

Summary of Oral History: Alfred Rozenik

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This Summary was written by a USHMM Volunteer on [05/2022]

Alfred Rozenik, born in Kazimierza Wielka, Poland, March 15, 1921. Describes family and childhood living in town with small Jewish population - father had a general store; Alfred belonged to Zionist organizations, went to public school and later each day went to Jewish school. Father died in 1938; Alfred was already in Lodz; worked as machinist in uncle's factory. Described beginning of war; sister in Lodz, mother in village. Decided to go to Warsaw, but when Germans entered the city, went back to Lodz and was caught by Germans, then released. 12/1939, heard that a ghetto would be formed in Lodz, so went back to his hometown. Describes forced labor until Nov. 9, 1942, when he heard rumors of Jews being taken away so he decided to leave; described his escape (with his mother and sister) over several nights and final decision to board a German truck and be taken to factory in Kielce, (met future wife, Lola there.) Was at factory till 8/1944, then Russians approaching, transferred to another factory in Czestochowa, sent to dig trenches (4-6 weeks), then back to the factory in Kielce until January 1945. Russians got very close so all of the prisoners were put on trucks and sent to Germany. Tape 2 – Men loaded onto trucks and taken to Buchenwald on Jan. 24th; remained for a week, then selected to go to Stadtwald to work in salt mines from end of January to beginning of April. Injured his leg but still went on a death march. Details his escape from march with three others; eventually ends up at an arbeitslager (labor camp); describes head of camp's help in escaping and his final days of escape. Details liberation, move from Russian to American sector, and his hunt for sister and Lola, finding both. Learning that his mother was killed. Became part of a Jewish committee, stayed in Hamburg for five years. Wanted to go to Israel but Lola was ill and decided they needed to go to US; sponsored by Lola's relative. Described his work in US and his family. Expresses his message for the future. Explains several photographs.