

1  
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:11,990

2  
00:00:11,990 --> 00:00:17,390  
This is Wentworth Films  
for Holocaust Museum,

3  
00:00:17,390 --> 00:00:23,182  
Sandra one with Ernest Weihs  
camera one on January 29, 1992.

4  
00:00:23,182 --> 00:00:26,540  
Take one.

5  
00:00:26,540 --> 00:00:29,060  
And you can look at me.

6  
00:00:29,060 --> 00:00:32,780  
I want you to first tell me a  
little bit of your background

7  
00:00:32,780 --> 00:00:38,450  
as a Jewish child in Vienna and  
how you came to be baptized.

8  
00:00:38,450 --> 00:00:50,520  
Oh, well, I was born in  
Vienna in November 1908.

9  
00:00:50,520 --> 00:00:54,210  
My father was Jewish,  
my mother was Jewish.

10  
00:00:54,210 --> 00:00:58,650  
My grandparents on  
both sides were Jewish.

11  
00:00:58,650 --> 00:01:08,520  
And 1914 I became--

12  
00:01:08,520 --> 00:01:11,240

I got a sister.

13

00:01:11,240 --> 00:01:14,410

My mother had another child.

14

00:01:14,410 --> 00:01:18,010

And when the war  
was breaking out--

15

00:01:18,010 --> 00:01:18,690

[PHONE RINGING]

16

00:01:18,690 --> 00:01:19,190

Uh-oh.

17

00:01:19,190 --> 00:01:23,460

18

00:01:23,460 --> 00:01:27,910

OK, start with how you  
were born in Vienna.

19

00:01:27,910 --> 00:01:33,250

Yeah, I was born  
in Vienna in 1908.

20

00:01:33,250 --> 00:01:38,900

And my parents and both of  
my grandparents were Jewish.

21

00:01:38,900 --> 00:01:45,520

In 1914 I got a baby sister.

22

00:01:45,520 --> 00:01:51,080

And we both lived  
with my mother,

23

00:01:51,080 --> 00:01:59,840

because my father had to  
go to war, World War One.

24

00:01:59,840 --> 00:02:09,000

When the war was over and he  
came back, on the way back

25

00:02:09,000 --> 00:02:18,000  
somehow he met another woman,  
and he wanted a divorce.

26

00:02:18,000 --> 00:02:23,520  
So my mother gave him a  
divorce, and both of us,

27

00:02:23,520 --> 00:02:32,010  
my sister and myself, stayed  
with my mother till I was 11.

28

00:02:32,010 --> 00:02:36,130  
By that time my  
mother just couldn't

29

00:02:36,130 --> 00:02:39,670  
make it raise both of us.

30

00:02:39,670 --> 00:02:50,880  
So she made my father take  
me and his new wife to him.

31

00:02:50,880 --> 00:02:56,220  
He was in another  
state of us there.

32

00:02:56,220 --> 00:03:00,310  
And so she packed  
me a little suitcase

33

00:03:00,310 --> 00:03:03,210  
and sent me off to him.

34

00:03:03,210 --> 00:03:06,410

35

00:03:06,410 --> 00:03:12,910  
He in the meantime,  
he married that woman.

36  
00:03:12,910 --> 00:03:15,890  
She was Lutheran.

37  
00:03:15,890 --> 00:03:27,110  
When he married her he switched  
his religion to a Lutheran.

38  
00:03:27,110 --> 00:03:36,230  
And when I came there  
to live with them

39  
00:03:36,230 --> 00:03:42,960  
he made me take on  
Lutheran religion.

40  
00:03:42,960 --> 00:03:48,080  
And it was very good because  
there was a lot-- in that city

41  
00:03:48,080 --> 00:03:50,600  
where we lived there was  
a lot of anti-Semitism.

42  
00:03:50,600 --> 00:03:57,660  
And it was better to say I'm  
Lutheran than I was Jewish.

43  
00:03:57,660 --> 00:04:05,810  
So anyway, I stayed  
with him from when

44  
00:04:05,810 --> 00:04:11,140  
I was 11 till I was 14.

45  
00:04:11,140 --> 00:04:22,700  
When I was 14, he  
tried to get me a job.

46  
00:04:22,700 --> 00:04:29,150  
And he was traveling  
all over Germany.

47

00:04:29,150 --> 00:04:34,010

He wanted me to  
become a nursery man.

48

00:04:34,010 --> 00:04:36,670

That means nothing  
children nursing,

49

00:04:36,670 --> 00:04:44,870

but nursery with greenhouses  
and cultivate flowers.

50

00:04:44,870 --> 00:04:53,750

So when I was 14, he  
found me a job in Germany

51

00:04:53,750 --> 00:04:58,340

close to the city of Munich.

52

00:04:58,340 --> 00:05:04,605

And in the meantime, when  
I was there a half a year

53

00:05:04,605 --> 00:05:08,840

or so his company  
transferred him

54

00:05:08,840 --> 00:05:14,210

and his new wife, my  
stepmother, back to Vienna.

55

00:05:14,210 --> 00:05:16,920

56

00:05:16,920 --> 00:05:26,430

And I had to learn this  
craft for three years.

57

00:05:26,430 --> 00:05:32,310

And I got a room and  
board and no pay.

58

00:05:32,310 --> 00:05:39,760

Can you describe  
how different things

59

00:05:39,760 --> 00:05:43,120

were in 1938 when Hitler came?

60

00:05:43,120 --> 00:05:47,210

Can you describe the  
change in everyday life?

61

00:05:47,210 --> 00:05:54,030

Well, when Hitler came  
everybody screamed Heil Hitler.

62

00:05:54,030 --> 00:06:00,090

Nobody wanted to be against it.

63

00:06:00,090 --> 00:06:06,330

And my real mother was living  
in Vienna too with my sisters

64

00:06:06,330 --> 00:06:12,250

in another part of Vienna.

65

00:06:12,250 --> 00:06:23,710

She managed to marry a  
guy that was from Russia.

66

00:06:23,710 --> 00:06:28,000

The quota for Austrians  
to the United States

67

00:06:28,000 --> 00:06:31,660

was not open anymore.

68

00:06:31,660 --> 00:06:40,480

But becoming a citizen of  
Russia she was able with him

69

00:06:40,480 --> 00:06:42,670

and my daughter to go--

70

00:06:42,670 --> 00:06:49,330

my sister to go to  
the United States.

71

00:06:49,330 --> 00:06:55,420

Over here, they went  
each its own way.

72

00:06:55,420 --> 00:06:58,330

They divorced here right away.

73

00:06:58,330 --> 00:07:05,200

And my mother, my sister  
lived in New York.

74

00:07:05,200 --> 00:07:11,140

My sister got married there to a  
guy that also came from Vienna.

75

00:07:11,140 --> 00:07:14,770

Back in Vienna how did  
people feel about the Jews

76

00:07:14,770 --> 00:07:17,840

at the beginning of the war?

77

00:07:17,840 --> 00:07:28,540

Well, they were sometimes  
worse than the German

78

00:07:28,540 --> 00:07:33,980

were when Hitler came  
to power in Germany.

79

00:07:33,980 --> 00:07:41,620

And when they saw the Jewish  
people getting picked up

80

00:07:41,620 --> 00:07:50,230

and there was certain schools  
where they collected them,

81

00:07:50,230 --> 00:07:53,080  
they were standing on the  
streets just laughing at them

82  
00:07:53,080 --> 00:08:00,670  
and sneaking and  
very, very, very bad.

83  
00:08:00,670 --> 00:08:03,565  
It was very bad to be Jewish.

84  
00:08:03,565 --> 00:08:07,660  
They had to wear a star.

85  
00:08:07,660 --> 00:08:09,370  
You couldn't work nowhere.

86  
00:08:09,370 --> 00:08:20,630  
And the people of Vienna at  
least 90% were for Hitler.

87  
00:08:20,630 --> 00:08:33,120  
So my mother was going then  
in 1939 she went to the United

88  
00:08:33,120 --> 00:08:36,159  
States with my sister.

89  
00:08:36,159 --> 00:08:44,520  
I myself-- yeah, my  
father died in '37.

90  
00:08:44,520 --> 00:08:48,850  
So he didn't know anything  
about the whole thing.

91  
00:08:48,850 --> 00:08:56,280  
And I stayed with my  
stepmother for the time being.

92  
00:08:56,280 --> 00:09:06,360  
And I had a job in  
a nursery in Vienna,



93

00:09:06,360 --> 00:09:16,890  
which I could hold  
until the end of '38.

94

00:09:16,890 --> 00:09:20,020  
Hitler came in March.

95

00:09:20,020 --> 00:09:28,690  
The people I worked for never  
had any idea where I came from,

96

00:09:28,690 --> 00:09:31,000  
that I was Jewish before.

97

00:09:31,000 --> 00:09:38,290  
And they could-- they were  
swearing that I was Lutheran,

98

00:09:38,290 --> 00:09:40,960  
so they kept me.

99

00:09:40,960 --> 00:09:47,640  
And the two sons of that  
guy that owned the nursery

100

00:09:47,640 --> 00:09:52,800  
belonged to the Nazi party.

101

00:09:52,800 --> 00:09:56,420  
And sooner or  
later, it came about

102

00:09:56,420 --> 00:10:04,430  
that I'm from Jewish  
parents, and I have to go.

103

00:10:04,430 --> 00:10:07,160

104

00:10:07,160 --> 00:10:11,690  
So they had to let me go.

105

00:10:11,690 --> 00:10:17,450

And that was in the end of '38.

106

00:10:17,450 --> 00:10:26,690

In the meantime, the

[INAUDIBLE] command in Vienna,

107

00:10:26,690 --> 00:10:30,960

there is Israelites

[INAUDIBLE] the place where

108

00:10:30,960 --> 00:10:42,370

all Israelites were registered,

they had my birth certificate.

109

00:10:42,370 --> 00:10:49,450

And they were trying to

get people to Palestine.

110

00:10:49,450 --> 00:10:56,050

But before it came to that,

you had to go in a camp

111

00:10:56,050 --> 00:11:01,720

and learn how to work on

a farm, do this and that,

112

00:11:01,720 --> 00:11:06,010

and milk the cows, and so on.

113

00:11:06,010 --> 00:11:13,390

I was-- except, they didn't know

that I had another certificate

114

00:11:13,390 --> 00:11:14,710

that said I was Lutheran.

115

00:11:14,710 --> 00:11:17,290

116

00:11:17,290 --> 00:11:17,800

So they--

117  
00:11:17,800 --> 00:11:18,675  
Now we got to reload.

118  
00:11:18,675 --> 00:11:20,990

119  
00:11:20,990 --> 00:11:22,670  
Roll two, take three.

120  
00:11:22,670 --> 00:11:23,180  
They--

121  
00:11:23,180 --> 00:11:26,370  
Now we got to reload.

122  
00:11:26,370 --> 00:11:27,870  
Roll two, take three.

123  
00:11:27,870 --> 00:11:31,240

124  
00:11:31,240 --> 00:11:35,020  
When you talked before with  
Linda you talked about--

125  
00:11:35,020 --> 00:11:41,720  
you described an experience  
you had helping--

126  
00:11:41,720 --> 00:11:45,560  
being with people when they  
packed to be transported.

127  
00:11:45,560 --> 00:11:46,190  
Right yeah.

128  
00:11:46,190 --> 00:11:49,845  
Can you tell me how it happened  
that you came to be doing that?

129

00:11:49,845 --> 00:11:50,345

Yeah.

130

00:11:50,345 --> 00:11:53,150

And how you felt about it,  
what you thought was happening?

131

00:11:53,150 --> 00:11:56,040

132

00:11:56,040 --> 00:12:03,650

I was in that camp, in the  
Jewish camp to learn farming.

133

00:12:03,650 --> 00:12:11,230

In the meantime, my stepmother  
in Vienna got a postcard.

134

00:12:11,230 --> 00:12:19,030

I was registered in  
a Swedish mission

135

00:12:19,030 --> 00:12:28,730

that was trying to get  
Jewish people out of Austria.

136

00:12:28,730 --> 00:12:37,100

And they are writing me  
that I should come to this--

137

00:12:37,100 --> 00:12:43,070

it was a priest, a pastor, that  
was the director of the whole

138

00:12:43,070 --> 00:12:43,790

thing--

139

00:12:43,790 --> 00:12:47,250

for an interview.

140

00:12:47,250 --> 00:12:54,470

So I went back from that

camp, from that farm,

141

00:12:54,470 --> 00:13:03,210  
and came to Vienna and had that  
interview with that director.

142

00:13:03,210 --> 00:13:11,500  
And he said that they are  
trying to get young people

143

00:13:11,500 --> 00:13:14,840  
from Austria to Sweden.

144

00:13:14,840 --> 00:13:24,790  
And he registered me, and found  
out what my profession was.

145

00:13:24,790 --> 00:13:32,120  
And he said well, right  
now it's transport going,

146

00:13:32,120 --> 00:13:34,850  
but we need somebody.

147

00:13:34,850 --> 00:13:38,180  
Outside of Vienna  
they had a home

148

00:13:38,180 --> 00:13:41,480  
for the elderly Jewish people.

149

00:13:41,480 --> 00:13:48,380  
And there was a huge garden  
and fruit trees and everything

150

00:13:48,380 --> 00:13:49,550  
there.

151

00:13:49,550 --> 00:13:56,570  
If I could go there and help  
out until the time comes

152

00:13:56,570 --> 00:14:00,370  
that I could go on  
a transport, that

153  
00:14:00,370 --> 00:14:03,890  
would be a big help to them.

154  
00:14:03,890 --> 00:14:11,550  
So I quit that farming,  
came back to Vienna,

155  
00:14:11,550 --> 00:14:15,870  
and went out to that  
home for the elderly.

156  
00:14:15,870 --> 00:14:20,820  
And I had made my room,  
my board, and everything

157  
00:14:20,820 --> 00:14:21,960  
and I worked there.

158  
00:14:21,960 --> 00:14:25,340

159  
00:14:25,340 --> 00:14:33,900  
And the time went by,  
and I never got a sign

160  
00:14:33,900 --> 00:14:38,170  
that I am ready to go.

161  
00:14:38,170 --> 00:14:40,470  
I know they needed  
me, and they didn't

162  
00:14:40,470 --> 00:14:42,816  
want to let me go  
until the last minute.

163  
00:14:42,816 --> 00:14:49,580  
In the meantime,  
the first woman that

164  
00:14:49,580 --> 00:14:51,820  
opened the gate  
in that big estate

165  
00:14:51,820 --> 00:14:56,680  
there was my future wife.

166  
00:14:56,680 --> 00:14:59,440  
She was working there too.

167  
00:14:59,440 --> 00:15:03,820  
They promised her the same  
thing, help us out there

168  
00:15:03,820 --> 00:15:08,520  
and we will try to get you out.

169  
00:15:08,520 --> 00:15:17,400  
Well, months went by  
and nothing happened.

170  
00:15:17,400 --> 00:15:22,350  
And the meantime, we became  
good friends and even engaged.

171  
00:15:22,350 --> 00:15:26,170

172  
00:15:26,170 --> 00:15:33,800  
Then in the fall  
of '42 I think--

173  
00:15:33,800 --> 00:15:41,110  
'41, the people of  
that little city

174  
00:15:41,110 --> 00:15:45,720  
where that home was  
insisted that that home has

175  
00:15:45,720 --> 00:15:46,790

to be closed.

176  
00:15:46,790 --> 00:15:52,060  
They don't want any Jews  
living out there anymore.

177  
00:15:52,060 --> 00:15:59,310  
So this Swedish mission had  
a huge apartment building

178  
00:15:59,310 --> 00:16:08,590  
in Vienna where they had  
apartments for people that got

179  
00:16:08,590 --> 00:16:12,710  
kicked out of their apartments.

180  
00:16:12,710 --> 00:16:14,870  
And they had some--

181  
00:16:14,870 --> 00:16:21,710  
it used to be like a  
huge place downstairs

182  
00:16:21,710 --> 00:16:25,955  
where they had beds  
for the sick ones.

183  
00:16:25,955 --> 00:16:30,120  
And they had a  
little chapel there.

184  
00:16:30,120 --> 00:16:41,030  
And we had to close up out there  
in that home for the elderly.

185  
00:16:41,030 --> 00:16:47,740  
And we all moved in  
that apartment building.

186  
00:16:47,740 --> 00:16:52,110  
I worked there and my  
wife worked there--



187  
00:16:52,110 --> 00:16:55,710  
I mean, just at that time  
we were not married yet.

188  
00:16:55,710 --> 00:17:02,580  
And we had a room to live there,  
two or three rooms, kitchen

189  
00:17:02,580 --> 00:17:04,950  
and two rooms.

190  
00:17:04,950 --> 00:17:18,970  
And we stayed until the Austrian  
government wanted the Swedes

191  
00:17:18,970 --> 00:17:23,050  
to leave, go home.

192  
00:17:23,050 --> 00:17:35,830  
They had to close the whole  
thing and the Jewish--

193  
00:17:35,830 --> 00:17:40,210  
the sick ones they  
got in hospitals,

194  
00:17:40,210 --> 00:17:42,220  
there was a Jewish hospital--

195  
00:17:42,220 --> 00:17:43,990  
still there.

196  
00:17:43,990 --> 00:17:52,810  
And we rented a room  
in an apartment.

197  
00:17:52,810 --> 00:17:57,790  
There was a certain section in  
Vienna where Jews could still

198  
00:17:57,790 --> 00:17:59,800

stay and live.

199

00:17:59,800 --> 00:18:03,830

We were in that  
apartment there, and I

200

00:18:03,830 --> 00:18:11,580

got acquainted with  
a Dutch mission which

201

00:18:11,580 --> 00:18:14,660

were doing the same thing.

202

00:18:14,660 --> 00:18:18,980

Feeding people, taking  
them out of Austria,

203

00:18:18,980 --> 00:18:21,605

and so they were still working.

204

00:18:21,605 --> 00:18:24,480

205

00:18:24,480 --> 00:18:31,580

And through them-- they worked  
with the SS to get them.

206

00:18:31,580 --> 00:18:41,200

And in order to be able to  
stay they took some of us,

207

00:18:41,200 --> 00:18:47,950

we had to go out at  
night and pick up

208

00:18:47,950 --> 00:18:52,420

certain people for deportation.

209

00:18:52,420 --> 00:18:59,080

We had to put them some suitcase  
full of stuff, whatever they

210

00:18:59,080 --> 00:19:07,700  
could carry, and the morning  
they were loaded up in trucks

211  
00:19:07,700 --> 00:19:14,400  
and taken to a place  
where they then would

212  
00:19:14,400 --> 00:19:18,170  
get transported to Poland.

213  
00:19:18,170 --> 00:19:28,270  
And that went on for a  
while until almost no Jews

214  
00:19:28,270 --> 00:19:30,100  
were left in Vienna.

215  
00:19:30,100 --> 00:19:35,400  
And that was '42.

216  
00:19:35,400 --> 00:19:38,760  
Where did you think they  
were going in Poland?

217  
00:19:38,760 --> 00:19:43,760  
They promised them labor camps.

218  
00:19:43,760 --> 00:19:45,910  
But then after awhile it--

219  
00:19:45,910 --> 00:19:48,820

220  
00:19:48,820 --> 00:19:54,980  
the truth came through that  
they killed them there.

221  
00:19:54,980 --> 00:19:57,410  
And they buried  
them in mass graves.

222

00:19:57,410 --> 00:20:01,560

223

00:20:01,560 --> 00:20:08,200

I had an uncle, he lived with  
his wife in an apartment.

224

00:20:08,200 --> 00:20:12,460

And the SS men came and  
said I like that apartment,

225

00:20:12,460 --> 00:20:15,180

and I'm going to take it.

226

00:20:15,180 --> 00:20:21,260

And my uncle said  
you can have it,

227

00:20:21,260 --> 00:20:26,640

but I want to take my  
bathtub with me somehow--

228

00:20:26,640 --> 00:20:30,280

I don't know how he  
came in that idea.

229

00:20:30,280 --> 00:20:34,010

He didn't want to move  
until he can get this thing.

230

00:20:34,010 --> 00:20:37,510

And a week later, he  
was gone to Poland,

231

00:20:37,510 --> 00:20:41,580

so we never saw them again.

232

00:20:41,580 --> 00:20:54,020

And anyway, the time came  
when the Dutch people

233

00:20:54,020 --> 00:20:56,790

had to close too.

234  
00:20:56,790 --> 00:21:03,950  
And that was when I had  
to go and leave Vienna.

235  
00:21:03,950 --> 00:21:12,180  
My wife-- future wife stayed  
with her mother and father,

236  
00:21:12,180 --> 00:21:14,820  
because the mother was Catholic.

237  
00:21:14,820 --> 00:21:19,670  
She could-- she  
didn't have to go.

238  
00:21:19,670 --> 00:21:28,130  
And I left with a  
transport Vienna.

239  
00:21:28,130 --> 00:21:29,690  
I think it was October '42.

240  
00:21:29,690 --> 00:21:32,270

241  
00:21:32,270 --> 00:21:45,750  
And they drove us  
with the boxcars

242  
00:21:45,750 --> 00:21:51,720  
to Theresienstadt, that  
was a former military camp

243  
00:21:51,720 --> 00:21:54,390  
for Austrian soldiers.

244  
00:21:54,390 --> 00:22:00,140  
And they made a ghetto  
out of this city,

245  
00:22:00,140 --> 00:22:04,790

just like they did in  
Poland made those ghettos.

246  
00:22:04,790 --> 00:22:07,850  
And they had these  
huge buildings

247  
00:22:07,850 --> 00:22:12,810  
where men were living,  
other buildings

248  
00:22:12,810 --> 00:22:15,210  
where women were living.

249  
00:22:15,210 --> 00:22:19,740  
We even had our own money  
and we had our own stores.

250  
00:22:19,740 --> 00:22:23,900  
And first of all, when  
we got there everything--

251  
00:22:23,900 --> 00:22:26,930  
they took everything  
off, gave us

252  
00:22:26,930 --> 00:22:31,520  
these old clothes and our  
suitcase and our rings,

253  
00:22:31,520 --> 00:22:37,600  
everything was-- shoes,  
everything was confiscated.

254  
00:22:37,600 --> 00:22:38,100  
And--

255  
00:22:38,100 --> 00:22:41,400  
Stop now, we have to put  
another roll of film.

256  
00:22:41,400 --> 00:22:42,920  
Roll three, take four.

257  
00:22:42,920 --> 00:22:46,270

258  
00:22:46,270 --> 00:22:50,970  
OK, why don't you pick up with  
describing Theresienstadt?

259  
00:22:50,970 --> 00:22:57,720  
Yeah, so we were separated  
in different buildings,

260  
00:22:57,720 --> 00:23:02,270  
but we could see each  
other during the day.

261  
00:23:02,270 --> 00:23:08,250  
And we got fed in-- we have  
to get all to one place

262  
00:23:08,250 --> 00:23:09,930  
where we get our food.

263  
00:23:09,930 --> 00:23:12,670

264  
00:23:12,670 --> 00:23:15,880  
And it wasn't too bad.

265  
00:23:15,880 --> 00:23:17,305  
It was really like a ghetto.

266  
00:23:17,305 --> 00:23:22,260  
We had our own, so  
to speak, government.

267  
00:23:22,260 --> 00:23:28,330  
But all was controlled by SS.

268  
00:23:28,330 --> 00:23:30,640  
So it's just we are  
all over the places.

269

00:23:30,640 --> 00:23:45,360

And I was lucky they gave you  
to certain working groups.

270

00:23:45,360 --> 00:23:52,100

And I was with a  
group of people that

271

00:23:52,100 --> 00:23:56,360

went out to the railroad  
station, unloaded the coal,

272

00:23:56,360 --> 00:24:02,300

unloaded the  
potatoes, or whatever

273

00:24:02,300 --> 00:24:06,840

it was, and bring it back into  
the ghetto, back and forth.

274

00:24:06,840 --> 00:24:11,540

In the meantime, because we  
did this almost every day,

275

00:24:11,540 --> 00:24:19,250

we got acquainted with some of  
the Czechoslovakian railroad

276

00:24:19,250 --> 00:24:21,410

personnel.

277

00:24:21,410 --> 00:24:31,710

And they got letters  
for us out home.

278

00:24:31,710 --> 00:24:36,930

So we actually were  
corresponding with our people

279

00:24:36,930 --> 00:24:42,530

at home, telling them  
how it was and so on.



280

00:24:42,530 --> 00:24:52,730

And my wife's father  
was still in Vienna.

281

00:24:52,730 --> 00:25:02,110

I was there '42, and in  
'43 he had to go too.

282

00:25:02,110 --> 00:25:12,840

My wife, my fiancÃ©, wanted to  
go with him and come and see me.

283

00:25:12,840 --> 00:25:16,463

So she went with him on her own.

284

00:25:16,463 --> 00:25:17,880

She didn't have  
to, she could have

285

00:25:17,880 --> 00:25:21,780

stayed with her mother all  
the way through the war--

286

00:25:21,780 --> 00:25:23,370

she came.

287

00:25:23,370 --> 00:25:28,430

I was standing  
there unloading coal

288

00:25:28,430 --> 00:25:32,390

and here comes that  
boxcar, and here she comes.

289

00:25:32,390 --> 00:25:36,350

Oh, I almost fainted.

290

00:25:36,350 --> 00:25:48,120

So anyway, we were together  
for right about '42, '43--

291

00:25:48,120 --> 00:25:50,930

292

00:25:50,930 --> 00:25:54,210  
she came in '43.

293

00:25:54,210 --> 00:25:59,760  
And we even got married there.

294

00:25:59,760 --> 00:26:02,955  
Not officially married,  
but like a ghetto marriage.

295

00:26:02,955 --> 00:26:05,910

296

00:26:05,910 --> 00:26:16,900  
And then in the  
beginning of '44 they

297

00:26:16,900 --> 00:26:27,610  
said they need people to  
work in Germany in factories,

298

00:26:27,610 --> 00:26:32,110  
and whoever wants to go  
out of the ghetto can go.

299

00:26:32,110 --> 00:26:37,080  
So a bunch of us, my friends  
and me, we volunteered to go.

300

00:26:37,080 --> 00:26:40,560

301

00:26:40,560 --> 00:26:45,660  
There was I don't know how  
many cars full of people.

302

00:26:45,660 --> 00:26:55,600  
And instead we ended  
up in Auschwitz.

303

00:26:55,600 --> 00:27:06,680

And we came, it was  
my friend, his wife,

304

00:27:06,680 --> 00:27:10,220

his wife's little brother--  
two brothers, little one

305

00:27:10,220 --> 00:27:14,330

and the older one, 17.

306

00:27:14,330 --> 00:27:17,870

We came at night,  
all the lights on.

307

00:27:17,870 --> 00:27:23,840

We got us out of the cars,  
and here was the officer.

308

00:27:23,840 --> 00:27:27,560

You go this way, you got  
that way, you go this way,

309

00:27:27,560 --> 00:27:28,880

you go that way.

310

00:27:28,880 --> 00:27:37,450

All the-- most of the women  
and kids and young people

311

00:27:37,450 --> 00:27:40,210

had to be going that way.

312

00:27:40,210 --> 00:27:45,980

Whoever looked halfway decent  
to work went the other way.

313

00:27:45,980 --> 00:27:48,110

And then we were--

314

00:27:48,110 --> 00:27:53,180

315  
00:27:53,180 --> 00:27:55,994  
but my wife was still  
in Theresienstadt.

316  
00:27:55,994 --> 00:27:58,660

317  
00:27:58,660 --> 00:28:01,960  
And the next day we  
look around, half

318  
00:28:01,960 --> 00:28:05,710  
of the people that came  
with us we didn't see.

319  
00:28:05,710 --> 00:28:09,580  
We knew they were  
gassed on the next day.

320  
00:28:09,580 --> 00:28:12,790  
All the women that  
looked elderly,

321  
00:28:12,790 --> 00:28:19,070  
all the kids that couldn't--  
young to working age,

322  
00:28:19,070 --> 00:28:21,460  
we never saw them again.

323  
00:28:21,460 --> 00:28:24,400  
Over there they stripped us  
again of everything we had

324  
00:28:24,400 --> 00:28:30,560  
and gave us these  
prison clothes.

325  
00:28:30,560 --> 00:28:35,200  
And we were in barracks.

326

00:28:35,200 --> 00:28:38,410  
There's a bed here  
and a bed here

327  
00:28:38,410 --> 00:28:43,110  
all the way through  
and to sleep.

328  
00:28:43,110 --> 00:28:49,140  
A couple of days  
later, all women came.

329  
00:28:49,140 --> 00:28:52,030  
And they told them  
in Theresienstadt

330  
00:28:52,030 --> 00:29:00,670  
your husbands are working  
in the factories in Germany.

331  
00:29:00,670 --> 00:29:04,320  
If you want to  
join them, you can.

332  
00:29:04,320 --> 00:29:10,420  
They all ran and  
registered and followed.

333  
00:29:10,420 --> 00:29:13,620  
Couple of days later, we  
saw him through the fences.

334  
00:29:13,620 --> 00:29:16,160

335  
00:29:16,160 --> 00:29:18,740  
We couldn't talk, we  
could just wave-- saw

336  
00:29:18,740 --> 00:29:22,280  
that they are over here too.

337  
00:29:22,280 --> 00:29:26,630

So we didn't know  
what was going on.

338  
00:29:26,630 --> 00:29:34,980  
We, a group of us, we stayed  
only a little more than a week.

339  
00:29:34,980 --> 00:29:39,090  
We didn't get no stamps.

340  
00:29:39,090 --> 00:29:43,200  
We were sorted  
out, said you habe

341  
00:29:43,200 --> 00:29:48,800  
to go to another labor  
camp where you can--

342  
00:29:48,800 --> 00:29:51,740  
where we're going  
to put you to work.

343  
00:29:51,740 --> 00:29:57,830  
So our group went to a place  
that was called Kaufering.

344  
00:29:57,830 --> 00:30:03,090  
It was a small labor camp  
next a railroad station

345  
00:30:03,090 --> 00:30:07,910  
between Munich and Kaufering.

346  
00:30:07,910 --> 00:30:14,630  
And there we were  
put in bunkers.

347  
00:30:14,630 --> 00:30:19,940  
The roof is grass,  
and you go steps down.

348  
00:30:19,940 --> 00:30:24,650  
And here is a wooden

boards where you sleep on.

349  
00:30:24,650 --> 00:30:30,200  
So from up high you  
wouldn't probably not

350  
00:30:30,200 --> 00:30:32,010  
realize what's going on there.

351  
00:30:32,010 --> 00:30:36,330  
It looks like grass all over.

352  
00:30:36,330 --> 00:30:39,360  
So we were there.

353  
00:30:39,360 --> 00:30:44,230  
And we didn't know where our  
wives were, where they got.

354  
00:30:44,230 --> 00:30:53,290  
But later on, we found out that  
they took them to another camp

355  
00:30:53,290 --> 00:30:56,210  
in Czechoslovakia.

356  
00:30:56,210 --> 00:30:59,830  
So we were in Poland, they  
were in Czechoslovakia.

357  
00:30:59,830 --> 00:31:03,180  
And we found that  
out after the war.

358  
00:31:03,180 --> 00:31:07,680  
And so we stayed in the camp.

359  
00:31:07,680 --> 00:31:11,550  
We get our ration of  
bread and cabbage soup

360  
00:31:11,550 --> 00:31:14,400

and whatever they feed us.

361  
00:31:14,400 --> 00:31:17,430  
And I was lucky again.

362  
00:31:17,430 --> 00:31:23,860  
I got to company,  
small group, they

363  
00:31:23,860 --> 00:31:27,850  
went out in the fields  
digging out the potatoes,

364  
00:31:27,850 --> 00:31:30,460  
bringing back the cabbage  
and all this stuff.

365  
00:31:30,460 --> 00:31:33,880  
And we had huge coats--

366  
00:31:33,880 --> 00:31:35,590  
overcoats, long.

367  
00:31:35,590 --> 00:31:40,735  
And we had big  
inner inside sacks.

368  
00:31:40,735 --> 00:31:43,480  
We put potatoes  
here, potatoes here,

369  
00:31:43,480 --> 00:31:47,290  
and we marched in the camp.

370  
00:31:47,290 --> 00:31:50,950  
And in each of these  
bunkers was a little stove.

371  
00:31:50,950 --> 00:31:58,600  
We heated that up at night and  
put the potatoes in the ashes.

372



00:31:58,600 --> 00:32:05,290  
And I think that's what kept us  
alive beside the food we got.

373  
00:32:05,290 --> 00:32:10,270  
But others were not so lucky.

374  
00:32:10,270 --> 00:32:15,400  
I came with people  
friends of mine.

375  
00:32:15,400 --> 00:32:21,720  
There's nobody in your group as  
strong and as tall and strong

376  
00:32:21,720 --> 00:32:26,810  
as this friend of mine were.

377  
00:32:26,810 --> 00:32:31,590  
And a week later I  
saw him as skeletons.

378  
00:32:31,590 --> 00:32:37,790  
They became diarrhea  
and they just ran out.

379  
00:32:37,790 --> 00:32:47,020  
And it was wintertime-- it was  
the winter from '44 of '45.

380  
00:32:47,020 --> 00:32:49,650

381  
00:32:49,650 --> 00:32:59,810  
So what happened and they  
didn't last a week, two weeks.

382  
00:32:59,810 --> 00:33:10,920  
And it was so cold  
we had to bury them.

383  
00:33:10,920 --> 00:33:15,200  
They are only skeletons,

only bones and skin

384  
00:33:15,200 --> 00:33:17,540  
laying there on the floor.

385  
00:33:17,540 --> 00:33:20,600  
And we recognized our  
friends, of course.

386  
00:33:20,600 --> 00:33:27,786  
We had to put them  
in a two-wheeler,

387  
00:33:27,786 --> 00:33:33,110  
a big bunch of them.

388  
00:33:33,110 --> 00:33:37,850  
And carry them out in the  
fields with soldiers with us.

389  
00:33:37,850 --> 00:33:44,560  
And we had to dig this  
frozen ground deep enough

390  
00:33:44,560 --> 00:33:47,610  
so that we could bury them.

391  
00:33:47,610 --> 00:33:51,400  
Soon there was no more room.

392  
00:33:51,400 --> 00:33:58,711  
So we had to carry them  
to another camp and--

393  
00:33:58,711 --> 00:33:59,211