

**HOLOCAUST ARCHIVE PROJECT**

Name of Interviewee	<b>MAURY FEREN</b>		
Name of Interviewer	Donna Yanowitz	Date	7/20/84
Name of Abstractor	Esther Potash	Date	9/10/87

**NARRATIVE SUMMARY**

Maury Feren was a member of the 2nd Infantry Division, 5th Division, Medical Detachment from 1943 until 1945. His unit was located near Prague, Czechoslovakia in early May 1945, when they suddenly came upon 75 emaciated, dying women between the ages of 20 and 35. These women had been among a group of 500 who had started on a death march from Auschwitz. Most had died and been buried along the way.

Maury retells the horror and pain of discovering human beings in such a state of suffering. He talks of how the army tried to help these women medically and emotionally in their struggle for recovery.

As a Jew, Maury was especially moved and disturbed by his role as liberator. His ability to relate so intensely to these women caused his own pain and difficulty with the experience even at the time of the interview. He was heartened, however, by the courage and devotion of those who tried to help the survivors.

**Maury Feren**

**ABSTRACT**

**VIDEO 1 OF 1**

INTRODUCTION

Maury was a liberator of a group of young women.

MILITARY BACKGROUND

From 1943 until 1945, served in the 2nd Infantry Division, 5th Division, Medical Detachment, U.S. Army.

IN EARLY MAY 1945, 5TH DIVISION CAME UPON A GROUP OF 75 EMACIATED, STARVING WOMEN APPROXIMATELY 75 MILES FROM PRAGUE, CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Women between the ages of 20 and 35. Group discovered outside the town of Egenfelder.

500 WOMEN HAD STARTED ON THE 1000-MILE DEATH MARCH FROM AUSCHWITZ

Many died along the way and were buried by the survivors. Maury's division helped to exhume some of the bodies that had been recently buried nearby.

DESCRIBES HOW HORRIFYING AND PAINFUL THE EXPERIENCE WAS FOR HIM  
DIVISION TRIED TO HELP THESE SUFFERING WOMEN AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE

MAURY WROTE HIS WIFE FROM THE SITE, INSTRUCTING HER TO TELL AS MANY PEOPLE AS SHE COULD, BUT STATES THAT NO ONE WAS INTERESTED

CHAPLAIN DICKERS WROTE A STORY OF THE PLIGHT OF THESE WOMEN

Women begged the chaplain for any Jewish objects, which he attempted to acquire for them.

MOST WOMEN IN THE GROUP WERE POLISH, BUT THERE WERE OTHER NATIONALITIES AS WELL

WOMEN VIEWED THEIR LIBERATORS AS GOD-LIKE

SHOWS PICTURES OF FUNERAL CEREMONY HELD FOR THE DEAD THAT WERE LOCATED

Army called the townspeople to exhume and properly bury those who died near the town.

SHOWS PICTURE OF WOMEN ONE MONTH AFTER THE LIBERATION, IN IMPROVED CONDITION

DISCUSSES EFFECT OF THE EXPERIENCE ON HIS LIFE

Never will be able to forget. Discusses how difficult it is to be Jewish. Praises the devotion of some people in those extraordinary circumstances, especially Chaplain Dickers.

RECALLS HATRED OF GERMAN SOLDIERS

Maury caused a riot at the German prison gates during a confrontation with German soldiers.

MENTAL AND PHYSICAL CONDITION OF THE WOMEN

MAURY ADMITS HE NEVER WANTED TO THINK ABOUT WHY SOME WOMEN WERE IN BETTER CONDITION UNTIL HE SAW THE MOVIE "SOPHIE'S CHOICE"

Says he never questioned peoples' motives or choices in these circumstances.

DURING RECOVERY PERIOD AFTER THE DISCOVERY OF THESE WOMEN, HE SPENT A GREAT DEAL OF TIME TALKING WITH THE WOMEN ABOUT THEIR PASTS AND THEIR FUTURE PLANS

NEVER DID DISCOVER WHY THAT DEATH MARCH OCCURRED