

**RG-50.091.0090**

**Summary**

Ruth Lidawer, who lived in Cieszyn on the border of Czechoslovakia and Poland, describes her father's electrical equipment store that enabled the family to lead an affluent lifestyle before the war; her family moving from the Czechoslovakia side of town to the Polish side when the Germans entered in 1938; her father going to World's Fair in New York in April 1939; attempting to flee the Germans in August 1939 by driving towards Krakow, having to walk after their car was commandeered by the Polish army; seeing her aunt and cousin killed along with many others when a nearby train was bombed; changing course and heading to Warsaw, and then Lodz; being given a choice by Russian police to return home or stay in Russian territory; being told that they were being sent west, but in fact were sent to a labor camp in Siberia; her mother being put to work tapping trees and cutting tree trunks into blocks of wood; having to go to work with mother when she was unable to make the daily work quota on her own; her mother being put in a jail cell and tortured when the Russians accused her father of being a capitalist; being released after one and a half years and transported to Samarkand, Uzbekistan; learning that her father had arranged for them to get visas to the United States in December 1941, but being unable to travel to Manila to pick them up after the U.S. joined the war; living on the street until joining a Kolkhoz (cooperative farm); moving to her paternal aunt's family after her mother died; being placed in an orphanage by her maternal uncle where she and sister lived for two and a half years; being taken by plane to Meshet, on the border of Iran then transported by car to the U.S. embassy in Teheran; staying with a Polish family for 6 weeks before boarding a ship to the U.S.; arriving in New York on April 1, 1945 and going to live with her father in Cincinnati, OH; learning English at a Jewish summer camp; completing high school and earning a college degree.