

RG-50.002.0054

Teddy Zweig

Teddy Zweig, born March 2, 1923 in Opatow, Poland, and named for his deceased father, describes growing up with two brothers, a sister and their mother in the predominantly Jewish town; being poor and religious; being sixteen years old in 1939 when the war broke in an increasingly ghettoized Opatow; living for three years in the Opatow ghetto in one room with a brother, sister and mother, the oldest brother having previously left for Lodz to find work; being forced, with other poor Jews, to make brushes for grooming horses and to remove snow; learning that his mother and sister had been shot with 57 other Jews hiding in a basement after being outed to the SS by a Polish townspeople; being shipped in late 1941/early 1942 to the labor camp in Skarzysko, about 50 km from Opatow, to work as a machinist in an ammunition factory, where he remained for three years, enduring hunger, lice, rotting corpses, and fear of typhus (those inflicted and unable to work were shot), knowing that his brother, also in Skarzysko camp, had contracted typhus (never discovered); being transported in mid-1944 to a labor camp in Czestochowa where he remained for a few months (mid-to late 1944) working in a smaller factory, receiving even less food than in Skarzysko and fearing random and unprovoked assassination; being transported in late 1944 to the smaller of the Buchenwald camps to which only Jews were assigned (vice the larger "all nationalities" camp); being taken with a group every day to the town of Weimar to clean up rubble from the bombings; again living with infestation and festering corpses; being liberated by General Patton's Third Army, and provided food; being relocated by liberators to Frankfurt, residing there from 1945-1949 in private homes and hotels while working kitchen duty for the American army; relocating to Brooklyn NY, where an uncle lived and where he started a business, married and had a son, Martin Zweig, who lives in South Brunswick, NJ.; and visiting a brother in Israel whom he'd not seen in 25 years (another brother lives in U.S.).

(summary by Eva Kleederman)