

Eugene Alfred Chmielowski

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Summary

Eugene Alfred Chmielowski was born March 3, 1929 in Lublin, Poland to Sophia Dophevez and Adam Chmielowski and had a sister, Lillian, who was 16 years older. His father had been an officer in the Polish Army and retired at age 47. His father was born in Kiev and after the Bolsheviks took over, he escaped to Poland. The father's brother was a doctor and remained in Kiev but was deported to a concentration camp during the war, along with Sister Lillian. After she graduated high school, she moved to Warsaw to study at the University and, after the war, worked as a clerk in a bank there. The family could not visit her as it was Communist. She died in 1952 or 1953 and the uncle returned and buried her. His father did not discuss his military experiences. In 1935 his father's work took him to Krasnik outside of Lublin and the following year to Kovel where Eugene has fond memories of walking in the park with his father on Sundays. His mother was a registered Nurse but did not have to work as the father received a sufficient pension. Eugene was tutored at home and then entered school for 2nd and 3rd grades and then jumped to high school. His mother spoke German, Russian and Polish and had a heart condition. She ran an orphanage and an old age home. In 1939 his father was notified that he was Chief of Anti-Aircraft defense for Kovel. Eugene heard on the radio that other towns were bombed. Soon, around September 3 or 4th, they saw Russian soldiers on the ground and saw them marching and Russian tanks going west September 17. Schools were closed as were used as hospitals. The family sold their belongings to survive. A Russian officer lived with them. His father was arrested in March on the second day of Easter by the NKVD as all the Polish officers were arrested and their house was searched for weapons. The NKVD returned a few weeks later and helped them pack for deportation. They were taken by truck with their dog and their belongings and all placed on a cattle car. Eugene and his mother took some dry bread to eat and were in a car with 50 people. They left April 30 with other families of officers and it took three weeks to reach their destination, Pavorda, the capital of Voivodship in Siberia where they lived on a collective farm. They were lucky to make friends with a woman who had her own room and moved in with her rather than living with 200 people in one vast area. In the summer his mother who was a nurse, supervised the workers burning the wheat in the field. Someone overheard his mother speaking politics so in October 1942 they were moved to a house with two other families in Torchka about 40 miles away. His mother would not permit him to attend school as was afraid they would convert him to Communism. His mother wrote to Stalin in 1942 asking where his father was and was told to contact NKVD in Kiev. Soon they got amnesty and were free to live anywhere they wanted in Russia so moved to Irtdisk. They survived by bartering their belongings. They moved to Bechistan as it was warmer and closer to the Polish Embassy where his mother was in charge of a hospital. He was taken care of there when he had a fever. They joined General Anders' Army and took a train from Uzbekistan to the Russian port of Krasnovodski where Pahlahi was the port across the water in Persia. They had few belongings

when they reached Bachlevy, Persia and lived with the Uzbeks. He was about nine months in Akfase and Maliare refugee camps in Persia while his mother was sick and being treated in a hospital. Then his mother worked as a nurse and they lived in Valividie with 5,000 Poles where he attended high school. Eugene spent five years in India attending Junior College until 1948 when his mother died of a heart attack at age 55. He found out his sister Lillian was in Poland and sent her a parcel. He learned his father had died in Catyn. As an orphan of a Polish officer, he was sent to England for five years where he attended a Junior College in Bottisham, got married and had a daughter, Dorothy. They immigrated to the US. The Polish National Alliance in Chicago sent him to study accounting and statistics and he worked thirty years for the Kemper Insurance Company. He returned to Poland in 1977 and again five years ago to see his sister's grave. He teaches the school children in Chicago about the non-Jews who were in Auschwitz and would like more student to learn about deportations of non-Jews.