

## **RG-50.031.0136**

### **Summary**

**Herman Margulies** born on July 25, 1912 in Vienna, Austria, to Abraham (worked as a tailor) & Regina (born March 24, 1864 and was a housewife), sister; Herman discusses food shortage during childhood, following compulsory school that had religious training, attends cheder 2 hrs./5 days week; Austria Revolution (1918), increase in anti-Semitism follows; Austrian events leading to German Army invasion; Jewish businesses are taken over, Herman loses job making appliances for foot problems, Jewish friends arrested on street, according to Herman at passport office, "Lines were miles long...Jews not allowed to take possessions out of country."; Fall 1938 unable to get "J" (Jew) visa, crosses border into Belgium, rejected asylum & sent to Germany, jailed; Herman shares his humility going from "law-abiding citizen to outlaw"; escape/jump from cattle car train, hides in woods, outed by dog barking, farmer comes out with shotgun, escorts Herman to town Gestapo, not arrested, allowed to take train back to Vienna; memories of Kristallnacht, Herman arrested in his home (wife had already fled to England on domestic worker visa, leaving her job as a legal secretary); Herman transported on cattle car where SS makes examples through shootings, thwarting prisoner jumps from train; entering Dachau, SS' terrorizing, if prisoner's profession not deemed worthy, "There were beatings"; "When names were asked, if you didn't respond quickly enough, beatings," watching stuttering man "mercilessly beaten"; pajama uniform in harsh winter, always hungry, having to march, exercise "all day long," never ordered to walk, to always run, if not, beaten; two punishments, 25 lashes on buttocks or hands tied in back, stood up on stool, stool taken away, strung up for half hour; Herman & others run away, caught, court marshaled; sister obtains exit fake visa to Shanghai & able to obtain Herman's release; Dachau friend advises Herman to never speak of Dachau, "No one would believe us anyway."; parents had been arrested & sent to Theresienstadt then "shipped out somewhere else," Herman takes a few minutes to compose himself in his grief, "There's no question what happened to them...they were good people."; getting off boat in US "with \$2 in my pocket," Jewish charity provides food/shelter, seeking work in PA to no avail though sheltered by Jewish family; visa is acquired for wife to enter US; finds work in Chicago where wife's sister lives; drafted into US Army medics 9/17/1943 to make injury braces, serves 2.5 yrs. Herman again takes a few minutes to grapple in grief recalling injuries witnessed as U.S. medic; two children (twin daughters); with proceeds from house sell, starts tele answering service that becomes successful; marriage has "ups & downs"; towards end, Herman introduces wife of 64 years; Herman shares photographs.