

Summary of Oral History: Oral history interview with Shlomo Biezunski

RG#: RG-50.002.0106

This summary was written by a USHMM Volunteer on 03/2022

Summary

Shlomo Biezunski, born May 13, 1926 in Łódź, Poland, describes his family and middle class life in Łódź; his family's drugstore; attending a Jewish private school; vacationing in a cottage outside Łódź when the war broke out in September 1939; life in Łódź under German occupation; German soldiers buying goods from his family's drugstore; a German soldier boarding in their spare room; his father leaving to fight in Warsaw only to turn back after seeing German planes shooting people on the roads; his father being shot to death at a trolley station by the Gestapo in January 1940; moving to the ghetto in May 1940; working at a factory in the ghetto and participating in a factory strike; scrounging for food and coal in the ghetto; the arrest of his mother for three weeks; his deportation along with his sister and mother to Auschwitz-Birkenau in August 1944; his separation from his mother and sister and never seeing them again; transferring to Fürstengrube subcamp to work in a coal mine; selection for farm work because he was healthy; marching 80 kilometers in the snow during the Auschwitz death march of January 1945; arriving in Gliwice (Gleiwitz) and being loaded into open train cars; traveling seven days by train without adequate food or water; arriving at Nordhausen (Dora-Mittelbau) concentration camp; selection to work building a plant in the mountains in April 1945; marching to Magdeburg then Halberstadt; boarding a barge on the Elbe River; traveling by barge via the Kaiser Wilhelm Canal (Kiel Canal) to Lübeck on the Baltic Sea; being taken by Fürstengrube Lagerführer Max Schmidt to Ahrensböök for farm labor; traveling to Neustadt and being loaded onto the Cap Arcona passenger ship; the bombing of the Cap Arcona and his escape out a porthole in May 1945; British forces taking him to a hospital; working as an interpreter at the Neustadt displaced person camp; immigrating to Israel around 1947; serving in the Israeli military; immigrating to the United States in 1967; teaching his children to stand up for themselves.