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Summary

This interview is a continuation from the interview in 1994 which covered Mr. Gruzin's history more chronologically. Audio only.

Israel Gruzin was born in 1928. His mother (née Masolovic ?) was born in October 1900 in Kaunas, Lithuania. His father was born in Latvia. He had one older brother, Yitzhak. They were sent from the ghetto near the end of 1941 passing through Stutthof Concentration Camp where they were separated from his mother. Arriving in Dachau, they were re-located to a camp in nearby Landsberg, Germany.

After liberation, at a time when he met a visiting General Eisenhower, his brother was sent to Galting Hospital due to his injuries, accompanied by his father. Israel was sent to Föhrenwald DP Camp. His mother survived, returning to Kaunas. Israel relates the difficulties in arranging their reunion, which took almost 16 years. During that time, he met his wife, Adela Mueller, at Föhrenwald where he worked in the camp administration. He was married in 1953 and had a daughter there.

They came to Baltimore with the assistance of his uncle in 1955. His father went to Israel where he was able to arrange his mother's release from Soviet-controlled Lithuania in 1956. She joined them in Baltimore, living there until dying in 1963 from breast cancer.

Israel described the beating of his brother that created long-lasting, serious injuries, and the dangerous circumstances his father, brother and he experienced in Feldafing, Bavaria in May, 1944 immediately following their liberation. His brother required six years of recuperation from the beating as well as complications from TB. His brother eventually died in 1972 at 45 years old. His father died at 79 in 1979.

Israel describes the life his family led in Kaunas when his father was an animal skins merchant. His father spoke Lithuanian, Latvian, German, Hebrew, and Yiddish. The family was moderately religious. He discusses the important lessons he learned from his parents, which helped him avoid the bitterness that could have stemmed from his experiences.