

HOLOCAUST ARCHIVE PROJECT

Name of Interviewee	ANNA MOSES		
Name of Interviewer	Leatrice Rabinsky	Date	1/17/85
Name of Abstractor	Donna Yanowitz	Date	4/26/87
	(Michelle Heyer, Editor)		

NARRATIVE SUMMARY

Anna Felsn Moses was born in Milicz, Poland, to a large, traditional, religious family. In 1935, her family moved to Krakow, where her father was a businessman.

Before the war began, Anna recalls, there were acts of anti-Semitism carried out by the Poles of Krakow. They boycotted Jewish businesses, or they bought from Jewish stores on credit and never paid their debts.

When the Germans invaded Krakow, life rapidly became more difficult for the Jews, culminating in "Black Monday," when Torahs were desecrated and synagogues were burned. Shortly afterward, Anna's family was among 10,000 Jews enclosed in a ghetto - 70,000 others were killed.

Anna lived in the ghetto from 1940 until the end of 1942, when she became separated from her family and was sent to Plaszow concentration camp. She remained there for nine months, and then was sent to Skarszysko, near Radom, where she worked in a munitions factory. She then went to Buchenwald, where she remained for nine months, working at making grenade timers.

As the Allies approached, Anna and her fellow prisoners were taken out of Buchenwald in a march lasting three weeks. She escaped, with eight others, and was liberated by the Russian army several days later.

Anna returned to Krakow, and in 1946 she met her husband. They left Poland in 1947 and in 1948 they arrived in the U.S. They currently live in Cleveland, Ohio, where her husband (a rabbi) is the spiritual leader of Menorah Park.

ABSTRACT

VIDEO 1 OF 3

CURRENT PERSONAL DATA

Anna has three daughters - Sarah Spero, Esther Ostroy, Chaia Wolf. Worked at Hebrew Academy for 11 years, now works part-time.

HUSBAND IS A RABBI

Husband lost first family during the war. Anna is second wife. Married in Poland after the war but stayed only a short time because of anti-Semitism.

ANNA'S UNCLE ARRANGES FOR IMMIGRATION TO U.S.

THE FAMILY MOVES TO SEVERAL DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES

Sought a community with a full Jewish life in which to raise their children.

MOVE TO CLEVELAND

Husband spiritual leader of Menorah Park.

ANNA'S CHILDHOOD

Born in Milicz, Poland. Maiden name was Felsn. One of six children - four girls, two boys. Moved to Krakow in 1935. Father a businessman. Older brother made suitcases. Later, whole family made suitcases to survive in ghetto.

FAMILY LIVES TRADITIONAL JEWISH LIFE

Anna's father was very intelligent and refined.

NEIGHBORS WATCH OUT FOR ONE ANOTHER

ANNA IS RAISED IN A VERY HONEST AND MORAL HOME

Before holidays, father visited a Hassidic rabbi for spiritual uplifting.

ANNA ATTENDS PUBLIC SCHOOL

Only exceptional students went on to higher learning.

ANNA DESCRIBES "WACHT NACHT" BEFORE BRITISH ATTACK

ANNA ATTENDS BETH JACOB SCHOOL AFTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

HASSIDIC MOVEMENT OBJECTS TO ZIONIST MOVEMENT

Many wanted to go to Israel, but couldn't.

ANTI-SEMITISM AMONGST POLES

Opened their own stores and boycotted Jews. Bought on credit from Jews and did not pay.

GERMAN COLONIES IN POLAND

Got along well with Jews at first, but killed them when Hitler came to power.

WAR STARTS SEPTEMBER 1, GERMANS COME TO KRAKOW SEPTEMBER 6

FAMILY MOVES TO KRAKOW IN 1933

Suitcase business sustained family in ghetto. Little sister took merchandise out - didn't need arm band because she was 9-10

ANNA WORKS IN CHOCOLATE FACTORY

THEY OPEN A STORE TO SELL SUITCASES

ANNA DESCRIBES CRUELTY OF GERMANS TOWARD JEWS

Beard-cutting, burning of a kosher slaughterhouse.

80,000 JEWS IN KRAKOW

ANNA DESCRIBES BLACK MONDAY

Desecration of Torahs and synagogue burnings.

10,000 PRIVILEGED SENT TO GHETTO, OTHERS KILLED

Anna's family sent to ghetto.

JUDENRAT

Jewish organization ran ghetto under German orders.

APARTMENTS ASSIGNED ACCORDING TO NUMBER OF WINDOWS

Three people to each window.

ANNA TAKES FOOD TO HOSPITALS ON SABBATH

POLISH GOVERNMENT TREATS JEWS AS ENEMIES

FAMILY ENTERS GHETTO AT END OF 1940

One sister left Krakow and lived near Lvov (Lemberg).

GHETTO LIFE 1941-42

Clandestine religious services. Streets bloodied from killings. Poles cruel - taunted Jews. Worked for Germans by day, cooked for people at night.

VIDEO 2 OF 3

ANNA'S FATHER DEPORTED, OCTOBER 28, 1942

Judenrat had to deport a certain number. Anna was hit and unconscious. When she awoke, family was gone.

NO ATTEMPT AT UNDERGROUND IN KRAKOW

ANNA RELATED STORY OF WOMAN WITH DIAMOND

DESCRIBES HER FEELINGS ON LEAVING PLASZOW

ARRIVAL AT SKARSZYSKO - A CAMP NEAR RADOM

WORKS IN POLISH MUNITIONS FACTORY

Poles were general managers.

DESCRIBES WORK IN FACTORY

People looked yellow from chemicals used. Hands eaten by chemicals.

ANNA DESCRIBES ATTITUDE OF GERMANS TOWARD KILLING JEWS AND PHILOSOPHIZES ON JEWISH MORALS

ANNA RECALLS HER LITTLE SISTER

GERMANS ALWAYS POLITE

Everything they did - all acts of cruelty - were done with politeness.

UKRAINIANS ARE GUARDS

DESCRIBES HANGINGS AND PERSECUTIONS IN CAMP

Young boy was hanged for whistling.

ANNA PHILOSOPHIZES ON JEWISH FAITH AND HOW IT SUSTAINED HER

DESCRIBES RELIGIOUS FAST DAY

Felt she would faint, so didn't fast. Shortly after that day, 500 people who looked ill were killed.

VIDEO 3 OF 3

ANNA SAYS THE ONLY WAY TO SURVIVE WAS TO MAINTAIN SPIRITUAL LIFE

ANNA DESCRIBES INHUMANITY IN SECOND CAMP

People dressed in paper held together by string.

ANNA DESCRIBES PASSOVER

Matzo baked secretly in barracks at night.

DESCRIBES DISPOSAL OF DEAD BODIES

Anna says "Life is bitter, but death is worse."

DESCRIBES HER PART IN DIAMOND DEALING

ANNA GETS MILD CASE OF TYPHUS

Able to survive with small amount of money received from woman with diamond.

PUT ON TRAIN TO BUCHENWALD

Had some bread which was shared with other people. Survived from Sunday until Friday on water only.

DESCRIBES PEOPLE AT BUCHENWALD - 1943

Heads shaved, striped clothing.

ANNA IS ASKED TO UNDRRESS

Walked around nude with big, seemingly educated men watching. Women given nightgowns which they wore for two weeks. Paper from margarine used as toilet paper.

ANNA WORKS ON GRENADE TIMERS

Worked in beautiful building with a radio.

ANNA SAYS GERMANS MUST HAVE LET ALL CRIMINALS OUT OF JAIL AND PUT THEM IN CONCENTRATION CAMPS

PLANES WERE HEARD

Germans were afraid - Jews were not.

REMAINED IN BUCHENWALD NINE MONTHS

DESCRIBED RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES IN CAMP

Kept clean and decent with hope.

ALLIED FRONT APPROACHES

Some people taken to Czestochowa.

ANNA WORKS OUTSIDE LEIPZIG

THEY ARE EVACUATED FROM CAMP, WALK FOR THREE WEEKS

Rested in fields, few rations. Jews dragged around. Germans who saw said it was a disgrace for the German nation.

SHE DESCRIBES THE MARCH

Cooked grass and drank dirty water. German people followed to avoid being left at the front.

ANNA RUNS AWAY

Eight girls left while a guard slept. Anna too weak to run fast.

A GIRL IS SHOT

Could not keep up with others in marching line.

ANNA CONTINUES TO DESCRIBE HER ESCAPE

Anna gave up, so a friend dragged her. Rhubarb was the medicine of survival.

POLISH WOMAN BRINGS HER FOOD AND CLOTHING

Stayed with her a few days.

RUSSIANS ARRIVE

Anna and friend taken into German home. Russian soldier wanted her friend. Let her go because she was Jewish.

MANY INCIDENTS WITH RUSSIAN SOLDIERS

ANNA DESCRIBES DRESDEN

No houses left standing.

RETURNS TO KRAKOW

Ate at public soup kitchen. Met cousin who had been in Sakorsky's army.

MEETS FUTURE HUSBAND IN TARNOWA

Married in 1946. Left Poland in November 1947. Arrived in New York April 4, 1948.