

## **RG-50.030.1111**

### **Summary**

Agnes Geva (née Laszlo) was born June 2, 1930 in Budapest. She had one younger sister. Her mother was Rosaria (Czeisler), her father was Zoltan Laszlo (surname as a youth was Lieberman). His family came from Tășnad (now Romania).

The family was largely assimilated and spoke Hungarian at home. Her parents lived for a while on a farm in Pogonyi, Hungary where her father was manager; many of the local farm managers were Jewish. It was an arranged marriage; he was 18 years her senior. Her father was fired in 1936 for being Jewish as were other managers. They went to live in Miskolc with many of her relatives lived. Her father fell ill and didn't work again but her mother opened a pension. Agi describes her early schooling in a gymnasium and her close friend, Edith Rosenberg.

Her parents often discussed whether to stay or leave after the war started, but her mother resisted. Her father, who had poor cardiac health, died just as the Germans invaded in March 1944. She felt the Hungarian government was glad to have the Germans invade and provided no protection of the Jews. Agi, her mother, and her sister were assigned together to a work farm before authorities returned them to the Miskolc ghetto on Agi's birthday in 1944. She describes the conditions there for the short time before all three were deported to Auschwitz by cattle car. She describes the selections on arrival with a visual demonstration of how some deportees made themselves look older or younger. The three of them were never separated, but were soon sent to Płaszów, which she considered "not worse" than Auschwitz. As the Russian army approaches, they were sent back to Auschwitz in September. Agi again avoided separation from her family through a plea with someone she thought was Mengele. Around November, they were sent to Germany.

Agi states that a medication called "brom" was put in prisoners' food which kept many inmates docile while also contributing to ceased menstruation. Agi also said that she never saw any corpses due to the protection of her mother. In late 1944, they were transferred to a small camp in Rochlitz; conditions were somewhat better. She was then transferred to large factory in Calw near year end. In late winter, they were put on a "death march"; after two months on April 28, 1945, the guards released them in Garmisch-Partenkirchen. They found American soldiers who took them to the HQ in Plansee, Austria and then on to Innsbruck where UNRAA placed them at the Hotel Post for eight months. Agi reflects on how she changed over the 13 months of her captivity.

The family returned to Budapest and moved into their original house, finding many items had been plundered, though authorities helped recover some of their furniture. Agi describes the difficulties in obtaining exit permission from the Hungarian authorities in the four years following the war. Ultimately, she and her sister were able to go to Israel in 1949 through the

help of a local Zionist group, despite her mother's objections as they had plans to enter the army.

Agi describes her early time in Israel including the combat death of a close friend. She ended up marrying, had two children, and divorced after 15 years. After divorcing, she became an insurance broker.

Shortly after the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, her mother and step-father (Gyula Sugar) joined her in Israel. Agi revisited Rochlitz and Calw with her granddaughters in 1989 and describes her different experiences there. She concludes with observations about the Holocaust Museum, describing it as a second home.