

-TITLE- SPIEGLER FREDERICK
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-NOTES-
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Fred gives a good description of working in the concentration camps. Some of his testimony is confusing (he keeps talking about making a mistake and getting married?). Also talks about being able to send and receive letters out of the concentration camp.

1:00 Frederick (orig.Fritz) Spiegler. Born in 1894 in Slovakia.

2:00 He moved to Vienna when he was 15 years old. He lived there for thirty years. He was in the Austro-Hungarian Army in World War 1 for four years.

3:00 He was lucky to survive World War 1 without harm. After World War 1 in Vienna he felt like a nobody, couldn't find a job, had rations, hard to get food.

4:00 Had to leave the city to find food. In 1930 he got married (?) and it was a mistake. Got married again (?) in 1932 and it lasted 43 years.

5:00 He was a sign writer/maker. In 1937 his daughter was born and his father died. At this time he could already feel the Nazi era coming. Anti-semitism was always big in Vienna.

6:00 He and his wife were big athletes and belonged to a Sport Club that was mostly Jewish. They hiked, skied, biked.

7:00 Not much later, Hitler came. At the beginning of April, 2 Viennese men (Nazis) came to his door and made him go with them. They took him to a school that had been turned into a kind of barracks.

8:00 A young Nazi then ordered him to wash the floor, and he did. Nothing happened until late evening.

9:00 Then they released him. He made the mistake of not trying to get over the border while he could. Later the next evening 2 brown shirt Nazis came and got him again and took

him away.

10:00 They hit him for no reason and made fun of him. They cut his hair down the middle just to make him look dumb.

11:00 The next day they took him to the police station and he had to spend the night there. Then the next day he joined the other arrested people in another station and they stayed there for about 2 weeks.

12:00 They took him and several others to the depot to a waiting train, and they kicked them and beat them.

13:00 They wouldn't let them sleep, and made them take their shoes off and on repeatedly. They made them do exercises and even beat them to keep them awake. Then they arrived in Dachau.

14:00 He had heard about concentration camps before the war.

15:00 When they arrived in Dachau they let them sleep. They had nothing to do, and they had to stay in the barracks all day long. The barracks were neat and clean and they were expected to keep them that way. They were only allowed out for meals and a little at night.

16:00 He was transferred in the end of October/ beginning of November to Buchenwald.(ph.)

17:00 He didn't know why they transferred them to Buchenwald. It was much different there. They formed work teams and all of the inmates tried to come up with ways to not work hard.

18:00 The sign the inmates used if a guard was coming was to say the number 18.

19:00 They used their eyes to their own advantage, and if there wasn't a guard around they wouldn't work.

20:00 If they saw a guard coming they started working again. He had to carry bricks but could only carry 10 at a time.

21:00 He also had to carry 3x4 iron bars and he doesn't know how he did it.

22:00 It was important to try and avoid the hellish work, but he got chosen again. This time he just walked away when the guard turned his back and didn't get caught.

23:00 All tried to avoid hard work. He was in Buchenwald during Kristallnacht. The food was also bad.

24:00 In Buchenwald the food (soup) was in great kettles and it was awful. He was always hungry and would even lick soup off of the floor if he could.

25:00 Jews couldn't buy food or cigarettes from the canteen.

26:00 Once he borrowed a cigarette from a guard and because he repaid him later this man always helped him by giving him extra food . They were later allowed to buy cigarettes again.

27:00 This man couldn't believe that he had paid him back.

30:00 After he was released he had to see release officials and stay in Vienna for 6 weeks. During Kristallnacht in Buchenwald they chased them more and beat them more.

31:00 To stay warm in Buchenwald people put paper in their shirts.

32:00 He could write and receive letters once a month.

33:00 Once he received a letter and he opened it up and there was nothing inside. When he wrote letters he tried to "write between the lines".

36:00 He planned to go to America after his release. While still in Buchenwald he met a young boy and tried to help him remain calm and positive. The next day he was released.

37:00 When he was released he didn't tell people about his experiences, only his family.

38:00 He had to stay six weeks in Vienna after his release, which was in February 1939. During this time he had to report to the police station everyday.

39:00 He was told that if he went to the police station every day that he would be able to leave when he wanted.

40:00 He had to wait for his papers to be approved but his wife and child were already in the U.S. His wife worked in a friends shop.

41:00 His wife found a German family to take care of their little girl, but she was starting to learn German so she found an English family instead so she could learn English.

42:00 His wife told him that things weren't so good in America but he knew that he could find work.

43:00 Once he got there they both got jobs from a friend that he knew from school.

44:00 This friend was originally a lawyer but had opened a beauty shop and was doing well.

45:00 When he arrived in the U.S. he told people about his experiences and they didn't believe him - they thought that it was propaganda.

46:00 He left his family behind in Vienna.

47:00 His sister in Hungary somehow managed to get to Israel.

49:00 His mother and sisters in Vienna disappeared. To this day he is still astonished that he made it out.

50:00 If you have a chance to see a film about the Holocaust or to talk to a survivor about it, you should.

51:00 He had a good job in Vienna working in travel.

52:00 He got this job in 1920. He met people that told him that he should come to the U.S. because it was much better. He exchanged addresses with a girl, and they used to write a lot.

53:00 They stayed in touch, but then he made a big mistake and got married.

54:00 When he was a young boy his father wanted him to go to temple but all he wanted to do was play soccer.

55:00 He would go with his father sometimes, and he had to go on Saturday afternoons to religious school.

56:00 Now he keeps the holidays but doesn't go to temple all the time because he can't drive anymore.

57:00 He also volunteers in a school.
.END.