

RG-50.091.0056

Summary

Betty (Berta Gurfein) Berliner, born in 1924 and living in Lanscut, Poland; describes her family and childhood; being the sixth of seven children-five girls and 2 boys; one brother moving to Argentina in the early 1920's and surviving the war; speaking Yiddish and Polish in the home; her father spending five years as a Russian prisoner of war in WWI; her father owning a machinery store; her mother whose maiden name is Talbenfelt; seeing anti-Semitism in 1937; the bombing that began on 1 September 1939; wearing the Yellow Star of David beginning in 1940; her family living in Raczyna until May of 1942 when the Gestapo took her dad and 11 other men away to jail and ultimately Treblinka; large trucks that came to take her and her family (her, her mother, sister, brother-in-law and their 2 children and her older sister) on 29 August 1942 and how her sister pushing her from the truck; running through a field to her sister and brother-in-law; hiding in the attic of a farmhouse barn in Wysoka; her sister and 2 children, her brother-in-law, her brother-in-law's sister all hiding in different locations; traveling to another village with her younger sister to stay with the married son of a family friend with no kids of his own from September to December of 1942; hiding in the business of a dentist and two tailors; her sister, her three children, and her two sisters-in-law getting caught by Poles on 11 January 1943; her younger sister and nephew remaining with a poor widowed woman (Ms. Do Dekha) from 1942 to 1944 in Sonina; her brother-in-law being caught by 2 Polish boys and shot in a cemetery on 25 July 1943; making sweaters for the Mayor's sister-in-law until a Kokot man (Gestapo) came regarding an unregistered pig slaughtered for meat; the bombardment beginning on 27 July 1944; the German soldiers walking around on 29 July 1944; the Russians arriving on 31 July 1944; moving into a large home with other Jewish people two days later at 19 years old; her sister marrying first and traveling to Krakow; following her sister to Krakow in 1945; her brother-in-law's two sisters surviving Auschwitz and returning in May of 1945; traveling to Wroclaw in the summer of 1945 and marrying her husband (Nate) there on 15 December of 1945; traveling through the border of Czechoslovakia to Austria to Germany and then onto a Displaced Persons Camp in the summer of 1946 and her oldest son being born there; arriving in Cleveland on 9 June 1950 with the assistance of UNRRA (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration) and spending four weeks in a hotel; raising her nephew, son, another son (born in 1954) and daughter and later having a grandchild (Jonathan) from her daughter and two more children from her nephew who ultimately attained the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the United States Army; her younger sister residing in Israel at the time of the interview; her brother having traveled 50 miles into Russia before the war surviving only to be killed by Germans after the war; and being 60 years old at the time of the interview (16 January 1985).