

Zbigniew A. Piotrowski

Tape 1

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Abstract

Zbigniew Antony Piotrowski was born December 16, 1929 in Torun, Poland, northwest of Warsaw. He was the youngest of four boys and one girl. When he was one or two, the family moved to Gdynia where his father owned a small antique furniture factory. The family were observant Roman Catholics. His mother died young. He attended school until the war started by the Germans bombing his city. Soon the Germans occupied his city and took away one brother to a work camp who was discharged when he got ill. Then the family was deported by cattle car to Lublin, moved to the aunt's home and decided to live in Warsaw. Zbigniew's mother died when he was 11. Zbigniew got upset when he saw people in flames in a burning house in the Ghetto. He and his siblings served in the Underground and his sister was arrested and placed in a concentration camp until the war ended. Zbigniew saw people captured by the Germans on the street and their corpses. On the 6th day of the Uprising, the Germans ordered all the residents of his street to go to the square by midnight. His father was placed with the men who were all shot and Zbigniew was permitted to go with the women including Grossha (?), his housekeeper. They were taken by train to a work camp near Breslau. Soon Zbigniew and Grossha (?) were among 100 picked to clean up the city. A Red Cross worker offered to hide him as long as the war lasted so Zbigniew ran away with another child to Obershlaven (?) and was hidden until May 1945. Then he took a train to Krakow to look for his family. He had no place to live in Europe so came to the US in '48. He has been happy in New Jersey for 57 years. He spent two years in the Army during the Korean War and has three children.

Summary

00:00 Zbigniew Antony Piotrowski was born December 16, 1929 in Torun, Poland, northwest of Warsaw. He was the youngest of the children. Richard was the oldest, born around 1920. Then came Helena, born around 1922. Next was Stanley or Stanislaw, born around 1924 and then came George or Yurik, born around 1926. His mother's name was Antoinette Zalevska (?) and his father's was Antony. The family moved to Warsaw in '16 from a town near Torun. There was an aunt on his mother's side and two brothers, one was killed in the War for Polish Independence in 1920. His father had a brother in Torun and a sister who came to the US in '35 or '36. Zbigniew's father was a successful businessman. He owned a small factory where he manufactured classical furniture and antiques. In 1931 or '32, his business improved because of the growth of the Port City of Gdynia near Gdansk. Zbigniew was one or two at the time when they moved to Gdynia.

- 05:00 In 1936 Gdynia bloomed with the development of homes and construction of the port as it was a new city growing up. The Germans took over Gotenhaven (G-d's port). In Gdynia, the family lived in an apartment in a villa between two mountains, one on the beach and one in the hills where they lived. They had a beautiful view of the city. They spent lots of time on the beach. They fished for amber stones on Sunday. They played with the stones and only now does he realize they were precious. They shared the villa with another family. They rented their apartment. They had three rooms and a kitchen. His mother had help. In both Torun and Gdynia, there was a nanny to care for the children. A young lady went to the beach with them and watched them.
- 10:00 His father was a good, steady man who took care of the family. He went out of his way for holidays. He would go to the harbor and bought fish which he brought home and surprised everyone. He was home a lot. His business was local. The customers came to him. He made custom furniture. He manufactured replicas of antiques. His parents were very happy together. They bought lots of things for the children. His older brother had a bicycle. In 1934 it was unusual for a kid to bike to school. His mother was a homemaker. Zbigniew's father was always in the furniture business. His brother in Torun was also in the furniture business. It was the family business. His Uncle Leo was very successful in Torun. All came to a sad story one day.
- 15:00 His mother lived in Warsaw where they met and courted. His father was not drafted in World War I. His mother's brother, John, was drafted and later died. His parents grew up under the Tsar. Dinner was usually quick but sometimes they talked around the dinner table. Richard and Stanley were involved with the father's business. Stanley was about to become apprentice in the furniture business or attend school for it. After high school, he attended a two-year college. Richard was in the business end of things and was in the office to perform managerial tasks. Helena attended a two-year college for women where she learned cooking. George went for higher education. None of the children finished more than two years of college. Zbigniew's parents were patriotic. Until the time of the war and occupation, his father had pictures of the president and the eagle in his shop. When the German officers came for furniture in Warsaw, they told his father to remove the president's picture but the one of Kaczynski (?) could stay. The commanding officer of the battalion sent a letter of praise.
- 20:00 His parents were religious. The entire family including the uncles on both sides was Roman Catholic. During the occupation when his father traveled for business, he stopped at a church for Morning Prayer. Sundays and holidays they went to church as they were practicing Catholics. His mother passed away young but she always told him to be honest and not take anything that is not yours and keep praying. She was gentle and easy going. His father had a stronger personality because of his business approach. He taught them to be honest, refer to each other and remember the good things of life. His parents talked about their country when war was in the air. His mother died in 1940 when he was

ten during the German occupation. They talked politics in the late 30s when Hitler was coming into power.

- 25:00 They talked of the coming war and how they would survive. His parents remembered the war of 1920 and told them to be careful. They should not volunteer for what they could not handle. If the family should break up, they were to meet at the sister's house in Gdynia, a fishing village from the 20s. They liked the German dancing and had a beautiful church. People from many different nations came when the port opened. Many people immigrated to America but they stayed in Gdynia for the trading. Zbigniew attended public school there until the 4th grade when war broke out. Gdynia is near Gdansk which had lots of pressure from Germany as Hitler wanted it. Summer '39 was very busy. It was a nice summer and they did not think of war. They had a holiday with parades for the sea. On September 1st, he was playing outside his house with other boys and groups of men were talking about war. Suddenly there were many planes and he thought they were Polish planes returning to England but they took a dive and the war started.
- 30:00 The German bombs dropped bombs on the harbor where the Polish Navy and barracks were located. He saw and heard an explosion and smoke. Zbigniew ran home and sat down as realized that war had started. His parents were upset. He did not think to turn on the radio. They did not know how to protect themselves from the bombs so there was chaos. There were a few quiet days and a day or two later a column of German Army marched through Gdynia. Two weeks later, Fort Visterplay (?) near Gdansk gave up. The German School Navy shot at the fort and Zbigniew saw the guns. Many Polish serving in the Army and Navy were marched off to German POW camps in Germany. That was the end for them. It was about the second or third week in September. A German truck went along the street and took Stanley who was 18 at the time and a friend and was not seen for five months. The next week, the Germans came with a loudspeaker and announced that all Poles must report the following morning at 8 AM at the train. They could take 20 kilograms and must leave their key in the front door. The Poles were moved out of the city as the Germans wanted it to be a strictly German coastline.
- 35:00 The entire family went to the train station and were packed in a box car and the door was shut. They did not know where they were going. They traveled all day and a night and the next day the train stopped and they were ordered out. They were in Lublin on the other side of Poland near Russia. The Germans controlled the city. The family did not know anyone there so they just sat on the railroad tracks. They saw the houses were half bombed out and felt the pressure of war. They left their business and returned after the war. They were in Lublin for two or three days. They had no furniture so just laid on the floor. His father took them by train to Kutno, his mother's sister. It is northwest of Warsaw on the way to Torun. There was a famous war there. They spent Christmas at

this aunt's house. During the two or three months there, his father made several trips to Warsaw before they moved there. His father had friends there.

- 40:00 They got an apartment in the center of Warsaw near a monument and the opera house. It was a four or five story building. They had a nice apartment on the third floor with a balcony overlooking the street. They had three rooms and a kitchen. It was mostly empty so they furnished it. His father found a manufacturing business for rent so started his business there on the second floor. First he made iron caskets as furniture was not popular. He had 15 people working for him as caskets were popular. There were two people who made the upholstery, some cabinet workers and some office workers. The Germans accepted President Moshitsky (?). His father was a genius in business. The family lived on Strabaska (?) Street facing a monument and a streetcar that went downtown. Nearby was Holy Cross Church where his father got off and walked to his business. It took his father about 15 minutes to get to work by streetcar. They saw signs of war as buildings were damaged or destroyed. There was a lot of bombing but the streets were cleaned up during the occupation.
- 45:00 They were on rations. There were stamps for different foods. His father bought food from the market. When his mother got sick, they hired a housekeeper, Malgasha Woodchuk (?). His mother was 42 when she passed away. She went to the hospital and died soon after. He was almost eleven. When they were at the aunt's house, just before Christmas, Stanley came home as he had been discharged for illness. He spit blood as he had a problem with his lungs. He had returned to Gdynia and Germans opened the door so he traveled to Horvich. He had had a rough time digging ditches for the German Army. They told him to dig a grave and when an officer saw him, he was discharged. Stanley was sick for a long time and his parents took care of him. After his mother died, Richard became closer to Zbigniew. Richard was working in an office and rented his own apartment.
- 50:00 There were some Jews in his brother's class in Gdynia. He remembers when they started to build the ghetto. It was touchy (he begins to cry). After it was built in '41 or '42, many people went in and people talked about it. Around '43, a year before the Uprising, they started to liquidate it. Zbigniew was on the street in old town Warsaw near the Ghetto and saw a house burning and people in flames were jumping down. When he arrived home, he told his father who said (crying), "Son, do not there. This is the beginning. What they do to these people, we'll be next." That was the first time he saw such a thing. It was a shock for him to see people in flames. It was around '42. Zbigniew and his siblings were all involved in the Underground.
- 55:00 The Gestapo came and arrested Helena and she spent a few weeks in a big prison in Warsaw. Then she was sent to Madjanek in Lublin and then to Germany, perhaps to Ravensbruck. She survived the war and returned to Poland but told them little. Everyone

went through a lot. Later Helena gave him a report written by the Polish ladies explaining how they were treated there. After three years absence, he saw Helena in May '45. He recognized her but she was slim and needed nourishment. Her boyfriend was involved in the Underground movement and, perhaps, she was too. During the occupation, Zbigniew attended public school. The Germans divided up Poland. Part was to the Deutch Reich which was German territory so no Polish schools or newspapers as you could not speak Polish. Gdynia was in that region. Lublin and Krakow were in the area called "General Government" which had more freedom and you could speak Polish. They had Polish theatres in Warsaw. They had Polish schools but they were forbidden to study Polish history or geography. They had to learn the German language.

60:00 Zbigniew was just starting 4th grade. There were many children in the school. They studied gymnastics, some Polish, and held secret history and hygiene classes. He was a member of the Boy Scouts which was forbidden. That was how the messages got around. He was in the resistance. For six months the Scout Master taught him to become a messenger. They held Scout Jamborees outside of Warsaw. They would meet in a quiet area and sing Polish songs. Zbigniew did not tell his father about this. He delivered propaganda papers to a village outside of Warsaw. One day the villagers did not permit him to return in the dark so he bought goat milk which the father loved and forgave him for staying overnight. He was lucky that he did not get into trouble.

65:00 The school was near the Platz of Christ with three crosses. He took messages across town. He did not know if Richard was involved in the Underground as he lived elsewhere. George and Stanley were in the Underground. Richard married young, in '42 to the daughter of his landlord. George was involved heavily in the Uprising. Zbigniew was supposed to report for the Uprising but he missed out due to the timing. Before his mother died, they got a housekeeper, Grossha (?) who ran the household with the sister's help. They were just three boys and the sister at home. After she was arrested, there was just the three boys, the father and Grossha (?). Warsaw changed. The Germans came to certain streets by truck. They captured people on the street and you never saw them again. The Underground developed in '41 or '42 and they would execute high ranking Germans on the street. The next day the Germans lined up 20 Poles on the street and execute them. He saw many corpses on the street.

70:00 Once he ran away when he saw Germans catching people on the street. The Germans might need 100 people so they would take a truck to a street and pick up 100. On the day of the Uprising, Zbigniew knew to report by 4 PM to a certain street in Old Town Warsaw. After breakfast, George silently got his coat so Zbigniew knew that he was going to report to some post by 4 PM. Zbigniew was invited to lunch at Richard's house. At 2 PM George rushes in and says, "Go home, the Uprising is coming and there will be shooting soon." George served as a nurse in a hospital and got home early. Zbigniew took a streetcar to Saxon Gardens and the conductor ordered everyone out although it was

not the last stop. He started walking home and heard gunshots and explosions in the distance and knew it was serious.

- 75:00 He passed the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and saw buildings on both sides occupied by the Germans. He arrived home and not to his post. The left side of the street with even numbers was under Polish control and the right side with odd numbers, his side, was under German control. There was a tank near the monument and shouting so you could not go there. He found his father, Stanley and Grossha (?) at home. George was at his post fighting the Germans. After the Old Town gave up, he survived and went to the center of town. Zbigniew has an album of George's battalion. George did not talk of his experience. He did not tell their father who did not want his children in the Underground. His father was 52 at that time. They heard shooting on and off. Later, the tank on the street was positioned so it could view the entire street and no one could walk out. Then some windows were shot out by the Germans. The first night was quiet and he stayed in his room. The next day, there was more shooting and they moved down to the basement with all the neighbors.
- 80:00 After experiencing the beginning of the war, the tenants built passages connecting the basements of the apartment houses so they could move around underground. The walls of the homes were very thick. Civil defense saved lives. They lost their electricity and used candle lights. Each tenant had a cubicle in the basement. There was a window to the courtyard which held the grocery and barber shop. You entered the courtyard through an arch over an iron gate which you could drive a carriage through. There were not many cars due to the lack of gas in Warsaw. They used a horse and buggy and streetcars for travel. There was no activity in the courtyard. Some of their windows were in the front and some on the courtyard. On the second day, Zbigniew's father thought the Uprising was going to continue. The Germans were bringing more tanks. They packed and placed their belongings on shelves in the basement and brought down some chairs. They could go out quickly to the courtyard for fresh air. They brought food down and Grossha (?) went upstairs and started a fire and did some cooking. After the third day, there was no gas so they could not cook so dined on dry food.
- 85:00 There were two apartments on each floor. There were about 40 or 50 people in the cubicles. There was a passage to the next building so some could walk through. One day a big house behind them was on fire. His father was the Captain of Civil Defense and he went with another man upstairs to see if they were in danger of catching on fire. They opened the hatch and went on the roof and the man got shot by a German sniper. They went down to the basement and he died that night. The next morning they had the funeral. They went through the basements to a house with grass and flowers and put a little cross on the grave. This was the first time that Zbigniew saw a dead person up close. The man was 40 years old. They felt the war was going bad for them. They mostly stayed in the basement until the 6th day, Saturday. They had dried food and bread

to eat. On the 4th day, they broke down the door of the grocery store. The owner lived elsewhere and they took what they wanted and wrote down what they took. 90:00

90:00 On the 6th day, the Germans came and ordered them to go to the square with the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Anyone left after midnight would be shot. They had to show up at a certain time. His father had lots of money in \$500 bills. Stanley took two breads and cut them and scraped out the insides and stuffed the breads with money. He placed them in a brief case and took knives and a fork and a spoon. Grossha (?) brought a bag of food and his father took a blanket. They were told that they would be evacuated from Warsaw. They walked through the basements to the square. Men ages 18 to 25 had to step forward. Around 7 or 8 PM the houses were burning.

9500 It was getting dark. There was smoke. The soldiers were in battle gear. The young men were placed against the wall. The rest were reassembled to walk across Saxon Park to the Market Square, the biggest market in Warsaw. He saw soldiers in the park and passed through Market Square and saw a pile of dead people on one side. Up front was a table with storm troopers. He walked across and saw 4 or 5 piles of dead people. He was told to go to the side of the building and they let the women go through. All the men were stopped so Zbigniew stopped with his father. Two SS came and took something from each Pole such as wallets, ID, cash, watch, and rings and placed it in a hat. In the front against the wall against the wall of burned market buildings were Germans with machine guns. His father said, "They still have time so let's pray." He said, "Hail Mary." The Germans took Zbigniew away from his father and they walked 50 feet and pushed him to go with the women. He was holding the briefcase with the bread. The Germans took his father's blanket and threw it on the ground.

100:00 Zbigniew turned around and followed the officer back to his father who said he should go. The officer returned and grabbed him by the collar and his father told him to go with the officer who had a pistol on his neck. He went to the corner and heard machine guns and sees the Germans shooting all the men of his street, about 50 or 60, including his father. He did not know what happened to the men aged 15 to 25. His father knew what was going to happen as he gave in his wallet and ID. Zbigniew went with about 50 women and when he told them what happened, they all cried. The brutal-looking SS with pistols were watching them. The houses on one side of the street were burning with sparks flying.

105:00 He realized that as groups of people came to the square, they were executed. That is why they saw piles of corpses. Some were women and babies. That night the Germans executed 510 people on that square. It was not easy to find out all the names of the people who were executed as their IDs were taken so none had any ID on them. His father had a wallet with money on him. Zbigniew and the women were assembled to march outside the walls. Before midnight they were arranged in columns and marched

for about an hour until they could not march any longer. The street was a war zone. The houses on the right side had finished burning but the left side was still burning. The marching columns came to a church and cemetery with a fence around. There were about 70 women in total as some women were already there. They sat down on the graves.

110:00 Everyone was crying and he saw two women. One was Stanley's girlfriend, Eve, so he told her what happened to Stanley and the family. Zbigniew got tired and went to sleep for a while. He woke up as the Germans were coming and looking for young girls. Eve was about 19 or 20 and her mother told her to lay down and covered her up. Two Germans walked past them so she was saved. In the morning they heard shooting and they could not enter the church as the German soldiers were occupying it. They made a sandwich and ate and were called to march. Grossha (?) who was about 35 or 40 and her mother were marching. Someone said they were looking for children without parents so Zbigniew made believe that Grossha (?) was his mother. She knew him pretty good. The guards stopped them as there were enough in their column so he no longer had contact with Eve and her mother anymore. His column marched to the railroad station and got into a cattle car. There were men, women and children placed altogether. The door was shut and the train moved. At every stop, they would open the doors. A Polish lady with water came and shut the door.

115:00 At night, some men lifted the floor and when the train slowed down, they escaped. Most of the people were from a different part of town. The next day they got a slice of bread and water. The train stopped in Germany. They saw they were German police as they wore hats with a crown in front. The group were assembled and marched a long time to the outskirts of Breslau as they later found out. They walked through the city to the outskirts where there was a large slave labor camp. It had a double wire fence, lookout towers and a spotlight which was worrisome. It was about noon and they had to stand in the courtyard between the barracks. Then they segregated the men from the women and then the women according to the age of their children. He did not see any other orphan children as they had been removed from the group. The commandant told them that if anyone tries to escape, they would be shot. Zbigniew went with a group of 100 men and a few children into a barracks. The beds were wooden shelves. He was almost 14 at the time.

120:00 Two of them picked a bunk and went to sleep. The next morning they awoke for breakfast. They slept in their clothes. They marched across the camp and realized they had no utensils. There was a big pile of metal cans from food and were told to take one for coffee or tea and another one for soup. They rinsed out the cans with water. They received a slice of rye bread with a teaspoon of marmalade made from beets and herbal tea. They returned to the assembly square where an officer gave them a small square of yellow cloth with the letter, "P" to be placed on their jacket to be worn all the time. The "P" was for Polish. They assembled for work and walked one-half hour and came to an

area where they were to dig big ditches. They were given shovels and told, "Mach Schnell" (Hurry up). They dug long trenches and British or American soldiers laid down pipes. They were building a sewer line for Breslau. The next day they would cover it up and repeat the procedure. They received a bowl of soup at night. It was the biggest camp in Breslau. Zbigniew applied for compensation from Germany and it was accepted. Another camp for British or American POWs was in the area.

125:00 There was a farm and outhouse that they could use. One day in sign language, the allies told them to go to the outhouse. They looked at the 2 by 4 and found a pack of cigarettes and chocolates. This continued for a week or two and then stopped. Zbigniew had the bag with the two breads with him. Little by little, he had consumed the bread. He had found Camel cigarettes so knew the POW were American. One day he noticed there were potatoes or beets at the farm so crawled and pulled it out. The farmer sent a German shepherd so he could not move. The guard beat him and he returned to work. Grossha said he should not try that again or he will get killed. It was September or October when the German officers pulled out every 5th or 10th prisoner in the column and he and Grossha (?) were picked.

130:00 Those not picked returned to the barracks. About 100 of them marched to a big room and told to undress. A female German with a whip checked each person. They stripped a Jewish woman and a boy who cried as thought it was a gas chamber. Grossha said that if it is a gas chamber, just open your mouth and you will go to heaven. Water came out so they found it was a shower room. Then they ran to get dressed in their same clothes and marched back to camp. They obtained their personal items from the barracks and returned to the group and marched through Breslau. It was Sunday morning before noon and citizens from Breslau gave them bread and potatoes.

135:00 They marched for an hour to the Hindenburg School that had an iron fence around the building. The 100 POW were told by the commanding officer who did not have an arm that no one escapes from the building. They will be shot if they try to escape. This building will be where they work and be their home. They all went in and slept on the floor. The next day, Monday, they went to work. The police put a blanket on the wall and each person was photographed one at a time. This made a catalog for the commanding officer. They were broken down into 5, 10 or 20 people to clean parks, pick up garbage or clean toilets. From October on, it got colder. One Sunday the Red Cross came into the gate with the police and gave them winter clothes. First they gave to the women with children and then to Grossha and him. A Red Cross lady who spoke Polish asked him his name, how old is he and where is his mother. She gives him used winter jacket, pants and a hat and goes out and speaks to Grossha. He is given a slip of paper with the lady's address and she says he can stay with her if he travels.

140:00 Grossha tries to convince him to go to the Red Cross lady who can take care of him and hide him until the end of the war. He will have a place to eat and sleep and be in good hands. Another Red Cross lady approached another boy for the same reason. He went to the railroad station and met the other boy who suggested they go to the caboose. Grossha had the money as they were eating the second bread. She cleaned the railroad station. Grossha spoke German and went to the money exchange and got marks and bought two tickets from Breslau to the lady's home. They would take the train that leaves at noon. They pass Krakow and get to Chevina (?), the last stop. The boys would jump after removing the "P" in the bathroom and they would meet in the last car of the train.

145:00 The other boy was a year older and had a Hitler-type hat but without the swastika. They sat down in the train and showed the conductor their tickets. They fell asleep. In about two or three hours they got to Chevina (?). Zbigniew could not find the lady's house so he went to the church and asked the priest. The area used to be Polish. He was hungry and tired and it was getting dark as it was almost November. The priest realized who they were as he was warned that they were coming. They were on Copernicka (?) Street. H took them to the dining room in the monastery and fed them. Later the ladies came and they each left and never saw one another again. Zbigniew spent 6 months in her house from November 27 to May 3 in hiding. Sometimes he stayed with the priest such as Christmas Eve and Day.

150:00 He ate with all the priests. They had fish and potatoes but no meat. They all attended midnight mass and he remained in the vestibule. Then he ran back to the monastery and had supper with the priests and monks. They had pork chops, potatoes and carrots. He had not seen meat for six months. The priest said a dispensation so that he could eat it. He was given pillows and a blanket and lay down to sleep on Christmas Eve. Christmas day he stayed inside and the next day returned to the lady's house. Every day the Red Cross came with fruit for the big camp. They had a big pot of soup and bread or tea. He never saw Grossha again.

155:00 During the six months, he sometimes hid in the limestone mines. Next door was a refinery which made gasoline for the Germans. This area had been Poland but became Deutch Reich. All the railroad cars needed gasoline. On December 17th, the day after his birthday, the American Airforce dropped bombs on the refinery and he saw oil tanks lighting up the sky, exploding and burning. In Gdynia, the Germans wanted a strip on the Baltic free for the Germans. He hid in Obershlaven (?) which was not on the border and he never went into the city. He only went to the church and the monastery. If he was caught, the lady would be arrested.

160:00 Auschwitz was 20 kilometers away. He had no papers except for the paper from his school in Warsaw. Everyone had an ID card. The lady's husband, Vaylor (?), had a barber shop in the middle of the square. He had no sons but had two daughters. The lack

of papers identified Zbigniew as he should have school papers. The woman wanted to help someone. She spoke German to the priest and Zbigniew spoke Polish. He spent hours with the priest reading books and they talked about the Uprising. The lady had a sister whose husband, Yakapino (?) Kraskow worked in the refinery. The sister did not like Zbigniew so he did not go to her room. He spent hours in the mine and held stuff for the baby. The stationmaster lived on the other side of the building.

165:00 Zbigniew stayed until May 2nd or so and checked with the trainmaster and got a schedule for Krakow and left. The first day the Russians came and then the Polish Army arrived. They exchanged old money for new Polish money. General Stalin's army came organized. The General Government was in Lublin. The first time that Zbigniew saw Soviet soldiers, they looked terrible, like bandits. He looked for the Germans. They had no mercy. The front came and Zbigniew evacuated with the people on a big mountain. When the Russians came to the mine, they said to return home as there were no more Germans. The Poles had a different uniform with an eagle and thought the war was over. They felt that Poland was free and all would be fine. It was from the frying pan into the fire. Once Zbigniew took the train, he never saw the lady again. He sent two postcards. He got to Krakow and looked for Richard. He found out from the aunt that Richard was wounded and should be in a hospital there or near Warsaw.

170:00 Zbigniew went to the hospital and stayed two days until May 5th. He saw a train full of soldiers from the Russian Army shooting their guns as the war was over. He did not find his brother there. It took him four days to get to Warsaw. On May 9th he arrived in Praga (?) and walked across the bridge to the castle. The bridge had been destroyed so he walked on planks. From the castle and the King Sigmund Statue, he saw that his house was just a skeleton. He sat down on a brick and had bread and water and started walking and then decided to go to the basement of his house. He went to the arch and saw the gate was twisted and there were crayon markings about people looking for others.

175:00 He saw Richard's name and that of his wife and baby and where they were living. He went down to the basement and the shining sun showed a comb of glass and silver melted down from when the house burned down and everything including the crystal and ceramics melted. He went to Holy Church to see his father's business but nothing was left except for a hole as the entire building was destroyed. He walked further to see a friend and stayed overnight. The friend's father told him to take a train to Wirtz (?). It took about 2 or 3 hours and he found his brother and they exchanged stories. It was May 11 or 12th. His brother George came over to see him. He had been in the Uprising and been sent to the Dresden Labor Camp. Later his sister returned from Germany. They all went to Warsaw first and saw the message. Stanley was in a prison camp in Italy digging ditches for the German Army and had escaped to the Italian underground until the Polish Army invaded and joined them in Montecasini with the British. Zbigniew met his brother in Southampton.

180:00 The brother did not want to return to Poland, there was no opening in the US and the British did not want him. He spent ten years in Australia and then Zbigniew brought him to the US. Zbigniew does not know why the SS man separated him from his father. He remembers his mother's words, "Don't worry, I'll watch over you." (Shows photos) Later he and wife returned to Poland when the Communists left. They went to Market Square where there is a monument on the wall which indicates 570 innocent Polish people were slaughtered. His father's wallet had money and his picture in it. Stanley was separate from them on the night of executions. The next day his group marched the same way and spotted his father's picture. He kept the original and made Zbigniew a copy. The Germans had thrown out the picture from the wallet. The brother came the next day and saw many dead people but not his father. Zbigniew had money all the time inside the bread. They finished the bread and kept the money. Grossha exchanged the money for marks.

185:00 There was a 500 zwałte note. The Polish money was exchanged for Reich marks. Later Zbigniew exchanged it for General Government money. He had saved his ID from school all that time. In May 1945 they were all in Worch (?). He visited his uncle, a dentist who had no room for him so returned to Worch (?). His brother was about 18 or 19, learned dentistry and later graduated as a dentist. Zbigniew had no place to go. Richard went to Gdynia to look for an apartment and work. Helena had a boyfriend, Eddy and thought they would marry so did not want Zbigniew to live with her. Richard returned and took him along with Richard's wife and baby and started his Polish film school in Worch (?). Zbigniew had one year of high school and quit and worked on a ship that traveled back and forth to New York. He saw Italy and England a few times.

190:00 He got a telegram that he must arrive at the film school to depart to Russia which was then in '48 under Stalin. He thought he must be sick to go there. He had an uncle in the Underground and was imprisoned for 15 years by the Russians. Zbigniew walked out with a raincoat and \$15 and arrived here in '48. He has been happy here in New Jersey for 57 years. He spent two years in the Army in the Korean War. He has three children, all with M.S. degrees. One in electrical engineering, one in carpentry and his daughter in computer science. All have good jobs. Fifteen years ago he returned to Poland and saw Market Square and he laid down flowers. Zbigniew believes that people should see how terrible war is and how good life is in the US. (He cries.) People should realize how lucky they are to live here. War does not bring anything good. The citizens, the innocent suffer.

195:00