but she also until recently would hold Friday evening Shabbat services at the retirement facility where some of her friends reside.

Taking care of the physical, she swims 18-24 laps 2-3 days per week. This challenges me, one who is busy academically. Nearly every time I visit with her and her daughter, we schedule a swim into the visit. She can almost outdo me doing laps!!

M. Jerdone Davis, Ed.D.
Associate Professor of Christian Education
Erskine Theological Seminary

¹ Davis, Maria Jerdone. 2003. "Perceptions of Builder Women's Contributions to Intergenerational Mentoring Relationships in the Presbyterian Church in America." Ed.D. dissertation, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. (Pettegrew/Simpson)

INDEX

- Auschwitz concentration camp, 5
- Bairan, L. Annette, 12-13
- Ballard, Nancy M., 14
- Benson Center, Atlanta, 18
- Breslau, Germany, 1
- Buchenwald concentration camp, 3
- Clark, Emma F., 12
- Cobb General Hospital, 15
- Columbia University, 6
- Davis, Herbert L., 12-13
- Davis, M. Jerdone, 13-14, 16, 20
- DeKalb County Health Department, 7-8
- Dorman, Genie E., 14
- Emory University, 6-7, 16-17
- Emory University Hospital, 6
- Farnsworth, Beverly J., 13
- Georgia State University, 7, 16
- Hopper, Eleanor T. (Toby), 11
- Kennesaw State University
Nursing program,
 Start of program, 8-11, 16, 18
 Nursing students, 9-10, 13-15, 17
 Relationship with area hospitals, 15-16
 Health Sciences Building, 16
 Doctoral program, 16-17
 Establishment of four-year program, 16-17
- KJC in 1968, 9-10
- Kennestone Hospital, Marietta, Georgia, 15
- Long, Janice M., 10
- Martin, Janet D., 14
- Morgan, Frances A., 12
- Newark Beth Israel Hospital, 3, 6

Perkins, Julia L. (Judy), 12, 14, 16
Pope John Paul II, 4-5

Sachs, Charlotte S.

 German background, 1
 Migration to America, 1
 Nursing education, 3, 6-7
 Early married life in Atlanta, 6-7
 Work in Atlanta hospitals, 7-8
 Start of Kennesaw's Nursing program, 8-11, 16, 18
 Service on Board of Nurse Examiners, 8
 HEW inequitable salary investigation, 11-12
 Memories of faculty and students, 12-15
 Retirement and volunteer work, 18
 Family, 19

Sachs, Harvey (son), 19

Sachs, Jeanette (daughter), 13-14, 19

Sachs, Martin (son), 5, 19

Sachs, Susan (daughter-in-law), 19

Sachs, William (husband), 5-7, 13

Saint Joseph's Hospital, Atlanta, 8, 15

Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (please see Stein, Edith)

Selig Company, 7

Stein, Arno (father), 2-4

Stein, Edith (aunt), 4-5

Stein, Eva (sister), 2

Stein, Helmut (brother), 1

Stein, Martha (mother), 1-2

Stein, Rosa (aunt), 5

Stein, Wolfgang (brother), 3

Sturgis, Horace W., 8-10, 13

Temple Kehillat Chaim, 14

Theresienstadt concentration camp, 2

Walls, June, 12-13, 16

Walraven, Wesley C., 9, 12

Wroclaw, Poland, 1