

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum  
Archives

Oral History Interviews of the  
Kean College of New Jersey  
Holocaust Resource Center

Interview with Gitla Grynwald  
1984  
RG-50.002\*0059

## **PREFACE**

In 1984, Gitla Grynwald was interviewed on videotape by Sidney Langer behalf of the Kean College of New Jersey Holocaust Resource Center. The interview took place in Union, New Jersey and is part of the Research Institute Archives of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's collection of oral testimonies.

Kean College of New Jersey Holocaust Resource Center created a summary and time-coded notes for the interview. The reader should bear in mind that these finding aids attempt to represent the spoken word in the recorded interview, yet have not necessarily been verified by the interviewee. The finding aids should not be used in place of the interview itself.

Rights to the interview are held by the Kean College of New Jersey Holocaust Resource Center. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum houses a copy of the interview as a result of a contributing organization agreement with the Kean College of New Jersey Holocaust Resource Center. Details concerning the Museum's rights to use and reproduce the interview are contained in the contributing organization agreement.

**Summary of the**  
**Interview with Gitla Grynwald**  
**1984**

Gitla Grynwald was born in Zawiercie, Poland on October 23, 1902. Her family consisted of herself, her parents, three brothers, and two sisters. One brother and two sisters were murdered, as was her mother. Gitla's father and one of her sisters died before the war.

Gitla lived in Kraków, Poland after her marriage to Aron Grynwald on March 8, 1933. After two years in the Kraków ghetto, the couple was transferred to Plaszków concentration camp in Poland in March 1943. Gitla was transferred to Birkenau, a subcamp of Auschwitz concentration camp in Poland (October 1944) and then to Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in Germany three weeks later. Gitla was then in Raguhn, Germany from January until April 1945. She was then moved to Terezín concentration camp in the Czech Republic, where she was liberated. While in Terezín, Gitla fell ill and was sent to a hospital for a protracted stay.

She recovered from her illness and returned to Kraków in July 1945, where she was reunited with her husband. She currently resides in Newark, New Jersey.

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1

**Time-coded notes of the  
Interview with Gitla Grynwald  
1984**

01:00:00

Gitla Grynwald currently resides in Newark, New Jersey. She was born in Zawiercie, Poland on October 23, 1902. Her family consisted of her parents, three brothers, and two sisters. Gitla's father was in the clothing business. She recalls that 15 percent of the 32,000-person town was Jewish.

01:05:00

Gitla lived in Kraków, Poland after her marriage to Aron Grynwald. She attended university in 1918. However, her mother's illness caused her to leave the university. She remembers having a private teacher for religious studies in her home.

01:10:00

Gitla worked in a library until 1932.

01:15:00

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**2**

The Germans invaded Kraków on September 6, 1939. Gitla's father died in 1934 and one of her sisters died in 1916. Gitla and Aron were married on March 8, 1933.

01:20:00

When the Germans came to Kraków, Gitla's husband ran away in the belief that all men had to flee for their lives.

01:25:00

Gitla's husband soon returned to Kraków when he discovered that he could not escape from the Germans. The Judenrat delivered daily quotas of workers.

01:30:00

A ghetto was organized in Kraków; Gitla thinks that the date was March 1941. Gitla recalls that the Germans took everything from their apartment.

01:35:00

In the Kraków ghetto, Gitla's husband worked as a gardener for the Gestapo. The couple was moved to Plaszów concentration camp in

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**3**

Poland; Gitla thinks that the date was March 1943. Gitla and Aron were in the ghetto for two years; Gitla recalls the dates as 1941 to 1943.

01:40:00

Gitla describes the drama and danger of the trip from Kraków to visit her mother and siblings. They walked 30-45 minutes to reach Plaszów from Kraków, under the Germans.

01:45:00

Gitla describes the terrible conditions at Plaszów. She recalls that she was at the camp from March 1943 until October 1944. From Plaszów, Gitla was transferred to Auschwitz concentration camp in Poland.

01:50:00

Gitla describes her arrival at Auschwitz and the daily routine at this camp. She recalls 12 hour of work with no food, making it impossible to live.

01:55:00

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**4**

After three weeks in Auschwitz, really Birkenau, her group was transferred to Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in Germany. On the six-day trip to Bergen-Belsen, they had no food.

02:00:00

Gitla describes her arrival at Bergen-Belsen and the conditions in the camp.

02:05:00

A group of Hungarian women arrived in Bergen-Belsen. These women bit others and acted improperly. Their behavior seemed incredible to the Polish prisoners. This behavior lasted for a few days.

02:10:00

In Raguhn (Raguhn, Germany), Gitla had diarrhea. A Jewish doctor gave Gitla medicine and she recovered. Gitla was in Raguhn from January until April 1945. From Raguhn, she went to Theresienstadt. By then her physical condition had deteriorated terribly. She was taken to a hospital.

02:15:00

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**5**

Gitla was under the care of a doctor whose husband, also a doctor, had been shipped to Auschwitz. Gitla's condition improved slowly. She arrived in Terezín in April 1945. By June 1945 she still could not eat. In mid-July 1945, she began to feel better and left by train for Kraków.

02:20:00

When she arrived in Kraków, there were strangers living in her former apartment.