

HERBERT PRAUER
RG-50.031.0058 (recorded 1987 Illinois)

Herbert Prauer was born in 1908 in Löwenberg in Schlesien (now Lwówek Śląski, Poland) in east Germany, near the Czech border. He discussed his family history; the family dates back to 1848 in that location. His father had a shoe factory and he worked in it too. Herbert describes the founding of the town that dates from 1360 and the Duke of Bolko. Because there were very few Jewish families, he had many non-Jewish friends.

He describes Kristallnacht and said it destroyed all their history in one night. During that night there were no Nazi uniforms in evidence, only civilian clothes. The family wanted to emigrate but many gates were already closed. His mother got to London on a visa. He describes the quota process. He and his wife were able to get permission to go to Palestine. Their family was made to give up the shoe factory. Herbert and other men in the town were taken by train to Sachsenhausen shortly after Kristallnacht. They were given the job of shoveling sand into a truck. He discovered his brother in another barrack. After a few weeks they started releasing men who had exit visas from Germany so both Herbert and his brother were released.

When the war broke out, Herbert and wife made it to Italy and from there to the United States. They settled in Chicago.