

Goldie Buch Jonas

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Summary, Part One

Goldie Buch Jonas was born January 17, 1928 in Radów, Poland as Goldie Buch with two older brothers, Baruch (Bennie) born in July 1925 and Pinchus in 1923. Her parents were Brima Wiesen born in 1897 and Moishe Buch born in 1895. The family were orthodox and the children attended Polish public school and then Hebrew school six days a week. Goldie completed 4th grade when the war started in 1939. Her family was middle class. Both parents graduated high school and her father earned a living by making the uppers of shoes. Her mother sewed clothes for her and herself. They lived in a town that was 90% Jewish. Her father was drafted into the Polish Army in 1938 and the family went to live in the house of her paternal grandfather. On the Sabbath they attended Mizrachi Zionist meetings, an organization for the working orthodox so thought they would all go to Palestine someday. When the Germans bombed the town in 1939, they escaped to a nearby town but soon returned. The Germans occupied half of her grandfather's house. Suddenly, all the Jews were ordered to meet at the market place and leave. They left for Przemyśl where they stayed with the uncle's cousin while her mother searched for their father in Lvov. She found the father as the Polish Army had been disbanded so returned for the children and they all stayed in a Polish Cathedral in Lvov with other refugees. Soon they found an empty house to live in and Goldie started attending a Russian school where she studied Russian and Yiddish. They survived by buying on the black market. Her father registered with the Russians to return to Poland and they were taken in a cattle car to the Urals. They traveled a month without food and were taken by sled to barracks in Kora Stalawka (?) near the city of Molotov (now Perm, Russia). They lived near the woods where there were tigers and hyenas. Her mother and older brother were chosen to work cutting wood. The workers got a slice of bread and soup and everyone was hungry. Many people died from hunger. There was no schooling. It was below freezing in the winter. Her mother refused to work on Yom Kippur and was taken with 16 others who refused to the city of Molotov to be prosecuted but were freed after a few days. On June 22, 1941 war broke out between Russia and Germany and all the prisoners in the camps were free to travel around Russia. Some chose the warmer areas but her family went to Troitsk near Molotov which was close. They obtained some food from America through the Polish Army. Goldie attended school and completed 7th grade and her father and older brother worked in a factory making shoe uppers. The younger brother made slipper type shoe by hand and she sold them in the black market until she was almost caught. They remained there until the end of the war. Goldie was required to join the Communist Youth Party when she turned thirteen. In March 1946 they took a cattle car to Brandenburg, Poland where a Jewish organization helped them. They did not return home as found out that all the Jews were killed there. Goldie was picked by Mizrachi to go to Katowice to obtain a certificate to enter Palestine but the certificates did not arrive. The children were sent to a children's camp, Jablitz, near Prague, Czechoslovakia. After six weeks Mizrachi sent her to Strasbourg, France. There she was

with her brother and she was sent to school to learn French and sewing. Meanwhile her parents were at a camp in Salzburg, Austria where her father died in March 1948. Goldie went to Austria to live with her mother and younger brother and met her husband, Joseph Jonas, while her older brother went to fight in Palestine. In 1950 the camp was liquidated and she and her husband were able to go to the US as his family had a relative in the US who could sponsor them.

Part Two

Goldie did not know English so first she worked in a factory, then a bakery and then worked in a bank until she was 73 years old. Both children became doctors, her husband passed away and now she has grandchildren. Her mother lived in the US for a year and returned to Israel where she died in 1987. Goldie did not talk of her experiences earlier as did not want her children to learn about them. After the interview, Goldie shows three photos of herself in 1939, one with her brothers and the rest of the school at Purim in Hebrew School and two with her friend, Sonja Olst. Then shows a photo of her parents, Moishe and Brima Buch, in 1947 and a photo in Russia in 1945 with her brothers.