

Fanny Schlomowitz-Phoenix

I was born in Poland, at 6 months of age I moved to Budapest and lived there until the advent of Hitler. After WW 2 I lived in Germany for 6 years and then received papers for Canada, and from Canada I came to the United States.

As a young girl I did tutoring, I tutored the Gabor sisters. I went to a Jewish school and then on to High School and then I married in 1941. I was one of thirteen children, the youngest, 4 died as infants so I grew up with 9 children. My father was a religious man, he was a mashgeach, he examined Kosher meats. We lived very comfortably. The children worked; we had a maid. I was a legal secretary for 5 years, then I was in advertising. I lost my job because of Hitler and I opened a snack bar for three years.

Before Hitler conditions in Budapest were beautiful. No anti-Semitism. After Hitler they showed us who they were and what they thought of us.

I married in 1941. I wore the yellow star, there was no food; conditions were terrible. I had a small baby and was expecting another. They took my husband away. My sister lived in the ghetto. I spent about 2 or 3 months in the ghetto. In 1945., January, the Russians liberated us in the cellar. We did not have food, there was a soup kitchen a distance away, we had to walk over dead people in the street in the winter. Nobody buried them. There were 20 bodies under the stairs in the apartment.

I survived, my husband came home. He was in Dachau. Because I was pregnant they didn't take me. At the end of 1944 the Russians liberated us. They raped Jews. They were not a gentle people, a wild army. I went back to my own apartment after liberation. They started to bury people.

They took me to a hospital to deliver my baby. When I was in the hospital they brought in people who had tried suicide. I was on the floor waiting to be delivered.

My husband came home when the baby was 6 or 7 months old. He lived in Vienna first and then came to Budapest and we were married there and they took him away. They picked him up from our apartment. I went down to the cellar. My husband was in Dachau. They did experiments on him first in lukewarm water, then boiling water, cold water, froze him. He came home a wreck, very nervous. A German lady got him false papers.

When Hitler came, we lost our jobs. We wore the Yellow Star. The janitor watched that we wore the Star when we went out. The janitor stole our things. When we went down to the cellar, my little daughter cried constantly, she lost her voice from fear. Many times I wished they would bomb us and put us out of our misery. We looked out of the window and they were taking groups of people under guns, unreal.

My daughters live in Scarsdale, my son lives in Colorado Springs and is a computer analyst. Antonia, Anita, Leon. In the DP camps we lived in soldiers' barracks, but we had food.

When they picked up my husband they took him to the Danube and he escaped and a policeman took him back to the ghetto. I have a brother in Houston who sent us papers and in 1956 he came to the US. My husband did difficult work, I worked in a bakery. I never lost my spirit. I leave for the nursing home when it is still

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dark and work there. I am chairman of the Jewish National Fund and am active in many other organizations. I have 3 grandchildren, one is a medical student.