

# **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum**

**Interview with Julian Noga  
December 11, 1990  
RG-50.030\*0171**

## **PREFACE**

The following oral history testimony is the result of a taped interview with Julian Noga, conducted on December 11, 1990 on behalf of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The interview is part of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's collection of oral testimonies. Rights to the interview are held by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

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## **JULIAN NOGA**

### **December 11, 1990**

Q: Good morning. Would you tell me your name, your date of birth and your place of birth?

A: Yes. \_\_\_\_\_. Julian Noga. I was born in Poland but actually my life starts in this country, United States. In 1921 my whole family was in this country...my father, my mother, my two brothers and then in June 1921, my mother decide to go back to Poland and after she arrived in Poland, two months after, on July 31st, I was born in Poland, so that's my...

Q: Where in Poland?

A: Ah, that was a little uh village by the name how pronounced Skrzynce (ph). This is the county of Dabrowa (ph) and the state of Krakow.

Q: In the state of Krakow.

A: Right.

Q: Can you tell me a little bit about your uh childhood?

A: Yes. I was grow uh grow up on the country, up to sixteen. When I was sixteen years old, I go to the big city by the name Tarnow (ph), and I start working as a dishwasher in a very elegant Jewish club by the name Musa on Siberski Square, right in the center of the city of Tarnow. I was there for some

01:02:

time as a dishwasher. Then after I decided to go and learn to be baker and that's not quite two years, about two years I was learned to be baker. And that's 1939 the war started.

Q: What was your first recollection of the German invasion of Poland?

A: Yes, that was on Friday, September 1st. Early in the morning I was delivered as usual out back to the groceries and I was in a city and I find out from one of the grocer that the Germans invade Poland and that was a shock to me. I was about eighteen years old that time and then right away you see those sirens sounds and the megaphone sounds through the megaphone speakers. You know, they announce that the German attacked Poland and they break out the border, you know, and they are already going in Poland.

Q: How far was your...the town of Tarnow from the German-Polish border?

A: I should say about two hundred kilometer.

Q: And how long before the Germans came to your town?

A: I can't tell you exactly but that was about another week or so they marched through the Tarnow and that was scary.

Q: What was...what impact did them coming to the town have on you initially? How did it change your life at first?

A: Well, at that time my life was changed. The bakery was closed. I have to go back to my mother on the country and the

01:04:30

Germans put the posters all over. They explain why they are there and everything going to be now under the German rules and when you break the law, there be a death sentence, Totesstrafe. That was very scary. And you see how they start arrested. First of all they go...they come to another small, small town by the name Strutch(?). This is on the Vistula River and first day that the German comes, they pick up twenty-seven Jewish people, those Jewish we know like some...one of the Jews I know very very good. He had a tobacco store. The other one had a restaurant. Another one, he was a cabinet maker. Many of my friends learn how to make cabinets by this Jew who was very nice man and a photographer, I remember his name Pilschnik. They took him. Twenty-seven Jewish people they take. They bring to the church there. They give them the shovels and they dig out their 01:06: own graves and they was executed right there the by the church, and that was scary. That we see what that means and what this going to be like, and that was really...that was something, you know, something I never forget.

Q: And you were back on the farm with your parents and your brothers and sisters after the bakery closed down, and what happened...what did you do after you went back to your parents?

A: Yes. My parents, I beg your pardon...my father stays in this country. He didn't go to Poland. My mother pick up three of my brothers...Matthew, Bruno and John. Matthew was thirteen years old. Bruno was seven years old and John was five years old and after she arrive Poland, two months later on July 31st, I was born, 1921. Yes. So before the war, each my brother come back to this country and the last one, John, he come back to this country in 1938, just a year before the war broke out, and I was a little bit jealous see, because I didn't have chance to come back to this country, so actually I stay only with my mother. My mother didn't have much land. She had about three or four acre, not quite four acres land. There was plenty food for us and that time after the Germans come, there was not much to do and we wouldn't know what do to and what to expect, so I was arrested 01:08: because I tell you why. As the Polish soldier back up, there was so many weapons and happened in the woods I find a beautiful new rifle, Army rifle, and I bring it home and I hide the rifle in a barn, in a haystack and that time if you're hiding any weapons...the posters was all over, you know...that means death sentence. There was no question about that. But they give us time up to I forgot...November 10 or something like that. Anything belongs to the Army, government, any weapons, ammunition, even

blankets, we should turn to the Germans. After that if you keep something like that and they find out, there be a death sentence for that. So but that rifle, I didn't...I didn't give it back. Now I thought maybe someday I going to use it, but somebody somehow squeal on me to the German Gestapo and they come. They arrest me, right there in the village, next village and they kept me there for three weeks, in November 1939, and they treat me very rough. If I tell you I get seventy-five on my rear end...they tied me to the bench and they tell 01:10: me...they tell me if I won't bring that weapon, they going to shoot me, and I tell them I haven't got no weapon and somehow somebody from the village...I think there was some people, you know, had me out and they talk from me I am innocent. I just come from the city. I was a baker, you know. I had nothing to do, but the chief of the Gestapo says now you too danger for me. The next week, on Wednesday, I want you be here and we assign you in for the work, for the farm working the German, and you got to be here about nine o'clock Wednesday. I forgot what day was it. I believe that was December 6th, on Wednesday somewhere as far as I can remember, so I sign a paper and they took us to Germany. Happened by good luck we landed in Austria, which was much better. We go through Czechoslovakia. We stay overnight in Vienna. We come to Austria, to Linz and from Linz we come to the little town, a little city I should say, by the name 01:12: \_\_\_ in Austria, and we come to the place, unemployment office and the farmers was waiting for us. If I tell you the story you wouldn't believe. From my village there was a friend of mine with me by the name Frankie (ph) and both of us we was assigned to the big, the biggest farm in that area, in that county I should say, and guess who picked us up. My wife Frieda. She was at that time...gosh, nineteen...nineteen years old, twenty. Father sent her to the unemployment office and she bring us home. Matter of fact they give us the taxi like about short before the house there was the kind of hill and the taxi couldn't make it because was quite a snow there at that time there in Austria, so at that place...oh, about a half a mile, we have to...half a kilometer I should say...we walked, and here we come on that farm and by gosh two big dogs because the father of the farmer...he was more than a farmer you see. He was a very wealthy, wealthy man...the biggest in the area. He had also hunting area. I don't know how many thousands and thousands acres of hunting, and that hunting was in that house for over a hundred years, so he had the two big hunting dogs. They greet us, you know, first. (Laughter) I look at them if either one of them going to bite me, and we and friend of mine Frankie, we come over there and here they greet us. Right away they show us the room where we're going to sleep. There was two beds. We put the suitcases there and we wash ourselves...hands...and they invite us for the big supper, and I remember that first supper in that house. There was a heavy, hot stew, like an Irish stew, see. Half and half with the meat, you know...very good...and we was hungry though and was tasting good, and here comes the whole family. There was four daughters and the parents and probably about four...that time...three or four workers. They work for that big farm. There was almost winter time you see. Summer time they hire fourteen, fifteen people they hire for the work, and that's what our...my job begin in Austria on that farm. Yes.

Q: What kind of work were you doing?

A: Yeah. Well, the next day we didn't do nothing. They show us, you know, what we're supposed to do and I think on Monday we work on the manure, see. We loaded the

manure on a 01:15: wagon. There was a one pair ox(en) and one pair horses, and they wanted their daughter, Frieda, which is my wife now...we're going to talk about her (laughter) later on...she was working with the horses. Big horses. Oh my God, and a friend of mine Frankie...they give him the pair of oxes. Oxes. Right...I pronounce alright oxes...yes. And we was working with them, you know, and they put the manure on...we put the manure on a \_??\_. Then after that they had also about twenty acres of forest belong to that farm, so during the winter time we was cutting the woods, you know, piling, sending to the saw mill, you know. Yeah. And food was good I must say. Plenty food, yes. If I tell you there was meat twice a day you wouldn't believe even that time, and they treat us pretty good. You got to work. So long you work, put your twelve hours a day, you're alright. So they treat us pretty good, I must say.

Q: How long did you stay on the farm?

A: Not very long. See, it's happen...it's hard to explain how this happen. Now that Frieda, the one of the daughter...I use to help her and oh for some reason we liked each other. You know...I was young that time. She was young and we liked each other, see. And I think this is little bit too far gone, so the family notice something too close friendship here in between us. 01:17: So that was on November...or before November 1941, the father had a speech to me and to Frieda. We know you two close together. You know what it is. She go to the concentration camp and you going to be dead man. One of you got to go. You can't stay together, so which one going to go? Leave the farm. One of us. Either Frieda or me. I says my gosh. This is your daughter. She should stay. Well, it's up to here, up to her. I don't care. So Frieda decided to leave the house, and I stayed. Yeah. That was something from a big house, you know, like that for a big family, very well-known family. She go to the unemployment office and they sent her off I should say about ten, fifteen kilometer away on a smaller farm, but soon I find out where the farm is and once a while on Sunday we meet again. Was nothing in between us except a very close friendship. OK. And then not long after that somebody squeal on us, so I was arrested from the Gestapo and Frieda was arrested and we was brought to 01:19: that very well-known Gestapo in Linz on the Donau in Austria. There was...all foreigners who was working there in Austria, they know what...what it is Gestapo in Linz, you know. There was the toughest Gestapo in in in Austria I should say. So they keep us for eleven days. They keep me eleven days. I don't know. Frieda I think she was thirteen days, and they couldn't prove anything because actually it was nothing between us except a good friendship so what happened they call me in one day and they says OK, we believe you. You had nothing to do with Frieda Greinegger (ph)...that's what her name was. We let you go, but 01:20: before we let you go you got to sign this paper, and there was the whole so many points, you know, what is against the law, and the very last one was to any friendship with German or Austrian girl...that sentence by hanging. They tell us this. They tell me, so you remember this. If you see Frieda again, you're going to be hung. Understand? Understand, OK. But he says here you go on the unemployment office and the unemployment office going to send you different direction where I was before...different direction of about I should say about fifteen kilometer from Linz or as by the railroad there as you go to Vienna, you know. Different directions, see. Now you go back where you were, pick up you belongings and you go on that on that farm. They

know about and you going to work over there and remember, behave yourselves. Yes sir. I says yes sir. So I go to Frieda's parents where I was before, pick up my suitcase and everything and then I think that was on Monday I was going back. Come back to Linz on a railroad depot and waiting for my train go to that direction where I was assigned for the new farm, and you wouldn't believe how this happen. You you might call it coincidence, but that's what happened. Here I walk in a third class in Linz on a railroad and here comes the Frieda. But we didn't stop. We just go by and she told me something like follow me, so we go in a place and you got to be careful because you don't know...maybe they watch you, you know. Who knows. And then she told me she's assigned to another farm, not home. They didn't send her home. Different direction on the other side of the city, again you know. They try to keep us as far apart as possible see, and then she told me OK...not this Sunday, next Sunday I meet you on a Landstrasse by \_\_??. This is a little city \_\_?\_\_ between Linz and that farm where Frieda's parents where I was working. I meet you on a highway. Highway means, 011:23: you know, Landstrasse. I meet you there on certain time. I forgot what was it...one o'clock or two o'clock afternoon. I going to be on a bicycle there and I meet you there. I says Frieda, my gosh, suppose somebody watch us. You know what that means. She says that's alright. Whatever happen I want to see you then, you see. So good enough. I think there was two week after I did borrow a bicycle from my new farmer, you know, from that new farmer and he was a very fine man. Even so, he was a member of the party but he was just a member for of the party so he get the machineries, you know, and this and this, and they discover him after, you know, by the end. They find out he was fooling and and they they they draw him to the Army and he was a prisoner in English...the English took him, yeah. Anyway, he was a fine man. He says well, OK. You want a bicycle. Go. Now tricky was there if you want be not recognize, you got to dressed up the same as the Austrian you know, wear their suits. So I had a nice grey suit with the green stripes on the side, you know, how those Austrians are and their short jacket, you know. I don't know...Eisenhower you call it...(laughter)...the jacket and I had a green hat with a big brush (ph) in the back, you know. I looked like an Austrian see. So when I ride the bicycle nobody pay attention, you know. You know what I mean....you have to be dressed like that because actually for the Polish workers...first of all, you're supposed to have that P. There 01:25: was a square, yellow square made out of the cloth \_\_\_ and there was a purple...purple P. Ugly. And you have to have this, you know. You have to wear all the time, all the time this over here. Yes, I did have. I have on this side, see. If I see the police, you know, I was no way...where's your P. Yes, I got it here. I I got it here, yeah. Well, says now wait a minute. That's supposed to be on this side. Yes, it's OK. I put it on this side, see. Well, anyway and happen after two weeks I meet Frieda or whatever and she told me, she told me, you know, where the farm is. Matter of fact we ride over there and she show me and says next time when you come there's a woods over here. We're going to meet over here. I says Frieda, what are we doing? They're going to kill us, both of us. Maybe not you, but (laughter) they're going to hang me anyplace you know. And says well, Julie (ph), I like you so much. Tell you the truth I can't live without you. I says Frieda, you know what you're talking. This is a death sentence. I don't care. To me it's worth it. There you are. So that was going fine. There was a small farm which to Frieda was working. I was happy. She was happy. I was doing the whole work. I had a nice pair of horses there. I take care of the whole farm because the farmer, he was a little guy, you know, and he didn't want

to work hard see. He had a new tractor there. Well, when there was anything to do with the tractor, he was sitting on a tractor, you know, but with the horses the most job, you know, I was doing, you know. He was 01:27: very glad and I was working hard and same thing Frieda was working on that little farm where she was. She was working fine. Everything was there fine, but meantime the Gestapo told the farmer where Frieda was working...look and watch it because she had something to do with Polish guy. If you know anything, if you notice anything, let us know. And good enough...how long you can hide. Sooner or later they found...they did find out...I don't know how...that that we was together, and he didn't make any report to the Gestapo. So long Frieda was working there, fine. But Frieda make one mistake. She want to quit that farm and go work in a city for the airplane factory, more money, more time, you know. And that was the biggest mistake Frieda make. And that's what the trouble start right then. So when the little farmer where Frieda was working find out she going to quit, she call up...he call up the Gestapo and Frieda was arrested first. I didn't know. And we had a...we had a date at that time, you know. That was on end of the week, yeah. I go over there and where we usually meet, Frieda wasn't there. So I had a bad feeling. Something happened. Is she sick? But there was no way to find out. But I no have to wait long to find out what happen. So good enough...that was I believe was on a Friday, September 19, 1941. We was digging potatoes. I was working on on my farm. 01:29: I mean on that farm where I was working. I was working with the horses. I had that machine, you know...dig out the potatoes, and we was working afternoon. At noon we bring some potatoes home and we go for lunch. Good enough. We was in a dining room. We was eating and here to the kitchen from the other side comes the policeman and he talk, because the farmer and his wife and the old parents, they was eating in the kitchen and we was eating the workers...there was two girls and a one Frenchman, a prisoner, prisoner from the French army...Louis...he was with us. We was eating there and I hear in the kitchen...I hear my name and what I hear what the farmer was answering, he's very good. He's a hard worker. He's a good man, yeah. And he was putting down. Then nice, not rush, the policeman was waiting till we finish and then he come to the living room and says, Julius Noga...I was called by Julius in German. Julius Noga. I want you to dress up and pick up whatever you want to pick up and you go with me to Linz. I says sir, is that Gestapo? Yep. Ah...to live or not. I was speechless. I says yeah, yeah, yeah. Come on. Dress you up. Wash you up. Dress you up, yeah. I wait for you. So I go to my room. I go to my two horses, you know. I clap them. I give them some more oats, a little more 01:31:30 hay. I clap them. I know...I know I no going to see those horses any more. Then I dressed up. He says whatever you need like shaving or equipment or whatever you need, whatever...toothpaste, brush, whatever you think, take it. But don't take too much. You don't need it. I know I don't need it. So here was another very important...I don't know how much did help. Now Polish worker not supposed to drive the bicycle and not supposed to ride a train. Now the Polish people was treated very...you know, Polish worker, you know...they're worse, you know. Yeah. Like Czechoslovak, they cannot ride their bicycle. They ride a train, but not Polish people. There was strict, very strict. So but many times when I go see Frieda on the other side of city, there was...I forget...oh probably what was it...forty, fifty...no, forty kilometer, so ride the bicycle was a little bit too far for me you know. What I was doing I go with the bicycle on a on a depot and put the bicycle in the box car, the first one always was box car there. Put the bicycle on the



train and go to the last city, take the bicycle...you know, pay extra...it was cheap, you know, that time. Take the bicycle and go wherever you want to go. But here we come on that depot with the policeman and we supposed to go by train to the Linz what was only sixteen, eighteen kilometers, \_\_\_\_??\_\_\_\_\_, and this is close to the concentration camp Mauthausen there, that direction. So first thing he come to the window where they sell the tickets and that was the guy by the name Schottinger (ph). He used to be very good friend to my farmer and every day as I delivered the milk on six o'clock train, I delivered for him a little canned milk, see, and each time I go somewhere when he was there, he sold me the train tickets, you see. So the first thing the policeman asked him, did you ever sell the ticket to this to this Pole. He looked at me and I see in his eyes. He look at me. He understand. He says never. I says God bless you. I never...if I live through, you're going to be my friend. So OK. So we go outside by the track. We're waiting for the train and here comes the train from Vienna, and I was thinking my gosh, suppose when the train come, you know...I long before study?? and I lay myself on a rail. I was ready to commit suicide, but you know, when you come to something like that, you always somewhere in the back you always had hope maybe miracle happen. Maybe it's too soon. OK. So we go on the train and we come to Linz and from Linz Bahnhof, railroad station. We walk to the Gestapo. Straight to the Gestapo offices. Not to the jail. To the Gestapo. Four hardy, strong Gestapo men was waiting for me. Ah, you are come. Julius Noga. Ah. Hum. We're waiting for you. Yeah. Now you're not going to tell us this time. You remember 01:36: you sign that list you no going to have...I mean you're not going to have nothing to do with the Austrian girl. You remember that. Here it is. Did you sign that? Yeah. Now, and you're still with her, right. I says no. What? You no see Fraulein Greinegger? No. Hmm. Hey, Hans, he says he didn't see her. You know what the guy...one talked to the other one. Well, you know...he's liar, you know. He says you son of a so-and-so. You Sau (pig). Pow. Pow. Pow. And there was standing those four guys...they were standing around. I was in the middle, you know, and I bouncing off on one on the other one. Oh my gosh...one of them hit me in the nose. Blood come out. OK. Yeah. Wash yourself. There was a sink there. Wash yourself. Sit down. Now don't be foolish, he says. We're going to beat you. You're going to be black. Tell us the truth. Are you with Frieda Greinegger or not? I says no. Oh my gosh, look at you. Oh, they make a joke, you know, how they had a fun with me. Then two other guys go and, you know, they hear...they heard somebody, you know. They open the door. They in that office...there are so many offices. Says well you got tough customer over here huh. Well, maybe we'll help you. Pow, pow, you know. And oh right away, you know, I start swoll up, you know, on this. Are you going to tell us the truth? I says I told you the truth. What? I have nothing to do with her. He says oh my gosh...then they give me some more. Then one of the interpreters...he was a 01:38: Gestapo man and he speak fluently Polish, and he told me in Polish language, look, we got all evidence. You meet her so many times in Ginskirchen. Ginskirchen means where Frieda was working there on that small farm, and we also know Frieda come to your place too, and you tell us you you have nothing to do with her. I says no. He says don't...you know...they they try to help me, you know, in this time. Says oh, OK. We don't want to hit you no more. Wait. And says go get the Frieda. She was there in a different office. My gosh. I open my eyes. She was crying when she come. Sit down, Fraulein Greinegger. Would you please told this guy here you see each other many times by many occasions and they already they already get

it from her, you know, how the woman is soft, you know. They tell her look...if you won't tell us the truth, you'll never come out of the concentration camp. You're going to die in the concentration camp. You better tell us the truth. Maybe we can help you. And how did you come out from that big house with the rich, very well-know family? How did you come to have something to do with a guy, a Pole worker? He was working for your parents. How did you come? What you got to do with him? You're beautiful girl. And this is true, because she was...she was beautiful. 01:40: I got the picture. She had three sisters and all of them was beautiful. And she start cry. She didn't answer, but they say OK, you tell him, and she says yes. We meet. How many times? I don't know how many times. OK. Now, what you got to say, they ask me. You see, if you tell us from the beginning we wouldn't hit you that much. OK. So that's all what they want to know. We talk some more tomorrow to you. Go outside and face the wall close. One of them bring me there and when you go on a on a wall, you stay close to the wall and face the wall, see. Face the wall like this. And don't turn, you know. And you stay there, and they took Frieda there. I don't know where they took her and then I see this is it. And then next day they ask some more question. They take the pictures from three sides...from the front, from this side, from this side...they took the picture. They took us to the...of course, there was more prisoners...they took us to the doctor. They weighed us. They measure us. You know, I don't know why they did it, but they did it. Oh, when we come to that doctor that was something. That was a private doctor, a private practice this doctor. And the Gestapo man...there was four of us and we was...we had that what you call it...that chain, handcuff and there in the office there was a a window or there was a bar on the window, bars, and he chain us to that bar and here was civilian people sitting, you know, and they shake their hand you know, and he looked at it, you know. He probably...they feel good so he unchain us there 01:42:30 and he keep the eye on us. Yeah. Well, from then there was more and more question. They didn't hit me no more after that. Yeah. OK. And good enough. When they finish...when they bring me to that jail on in Linz on Mozart Strasse, Polizei Presidium that's the name was... there was a very modern jail, built in 1938. Everything push button. Clean. Very very tough. There was no way to run away from that jail. No way. So from my previous...from my last year experience I know that cell Cell Number Five...they peel the potatoes, and I knew they had enough food, so in our office before they give me the cell, I asked the inspector would you please put me on cellar...on Cell Five. He says well, I don't know. I think Cell Five is crowded, but he call up that guard there, ask you got room on Cell Five for one more man, and I remember that guard name...Rollinger (ph)...blond guy, tall guy. He says oh yeah, yeah, yeah. I have room for another guy. They put me on on Cell Number Five, and good enough. We peel the potatoes. Before noon we peeled boiler potatoes and we had a salt and boiled potatoes you can eat how much you want, you know, and then afternoon whatever left over, they give us the leftover too, so that was plenty food there. So that was good. That was good. That was in November. Short before Christmas, the Gestapo...I don't know for what reason take us, about thirteen guys, put us in a black van and bring us to another city closer to the previous farm where Frieda's parents are. Was the next city though, pretty 01:45: good sized city and they put us in an old jail and I remember the the street, SA Strasse. And there was a very small jail, very old prison and we stayed there over the Christmas and during the winter two guys come from Linz, from the headquarters, a prisoner, Polish guy, and they tell us what the Gestapo do. They hanging people in the

woods and they send to the concentration camp and you...it's going to happen same thing to us. So what should we do? My gosh...this is occasion over here. We might have a chance to run away from this, from this jail see. There was two old guards and the inspector and that was the ??\_\_\_\_\_ how many prisoners there. They coming and going oh maybe twenty, thirty prisoners, you know. They coming for short time, you know, like those guys don't want to work on a farm or do some something wrong, you know, and they give them for the...they give them for the few...jail for the few days. You are no bread, nothing and no food and they keep them three, four, five days hungry, you know, and they give them good advice, you know. Go back and work. Next time when you come, we going to keep you here two weeks without the food or we're going to send you to the concentration camp, so they they scared the people. OK. So now here what we're doing here...what's the what's the reason they bring us over here. Nobody knows, but those two guys tell us we better run away if we got chance. OK. So how we going to run away? There was thirteen guys all together, all Polish. We was on that cell, so one of them was shoemaker. Walter was his name. He was a shoemaker. He says you...that bar in the window, if we cut just one of them and we lifted it, we can go through, and there was a screen, thin screen. If you cut just the one, you you you can make a hole. You can open it, see. Yeah. But where we going to get the saw. He says well, we got to figure out something, so next morning we go...in the morning we go on a on a hall for.. there was a big sink where we washed ourselves and then you can go toilet there and there was a guy and he had those high boots. A guy...he was just a short for one week. He had 01:48: those high, high boots and then Walter looked at those boots and he says my gosh, I know...I'm shoemaker...I know this...in those boots, you know, there's strip of metal, of good steel. He said maybe we can make a saw out of this. So Walter go and talk to him...how long you are here. Oh I'm here already third day. You hungry? Oh my gosh, I'm hungry. I didn't eat for three days. He says look, you want to sell those boots? Yeah. Yeah. Look, we give you ...we exchange. We exchange, or something like that. We exchange the shoes...you you need the shoes, yeah, and we give you half a loaf bread for the...good, good. OK. So we give those pieces, make a half a loaf, and we get them. You'd be surprised. He pull out those steel plates, you know, narrow one, steel. This is a good steel. Now, how we going to make a saw now? OK. Figure out. Walter says why don't we break the shoe and call up the guard. Maybe they got the hammer and some nails, you know, fixed up the, you know, sole, you know. Good enough. Pushed the button. The old guard come...Austrian with their big mustache...yeah...he smoked a pipe, yeah. What is it? Oh I says Herr Wachmeister, Wachmeister 01:50: you call him, the guy...look, my shoes is broke. You you got hammer and something we can fix? Well, yes. I look. I think we got something upstairs, yes. So he go upstairs. He come not only with the hammer and nails, short nails, but he bring us that what you call that steel stand like for the shoes, you know, \_\_\_??\_\_\_\_\_. I don't know what you call that ...like you fix the soles...you you you put on that steel plate like, you know, made like a lace (ph) or something, you know. Steel lace I should say. OK. So Walter...Walter says look. How we going to make it? So we put those two plates close, right? Another guy hit with the hammer and we go like this. We go like this, and when they get two saws in one. How whether the saw going to cut now? Now we're going to try out, and that that was the week before Palm Sunday in April 1942. OK. So the very first night we start...we tried that saw, and by gosh, you'd be surprised how that saw was cutting the bar. We

couldn't...we couldn't cut just like that, you know, steady. No. They upstairs. Maybe somebody hear, so we tied the bar with the blanket and go just a little bit, slow you know, and believe me...about four o'clock in the morning...we start about nine o'clock in the evening to cut little by little. About four o'clock in the morning we got that through and there was a square bar, I should say one inch by one inch thick. And good enough there was not so tight together, so we cut the second one on the bottom. There was only one cross bar in the middle, so we figured out when we cut it on the bottom, so we grab it and bend it up and this was big enough...what we had to do just to the thin screen was outside...just cut the once you know, and then we run away. Then...but before we did it, we swear, we make a promise...we go all of us, thirteen guys. We go out, and we all decided to run away. OK. And that that night going to be Palm Sunday, Saturday before the Palm Sunday, so Palm Sunday we going to be 01:53: out. OK. Good enough. Then that night comes, the Saturday, and we pray as usual. We had a supper. We go a little bit early to the sleep but meantime I forgot to tell you...the very same day one of the guard come and he says he needed two men for some kind of work there, for short time, so he took two guys and they were there oh I'd say for a couple of hours. Then they coming back, and that bar was already cut, so when they come back we ask, did the guard ask you something? Did he notice...notice anything? No, no, no, no. He didn't say...he didn't ask no question, no no. They don't know nothing. OK. So tonight we're going to go. Good enough. So that that that evening, after the supper, we go a little bit early and we're going to start around ten o'clock. We're going to go out. And we already had plans, you know...I go with you and you go with him, you know...all different direction and we make agreement we going to walk, run away only by night. If we have to go by the by the day, we have to have either shovel or fork or something carry, you know, make believe you go to the work so you won't be stopped by the by the policemen when you go far, and the first night we got to go as far, as far away, and there was a river over there and we should pass that river. It wasn't very deep. We should pass that river for one reason...when they chase us with the dogs, when the dogs come into the water...that's what we understand that time...they going to loose their tracks, see. Good enough. So that night we go early bed and we wasn't...it wasn't long we hear the guards come, open our cell and the inspector was with them, and first thing he ask why you guys going so early sleep tonight. Nobody says nothing. Come on...get up. Get up. And there was a long bed made out of the \_\_\_\_\_. There was no mattresses. There was just the blankets, from one wall to the windows...a long one bed, you know, like a...about that high...like a like a floor. OK. We get up. He jump on that bed, go straight, open the window, pick up the knife from his pocket and on that particular bar start from the middle and go way down...oh, and we covered that cut...we make it go under the \_\_\_\_ and we covered the cut and and we had black shoe cream. We put the...because the bar was black, we put the cream...that that black shoe cream...we put it on, so...yeah...so that's why he go with the knife. He knows which bar is it, see, and then his knife fall in that cut. He says, I see. He cleaning it up a little bit, put the knife there...so, you cut the bar huh. You want to run away. Hmmm. He smile, you know. That's bad, you know...he smile. I don't know for what reason he come straight to me and says where is 01:57; the saw? I said we haven't got no saw. Pouch...pouch...where is the saw? I said we haven't got it. He says why you liar. Then one of the guy from those two guys they was two hours working that afternoon, he says well Mr. Inspector, here Inspector, here he is. He go behind that...in a corner and there

was...we hiding behind the molding on the floor, we hide those two...two plates. He pull out those two plates. Here, here, here Inspector. Here. You know...ah. He smile. How nice. So you guys make those saws huh, and they work huh. Nobody says nothing. Here...Sauhunde, verfluchte. He swears, you know. Noga...Walter....he call...he knows who was the instigator, you know...they told him, you know, those two guys. Noga, Uganick, and Yashinsky (ph)...come with, and he told to the guards take those other guys Cell Number One or something, you know. So he...yeah...

Q: We're going to take a break right here.

End of Tape #1

Tape #2

Q: Would you continue the story from when you and the two other prisoners were transferred to Cell One?

A: Yes. That was a cell called in German Korrection (ph) cell. Now, what is correction cell? This is windowless cell, dark, concrete on the floor and there was three of us...me, Walter \_\_\_\_\_ and John Jachinsky...Yachinsky, and for three of us they give us only one blanket and that was the Holy Week before Easter Sunday. We spent the whole week over there and Easter over there. That was very sad because we couldn't see much, but you after you stay so in a dark cell for a while, you know, you beginning to see (laughter)...right. So after Easter...that was on Tuesday... they send a Gestapo man, happen he was photographer. That's the guy make those pictures, first one when we was arrested, and he come and pick me up. That was on Tuesday, and he chain my hands. He want to chain my hands in the back and I beg him to chain my my hands on on on the front, handcuff. And we go on a railroad depot and I remember there was so many German soldiers was going on a east front, Russia, was \_\_\_\_\_ there, but we come with the regular train from \_\_\_\_\_ to Linz what is like I said fifteen kilometer, something like that 02:02 and that was a third class train. There was a one lady sitting there and he excuse her...would you please leave this compartment or what you call that part of the train and there was a window open. He closed that window and I was sit there vis-a-vis with him. And that time I was in a good mood for some reason. I know this is my last days, you know. I know what they going to do me. I was so sure, hundred percent sure I was, but I was wrong. And I say ...I look at it through the window from from the from the train. I see how they work in the field. Somebody was plowing there with the horses, you know, and it reminds me how I use to plow the ground there on the last farm where I was. How much I would give to change the place with that guy who was plowing that that land, that land there, and then I start joking with the Gestapo man. I...I didn't care whatever they going to do. I know what they going to do to me. I says hey Inspector. So I know the Gestapo going to hang me or they probably going to hang hang me or they going to shoot me, so which...what they going...you can talk to me, you know. It doesn't matter. I know you going to kill me anyway. He says who told you that. I says there was a two guys come over there in a \_\_\_\_\_ in the cell and they tell us how many already you hanged and 02:04 how many already you shoot. I was so open I I didn't give a damn, you know. I was \_\_\_\_\_. He says no, you not going to be hanged and you you not going to be shot. Gestapo want to see you and ask you a few questions. I says what Gestapo want to know more. Gestapo knows everything about me. He says well, I don't know. Don't ask me. I don't know what they want to ask you. He says yeah. So was sitting there, sitting, you know. Then again, you know, I asked hey Inspector, so when this going to be? Today or...it's early in the morning, you know, you still got time when...today or tomorrow? And where they going to go? Where I was working there, because usually what they did in a cases like that, they take the guy they want to hang. They...day before they call up all foreigners on certain day. Next day certain day in the woods where they going to hang that man, you know, in the woods. So they show...so they scare him, say you no work. If you not listen, that's going to happen same thing to you, see, so I says you going to probably...you going to bring me to \_\_\_\_\_? Sankt Florian, that's the place was the \_\_\_?\_\_\_ and probably and go

somewhere in the woods you going to hang me. Then he was little bit upset. He says now listen. I no want to hear that from you. I tell you once you not going to be hanged and you not going to be shot. We go to the Gestapo. Well, good enough. So we come to the Linz on the same very familiar railroad station, yeah, and from the from that station to the Gestapo, not to the jail on Mozartstrasse. We was walking. So I come to the office and in the office they open a book and they 02:06: look at my name. Says oh...that's the one was involved in boycotting in Vels? \_\_\_\_\_. He's danger. Ah ha. It says you guys cut the bar. You want to run away, what you heading...which you was thinking. Where you turn wrong...where? Where? How can you hiding? I says well, we try...you know...I I don't care. I know I'm dead man anyway. So I says hey Inspector, would you please do me one favor? Yes, what is it? Would you please put me on on Cell again Number Five? He says, ah you hungry. Not quite. I like to peel the potatoes before I die. What? Before you die? Who told you you going to die. I says I got that feeling. Ah, forget it. So they call up the guard and they put me on Cell Five, and thanks God, because from April after the Easter up to August 1st I believe, I was on Cell Five. We had plenty food. Nothing special...potatoes, carrots, carrots, beets, whatever we had, you know, but we fill up the stomach, you know, and matter of fact I I gained some pounds, you know, in that cell. On August 1st, on the evening, I remember, again the \_\_\_\_\_, you know, that tall guy, the guard come with the pink sheets and says Julius Noga. Sign this here. We already know pink sheets what means...concentration camp. I said so I says OK Herr Wachmeister, when? Tomorrow? Yeah, tomorrow you go Flossenberg. And we hear something about Flossenberg, that that's supposed to be tough concentration camp. I thought they going to send me in Mauthausen. No, but for some reason they send me in Flossenberg. So next day, OK. They pick up...I believe there was forty-six of us. I was the only one Pole, Polish guy in this transport. They cuff our hands two and two, and they bring us down to the garage down below and they put us on a bus without a top, that bus what they usually bring the prisoners from the from the jail to the Gestapo building what was in a city there, a new building, yeah. They bring us on a rail depot and they put us on a on a railroad car and that was small compartments you call it... three men or four men to the one compartment, yeah, and two of them can sit and two of them stand and then we change, you know. So we come as far as Salzburg in 02:09: Austria. Then in Salzburg we stay overnight...some kind of old jail, big cell, all of us was laying there. There was some mattresses on the floor and we stay over night and this is very interesting because all documents in a concentration camp and on the Gestapo, all documents from the foreigners was destroyed, but Salzburg, that jail for some reason I don't understand even when you go today, when you call up, they keep that record and says Julian Noga stay over night here in a on the way to concentration camp to Flossenberg, and this is the only evidence there in Austria where is I was sent to concentration camp Flossenberg. I got some other witnesses, but that's what is still, you know, the the the best proof, you know, I was on the way to Flossenberg, so the next stop was we stay overnight from Salzburg in Munich. Also in some kind of jail, and this what I meet...how should I say...my good luck. As we was there was late in the evening. They bring a tall guy, brunette, tall guy, strong guy by the name Hans Bauer (ph). Now Hans Bauer was in a German jail for ten years. He served his term and the and he was free, but the Gestapo was waiting for him and pick him up and put him in a concentration camp like they did with all others, criminals were told that. So always you serve your term in a jail like Hans Bauer ten

years, but the Gestapo, they decided, you know, he's too dangerous to be free so they put him in a concentration camp. Now he was poor, that guy. He didn't have nothing and happen when I was there in Linz on Cell Five some of those guys will clean up on the Gestapo there and pick up the cigarettes, you know, butts, you know. We had plenty tobacco and we...those newcomers come and they had some cigarettes and from the office we had one guard so he bring the cigarettes on the cell, you know, because what you say black marketing was when going all over, so I had plenty cigarettes and I had a nice bag of tobacco, so I give...he was a heavy smoker that Hans Bower. I give him one pack of cigarettes and he was appreciate it so much and he says what is your name. I says Julius, because they usually call me Julius. OK. I remember this. Now what it was soon after we come to the concentration camp, but before we come to that, now then from Munich we go to a little town, the last 02:13: railroad station by the name Floss (ph). It is close to the concentration camp Flossenburg. Now there the SS with the black vans, they was waiting for us. And how they greet us when we step out from the train...with the whips, the long whips and they call us all kind of names. Lauese (ph), lice...and they pack us, you know, in that black vans there and shut the door and we was standing so packed, you know. And we come to the concentration camp and when they open the door, you couldn't see nothing when we was...and that was probably from Floss to concentration camp wasn't that far...was maybe three kilometer, not more than five kilometer and here they open the door and we looking around. We had not much time. My gosh...we see the watch towers and the wires and those guards there, and and right away they put us in a washroom which was few stairs...I don't know...about five, six stairs down. They put us there and they push us and they hit us with the whips and that's when we take the clothes off and they give us nice cold shower. Of course, that was summer. That was beginning of the August, but (laughter) you take a really cold shower, you feel it, and they put the hose, you know, they had a big hose with the water. They put the hose, you know, just like the animals, you know. OK. And they give us the striped suit what I going to show you later on, but some are striped white and blue, thin. Thin fabric. Yeah. OK. And then they bring us on a on a newcomer so-called, new-comers barrack and they keep us there for fourteen days, for two weeks. The only thing they didn't give us the shoes those fourteen days and every day in the morning they call us to the Politische Abteilung, means to the political bureau, and they ask us...everyone of us...you know, one by one, all questions, you know...where you was born, where, how, this, how come, how you come over here, and they had this all reported. But they ask you, see. Then I remember just a short ...I give you example. There was a guy asking question. Ah he was not even high officer. He was some kind of like a corporal, SS, and he was sitting on a table, you know, and play with the feet, you know...he look at me. He asked me question like this...you know why you are here? I says yeah. Why? Well, because I was too close friend to the Austrian girl. He laugh at me and he says no. You here to pay for those all German soldiers was killed in in a in a city by the name Bedgost?? in Poland. I know that's 02:16:20 later on I find out because I asked so many people why, why, why he ask me questions. Bedgost. Who is \_\_\_\_? I know that \_\_\_\_ they had a big factories, clothing factories, something like that. I don't even know where is \_\_\_\_ you know. Far away from Tarnow. I says sir, I never was in Bedgost\_. What? Macht nichts. But you pay for those German soldiers was killed in Bedgost. Now after I find out, yes. There was a \_\_\_\_\_. Even before the war start, there was so many Germans living there in the \_\_\_\_ and



Germans started it. When the people come out of the church, you know, there was some shooting, you know, something like that, so the Polish people go after, after those German and after the Germans come, the soldiers, you know...that was something very unusual and that's what he probably was there and he remembered this and that's probably...that's what he told me. OK, sir, if you say so...fine. OK. Raus. He chased me out and good thing he no even slap me, you know. But other guys, some of them, he beat. He kick, you know. Mean, mean bastard, you know. Oh mean, mean. So what we was doing after that...OK. After they asked...so they had a kapo. Kapo was like a foreman. Kapo comes from an Italian word, language...kapo, which means foreman. He had a long whip and he let us run five...five men in one row. How many was there? Oh gosh...I don't know. Maybe fifty, maybe hundred. He let us run, run there, on Appellplatz which means the roll call square, in a meadow, and there was no blacktop. There was just a like a rough gravel. Pretty smooth but not too smooth, and you imagine...no shoes. And we had...we had to run all way around, you know, and he play with us, you know. He hit us with the things you know. So they keep us for fourteen days and teach us all those rules in a concentration camp and the best thing what they tell us, you know, one of the guy...he was a prisoner, a German prisoner, criminal, the kapo. I remember his number. He had a green triangle and his number was very low...number 14. And I think his name was Paul. Big man. He say now while you are here, you're going to work twelve hours. See that quarry over there. You're going to work in that quarry. Most of you. Twelve hours a day. Here is the eighth what you call commandment of the concentration camp. I forgot how you name it, you know, but those you know, you you got to work. You got to be good, you know. You got to listen this and this and 02:20: this. And if you not listen to this, for stealing, stealing bread was death sentence. For the little thing you get twenty-five whips on your rear end. And then he says oh yes, you can go free from this. Of course, you go...you had the on the entrance you had that writing arbeit mach frei (ph)...just the baloney, you know. Nobody go free there. He says but yes, you can go free. You see that chimney on the crematorium there? That's the way you go to freedom. So I thought my gosh...and you look at those all wires, double wires. You know, the first first was I don't know...three, four meter high, barbed wire and on the bottom there was a big rows you know, the barbed wire. And the second one probably oh about thirty inches, three foot. There was the electric wires. Smooth electric wire, pretty close together. Five thousand volts, so if you touch it, you burn, and I saw that too, you know, what can happen when the person start turn blue and black, you know. OK. Thanks God...my gosh, you know, now that's the life supposed to be so I start...somehow I start thinking now it's going to be impossible. I got to prepare myself to commit suicide. OK. So after fourteen days they one morning...oh, by by the way...you get up four o'clock...four thirty in the morning. That's get up. Aufstehen, you know. Hear the whistle somewhere. Aufstehen somebody screamed somewhere. Then you got to get up fast, make your bed, go in the washroom, take your shirts off up to here, wash yourselves and make ready and go out. Go out by the barrack and the block man...block man...that's the German prisoner. He was responsible for the block, for the barrack, barrack. He count you. There on the SS fuehrer, block fuehrer you called it...one of the SS take care of the...for instance, by block was number nine. He come and the block man make a report to him, so many men go ready go to work, so many men is sick, so many die over night. We say four, five, six men die over the night, so he make this report. OK. Then the block nine was way high as

you go...in the middle the blocks was on both sides and there was hundred two stairs. There was few steps and there was a level ground and there was one barrack on one side and the other one on the other side, and again few steps up and two barracks and a few steps up, so I was pretty block nine on the right hand side was I think second or third before the last one on the right hand side, so when you looked from block nine, when you looked down to the square, to the roll call, you see everything. You see the cremation building, you know. I had a very few view from block nine, so OK. So after fourteen days they took us early in the morning and they bring us to the 02:24: quarry. They give us shoes too, with the wooden sole and that's why I got the original picture because as I show here and I going to leave that picture, my picture from the first day in the concentration camp hangs there today in a museum in Flossunberg and this is a big format of the picture, so when I was there two years ago, when I saw myself on that picture, I thought I going to faint. My legs go down and I call my wife. My wife was with me, my daughter, my son and I show them that, so that was something...excuse me...and I remember exactly that time when that picture was taken. It was the first day in a quarry and that was at noon when we get the soup. We was waiting for the soup. You're going to see that picture. We are going to show later on, and there was a little SS, red hair with a big black camera like a like an accordion I should say (laughter). And why I remember so good because we was joking from that guy. How come they pick him up for the SS because usually when they pick up a man for the SS they got to be tall...you got to be perfect, see. But somehow (laughter) they pick him up. He was a little guy, red hair. Anyway, he make that picture and I remember that day and that picture was made as I can remember as I come to Flossenburg on August 3rd, and fourteen days they keep us there. It must be around August 18, 19 or maybe 20th that picture was made. How this picture survived, how they get it, how they put it there, I don't know. But I'm there see, and then on a in a quarry they put me in a special gang, so-called Kette Kommando. Kette Kommando was was a gang...I can't remember...was four of us, six of us, few gangs like that...our job was going in a quarry way deep with a dynamite that granite night before, and those big blocks granite...we put the chain around and the big crane was on top of it. He pick up those big blocks and bring on a level and then those blocks, they was cut again for the smaller pieces. So I was there for few weeks and that was very dangerous. Some time the whole block slipped, you know. We didn't put the chain right, you know, somehow, and there were so many accidents there. That was that was very danger(ous). Now why I say this picture was made in a first day in a quarry. Because on that picture I got the shoes with the wooden sole and after a while I was assigned for those Kette Kommando...put the chains on...what was so much climbing, they give me leather shoes very next day, and that's why I I remember that that was the first day in a in a quarry. OK. So after a few weeks they...for some reason one morning they put me on a barrack...they take me off from this kommando. We call it kommando...you know, the gang. And they put me on on cell number 12 to learn how to work out and make pieces out of the granite, so my first teacher there was another prisoner, old prisoner, a Czechoslovak. I remember his name. Very nice man. Franco Cerevani\_ and he teach me how there do this granite. What we was doing we was making the stone for the corpse, for the sidewalks and for the kilometer posts, for the streets those... in Germany you got though made out of the granite, little squares, you know. When you see sometime those streets in Germany made out of the granite, you know in different designs, see...those

kind of squares we was making and also we was making stones for the buildings. For instance, many buildings in Germany, they're made out of granite. Matter of fact the Politische Abteilung building there, later on we put there. Pol. Abt. means the all political bureaus was there, the whole concentration camp commandant, wheels...they had offices there, and matter of fact I got my probably...I can't remember exactly...four or five stones underneath the roof and they're in a shape like used to call them cocquils...special made. They stick out on the \_\_\_\_ roof and they're in a shape like half-rounded, you know, and two years ago I was there and I show my wife, my daughter and my son, look...I don't know which one but I know this is four or five of them, those stones, I make it, see. And also we was making stones for the bridges. That time they build up the autostrada (ph)...the big way you call it...and by each bridge on the side, those walls, they was using those big blocks. We...there there was a name Soldaten Steine. Yeah. That's the name was, and that's what the work was. First few 02:30:30 weeks that was terrible, you know. I thought I not going to make it see. My hand...you...that was all hand-work, you know. Point chisel and s flat chisel, you know, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, (tools in German)\_\_\_\_\_ and mash (ph) hammer number one, number two, you know. You smooth it up with the with the mash hammer. So you start with number one what is rough, see, and you pound and pound and you got the brush, you know, and you brush that dust. There was no fan, nothing. In the evening after twelve hours when we're finished, we was full white, you know, like a bakers. Remind me in a bakery, you know, I wasn't that much white that time. And then...now if you make that stone, each stone had it own term, you know...how long takes it to make. If you make that stone on on time, you have extra bonus. We say in a week, one mark, two mark bonus, so you can buy something in the canteen. They had a canteen in a concentration camp, so after after a few weeks I pick up because friend of mine told me, look Julie, if you want to survive, you got to show them something what you can do and don't go down. If you go down, you come to the stage of mussulman...what we call mussulman, mussulman...they going to kick you. They going to kill you. You're gonna swell up. You going to die he said. All the prisoners told me that, you know. So I really pay attention and thanks God by gosh, somehow I I did my work the best and I finished some of those stones most of them on time, getting better and better and I become professional stone cutter, and that's probably was one reason...as a good stone cutter, you know, as a low number...1623, those kapos they somehow somehow they they like you, you know. They kick you any time, you know, but no respect, you know. He's a good stone cutter. He's got low low number, you know, so sometime they skip you. They no kick you, you know. But that doesn't mean (laughter) you're safe. OK. So you know, might want to know how what kind of a life was in a concentration camp. You hear so many stories. What should I say? Gosh, that was miserable. No matter what I going to tell you, you probably...half of that you're not going to believe it because I tell you the truth. If I think back right now, if I think, you know, it's hard for me to believe, you know, how this possible could be how I survived. Yeah. And there is so many, so many bad things happen in Flossenburg. The life, daily life was terrible. You get up four thirty...quick, quick, quick, quick. And go to the quarry, work twelve hours, six days a week, twelve hours a day. Sunday...Sunday before noon we do the chores, so called, you know...clean out the your lockers, clean out the barrack, clean up yourselves and everything. Then we had inspection, you know. If you had button missing or something like that, you was punished for that, see. So it was clean.

That time from the beginning was clean, I must say. Yes. Oh...they cut our hair every month, and every week they cut with the clippers in the middle, you know. Yeah. And then you work 12 hours a day. The food was not to survive no matter how strong you are for six months, you know. The stronger people I saw, in a six months they die. Like in the morning you get only half a liter, what you call a liter, black coffee, ersatz coffee so-called, made out of a bark, burnt bark. Then when you was working in a quarry, around nine o'clock they give you two slices of bread with margarine, as a heavy worker. Yeah. At noon, as you see on this picture what I got, we had soup. Soup. Cabbage, red cabbage. I thought I never going to eat red cabbage in my life. Spinach. Spinach. Spinach...I says my gosh, spinach again, and that was watered, you know. There was no fat to it, see. So I thought as long as I going to live I never eat spinach. But I tell you something. I like spinach, Once in a while (laughter) I eat spinach. Yeah. And then after you come from the work here on the roll call square, they count you again and son of a gun...you know, every day somebody was missing. No matter what. And they count and count and count till they find out what happen. What would happen sometime guy die or was killed in a quarry. Many of them was killed and they forgot to take his name off, so they find out in a...we had a hospital. We called it ambulance. They find out the guy is in the ambulance or they find out he is on a pile there by the crematorium, you know, but it's happened, many times happen somebody want to try run away, and that was death sentence. My gosh. Yes. Don't you try to do that. If you try that, you...but I know, I know at least three guys..they run away and they didn't catch them. Why they didn't catch them? Because anybody run away, either death or life, they bring them back right in the middle in in that square. They put them there and says look, we we caught him. And when you people want to run away, we'll bring you back like that, you know. That's was, you 02:38: know, the lessons, you know, for for this. So the worst...one of the guy from this \_\_\_...this is very interesting...there was a Ukrainian guy. He was smart on one hand but he wasn't so smart on the other hand. What he did when we was working in a quarry...I make the story short, we had some civilian bosses there. Usually those guys set the dynamite there in the evening, and those civilian bosses, they had some kind of suit which you call uniform or or...there's a name for it, you know...the pants and the all together. At noon...that's right...at noon the the boss hang out this suit in his shack, and that Ukrainian guy sneak in and put that on and put his cap and he go on a side there there was a small gate, yeah. And the guard salute to him, you know, and he let him go, and he go only about thirty kilometer. We find out after he go about thirty kilometer and he come to the farm and he says, he told the farmer he just come from the Ukraine. He start on a station...he don't know what station and he want to drink the water. He was thirsty, and the train go away and he lost everything, you know. He lost the paper. He lost the suitcase. He had a suit over there and everything, you know. The farmer need a worker. He says don't worry about that. You know, that guy is a Gemeinde Buergermeister, he's friend of mine. I make a paper for you, so he make a paper for him, you know, and everything, even the clothes you know...was everything alright. Now three months after...I don't know, not even three months...he was too fresh and for some reason that farmer was fresh too, and the farmer hit him and he hit the farmer back, so he call up...the farmer call up the Gestapo. The Gestapo come. Ah...yeah...he had a different name already, but listen. What a coincidence. So Gestapo keep him there and give him good, you know, and this and now we're going to send you to the concentration camp. Would

you believe where they send him...to the Flossenburg. There is now...that be alright. Nobody would know nothing, but after fourteen days as a newcomers, they sent him to the quarry and they sent him to the same gang where he was before and the kapo recognize him and he call up the camp and two SS come with the with the rifle, with the bayonet, and they bring him over there. So in the evening when we come, when we come to the camp, he was standing there by the pole in the center and he had a big sign in three languages...I think that was in German, in Polish and in Russian...Ich bin wieder da. That means I come back. Yeah. OK. So they keep him for a few days in a jail. We had a jail, bunker we called it. See. They keep him there for a few days, and one evening we come back from the work...usually they make a show...almost every week they hang somebody...and here they carried...we had a...they had (laughter) portable gallows, gallows. Portable. Two men carry them, you know. They bring the gallows. Nothing new...we know. Every week they bring the gallows...you know, they hang somebody and they hang that Ukrainian fellow. Now when they hang the guy, no matter winter or summer, he had only pants. Barefoot. No shirts, nothing, and the hands was tied in the back. They bring that guy and we find out who that guy was. Now that was the unforgettable moment. I saw so many people was hanged there and feel sorry for them you know, but for this guy particular I feel sorry be...because this is a unbelievable story, so they put him on the gallows. There was...the gallows was a box with the floor cut in the middle and there was a handle on the side. When the guy pull out that handle so the floor goes in, you know, and the guy fall in that box and and was hanged. And that's what they do to that Ukrainian fellow. First they read the verdict, you know. The verdict, and no matter what it was, they always says for the sabotage. Everything for them was sabotage. So what they did...and we stood there, everybody still, you know. You got to stay there and and watch it, see, and they pull out the handle and the guy fall in that box and would you believe the rope breaks. The the the the rope broke. Now somebody told me because we got all kind of people in a concentration 02:43: camp...lawyers and judges, you know...that was an international law...I'm not sure about that but they tell us, if the rope break when they hang somebody, the man supposed to go free. Those criminals...they make a knot, you know...they put that rope together and they hanged that guy second time and he was crying. He was...he was begging them...he's going to be good worker. Just keep me in this concentration camp. They hang him second time, and that was the worst thing.

Q: Can we go focus a little bit more on some of the things that happened to you while you worked in the camp...some of the situations that that you were the victim of while you were at Flossenburg?

A: Well, yes. Like for instance this was...I think that was well, I was working in a in a quarry, as I tell you before and what happened to me and forgot about think to me personally, once I was sent to the kommando...in a in a concentration camp kommando means gang...and we was pushing a wagon on a small tracks with the dirt, you know. They was building something, another barrack or something, and on that job I had a different foreman and he hit me with the stick over the head and he split...I still got the got the scars over here. He split my head, and I was...he was a German foreman, and I was so furious I don't care what happ...what's going to happen. I take the stick from him

and I hit him so hard so the blood come from the ears, you know, from him, and they catch me, the kapos, the other kapos catch me and there they give me a...oh my gosh. They beat me so bad on there in the quarry and they bring me to the first aid in the quarry, and again the Hans Bauer find out about that because that was something, you know, that the the Polish guy hit the hit the German foreman, you know. That was death sentence right there. I didn't care, you know. He hit me for nothing, you know, you know, and I was so mad I didn't know what I doing, you know. That was my reaction, and the Hans Bauer...at that time, you know, he saved me. He grabbed that foreman and he says if anything happen to this guy, I going to kill you. So he said, because he says that guy...I had a knife. Knife...this is death sentence, you know. You...besides the hankerchief, you not supposed to have nothing on a...in a quarry, just a hankerchief. And a and the dish what you was eating and a spoon...that's all. Yeah. So that was...that was something, you know, that Hans Bower saved me right there, you know. The second time why I got that number on my arm, four. Up today I can't explain how this happened and what they had in mind, what they want to do with me. There was a group of us. There was some officers come and we find out they was from Auschwitz, Oswiecem, and they pick up so many prisoners and happen, you know, they pick me up too. First of all, we have to take the shirts off and they put my 1623 with the red chalk (ph) on my on my chest. Then they took us to the extra barrack there and they tatoood our our numbers, you know, like I have 1623. Well in Flossenburg we had no numbers, you know, and we was ready to go for the transport, and we find out for Auschwitz, \_\_\_\_\_. And I don't know why they tatooed us there. Then we was ready to march to the to the truck...there was several trucks, you know, pick us up and bring us on a on a railroad depot. Again Hans Bauer comes somewhere, and he check up...he was already...he was already big wheel in a concentration camp, so-called you know...big wheel. He was lageraeltester number two at the...yeah. And he look at me. He recognize me. He look at me and he go to the officer. He say something to that officer and then he come back and he says \_\_\_\_\_1623 austreten, and he pull me out, and he says go on your barrack quick. And he saved me that time. Yeah. What can I tell you my personal...that was hard. Many times comes, you know, I was ready to commit suicide because I didn't believe what they was doing, what I saw every day would happen in the quarries, how many people die in the quarries, how many people they kill, from nowheres, and I tell you after that what they lay out the bomb for Hitler, you know, in the bunker, you know...they want to kill Hitler. You want to see how many Germans, officers, all kind of men, they bring to the Flossenburg. And they kill them right there. What it was today people look for other people they disappeared during the war, during the war. They don't know how they disappeared.

Q: I'd like to stay back on on where you...what was happening to you at this time. After Hans Bauer saved you from the transport...

A: He did.

Q: ...what events occurred while you were still at Flossenberg?

A: OK. I still was working in a quarry, do my stones, and till April 20th. On April 20th, the the concentration camp was evacuated from Flossenburg to Dachau, so you want to know

some more about the concentration camp. My gosh. You know, you hear so many stories there. Unforgettable. OK. I give you another example, what I witnesses and what bothers me...

Q: You?

A: What happened to me? No. What I saw. What I saw. Now we had a very interesting Christmas Eve in a concentration camp. Every year they put us...they put the big Christmas tree by the entrance and that evening when we come from work, there was a gallows hand-made... long log was and five loops and they hang up five men on the front of that Christmas tree, and they had a guards...yeah...nice present isn't it? And the officer that report officer had the guards to come wish you Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and we wish you be free in the next year. We couldn't put this together, you see. And that's...this is something unforgettable...unforgettable for me. There was a time...there was a time it did help me. You know many people ask me how I survived. It did help me, because that time when I was arrested I had three hundred eighty marks. That was a lot of money though. I was doing a little bit black business before I was arrested, you know. I'd buy something like shoes, you know. I had a a place where I can buy shoes, you know. I buy them for ten marks. I used to sell them for twenty marks, you know, for other people, you know, because that time was everything, you 02:51:30 know, you have to have Bezugschein card, you know, to buy anything, you know. So I I I saved quite a money. I had about three hundred eighty marks that time when I was arrested, and that money from the Gestapo to the concentration camp was follow me, and they deposited that money and that was honest, you know, at least that much honest. I'm surprised. So from that money I can wiggle...every week, anytime, I can wiggle some money. I give you, for instance, like how much you pay, how much I pay for the cigarettes. Cigarettes was very important. Hundred cigarettes was only two marks. For the cigarettes you can buy everything, you know. You can buy bread. You can buy soup. You can buy anything, you know, and that helps me to survive, you know. I tell about myself now.

Q: Tell me about how...what happened to you during the evacuation? Your your evacuation from Flossenburg.

A: That was the worst experience for for all because I thought this going to be the end. They no let us...they no let us live through and be witness like today so I can tell to everybody what happened, see. So we we we believed they going to liquidate us. OK. That was on Friday, April 20th in Flossenburg. Maybe I should go a little bit back, thirteen days. There was a one night the guards and the SS left the concentration camp and we was free. Let's see...that was about a week or a little better than a week before the evacuation, so one day, one night, we was free. We already put the flags, white flags you know...we surrendered, you know, please. American planes come. They make a picture. They circle there. We was free. But just don't run away. Don't go nowheres, because in the woods all over there was so many German soldier, you know, so anybody can shoot you. But that was short freedom, see...over the night. We get up in the morning and here you got the same thing...all the guards and even worse because they had new guards from the front,

SS, and they was very cruel, you know, and they start shooting, you know, anybody, you know. If they no like you, they shoot. OK. So we was we was there for one week like that. Then they was talking about the evacuation, so OK. On April 20th, six o'clock in the morning, they start evacuating two thousand men...that was probably about close to sixteen thousand prisoners that time. Now three years ago when I when I come to the concentration camp, that Flossenburg was not more than two thousand, not even two thousand. So by the end there was about sixteen thousand because we had some prisoners from Gross Rosen coming. OK. They start evacuate us on that day, April 20th. OK. So the tricky was for me and few other my friend of mine, hiding and stay as long as possible in the camp because the American 3rd Army was so close already. You can hear them...you can hear the shots you know, machine gun, so we're going to stay as as long as possible in the camp, but comes about five o'clock afternoon. The last column was called and many people fall on a...they they want to be sick, you know...they don't want to go, and they start shooting, you know. Get up or death, you know, or they shoot you. So many people get up, you know, and they form...I don't know...was it two thousand, close to two thousand. Yeah. Then we march. We're marched and how sneaky they are. They bring us to the woods, you know...side roads, you know, through the woods, thick woods, you know, we was marching. They didn't give us nothing to eat. Nothing to eat. That was Friday. Saturday, nothing to eat, and soon we just left to the concentration camp. We come to that woods. We see there's so many dead people laying on both sides from previous columns, you know. Those previous...there was eight columns, two thousand each, you know, before us. All day, you know, and you see those dead people, so that was the worst thing. First of all, soon you get so tired, you know, to walk and no water, no bread, nothing. On Sunday we had to stop... we had to stop and they give us a little, little piece...fifteen decagram of bread. No water. No coffee. Nothing, and that's all what we had. Now each each morning...oh let's say around four o'clock, they bring us in the woods and let us rest for two, three hours the most, you know and by gosh that was good, but so many people couldn't get up, you know. They was exhausted, so they was shot. They were shot, and as we march to Dachau, if somebody was walking, you know, like, you know, wobbles, the guard come to that guy, push him on the side and close range shoot him with the rifle. Shoot him in the head. It was terrible picture. So I give you example. From Friday till Monday noon, about four thousand prisoners from those columns was shot and I was...that last day I was ready to lay down and OK...shoot me because, you know, it was impossible, almost impossible. So and we was not even half way to the to the Dachau concentration camp. We was free on Monday, twelve o'clock. On my gosh...at noon. The first American tank come with the white star. That was emotional. Would you believe...oh...then we have to lay down, you know. Somebody give us the...somebody give us the order to lay down, and some of those guards want to run away but they was stopped by by those machine guns, American Army. Third Army...General George Patton, the best man. God give him heaven. So after we get up, the first thing what we was running to the American tanks and we kissed those tanks. We hugged...we squeezed those American soldier. We kissed them shoes and we thank them for the freedom. That was unforgettable. That was something. That was the biggest moment, and during those not quite four days, four thousand was shot and then we'll go back just a little while...a little back where we...there was a little town there, Stansriedt (ph) by the name there...not far away from \_\_\_\_ city, and we stayed there for...privately



for two weeks and the Americans make a kitchen for us and we had plenty food and we stayed there and after three weeks the Americans give me the special paper, pass and they give me bicycle and I go back to Austria. I was thinking to see Frieda. And there's so much to say what happened in a concentration camp, but by gosh, you know, the cruelty, unbelievable cruelty. So many people knows so many people not believe that's happen. Last week one lady call me and says you was in a concentration camp. I don't believe you. There was not such a thing. Yeah. So after that...

Q: I have to stop right now. We're out of tape. Thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape three: no transcript