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Summary

Sally (Zelenski) Reisman was born October 2, 1930 in Sosnowiec, Poland as the middle of eleven children. Her mother's name was Hinder Perchik, her father, Chaim. Her family was Hasidic, very religious. Her father was both a rabbi and a textile merchant. Sally attended a religious school and had some interaction with non-Jews, much of it negative due to widespread anti-Semitism. They had considered immigrating to Palestine before the war. When the war first started, they began to move eastward, but returned due to fighting.

Her father largely stayed home to avoid physical abuse due to his beard and religious appearance. Their jewelry was confiscated. A *gemeinde* was established that some liaison between Jews and the authorities, while families could stay in their homes. Her brother, Simon, was the first of the family to be taken away in 1941, but in 1942, the community was moved to single location. Her father was separated from the family; she never saw him again. They then began to hear rumors of the concentration camps. A ghetto was formed early in 1943 into which all Jews were placed. Conditions were worse than before the daily routine of life was 'desperate', but there were few mass selections. Her sisters were forced to work making military uniforms, but one day were taken to the Graben labor camp directly from work. One night the SS took her from her family by bus with other young girls to Graben. Her mother and younger siblings remained in the ghetto. They could trade letters until June 1943, when she thinks the ghetto was liquidated, and they were sent to an extermination camp.

She worked in a flax factory, subject to frequent physical abuse, until January 1945 when they were put on a forced march as the Russian army approached and then carried by open cattle car train to Bergen-Belsen. Sally was assigned to the kitchen, which allowed her access to additional food for both her use and for trading with others. She contracted typhus, but was helped by her older sister, Esther. Sally claims she didn't have a strong will to live, but was saved by her sisters.

The British army liberated the camp unexpectedly in April, 1945. She found her brother, Simon, close by and other brothers at Buchenwald. She expresses her disappointment at the willingness of the Free World to permit the exterminations.

The remnants of their family remained at a DP camp until 1951 when they decided to go to Australia instead of Israel or America. She continued her education there becoming a dental technician and bookkeeper. But, then moved to America where she met her husband, an American-born Jew. She became married in 1959 in New York City and convinced her husband to move to Australia for a while before moving to Los Angeles.