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Katharine Renolds Thomas

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Myer Marcus Interview
JUD MS 6

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By
Katharine Renolds Thomas

Portland, Maine
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Administrative Information

Provenance: Penny Rich, whose Collection can be found in the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Collection, donated the Myer Marcus Interview in April of 2013.

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Cite as: Myer Marcus Interview, Judaica Collection, Jean Byers Sampson Center for Diversity in Maine, University of Southern Maine Libraries.

Restrictions on Access: The Interview is open for research.

Biographical Sketch:

Myer M. Marcus was born in Portland, Maine in 1914, the son of Russian-Jewish immigrants Saul Marcus, a Portland clothier, and his wife Bertha Marcus, nee Goldstein. As a boy he enjoyed spending his free time at the Portland Boys Club on Plum Street. He attended North School and Portland High School, then spent one year at the University of Virginia before transferring to Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine. Marcus earned his LL.B. in 1937 from Boston University School of Law, then returned to Portland to open the Marcus and Marcus law office on Exchange Street with his younger brother Harry. At the end of his career, Marcus worked for the Portland law firm of Marcus, Clegg, and Mistretta, P.A. He retired from practice in 2005, at the age of 91. Both he and his wife Frances were members of Portland's Temple Beth El.

Description of the Interview:

The Myer Marcus Interview was conducted over the period of one week, between February 1st and 8th of 2001, ostensibly filmed at Marcus's Portland law office. It is recorded on three video cassette tapes and has a running time of approximately four hours and eighteen minutes. The United States District Court for the District of Maine solicited the Interview.

In the Interview, Marcus speaks briefly about his parents' immigration experience and his early boyhood and family life in Portland, Maine, including some anecdotes about life during the Great Depression. He describes the requirements for a law career in the first half of the twentieth-century and tells of establishing his own law firm in Portland after graduating from Boston University School of Law. Marcus goes on to speak of various cases in which he was involved and of various lawyers and clients with whom he worked, principally in the state of Maine.

In addition to this Interview, Myer Marcus participated in an oral history interview in 2009 for The Oral History Project of Documenting Maine Jewry, part of The Portland Jewish Oral History Project housed in the Portland Public Library Digital Commons.

Keywords: Myer Marcus, Jewish community, Portland, Maine, law practice, immigration, Great Depression, Portland Boys Club, Temple Beth El, Bowdoin College, Boston University School of Law