

ESTHER ROSEN - Phoenix

I was born in Stoltzka in Poland, a border town between Poland and Russia on Dec. 22, 1924. My father was Mordecai, my mother Alta, my brother Israel was a doctor and my brother Erol lives in Israel. Bother brothers and my motner live in Israel, my mother is a dentist . We all survived.

Stoltzka was a small town of 9 or 10,000 people, mostly Jewish with two synagogues and one Catholic Church. I went to Hebrew grade school. We talked Yiddish at home and Hebrew in school . My third language was Polish.

September 1, 1939 we were occupied by the Russians. We went to Russian schools and learned to speak Russian. We did not feel the war. Polish immigrants came to our town which was an important railroad station. Any trains coming from Russia had to stop at our town.

June 22, 1941 Germans started the war with Russia. My brother was sent to the Russian Army. I was 16 years old and wanted to run away from the town and convinced my parents to leave too. We left at 5 am my parents, my brother and I. My brother and I went to school alternatively because we did not have two pair of shoes. These were hard hears for us. Father was arrested by the Russians and was in jail but was released. We had little food, it was very cold, no wood to burn in the stove. We went to the woods at night and chopped down trees . We went to Olmsk, a larger city. My mother was a dentist. We survived.

We did not hear about my brother until 1945. When our town was liberated we wrote letters and tried to locate my brother. On the third day of the word he was taken a pow by the Germans. He changed his name and became a Turk, took a new Turkish family and survived. We heard he was in Prussia. He escaped the Germans as a pow and went to the Russian side. The Russians arrested him and put him in a concentration camp. Finally he was liberated. He came to Olmsk in 1945. In 1946 we left Russia for Poland. I married my husband in 1949 in Germany and came to the U.S. We had been in a dp camp in Austria and also in Minsk. My parents went to Israel My husband and I went to Ohio in 1949. There were 200 Jewish families in the town who sponsored 15 families. My husband is an engineer. I have 3 children, two sons live here and my daughter lives in Texas. I have five grandchildren. My daughter writes about the Holocaust, about how the Holocaust affected the lives of survivors and their children. When the children were growing up we did not discuss the Holocaust much. However they visited my parents in Israel and had their Bar and Bat Mitzvahs in Israel .