

Interview with Bertha Tulc

First, Bertha Tulc discusses her family and other personal information. Then, she continues to talk about life prior to the war and in the ghetto.

Next, Bertha was asked about her relationship with her peers. She responded that for a long time she wasn't treated any differently than anyone else. Then she describes the difficult living conditions immediately after the break-out of the war. Then, they were moved to a ghetto. She was separated from most of her family. She was left to raise her blind, three-year-old nephew. In the ghetto, there was not enough food available. There were meager rations of potatoes and bread. On June 15, 1942, Bertha's father died. The Gestapo barged into Bertha's house and took her older sister and her husband. Although they had search dogs and bayonettes, her brother and nephew miraculously survived by hiding in a wardrobe. Bertha spent her dowry to teach her brother a craft so he could support them. Her brother was taken away and she was left with her youngest brother and her nephew with no money and no means of support.

Bertha was sent in a windowless cattle car to a concentration camp. The cars were packed with people. The stench and the presence of death were unpleasurable on the long trip. Men and women were separated into different camps. Bertha was in Auschwitz for two days when a soldier, for no known reason, took her from the crematorium to a work camp. There was an inadequate amount of food at the work camp and the guards, both male and female, were unnecessarily brutal.

Shortly before D-Day, they were forced on the "March of Death". When they were finally liberated by England, insufficient supplies of food were made available to them. Then, they were taken to a hospital. There was not enough food, medicine, or clothing to go around.

After her release from the hospital, Bertha met up with her husband's friend who got her a place in a refugee camp. She found her youngest brother, who had lost one eye and had a skin disease. They visited her father's grave together.

She and her brother made plans to cross the border, but she was too weak to walk. She hitched a ride in a truck with Russian soldiers while her brother walked. The soldiers tried to rape her, and she ran away. She found her way to Czechoslovakia, where she found her husband and her brother-in-law. She had two daughters, and one was very sick.

The family moved to the United States. She and her sister were very close to death on the boat from Europe. They had no money and no place to live. Eventually, her husband got a job, but the family had to keep moving for several reasons.

Bertha stated the fact that the Germans took the children. After the war was over, she discovered that her sister had died in Ber~en-Belsen. Bertha Tulc believes that a second holocaust is inevitable.