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Born August 14, 1924, in Lodz, Poland

His name was Gedoliah Geslewitz. Was the youngest of 7 children. The oldest was Myer, then Hirsch, then sister Chaya, Laiva (the only one alive today), then Shmiel, Laya and me. Father's name was Yitzek Lazer and mother was Muel.

Father was a self-employed cabinet maker. When war broke out Daniel was 15 and had stopped going to a public Polish school attended only by Jews. The studies were in Polish. There was no religion in school. He went to a Cheder after school which was private.

Had no Jewish friends growing up; everyone in neighborhood was Jewish.

Before serious problems began, he always felt persecution all the time as a Jew.

Childhood home was middle class and comfortable.

Was persecuted in certain neighborhoods, would be attacked by Polish people so he couldn't be near the Poles. Children and adults attacked Jews. They made life as uncomfortable as possible.

War started September 1939. They knew war was coming. German soldiers marched through Lodz. There were German proclamations such as if there were more than 7 people, you couldn't congregate in public, you couldn't attend synagogues; the punishment was always death, no imprisonment. Then the food got scarce; if they saw you were a Jew in the bread line they made you get out.

At one time Jews were ordered to wear yellow stars. Then came the order that the Jews had to vacate Lodz; they created the Lodz ghetto surrounded by barbed wire. Jews could work and live only in there. From the ghetto the Jews were then shipped out to camps.

Factories of all kinds were established in the ghetto, woodworking, shoes, tailoring.

The family lived in their own home which became part of the ghetto; they all lived together. Conditions were very bad; there was a lot of starvation. Everyone in the ghetto worked--if you didn't you were shipped out to a camp.

He observed many starvation deaths around him.

There was no opportunity to escape. The ghetto was guarded and surrounded by Polish neighborhoods. They had no radios. The outside world, including the immediate neighborhoods beyond them, did not help at all.

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There were periodic transports--the first of which were voluntary to go to supposed work camps. The mentally sick were deported at an early stage or extermination. Later they went from house-to-house to select people to ship out; they took the older people and the children out.

He remained in the ghetto until the end of the ghetto which was August 27, 1944, on one of the last transports that went to Auschwitz. He went with his whole family. They had been hiding and were discovered the day before by the Germans. They were hiding in an apartment. There were no resistance fighters in their ghetto.

When taken, they were taken to Marishen and loaded on cattle cars and arrived at Auschwitz with his mother, Shmiel, Myer, Laiva, Laya and Helen with her little boy. His father had died of hunger in the ghetto. Then the men and the women were separated and were again separated, those to be gassed and those not to be gassed. He was chosen to live as were his 3 brothers.

The SS shouted orders and they followed; it was all very fast. They took all their possessions, were de-liced, took showers, came out the other side and then they gave them prison garb. They only let them keep their belts, which he still has today. They were kept in barracks. There were constant beatings all day long.

In the morning there was always an exercise. Then got brown water to drink and later bread and soup.

He didn't work in Auschwitz. Was there a short time. He became a metal worker and left Auschwitz after 7-8 days to go to Germany to work.

He worked in a village in a small factory that was making parts for trucks. There were 350 Jews there; adjacent to the factory was living quarters which was 1 big room. They slept like sardines. Food in the beginning wasn't too bad. Then SS took over, and food diminished and starvation started again. His brother Shmiel died of starvation there. There was no medical help. Got soup in the day and bread in the evening.

Got to factory in September and stayed till March. Then marched to the main camp because the allies were getting near in Vacstedt.

Hunger got to older brother Myer. He was punished. He went into the kitchen looking for food and was punished for touching the soup on the table. He was forced to drink that soup with a very large amount of salt that the Germans put in it, and soon after he died because of it. He was given a separate marker on his grave in the town where he died.

Daniel was very emaciated: They all were. Got to camp and then were transported by cattle cars to other camps as the allies got nearer. Went to Ravensbruck; got food packages there from what might have been Jewish Red Cross. Packages didn't help because they were coffee or foods that needed to be cooked or hydrated and they didn't have the right materials. They were also given some cheese in the packages which they couldn't eat because of their physical conditions. Were shipped to another camp where they were liberated.

Liberated by the Allies on May 2, but not sure which Army. He was sick then. He later found out it was the Americans that liberated them.

The day after, they left the camp and walked to the city. They went into a house. The Germans were hiding--they had no intentions of hurting the Germans that they found. The inhabitants came down and the Jews stayed for 6 weeks in this place to recuperate.

Two weeks after the liberation he was taken by American soldiers when he was found inside this house for forced deportation to be returned to his country of origin. When he got to this deportation site, he just walked out of the camp and went back to the German house in town. He stayed another 4-5 weeks with his brothers.

They all went to the authorities at that camp, which was controlled by the English then who were no longer sending transports to the east.

So he was sent to an English zone in Germany on an English military site. They settled in the same town after they left the site and formed a small Jewish community.

They got reparation money from Germans and some food stamps. They stayed in this town for 5 years.

In 1950 he came to the U.S. from Germany. He'd made application for visa in 1949.

His older sister, her son and his mother had been gassed in a camp.

His brother came to the U.S. also. He got married in Germany; his bride was from Poland. He and his wife emigrated by plane because his wife was pregnant. They arrived in N.Y.

He had family in N.Y. who had lived there from before the war. He had written to the family to say they were coming to New York. When he got to the airport, someone met him with a message saying that this family of his in New York refused to meet him and didn't want anything to do with him.

He found a job ~n New York. He had a series of menial jobs. He remained in New York for a short time and moved to other states in the country.

He has 3 daughters and 6 grandchildren.

Asked if he ever saw any German soldier who refused to carry out orders to punish or kill a Jew. He said he never experienced any good will from any German or any Polish civilian or soldier to a Jew.

He also thinks this Holocaust could happen any time again.

He lives in Phoenix, Arizona.