

RG-50.060.0018

Summary

Hyman Goldberg, whose parents were Handel and Heschel, was one of four children: Brother Isaac, and sisters Leia and Miriam. In Lodz, his family owned a grocery and a cartage company, and had a “beautiful” life renting the same house for 28 years. His aunt, Raisel Steinovitz, came from England and lived with them. He attended local public school and knew many non-Jewish children.

Shortly after the Polish army’s defeat, the Germans demanded Jews give up their items of value, while also forming a ghetto with all Jews wearing yellow armbands, not stars. A system of rationing and “ghetto money” was started. In response to sporadic rioting, the stronger Jews were taken away. Hyman was one of about 2000 youths 16-17 years old “hired” to work on Germany’s autobahn. Some of youths who wished to go home, were sent instead to Auschwitz. After two years, he was sent to Auschwitz, where he worked at the gas chamber burying the bodies. His wrist tattoo was 44022. Suspecting that he too would end up in the chamber, he volunteered to go to the Buna camp about 15 km away, working at its cement block plant. Most of the workers were children. Hyman found the Germans there less harsh than at Auschwitz; he became a supervisor of about 90 kids. Each barrack had about 200 kids with straw mattresses and blankets. His Jewish block supervisor treated him and his barracks well focusing especially on cleanliness and counseling to do what they needed to survive.

In winter 1944, to escape bombardment, he and many others were moved by open cattle train for a week without food or water to Czechoslovakia, but then rerouted to Gundelsheim (?), which had a crematorium. They were then sent out again to a camp called Dula, which had dynamite placed all around it. However, an SS officer disconnected the dynamite, allowing the U.S. troops to liberate the camp, saving 2-3000 kids. The Americans were soon replaced by the English, who Hyman said were worse than the Germans.

Hyman ended up in Goslar-Harz, Germany, where he tried to locate his family. He met his future wife at Braunschweig near Hanover, marrying her on Christmas Eve. They lived in Goslar where he worked in the black market with their first child born in 1946. After 4-5 years, they obtained papers to go to Chicago, via ship from Bremerhaven to New York.

(Ends abruptly and prematurely.)