

Irving Goldstein was born Oct. 25, 1921 in Czortków, Eastern Poland (now Chortkiv, Ukraine). He was the youngest of four boys and three girls. His parents' names were Mordechai and Pearl. His father was in the meat business. After attending public school, he went to Lemberg (Lvov) for work in 1938, staying about a year. He returned home at Passover remaining until the Russian invasion.

When war erupted in 1941, Irving joined about 60 young people (and his brother, Bill) who evacuated to Russia to help with the war effort. They stopped near the Caucasus Mountains working on cooperative farms for nominal pay, and then onto some labor camps, where their movements were more restricted. They ran away, changed their names, traveled another 1000-2000 miles and re-registered. They did this a number of times, stopping in both Baku and Yerevan. The labor camps built railroad tracks, telephone poles. Though they were not entirely free to go as they wished, they were not as heavily guarded as a prison camp, which made escape possible.

Their supervisor, whom they suspected was Jewish, gave them passes to visit their hometown once they learned that it had been liberated by Russian forces late in the war. Only their older brother, Shlomo, remained; they never obtained word on where the rest of the family had gone. He says the Nazi practice was not to send the occupants to concentration camps, but to gather up Jews in groups and execute them secretly in the countryside.

Irving and his brother remained two weeks until they were called in by the local NKVD, which told them they had to return to their labor camps within 24 hours. They fled during the night to Lemberg where a Jewish agency helped them get to Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Austria where they joined a Displaced Persons camp in the American zone. Ultimately, they located an older sister who had emigrated to the U.S. in the Twenties who sent him immigration papers. His brother had to wait a while longer since he was married.

Irving came by ship from Bremerhaven in December, 1946. He worked for two years in his brother-in-law's radio and TV shop in New York, while he learned English. Then, he began selling wholesale meat to restaurants, ultimately getting married and going out on his own with \$6,000 borrowed from his brother-in-law, eventually repaid. As he began to have union problems, he liquidated the firm and started up again in Phoenix with his brother in 1958. He had three sons, one born in Brooklyn, the other two in Phoenix.