Continue, please.

So, continuing to the life with my family at a time, of course, as I said before,

I tried to get my sister to go to Germany for work.

And I couldn't get her.

Couldn't get a birth certificate that she is not Jewish in order to get her to work.

And it was a hard thing to do, and it was one of the lifesavers.

Quite a few girls went.

And they are now in Israel living.
And then they came back after the war.

You started to tell us about a story of a family that you met that you came upon when you were in hiding or something?

Yeah.

Hiding was a, at that time, one of the important, temporary things, what happened in the ghettos.

Because, when the shooting were going on, or they surrounded,

let's say, a part of the ghetto and loaded them trucks straight to Auschwitz, and if you had the hiding place where
nobody knew-- of course, it had to be secret

because, as I said before, people

when they knew that there is, in this house, a hiding place,

you had 40 people coming when this hiding place could only take five or ten.

And that's how you had to make it in secret.

And so people were hiding out, temporarily.

But, later on, when the ghettos were cleared,

the Germans had already found out about the hiding place.

They could measure a house.

A brick house, let's say they measured.
It had 40 feet the front.

36 00:01:56,757 --> 00:01:58,340
And they went in through the basement,

37 00:01:58,340 --> 00:02:03,290
and they saw it's only 30 feet, the width of that house.

38 00:02:03,290 --> 00:02:05,300
So they know that there was another wall there.

39 00:02:05,300 --> 00:02:10,669
And people did build other walls in the basements, double walls,

40 00:02:10,669 --> 00:02:13,250
to sleep in, temporarily.

41 00:02:13,250 --> 00:02:15,010
And they found out.

42 00:02:15,010 --> 00:02:18,303
They threw a grenade through a little window, and that's it.

43 00:02:18,303 --> 00:02:19,970
And that's how they destroyed the house,

44 00:02:19,970 --> 00:02:21,990
and the people were there.

45 00:02:21,990 --> 00:02:23,240
And this was how it was going.

46 00:02:23,240 --> 00:02:26,540
Now, I would like to continue--

47 00:02:26,540 --> 00:02:27,680
I had a grandmother.

Of course, she was over 80 years old.

And when this town where we were living, Radomyśl Wielki, was cleared of Jews, and we knew a night before,

I took my whole family and went out into the forest there with the family.

And my grandmother couldn't walk.

She couldn't go.

So next thought was where nuns were living, nuns.

They have their house.

And I went in there-- we were very acquainted with them--

and asked them to let my grandmother sleep overnight.
And, tomorrow, the ghetto might still continue--

part of the ghetto.

She will go out, and we'll be [INAUDIBLE].

And so they did.

I took a mattress, and I put it in the basement there.

And she was staying there overnight.

And, the next day, the ghetto was called in German Judenfrei, free of Jews.

And nobody-- and, also, big, big signs on the corners of the houses.

Whoever will hide the Jew will be destroyed.
The house will be burned up, and he

71 00:03:41,390 --> 00:03:43,550 will be destroyed
with the whole family.

72 00:03:43,550 --> 00:03:45,950 And they wouldn't take a chance.

73 00:03:45,950 --> 00:03:47,410 And I don't blame them.

74 00:03:47,410 --> 00:03:48,440 And it happened.

75 00:03:48,440 --> 00:03:53,660 It happened, let's say, 50 miles away.

76 00:03:53,660 --> 00:03:57,080 And everybody knew about it, that their house was destroyed

77 00:03:57,080 --> 00:03:58,500 and the family killed.

78 00:03:58,500 --> 00:04:01,420

79 00:04:01,420 --> 00:04:04,550 And so they had to let her go.

80 00:04:04,550 --> 00:04:11,630 So she dressed-- always
when there was a slaughter--

81 00:04:11,630 --> 00:04:13,760 we called it a slaughter.

82 00:04:13,760 --> 00:04:19,910 The Germans used to
call it an aktion--

aktion--

--and so, whenever there was my grandmother

dressed herself in those shrouds because she knew that this is what she is going to have to wear.

Then that's it.

And so she dressed herself in the shrouds,

and she went to the police.

And she said, I'm--

shoot me.

I'm still alive.

Shoot me.
And this her was a man, also, an old man--

the richest man in town-- his name was, I think, Noah Green.

He could probably cover this place here

was with thousands of dollars.

And, at that time, no money could save him.

And he couldn't stay in the forest.

Nobody would give you a drink of water.

The flies will eat you up.

And there's no question about it.

You couldn't walk.

So the police asked her to go to the cemetery.
And we will come, and we will shoot you.

00:05:27,820 --> 00:05:29,750
And so they went to the cemetery.

00:05:29,750 --> 00:05:33,020
Sitting there, it was about 2 o'clock, I was told.

00:05:33,020 --> 00:05:34,440
And they were sitting there.

00:05:34,440 --> 00:05:46,940
My grandmother had a little Bible with her.

00:05:46,940 --> 00:05:49,370
And she was praying, saying [? tillum ?] all afternoon until it became dark.

00:05:49,370 --> 00:05:51,130
And they came, and they shot her-- both--

00:05:51,130 --> 00:05:57,710
And this is the way the conditions were in Poland.

00:05:57,710 --> 00:06:01,700
This is the way where you didn't have--

00:06:01,700 --> 00:06:08,480
there was no place where you could go and survive.
Here is a man with her. He was the richest man.

He was so rich.

He also had a big ranch and everything not far away and was one of the richest people.

And he was so poor that he went over to the police and had asked to be shot.

Now, would somebody believe that this can happen?

It happened. It happened there.

And so I found out about that because I had the bicycle. And I gave her bicycle to a--
I paid a young gentleman.

I said go over there and find out if there is still a ghetto there.

And, if there is a ghetto, let us know, and we might go over there.

And he came back.

And he says, no, in that town, there's no more Jews left.

So I sent him to another town.

To town that's called Dębica.

And it was not far away from this one.

He went over there, and he says, hey, there's a ghetto left.

So we stayed there two nights in the forest and, one night
about 2 o'clock in the morning, we start off to go to that town.

And we came into the town. Everybody was shivering scared because nobody would let you in because you were illegal.

See? You were illegal.

You were alive.

You were illegal alive.

And, to be alive at that time, you had to be legal alive.

Otherwise, you have no right to be alive.

And so we came in, and nobody would let you in.
They didn't have a place.

Anybody who was there, were three or four families in one room.

So who would let you in and take their life in the hand?

So, finally, my mother had a long, gold chain from before the war.

It was a little watch.

And my father had a nice watch.

And I took this two pieces of gold.

And I went into the--

so-called Judenrat.
This was the President there where this community was.

00:08:38,190 --> 00:08:42,480
And I said, look, we came from the forest,

00:08:42,480 --> 00:08:45,140
and I have no money, but I have with me

00:08:45,140 --> 00:08:46,610
those two pieces of gold.

00:08:46,610 --> 00:08:50,045

00:08:50,045 --> 00:08:55,280
Give me a place where I can stay and have my ration cut

00:08:55,280 --> 00:08:56,960
for this little bit of soup--

00:08:56,960 --> 00:09:00,560
what you got in the kitchen.

00:09:00,560 --> 00:09:02,390
Because, if you didn't have a ration card,

00:09:02,390 --> 00:09:06,750
you couldn't get a spoonful of soup.

00:09:06,750 --> 00:09:10,310
And so he took this gold.

00:09:10,310 --> 00:09:13,080
And he says, come back in the afternoon.
And he gave me a ration card, and he says that I am legal.

He had to get this from the Gestapo.

He couldn't write down by himself.

He wouldn't take a chance.

And so they made us legal.

And I couldn't begin to tell you how important this was for us.

I gave away, for $50,000 gold, what my mother and father had all life.

And this was one of the most important thing.

You could stay alive in that ghetto.

And he gave me a place
in a barrack there.

00:10:03,570 --> 00:10:05,020
And I was there.

00:10:05,020 --> 00:10:06,900
And, when it rained, it poured in

00:10:06,900 --> 00:10:08,940
because the roof was no good.

00:10:08,940 --> 00:10:12,000
And this was all good, as long as he gave me, also,

00:10:12,000 --> 00:10:15,210
a card that I am a legal man, and I

00:10:15,210 --> 00:10:20,960
could go out and get a quarter of a loaf of bread

00:10:20,960 --> 00:10:24,900
and a quart of soup.

00:10:24,900 --> 00:10:27,390
So that card was the key to life?

00:10:27,390 --> 00:10:29,220
It was more important than the gold?

00:10:29,220 --> 00:10:32,420
This is the way we started off.

00:10:32,420 --> 00:10:35,670
But, if they would let us stay there,
we could have survived because I was going out.

I was later legal into a group going out to work through working on the railroad.

And going there out, you know, you had contact with the gentiles.

And, if you took out, let's say, a shirt--

and he gave you a shirt, he gave you a loaf of bread or [INAUDIBLE], whatever it is.

And this is the way--

I smuggled it in into the ghetto--

this is the way we lived.
This end.

This is, I think, which six months later, the ghetto was surrounded and cleaned out.

And just a group of working people were left.

And nobody else, except the group of working people.

I think I told you the last time what we did as working people there. And we are going to go further to do other things.

Being in the beginning in Plaszów, a notice was given that you can go out with a group to a place,
Rymanów and this was, I would say,

about 50 miles away from this classroom, from that camp.

And there, we had to untie a big, big campus there.

This campus erected for the German army there.

One day before, they attacked Russia.

They had their army there.

They had camps like that erected there.

And this was on--

maybe you heard the Potoskis.

They were the prince of there.

They had thousands and thousands of acres of land there.

This was on their land.
And they had an agreement, when this concentration camp
will be finished, that the ground restored back there.

And so we were taken over there.

And then later, we worked there for about six months.

And we dismantled that concentration camp.

It wasn't a concentration camp.

But, of course, a concentration camp for the Russian soldiers,
the Russian POWs.

Let's say, every six months, 10,000 Russian soldiers
were brought in.

And they were burned and killed there at that camp.

So I'll make it short.
We opened, took those wirings, and rolled it up, and sent everything to Plaszów.

We loaded it on trains--

the boards, everything what was usable was going to the concentration camp to Plaszów on trains.

Bricks even, everything.

And then they took us--

in the last time, when we dismantled this concentration camp, we were not any more closed in.

So they took us to the prince.

He had a little stable there.

And this group was staying in this stable.
And, of course, we were surrounded with SS, so nobody would escape.

And, at that time, you didn't have way to escape. You were so far away from your living areas, where you used to live before the war, there was no escape.

And I remember a fact that is worth telling.

Of course, we were-- hunger was terrible. So no-- and they gave you a small piece of bread for three or four days and a spoon full off soup. So you wouldn't find
a potato, just water.

272
00:14:59,400 --> 00:15:03,450
And that Prince had
such big dogs there.

273
00:15:03,450 --> 00:15:08,240
He had four dogs
fenced in there.

274
00:15:08,240 --> 00:15:11,580
And then we were in the
area next to the dogs.

275
00:15:11,580 --> 00:15:12,780
There was a fence there.

276
00:15:12,780 --> 00:15:16,260
And, whenever in the morning
they brought out for the docks,

277
00:15:16,260 --> 00:15:17,910
meat--

278
00:15:17,910 --> 00:15:20,360
big pieces of meat
for the dogs--

279
00:15:20,360 --> 00:15:23,190
and I was a daring guy--

280
00:15:23,190 --> 00:15:30,315
I took a wire, and put
it under that fence.

281
00:15:30,315 --> 00:15:35,160
And I pulled over that plate to
the fence close to [INAUDIBLE]..

282
00:15:35,160 --> 00:15:36,485
The dogs already finished.
They didn't want to eat any more.

They left this meat.

But, if I would have been caught with that,

that would be an end.

But, still, when you were hungry,

you were doing things which is more dangerous.

And so I pulled that plate over to the fence.

Can I grabbed this piece of meat out with that wire

and pulled it out there.

And it was very good.

It was very good.

It could be a bullet in the head, but it's all right.
Did the dogs react?

The dogs were satisfied.

They were not in there.

We were staying there, so the dogs wouldn't bark always.

Those dogs wouldn't bark, but--

Did you push the plate back?

No.

I just get away from there as fast as possible.

Things like that, you have to remember.

And then they took us in--

we finished this camp to Szebnie.

Was another camp like that, also erected for the army.
But there, they brought people in.

They were staying there.

And they were working.

So when we finished this camp, they brought us in this camp there in Szebnie.

This was about 30 miles away.

And, in there, they gave me a job to sort out big, big huge, like, airplane hangars.

You know, where you could put an airplane in?

They kept their tanks and their machinery.

And, in this place, they gathered from the whole Poland and in Europe, all Sifras torahs all scrolls--
in the thousands and thousands of scrolls--

and then silver spoons.

In the millions-- not thousands-- but,

in the millions, knives.

In Poland, everybody had a knife that was written Shabbat Kodesh that means Holy Shabbat--

on that knife.

And those knives were not cheap knives.

They were very expensive knives.

They had the handle was special, special--

well, I don't know how it's called in English.
But, anyway, very expensive knives.

Phylam phylactories...

what is it?

Phylactories.

Phylactories.

In the millions, talleisim prayer shawls, prayer shawls.

And I was there with a group selecting this,

putting the silver spoons separate,

the phylactories separate, the knives separate,

and the Sifras Torahs separate.

Beside the scrolls, there were also big--

in Europe, those orthodox people had big books.
They were bound in leather.

And all those books, in the thousands,

were brought in into that house.

Now, the Torahs were taken out every time.

And they cut them up for linings.

When we were making the Torahs, the scrolls, this Torah, the scrolls,

for the shovel, for the little axe-- what the soldier were carrying-- a little shovel,

this is a parchment.

this was cut up for lining.

Under that, we sewed this together.

And this was used out.
And, even when they made--

there was a shoe factory--

and linings in the shoes made from the parchment.

And this is what the Torahs were used for.

Did you have to work on this yourself?

Oh, there was a group.

Yeah.

How did you feel doing it?

Again, you were numb.

You just did.

And you wanted to stay alive because to be alive was the most precious thing to live through a week or a day.
And you wouldn't complain that this all you had.

You didn't have any feelings.

You were numb.

There were no feelings.

If you didn't have any feelings for the human being, for the children, how would you have a feeling for scrolls, or knives, silver spoons, candelabras in the thousands?

And this is what we--

you know, in Europe, everybody had a silver candelabra.

Here, too.

But this was taken away, and it was all loaded there.

And this was taken later.
The candelabras were taken into a special press.

And they pressed this up into a big pile, like a square.

And this was shipped to Germany.

It was very expensive silver.

It was silver, pure silver.

And so working in there, I found myself a pair phylactories very small.

From home, I had large ones.

This one, I found.

The part-- they were so small that there like a sugar cane-- a sugar cane.

Sugar cube?

A sugar cube-- a sugar cube.
And they were so small, you could put them in the small pocket here.

And this was good for me because I didn't where to keep them.

I was afraid.

And I found them, so then I smuggled this out.

And so we were there for about six months,

and we have finished our work.

They shipped us back to Plaszów because we came from Plaszów.

And, later on, the whole group--

there were about maybe 4,000 people there in [INAUDIBLE]----

and are all shot to death.

And they shipped-- their
clothing where shipped

403
00:22:12,780 --> 00:22:14,700
to Plaszów to our.

404
00:22:14,700 --> 00:22:16,920
And a young man was
working with me,

405
00:22:16,920 --> 00:22:23,380
and he recognized this sport
jacket from his father.

406
00:22:23,380 --> 00:22:25,200
The sport jacket was shot--

407
00:22:25,200 --> 00:22:27,290
was a hole here--

408
00:22:27,290 --> 00:22:29,240
and he recognized
that sport jacket.

409
00:22:29,240 --> 00:22:30,400
He said, this is father.

410
00:22:30,400 --> 00:22:31,860
So he grabbed this jacket.

411
00:22:31,860 --> 00:22:35,200
And he put a hand in the
pocket, and there was

412
00:22:35,200 --> 00:22:39,400
a note with his father's name.

413
00:22:39,400 --> 00:22:46,030
Things like that--
it's unbelievable

414
00:22:46,030 --> 00:22:48,050
what was going on
for those five years.

415 00:22:48,050 --> 00:22:49,550 How were you liberated?

416 00:22:49,550 --> 00:22:50,050 Pardon?

417 00:22:50,050 --> 00:22:53,020 How were you liberated?

418 00:22:53,020 --> 00:22:57,620 As you know, I have jumped out of the train.

419 00:22:57,620 --> 00:23:01,070 And I was going back to my area where I lived.

420 00:23:01,070 --> 00:23:05,530 And, the last time, I told you how I crossed the bridge.

421 00:23:05,530 --> 00:23:07,210 And I had two more bridges to cross.

422 00:23:07,210 --> 00:23:09,250 I only told you about one bridge.

423 00:23:09,250 --> 00:23:12,100 I had two more bridges to cross.

424 00:23:12,100 --> 00:23:17,290 One bridge, I knew because, before the war,

425 00:23:17,290 --> 00:23:21,580 I was going out there to bathe.

426 00:23:21,580 --> 00:23:23,980
This was clear water.

There were no ships or barges going with oil there.

The water was as clear as crystal.

And, before the war, I used to go out there once in a while on a bicycle for a ride because I was in the town where my wife was born.

And it wasn't too far away.

And taking a bath there always there when it was hot, like some days when you do work.

So I knew this river.

And I went straight further in into a wave of the road,

and I crossed that river.
The water was still here about.

It was dry.

It was hot.

The air was dry.

The waters were low.

And I crossed.

So this is the second river.

And the third river, this was near Tarnów.

It was called Dunajec.

That river wasn't clean.

The sewers from this town was all dumped in that river.

But who cares about?

The same thing, I went through the waters--
Was this the day or at night?

During the day.

You wouldn't move at night.

At night, it was dangerous.

Why?

And I came--

She wanted to know why.

At night, the Germans were patrolling the rivers, the bridges, and changing patrols.

Going from one, back and forth.

And, if they catch you at night going, you are a traitor.
You are a spy.

00:24:59,110 --> 00:24:59,880
You are something.

00:24:59,880 --> 00:25:03,820
And they wouldn't be
patrolling during the day?

00:25:03,820 --> 00:25:06,840
During the day,
there are movements.

00:25:06,840 --> 00:25:08,070
People are walking.

00:25:08,070 --> 00:25:10,220
People are going,
especially when

00:25:10,220 --> 00:25:15,480
you go in the populated areas.

00:25:15,480 --> 00:25:16,830
So I'll make it short.

00:25:16,830 --> 00:25:23,100
I came to my area where I used
to live near that big wrench

00:25:23,100 --> 00:25:24,600
there.

00:25:24,600 --> 00:25:31,050
And I went-- yeah, before
going, this I have to tell you.

00:25:31,050 --> 00:25:34,350
I had to cross the main
road from one side--

00:25:34,350 --> 00:25:35,890

This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word generated with 3Play Media.
It is not the primary source, and it may contain errors in spelling or accuracy.
there was forests.

00:25:35,890 --> 00:25:39,240
There were those forests from that same wrench.

00:25:39,240 --> 00:25:42,390
And I had to cross that main road.

00:25:42,390 --> 00:25:45,450
So I went through the road, and I go on the road,

00:25:45,450 --> 00:25:48,460
and there's a military brat laying on the road.

00:25:48,460 --> 00:25:52,890
It was just a little bit by a wheel.

00:25:52,890 --> 00:25:55,170
It splat-- in one side, run over.

00:25:55,170 --> 00:26:01,590
And bread-- oh, my goodness, I said.

00:26:01,590 --> 00:26:03,830
This is mana from this skies.

00:26:03,830 --> 00:26:04,680
Bread?

00:26:04,680 --> 00:26:07,050
[INAUDIBLE] the bread.
I picked up that bread.

And, right way-- we were taught in the army that, when our enemy is drawing, they poison the water.

They poison the flour.

They poison bread, and they especially leave bread so that, when the opposition comes in, and they eat this, it's poison.

And so this is what we were taught in the Polish army.

I was 18 months in the army.

And they had that in my head for 18 months.

And I took this bread.

And I said, oh, maybe something [INAUDIBLE] was poison.

But I was hungry like a dog.
I broke off a small piece.

And I'll say, I'll try a small piece.

Maybe this was all right.

So I tried a small piece.

It was delicious.

And I waited about 15, 20 minutes.

I said, nothing happened to me.

I took a larger piece and I ate.

This is a thing where you remember.

This is a good thing what happened to me.

And I said, this is a good sign.

I am probably going to be liberated.
And I went back there.

I told you before because I was jumping [INAUDIBLE],

and I went back into the forest.

And I was sitting with those people who were in the forest.

Now, they had a system--

had a [? iron ?] three legs, [? iron ?].

And they were in a pot.

It was all smoked up black like this all around.

And we were digging potatoes on a farm.

As the farmers had potatoes at that time, it was potato time.

And we're digging potatoes, and we're cooking there.

And I picked some little mushrooms.
And this was put in the potatoes,

and they made potato soup.

And so we cooked them here very low, so it wouldn't be too much smoke because smoke is seen from far away.

And then, later, you took the potatoes, and you about, let's say, a half a kilometer away--

and you about, let's say, a half a mile away-- and you ate it there because, in case somebody saw the smoke here,

you shouldn't be on that place.

And, after you ate, the sun was shining.

Everybody was undressed and taking out the livestock.
And there were plenty.

And everybody was doing that.

This is the only way they kept the livestock lower.

And this people that I met, they looked almost like wild--

black from the smoke.

Never washed the hands.

Never washed.

I still came out from the concentration camp--

in the concentration camp, you still

had some water you could wash yourself if you felt like.

And they were all black completely--
the hands-- and they looked like wild people, honestly.

But they still had their [INAUDIBLE] how [INAUDIBLE] on--

Sense.

Their intelligence.

They still knew what they were doing.

And we were there for about four weeks.

I was with them together.

And, later, because the Russian/German front was stopped at--

there was a Wisłoka--
they call it Vistula, a river.

Again, a river.

So the Russians were the other side of this river.

And the Germans were on this side of the river.

And we were about four weeks in that forest.

Later on, the front moved a little bit.

And we know that something is going on because we heard the airplanes and the shooting.

We heard because we were in that forest.

So the Russians were shooting in that forest

because they saw that the Germans are there.
And the Germans, already, was drew further,

00:30:41,157 --> 00:30:42,740
and they were shooting
in that forest.

00:30:42,740 --> 00:30:47,510
Every couple of seconds,
another big cannon

00:30:47,510 --> 00:30:49,430
exploded here and there.

00:30:49,430 --> 00:30:50,270
It was already.

00:30:50,270 --> 00:30:53,750
So we were digging holes and
then hiding in the holes,

00:30:53,750 --> 00:30:55,600
but it was all dangerous.

00:30:55,600 --> 00:30:59,750
One morning-- and a lot
of farmers used to--

00:30:59,750 --> 00:31:06,560
when the Germans moved,
they took the cattle,

00:31:06,560 --> 00:31:12,040
their livestock, the geese,
and then ducks, and chickens

00:31:12,040 --> 00:31:15,760
and came to the forest with
them, staying with us, already.

00:31:15,760 --> 00:31:19,550
At that time, it was
already one thing.
And, one morning about 2 o'clock in the morning,

I looked up there on the horizon.

The whole horizon was red, burning.

And, again, I learned in the army, when

the army is withdrawing-- let's say, the enemy is withdrawing.

They burn the houses, so that the other--

Scorched earth.

--the opposition comes in, they wouldn't have a way to get in.

They couldn't go through.

They made blocks and things like that.

And so I saw, about 2 o'clock in the morning, the whole horizon
all around was red, burning.

To my friends there in the forest, I said, we can't stay here any longer because this is an area where it is being shot in.

We must go out as soon as possible.

So, when the Polish people saw that we are going,

they said, oh.

The Jews.

They are smart.

When they are going, we are going, too.

And they took their horses and their cows.

And the cows were so afraid, they
were mooing so terribly because of those noise every time.

And, again, I said give me a cow.

I go to the farmer.

I said give me a cow.

And the other guy took a horse.

And I helped them go to the front.

And we are going there for another probably about 10 miles to walk.

And the explosions every minute, it got light and exploded.

Every couple of minutes, another one here, another there.

And this cattle was so afraid.

Finally, we came over to not
far away from that horizon

616
00:33:13,570 --> 00:33:17,370
where it was burning, and we were stopped by the Russians.

617
00:33:17,370 --> 00:33:19,490
Oh, we saw them.

618
00:33:19,490 --> 00:33:24,620
This was just like HaShem was there.

619
00:33:24,620 --> 00:33:28,820
And we really saw that we are now--

620
00:33:28,820 --> 00:33:31,860
they saw, of course, the horses and cows.

621
00:33:31,860 --> 00:33:34,100
They know that this is not the enemy.

622
00:33:34,100 --> 00:33:35,640
Those are farmers.

623
00:33:35,640 --> 00:33:38,450
So they say, [PERSONAL NAME].

624
00:33:38,450 --> 00:33:39,950
Let's go.

625
00:33:39,950 --> 00:33:41,230
Go.

626
00:33:41,230 --> 00:33:43,040
And we went over there.

627
00:33:43,040 --> 00:33:44,070
We went through the town.
But we were staying in the town.

And a couple of weeks later, we heard that, in another town, there were 30 people killed by the Polish.

They called themselves AK.

This is Armia Krajowa.

And, in English, it would be the army of the [? lent ?]

to translate this, what they were calling themselves.

And they were actually--

This is the Polish Underground?

Polish Underground.

And they were killing Jews.

They went in, and they was in a small town called [PLACE NAME]..
In that town, there were about, maybe 30 or 35—

I don't remember, exactly—

Jews killed who came out from concentration camp,

from the forest.

And they were killed.

And so, when we heard that, we picked up our things

and were going further into a larger town.

And it was called [PLACE NAME].

And there, there was already a lot of Jews

came from Russia, back, and in the army, and things like that.

People, the Jews, started already to do business.

But you were afraid
to walk out of town.

652
00:35:08,590 --> 00:35:13,150 You didn't know who was your enemy because they were really

653
00:35:13,150 --> 00:35:14,960 looking for Jews.

654
00:35:14,960 --> 00:35:17,110 They didn't want the Jews to survive.

655
00:35:17,110 --> 00:35:22,900 Again, this same army who were--

656
00:35:22,900 --> 00:35:27,880

657
00:35:27,880 --> 00:35:33,220 during the Hitler time, they were underground.

658
00:35:33,220 --> 00:35:36,910 They came out, and they were shooting the Jews.

659
00:35:36,910 --> 00:35:39,790 And so we didn't wait so long.

660
00:35:39,790 --> 00:35:46,070 We went over to that larger town until that front moved.

661
00:35:46,070 --> 00:35:49,720 And it was another six months.

662
00:35:49,720 --> 00:35:55,520 It took six months until the front, the Russians moved.

663
00:35:55,520 --> 00:35:58,970
And they went still to Berlin.

And when Krakow was liberated, I went back from [PLACE NAME] to Krakow.

And then Krakow, I met some friends who went out from the concentration camp.

And there in Krakow, again, was already whatever you took in your hand, you could make some money.

For instance, you took out, let's say, from what you had hidden somewhere, a suit, you went out to sell it.

You could live a couple of weeks for the money.

People were buying.
In those towns that you're saying were burned,

and you were moving from one town to the other,

how did you eat?

Weren't supplies also destroyed, and the army was there needing supplies?

Where were supplies coming from?

You mean after the--

No, as you were going, you're saying you went from the smaller town to a larger town--

Oh, this was already under the Russians,

under the Russian Occupation.
And they brought food with them?

They-- people helped themselves.

For instance, right away after I was liberated--

I mean, after we went to the front--

as you know, I was a tailor.

I went into a Polish family.

And they had a machine.

And they had peace goods stolen--

plenty of peace goods from the Jews.

And I was working for them, sewing, making shirts, making shirts.

And they gave me to eat, nothing else.
But they gave me good to eat.

This was a big thing for me.

This was a big thing in the beginning.

And then, later on, when I went into the larger town,

I started, also, to do some business.

What was the business?

The Russian Army, when they were reaching the German borders there, the German people, they were clearing out their closets, taking out all their goods,

their suits, their things.

And, when they were going back to their headquarters,

back to behind where we were in [PLACE NAME].
they brought big sacks of materials— not new ones

but suits and things.

And we bought from them.

For instance, if you had the watch,

and you gave them this watch, you

could get a whole bag of clothes, and bedspreads,

and sheets, and other towels, all these things.

So you went out on the market.

There was a bazaar every week.

You went out, and you were selling them.

You made some money.

This was the way it started off.
And then I went back from [PLACE NAME] to Krakow.

Krakow was already liberated.

They were already in Berlin.

The war was still on.

And, in Krakow, again, was a big town already.

Right away, a Jewish Community Center was created.

And they were taking back some buildings,

what the Germans occupied.

And they moved in a lot of people.

But we couldn't move in.

We rented a large room in the main square.

And, every week, like a
bazaar was going on there.

00:39:35,180 --> 00:39:37,940
I was going out
there and selling,

00:39:37,940 --> 00:39:40,700
either some
[INAUDIBLE] what I had,

00:39:40,700 --> 00:39:43,130
or I started off to
do some business.

00:39:43,130 --> 00:39:49,430
A guy came in from further
near the German border.

00:39:49,430 --> 00:39:52,430
He brought leather,
and he was selling

00:39:52,430 --> 00:39:55,640
this leather on the market--

00:39:55,640 --> 00:39:57,200
big pieces of leather.

00:39:57,200 --> 00:40:01,640
I said, why don't you
give me [? consign ?]??

00:40:01,640 --> 00:40:03,750
I'll sell it, and
I'll pay for it.

00:40:03,750 --> 00:40:04,250
Good.

00:40:04,250 --> 00:40:06,890
He gave me because he had to go.
And we let him store in our place to go in.

This was, for him, very good.

And I started to sell the leather.

And, later, I got smart.

I have to take from him.

I went to Katowice.

Maybe you heard of Katowice.

Again, a large town.

This was closer to the German borders.

And I found out where I can buy leather, and I bought leather.

This leather was smuggled in from Germany, from Hungary.
The Russian soldiers were smuggling in.

There were Jews with them.

There was one Jewish soldier.

He is now living in New York.

And I meet him once in a while.

He lost a leg.

And he was dressed as an officer.

And he took a Russian with a truck.

And he got himself a seal that he is [INAUDIBLE] means secret--

secret--

And the saw this--

This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word generated with 3Play Media. It is not the primary source, and it may contain errors in spelling or accuracy.
it's called [INAUDIBLE]---
this [INAUDIBLE] this card,

what he had written that he is
a secret man didn't do anything.

He went into Hungary and loaded
that truck with hard leather--

leather, hard leather--
and brought back to Krakow,

and was selling whoever knew
about selling, making money.

And so I, again,
with my friend--

and my friend, an old men,
survived in the forest.

He was about maybe
65, 70 years old.

And he had a fur coat.

You know, the rich
Jews before the war,

had a black coat with
a [INAUDIBLE] collar.
This was very expensive.

And this is only who could afford this.

He gave this out away to a farmer somewhere.

And he got it back.

And he goes out to sell because they didn't have a piece of bread at home.

They were going around hungry in Krakow.

He went out on that bazaar to sell this.

So, to sell it, comes excuse my expression-- a jerk.

And he has to put it on, to try it on, if it fits him.

He tries out, and he says, this is my coat.
Where did you get it?

He says to that Jewish fellow, this is my fur coat.

Where did you get it?

And then that old man started to make noise.

And, right way, they came--

the milic was called--

this was the police at that time but also the kind

from what were killing Jews.

But they were the authorities.

And so what can I tell you?

They arrested this old man for wanting to sell his coat.

And this guy who wanted to
steal that coat from him,

806
00:43:34,250 --> 00:43:35,390
they let him go.

807
00:43:35,390 --> 00:43:42,170
They just took his name, and
they arrested this old man.

808
00:43:42,170 --> 00:43:43,130
And we go out.

809
00:43:43,130 --> 00:43:47,080
Here, he had a
sister, and a brother,

810
00:43:47,080 --> 00:43:52,120
and a daughter, and a son, and
another young lady with them

811
00:43:52,120 --> 00:43:53,810
who was in the forest.

812
00:43:53,810 --> 00:43:57,020
Honestly, hungry, was
out a piece of bread,

813
00:43:57,020 --> 00:43:59,210
not a penny in their soul.

814
00:43:59,210 --> 00:44:00,080
They came to Krakow.

815
00:44:00,080 --> 00:44:02,810

816
00:44:02,810 --> 00:44:04,850
And he had the man--

817
00:44:04,850 --> 00:44:06,220
they arrested them.
And good that this police took that coat from the headquarters.

They didn't let him have it.

Finally, they had to prove where this coat was hidden.

And they got a witness that this is his coat from before the war, this fur coat.

So they gave him back.

But he had to be in jail for 24 hours for selling this coat.

This is how the conditions were after the war,

the good conditions, the good Polish.

And so, of course, these girls, as I said, they were hungry.
I had some money because I was doing some business.

830
00:44:45,170 --> 00:44:49,940
I said to the brother, go out and, first, buy a bread.

831
00:44:49,940 --> 00:44:51,740
Let them eat.

832
00:44:51,740 --> 00:44:53,330
And so we start to do some business--

833
00:44:53,330 --> 00:44:54,038
Excuse me, Aaron.

834
00:44:54,038 --> 00:44:55,100
We have 15 minutes more.

835
00:44:55,100 --> 00:44:55,600
OK.

836
00:44:55,600 --> 00:44:59,510
[INAUDIBLE]

837
00:44:59,510 --> 00:45:00,770
You want me to stop for 15?

838
00:45:00,770 --> 00:45:00,950
No.

839
00:45:00,950 --> 00:45:01,450
No, no, no.

840
00:45:01,450 --> 00:45:02,307
Just continue.

841
00:45:02,307 --> 00:45:03,640
We have 15 more minutes of time.

842
If there's anything that you want to make sure you say--

Uh.

Dah.

What I want to say is this, being there in Krakow,

one morning, this group came in the--

AK?

--the AK came in with machine guns,

and put them all against the wall,

and picked up everything what was in the house,

and took out the leather.

They knew where to look.

We had some gold pieces--
you know, when you had money, you bought something,

you wanted to invest your money.

In there were, in old rags in the closet,

they picked up the rags, and went through one by one,

and picked up the gold pieces.

And I happened to be, at that time, in the movies.

I went out in the movies.

It was during the day and good that I wasn't there because I wouldn't have let them take away

because I would have-- first of all, I would have go out.

I would have run out and call some authorities

if there were some authorities.
But, anyway, they picked up everything what we had, and they left us clear without anything.

So we moved out of that apartment because, "We will be back," they said.

We moved out, and I gave up the business.

And I didn't do anymore this type of business.

And so, later, my wife came in the picture.

She also came out sick from a concentration camp.

And they introduced her to me.

She looked very bad.

She lost all her hair on the head.
She had a little coat made from an American blanket.

So it was something she made by hand.

And this was with a girlfriend.

The girlfriend provided her the blanket,

and she sewed that coat up.

And so, when she went out, she's wear the code.

And, when the girlfriend went out,

the girlfriend would wear the coat.

And I met, at that time, my wife.

I wasn't so eager to get married because I didn't know.

I though maybe I'm going to go away to the United States,
and I am not the one
in involved myself.

But I did.

I got married.

And then, in Krakow--

we were living in Krakow
for about another year.

And I had uncles in the United
States, right in Plainfield.

And they sent me a affidavit--

papers.

And we had to smuggle
from Poland to Austria.

From Austria, we had
to smuggle to Germany

because, from Poland, nobody
was going to the United States.

And we came in-- when I came
into Germany, at that time,
we had to register that we belong to a certain group from survivors from the concentration camp.

And I went to Heidelberg because my wife was still sick.

She had the lungs that were still not clear from [INAUDIBLE] because she had very bad typhus.

And so we went to Heidelberg, and there were the clinics and doctors.

And she was attending a clinic there.

And she was healed out there.

And, in Heidelberg, I was registering.

And this guy in the--
in that community, he says, what proof do you have that you are Jewish?

Because a lot of German were registering, that they say they are Jewish.

And I said, I am Jewish. What do you want me to do?

You want me to talk Jewish? I'll talk to you in Jewish, but do you understand Jewish?

No, he says. I said, I have no other proof to tell you that I am Jewish.

What nationality was this man? This man was a German. Wait— what happened to this man,
it happened so that somebody recognized him that he was in an SS, and he ran away.

This guy who will try to find out if I am Jewish, he was an SS.

He was in this community center, the whole chief, and finally somebody recognized him.

And he was an SS.

And he ran away.

And so those are things where you cannot forgive.

And you are-- after five years, what you went through, you just slip a lot of it.

But the main things, which is
the horrible scenes and things remain with you.

And you cannot forget that.

You dream about.

You go through dreams every few days, another dream.

You are hiding, you are running, and hiding.

And there's nowhere to hide and things like that.

When did you come to the United States?

We came in '49 or late in the '48, I think.

We had some problems coming here because of this organization of survivors.

What happened, they elected a president,
and he was a communist.

And whoever belonged to this organization had a black spot.

He [INAUDIBLE] communist.

And we were staying in Bremenhaven,

and this is where the ships moved.

We were staying there for more than, I think, five weeks.

And I had a little boy, a year old.

He caught a cold, and got sick, and had

to put him in the hospital.

And we were waiting.

They were checking my papers, a bit communist, I am.

Where was he born, your son?
Who?

My oldest son?

Yeah.

In Heidelberg?

In Heidelberg.

He was-- yeah.

He was born in Heidelberg.

And this is where--

the problem was, when
I came in to register,

and I belonged to
that organization.

And that organization
turned communist
because they
elected a communist.

And so everybody who belonged to this organization,

had some doubt if he is not a communist.

I told them I didn't go any more to any meetings.

Since the first president was discharged,

I didn't go to any more meetings.

I don't know what you're talking about, a communist.

I never was a communist.

I was a hard-working man.

And, finally, they checked my papers.

And it took about five weeks.

And to stay there five weeks and to sleep, again, in barracks
and eat every morning a half a quart of potato soup,

you had another portion.

And, when you came here to wait in Germany,

I moved in with a friend.

Never bed.

I was sleeping on the table, or under the table,
or on the table for about two years.

And, finally, when we reached the United States,

I was, the first time, in a bed.

And that's how you-- like I said, this is the main thing.
But there are more to it. You can't remember those things. It's very hard, after five years, to remember. We haven't got anything written. We have everything with what we remember. That's what I'm trying to tell you. And so, further later on in the United States, I was working on two jobs. During the day, I was working as a fitter a department store. And I was working on another job, going out to do some sheet rock work-- applying sheet rocks,
and spackling, and things like that because I was a handyman.

I learned a lot this business in the concentration camp.

And it was hard.

I couldn't get an apartment because I had a little boy.

Nobody would rent to you, at that time,

an apartment with a child.

I couldn't understand that.

Finally, we did get settled in and worked very hard.

And thanks, God, that we are here,

and that we survived all these things that we can tell about.

And I am now, I would say, [NON-ENGLISH] doing fine.
I went into the business into building line.

And I was about 11 years in the building trade.

And then I gave up.

Became bad.

It became that you couldn't get any mortgages.

Couldn't sell houses, so I liquidated this business.

And I am partially retired.

I have a couple old houses, which

I am taking care of myself.

[INAUDIBLE] you fix it.

You need a plumber, you call him, and you rent it.
And this is what I am doing.

And thanks, God, for that.

Do you talk to your children about this?

Did they ever-- did they want to know about this?

They know about this.

They don't want to-- they don't want to listen too much about it, like all American children,

You know.

But, now, they wanted a copy of those papers, what we had.

And they are more interested because they're starting to--

the [INAUDIBLE], as we call ourselves,

the time is against us.
Let's not kid ourselves.

And, if they won't take over and be interested,

those anti-Semites who are writing books now

and that this was a lie, then they will open their mouth.

Do you have grandchildren?

I have had six grandchildren.

And they are-- and whenever I think of those children

where they were killed, it cuts my heart

because I love my children.

I love my grandchildren.

When I don't see them, and I don't see them in two weeks,

I have to go with them.
One son lives in Muncy, and one is in Fair Lawn, and one is Livingston.

He's a lawyer there in Livingston.

And Fair Lawn works in computers.

And, in Muncy, he is a Orthodox young man.

Not special Hasidic, but he sends the kids to the yeshivas.

And he has a good Jewish home.

The same thing is in Fair Lawn.

Fair Lawn is now a very nice Jewish community there.

And, if you want to be a Yid you can be there with all the things.
And I have [NON-ENGLISH].

00:56:57,930 --> 00:57:00,130 That's called, in Jewish, [NON-ENGLISH]..

00:57:00,130 --> 00:57:01,210 Pleasure.

00:57:01,210 --> 00:57:01,820 Thank you.

00:57:01,820 --> 00:57:11,420 And you know, after one man left from 46 people,

00:57:11,420 --> 00:57:17,030 and now my family, [NON-ENGLISH] is growing, I have the name.

00:57:17,030 --> 00:57:17,810 I survived.

00:57:17,810 --> 00:57:23,240 And I feel that I have accomplished something in life.

00:57:23,240 --> 00:57:31,870 And, when I am with my children, my children

00:57:31,870 --> 00:57:35,110 don't like to hear too much about.

00:57:35,110 --> 00:57:38,810 Even if I tell them, it goes in here,

00:57:38,810 --> 00:57:41,000 and it goes out right here.
But they know what I have been through.

And they know what happened to the people in Europe.

They know about that.

Aaron, thank you very much.

Thank you.

Thank you.