

I'm Judie Wayman. Today, we are interviewing Henry Miller, a Holocaust survivor. The project is sponsored by the National Council of Jewish Women, Cleveland Section.

Mr Miller, please tell me a little about yourself, today. Where do you live?

I live in University Heights, Warrensville.

And who do you live with?

My wife. I have two children. They are married, both of them. My son lives in California. My daughter lives in University Heights, also, on Silsby. And my daughter has two kids. My son has one daughter.

How old are your grandchildren?

My daughter's children-- the girl is 10, the boy will be 8.

And your other granddaughter?

My granddaughter was born in California. She is three months old. They live in Los Angeles. But we are planning to go, to see them in November the 11th.

That'll be very, very nice.

The first time-- I mean, I never been in California. And now, we going to see the granddaughter and my son and the daughter-in-law.

Well, with a new baby, you probably won't see much of California.

Oh, sure.

You'll see lots of the baby.

Yeah, she was born there.

How old are you now?

I am now 69. I'm 69. I will be, you know. And I was born in Czechoslovakia. And I been-- they drafted me, the Czech Army. We had a good life in Czechoslovakia.

We'll be getting into some of that a little later.

OK.

Named Henry Miller.

Yeah.

Who are you named for?

Oh, I named for a great grandfather. And my parents was born, also, in that little town, where I was born.

What kind of work do you do or did you do?

When I was 13, 14 years old, I went to learn tailoring. I am a tailor. And since then, I'm working always tailoring. I'm a tailor. I worked, here, also. I had my shop in the west side. And I worked like a tailor all my life.

When did you retire?

Three years ago. And then I sold the shop. I retired, because my partner had a heart attack. He passed away. So I retired.

Does your wife work?

My wife? No, she didn't work. She was a housewife all her life. We brought up two children. And she never worked.

What do your children do?

My son is, in advertising, in California. My daughter, she is a teacher. And my son-in-law, they have a shoe store. They bought, last year, a shoe store. He was managing that store, and then he bought it over.

And what does your daughter teach?

My daughter teach the Hebrew, and then she has a regular class. I think that-- I don't know which grade, exactly. I think the fourth grade. Or I'm not sure exactly what grade.

Elementary school?

Elementary in Beachwood. Beachwood School, she teaches.

Could you tell us what life was like for you before the war?

Where were you from? Where were you living before the war?

I was born in Czechoslovakia. I lived in Tacovo

How do you spell that?

T-A-C-O-V-O, just under C, we put always a little mark. That means that is a "chi," "Tach-ovo," you know? In Czechoslovakia, we used to write that. Because every language is different to read and write. Tacovo.

Where about was that located?

Not far, let's say, this Uzhhorod. Now, we cannot go there, in my hometown, because over there is Russian now. This part, this is the Carpathian, the Carpathian. And this Carpathian, they call it, is occupied by Russian. And Russian don't let in nobody over there. If we could go to Prague, to Bratislava, all over we could go. Just in the Carpathian, over there, we cannot go. The biggest town is that Uzhhorod. Till then, we get visa to go. And if you have somebody there, they calling those people coming to Uzhhorod, and they could meet there. Or we cannot go in there, in that town.

How close were you to Prague?

Oh, how close from Tacovo? Let's say, Prague--

Or was there another big city-- bigger city that was closer to your town.

Oh, yeah, Kosice. They call it Kashau, Kosice.

How close was your town to that city?

To that city, you mean the mileage or the hours?

Whichever.

Yeah. Let's say, with the train, we used to go 8 hours by train.

It was quite a distance.

Yes.

How big was the town that you lived in?

How big? Was population? Was 7,000.

How many of them were Jews?

Jews, we had 2,000 Jews. 2,000 Jews there.

What did the town look like?

The town was a very nice, friendly town. We know each other, everybody knew each other. And like I say, we call this a good life. Because we didn't know better. And it wasn't-- no antisemitism there. Because when the President Masaryk used to live-- he was the president-- everybody was almost equal. They couldn't say, let's say, like some places they say, you dirty Jew or what.

We was equal. We went. They call us to the army, like anybody. Was no different in the army, either. Just I didn't feel I'm a Jew and the other one is a Christian, you know what I mean? Everything was equal. Even, we had officers, Jewish officers, was in the big offices and all over. We didn't felt that we are discriminated. Like I heard in the other countries, in Poland and Ukraine, was very discriminating, the Jews, you know? In the Czechoslovakia, I cannot say we were discriminated.

In your town, what did most of the people do? What was their occupations or industries?

No industries. There was no industries. Was tailors. And, for instance, we were nine children at home. And I went. And we had three brothers. We was tailors. Because there was no industry. Just, if you have an occupation, you could make a living. So I learned the trade. And we made a nice living. And we were satisfied, because the parents was there, the kids. And the most was Jews. They had stores. And Jews, they was in the offices, I mean. And in the banks were Jews, also. So we didn't felt discriminating, the Jews there.

What sort of work did the non-Jews do or businesses did they have?

The non-Jews? There was a few who had stores, also. They had the most, let's say, land.

Farming?

Farming. And they had a lot of farming. And it was, by us, was the main apple. There was farmers with apples. The Jews used to buy the apples from them. The most I can say, when the apple was only like the bloom, the bloom from the trees, you know?

From the blossoms.

The blossoms. And they used to sell it to the Jews, because they was afraid, that comes in May, June, they're going to freeze it down, and then be falling off, you know? And the Jews, they took a chance all the time.

And the most make a living from that. And they used to come from Prague, from all over, even from Germany, used to come to buy the apples. And not only, like they say, a basket or what-- full with wagons, the trains, 10, 12, even 20 put together. And they used to take it there, to Prague, to all over. And this was a big business, very big.

Were Jews allowed to own land?

Yes. My father, we had a farm, also. We had horses. We could buy anything. If you had the money, you could buy. Like I say, was everything legal. I mean no discriminating, nothing. I didn't know till I didn't came-- till Hitler didn't came. I didn't know different.

How many brothers did you have and how many sisters? You said there were nine children.

Yes. I had five brothers and four sisters.

So there was 10 children, then, all together.

Five and four.

Oh, you were one of the five. OK.

Yes, I was.

And your parents?

And my parents.

Any other family members live with you?

My grandfather. My grandmother passed away in the '20s. That was my mother's mother. And he had four children, my mother and three brothers-- my mother had, here, in the United States. So she was the only girl in Europe, in the old country. And then the grandfather lived with us.

I mean, he didn't live with us. He has his own house, just he was eating with us. We used to take him, every day. He used to sleep there or by us, just he liked to be himself. And he was a shoemaker, my grandfather. He still liked to work, all the time, a little bit.

So in the morning, we take him the breakfast. We respect him. My grandfather, I was more afraid of than my own father. Because we didn't know a difference from my father to my grandfather. We respected him very much. Even I remember, my father used to respect him. So that was a different life in the old country.

What type of work did your father do?

My father, we had the farm, like I say. We had corn and wheat and potatoes. That was the main thing in Europe. You had bread and milk. You know, then you was happy. We didn't look for luxuries.

Did your mother work outside of the home?

No. No, my mother was in the house with nine children. And we were very happy.

Would you describe your family as well-to-do, comfortable, or poor?

Comfortable. My parents--

I'm sorry.

Yes. My parents was very comfortable with us, and we was with them. We were happy.

Did you have to work to help support the family? Or did you have to? Did you work?

I worked. I support, too. I gave all the time. After all, I didn't know different. Just I don't have to giving some money in the house. I made money. And I helped the family, too. Let's say, four sisters I had. I made them, all the time, clothes, nice clothes. They was dressed nice. And my father, he was a farmer. We never bought milk. We had our own cows for milk. And we had horses. Some times I went to the field, and I cut the grass, not like, here, machinery. We had, by hand, such-- I don't know how do you call it?

A scythe?

Yes. Oh, not a small, a big one, you know? And I used to help him for pleasure. I used to go. I liked the field. And in summer, late summer, in September, we used to go and take the apple home. We had apple trees, lot of them. And we used to put them in a big pile. We have a big garden. And we used to sell it. Used to came the Czech people, from Czechoslovakia, and used to come from Germany, too. I used to know lot of people from Germany, big businessmen.

They came, and they bought apple, not only like a little bit, was apple from one end to the other end. You couldn't see such big bundles. And let's say, he went there. He said, what do you think? How much apple you have here? We used to-- in the 100 kilo was one [NON-ENGLISH] like we was-- that was in the old country-- different. Like here it's by the pound and by the bushel. Let's say, was there 100 [NON-ENGLISH], they call it.

This was in one big-- we call it a wagon, but with a train. You know, those what they putting in there a lot of things, too. Let's say, I saw, here, they put in cows in the big, with the trains-- how you call it? I forgot how. By us, used to call it a wagon. Here, I don't know.

And they used to put in 100 [NON-ENGLISH] to a wagon. Let's say, who bought it, he figured, very closely. He didn't wait. He knew the way, on this path, how many could be. And he said, I give you, let's say, \$1,000 for it. And if my father think that he made already profit on it or not, so he refused or he sold it. And then they picked it. And they put it in the big basket, such a big ones. And they shipped it to Czechoslovakia, to Prague, to Kosice, to Bratislava. And they made a little money. People used to make-- from one season to the other one, they could make a nice living.

You're talking. I'm smelling apples the whole time you're talking.

Yeah, because, by us, was the main thing, the apples.

What order were you of the nine children? Where were you?

I was at home. I worked.

Were you the oldest or?

No. No, I am-- my oldest is in Israel. My oldest brother is in Israel. He went to Israel. He was married. It was a hard life, like I said. It was a hard life, when you married, you have a wife, with a child. And then came somebody-- Those times was the occupation from the Britain. And Palestine, they called it-- came from the Histadrut somebody. And we bought a visa. They call this certificate.

When did he go to Israel?

In 1933, with his wife, with a 2 and 1/2 year child.

OK, were you the next eldest?

No, then I had another brother. He was a tailor. He passed away, here, in Cleveland. He was here. And then was another brother older from me. He didn't come home. He was in Auschwitz. This, I will tell you later. And then came a sister, what she is still here. And just she's in a convalescent home. She is here in our home. Then I came. I was, let me see--

You're right in the middle.

I was in the middle, that's right. Then I had smaller one from me. I was in the middle.

How religious was your family?

Yes, we was religious. We were religious Orthodox.

What do you remember about the holidays?

About the holidays? It was very nice and sweet. Holidays, we didn't work on the holidays or Shabbos we didn't work. It wasn't such a thing, if it was a holiday, we should go to work. It came Friday afternoon, let's say, not all afternoon-- before candle lighting, an hour let's say, we stopped the work wherever we was, went home, took a shave, a shower. And we washed up ourselves, not with a shower. We washed up. And we went, Friday night, in shul and Saturday morning in shul, all of us.

What was the Seder like for your family?

The Seder? It was a very nice Seder. You can't imagine nine children, my father, my mother, my grandfather. Because I'm talking my grandmother passed away in the '20s, and my grandfather was with us, always, like my father. I didn't know different. Our Seder was a very nice Seder.

Who led the Seder?

Pardon me?

Who led the Seder?

My father. My father led the Seder. And my grandfather was there near my father, also. Just my father led the Seder. He was the head man.

Did you have aunts and uncles and cousins there also?

Yes. I had another grandfather. My father's father was living next door to us. And my father has had a brother, here, in the United States, and one brother was at home and two sisters, also, in the same town, in Tacovo. And cousins. And what can I say? It was a nice life.

You said some of your family had left, come to the United States.

Yeah. My father's brother came to the United States in the '20s or earlier yet. And my father had a brother, here, in the United States. He had another brother in Europe, except he was a step-brother, you see? His real brother was, here, in Cleveland, also. And my mother has three brothers. They all was, here, in Cleveland.

You were telling me a little about this earlier, but I'm asking you about it now. About your family, had they wanted to leave Czechoslovakia?

My parents want to leave Czechoslovakia in the '20s.

Why did they want to leave?

Why? I tell you the truth. I was a little boy. I don't know why, just they want to leave to come, here, to America. Because they used to-- my mother's brothers used to send her money. You know how it is easier money? Come here. You know what I mean. That's why they want to come to America.

And why didn't they?

They didn't got the visa. They never give them the visa. There was another friend of my father's wants to come also. And he got. He got the visa. He came here. And my father couldn't get the visa.

How long had they tried?

A few years, but I was a little boy. And I heard they want to come to America, so and so. Details exactly? You know. We didn't ask so close details.

Did Zionism or other political organizations play a part in the life of your family?

Of myself, yes. Myself and my brother, not my parents. You know, those religious people, those time, even when my brother went to Israel, and the rabbi, himself, said to my father, Moshe Hirsch, why did you let go your son to Israel, to try for land? You know what I mean.

So my father was not once crying, he should come back. And I wrote for my brother, you shouldn't come back. You just stay there. I'm going to come, too. I didn't know what's going to happen or what, just I was a Zionism all my life.

Why?

Why? I like the organizations. And I read of things from Jabotinsky. He was Menachem Begin's, how shall I say, the teacher. And he used to go. He was in Poland. He used to come to us and with speeches. He said Jews, for us Jews, there's no place around here. We have to go to Palestine. Doesn't matter how, just we have to go. Because it comes very bad thing for all Jews. And I would love to go to Palestine. Those times it was Palestine.

And my brother, he went in 1933. It was very hard life there. Oh, yes, very hard. Not once my sister-in-law wrote letters, I would glad to come back, just I don't have for what to come back now. And I wrote to my brother, don't you dare come back. You just stay there. I don't know for why I wrote it. I was a Zionist all my life.

Was your family-- any members of your family involved in any other organizations or community groups?

You mean my brothers?

Your brothers, your parents, your sisters?

My brothers? My brothers, yes. They was involved, also, in the organization, just in the. Zionism one was a Mizrachi organization. And my parents, no, they wasn't involved. Those older people or religious people-- I cannot say my parents was old people those time. Or still they went according to the rule from the rabbi.

Did they belong to any community groups?

What you calling "community groups?" They belong to the shul. We had a few shuls in Tacovo by us. And we belong to the shuls, yes. Or other kind organizations-- wasn't only the Zionism, was Mizrachi, Betar. They called it HaShomer Hatzair, those three organizations. You see, the Hashomer Hatzair was a little bit too much on the left side. Well, we didn't like that. And Betar wasn't too religious, wasn't in the left side. Was more in the religious side than the other one. Mizrachi was on the religious side, also. Just the Hashomer Hatzair was not in the religious side. Then you didn't want.

You picked--

Yeah, the parents to hurt or you know?

What about your sisters? Were they involved in anything outside of the house?

Yes, also in the Mizrachi. They was all in the Mizrachi organizations.

What was the main language spoken in your home?

Yiddish. Only Yiddish, the main was Yiddish. We speaked all kinds of languages-- Hungarian, because before the war, before the 1914, was there Hungarians. So they speaked Hungarian. And then they speaked Russian language-- almost Russian. It was, how they called it, a different language. It was almost close to-- the Czechoslovakian language and Russian is almost the same. We understood. I understand when somebody speaked Russian or Polish. I understand because I had my school, Czechoslovakian school.

What kind of books were there in your home?

Books? Only Jewish religious books. I had books, let's say, from Zionism books. I had, from Betar, books. This way, other kind-- all religion books. Were your sisters also able to read?

Oh, yes. Oh, yes. Oh, yes.

Was there a theater in your neighborhood or a concert Hall or places like that?

Oh, yes, was a theater in my town. There was movies. And we used to go almost every Sunday, because Shabbos we didn't go. Just sometime, you didn't want to hurt or I don't want they should see me, I go in, in the movies, on Shabbos. Shabbos afternoon, around 4 o'clock, let's say, I wouldn't go in, somebody should see me. Oy, he went in, in the movies, on Shabbos. I don't want to hurt my parents.

I wasn't too religious. I was religious, that's no question about it. Just I would go on the movies. I didn't write them, Shabbos, for no money in the world. Because you want to hurt the parents? Was a little town. I mean, this was not a big town. We knew each other. So there was theaters. We used to go in the theater, too.

Any concerts or museums?

Concert. Concert. Yes.

What other kinds of entertainment did your family do?

No other entertainment.

Did you ever go on vacations?

Vacations? No. No vacations. I cannot say we went for vacations. No vacations. I worked all year round. When I was let off, let's say, so I went to the field. I liked that work. Or for vacation, we had the family, there, in my town. Where shall we go on vacation? No. We didn't went for vacations-- I cannot say.

Talking now about you, specifically.

Yes.

What did you look like, let's say, around 1937, '38?

In 1937, I tell you the truth, I was already a strong boy. Because I came from a very strong family. My father was a very strong man. And I have even pictures, not with me, how I looked in 1936, '37.

I met my wife, because she is also from the same town. My parents, with my wife's parents, was good friends. I met my wife in 1935. And we were always very close. She used to come to my house. And my parents liked her very much. She was a girlfriend from my sisters. And then how it is, boyfriend and girlfriend. So we falled in love. And we were very close. My parents was very satisfied and her parents. When I went to their parents or my wife came to my parents was like we liked each other. And my parents liked her.

And in 1937, I went in the army, in the Czechoslovakia Army. And still, we were-- I was writing to her like a boyfriend and my girlfriend.

How old were you then?

How old? I was born 1915.

22.

20-- 24?

In '37, you'd be about 22.

22, 23, like that. And we didn't got married. I tell you the reason why we didn't get married. First of all, I had older brothers, older sisters than me. And then, I want first to be through with the army. I went in, in 1937, to the Czechoslovakia Army. And I've been there till I came home for vacation. I mean for not vacation, they let us home.

On leave?

Yeah, for a week, two weeks, you know? I came home for Passover. The Jews, they let home. They came home for Passover. The Christians went home for Christmas. This was in the army, they knew I'm Jewish. I have to go home on Passover. The Christians have to go home on Christmas, you know? And I came home, for a week for 10 days, whatever was the law, to come home. And then I went back. And I wrote to my wife-- to my wife, we correspond each other. I wrote every week for my parents. And they wrote me back.

And 1939, when the Germans came in to Czechoslovakia, March the 16th, I was in the army. I was in the Sudetenland, they call this those time. Because the Germans came into the Sudeten in 1938, end of October, November. They took a part, only, from Czechoslovakia. But they said this belonged to us. And still was the army, just they moved a little bit from there below. They gave it over to Germany, the Sudeten they call it.

In 1939, in March, they came in already to Prague, to Brno. They took the whole Czechoslovakia, the Germans. And then I was released, from the army, in 1939, in March. I could go home, to my hometown, where I was born, where I belonged in '39.

And by us, when the German Army came into Czechoslovakia, from the other side came in the Hungarian to us, to the Carpathian, came in the Hungarian side. They came in the Hungarians. When I came back, from Czechoslovakia, when they released me home, from the army, I got a book from them that I could go home. I was a soldier, and I could go home, my home town.

When I came home was already Hungarian by us. So I lived over the Hungarian already. In 1940, the Hungarian took me to work.

Yeah, we're going to be getting into that a little bit, yet. I want to still stay back a little bit before this.

OK. OK.

Prior to the time you went into the army--

Yes.

--right around that time, what did the future look like to you? What did your future look like?

My future?

What was your outlook on life? What did you think your life was going to be like?

Let me tell you the honest truth. I didn't believe that could happen. I believed that Czechoslovakia will be Czechoslovakia.

And what did you think was going to happen to you before the Nazis came in and all this?

Before? Nothing. I thought I'm going to-- one day, I would like to go to Israel, to Palestine, in those times. Or I didn't thought it was going to happen, something to me. No, I was blind. I didn't thought it's going to happen, something. I didn't believe that could happen, something. I was a regular citizen. There's nobody can touch me, like anybody else, like a citizen.

Did you have any special interests, besides working? And you were involved in Zionism.

In Zionism.

Did you have any hobbies or any other interests besides that?

No, no hobbies. Let me tell you the truth, there was no hobbies. Just you have a close friendship with the parents and with the family.

And you're already involved in sewing at that time?

Oh, yes. I made already a few-- I made money, because I worked. Yes. I was-- and for my own, you know? And you felt already good. I mean you make a dollar, you could do what you want. You could spend. You could go with your head up. Nobody can touch you.

What kind of person were you?

Pardon me?

What kind of a person were you?

What can I say?

How would you describe yourself?

Everybody liked me. I had no problem with nobody. Everybody respected me. And I respect everybody, too. Because I was brought up like that. I was brought up like that. Later on, when they start, already-- this was in the '40s-- to touch the Jews, the neighbors, ours was Christians also. And even in the city hall, they said, I don't care what's going to happen. The Miller family, they could not touch it. Because we were so, by them-- we respect everybody. And we worked. And we was on the straight way.

So I didn't believe it myself. When I came home, they told me the neighbors, what they said, the Millers, they're not going to touch. In the '40s was it. And I didn't believe it, they will do, even with the Jews like that. Because I tell you the truth, like I say, again, I was blind. Because this, we're going to talk later, you said. All right. This we're going to talk a little bit later. I will tell you.

Tell me about your schooling.

Yes, the schooling? I went to school to the Czech school. By us was Hungarian school, under the Czechoslovakian. And they call it not Polish, almost like Polish, Russian was a school. And then was the Czech school. I went to the Czech school, the Czechoslovakian school.

How long? How many years did you go?

Yes. I went. I made two high schools. Till two high schools, I went. Like here, they call this high school. By us used to call it the polgari.

You had two years?

Two years in high school. Then I went for tailoring.

Where was that, to learn to teach-- oh.

By us in town, by us in town, also from a Jew. He had a big tailor shop. And I went to teach for three years.

You were an apprentice?

Pardon me?

You were an apprentice? They taught. You went for three-- they taught you tailoring?

For three years, Yes. I worked for nothing, just I ate and slept at home by my parents. And then after three years, they took-- this was, by us, like that. After three years, you have to go for an interview by another tailor, and to see if you can sew or not. Then you're getting a book, a paper, that, yes, you learn for three years. You are a good tailor. Now, you're getting a book. You could go wherever you want with that book. They're going to take you in for work if they have work. Otherwise, you couldn't go just, I'm a tailor and take me in a work. No, you have to have the book to show them. You'd be surprised, I got my book, here, with me.

Today?

Today.

No, with you, here, today or at home?

No.

It's at home.

If I were, I would bring it. I would make the-- you know? I have it at home.

Did you also go to cheder?

Oh, yes, well, cheder, I'm not talking. Who didn't go to cheder? Cheder, everybody went in the morning, early in the morning to cheder, for half a day. In the afternoon, you went to school. To cheder, everybody went, almost. We learned there everything. I mean everything. Forever, I didn't talk not even, Chumash, Rashi, and Gemara we talked. Sure. It came Shabbos, we have to go to shul. And the shochet or the rav went to see what you learn the whole week, if you know. You have to know.

Do you remember your bar mitzvah?

Yes. I remember a bar mitzvah. What was the bar mitzvah? Wasn't a bar mitzvah like here. I remember even my haftarah I know even now. I know my haftarah. We went to shul. I have a friend of mine. We were the same age-- even three friends. And I had haftarah. And he said something else, because-- you know. I was the leader. Like you call this, how you call it here? When you go to the Torah?

Oh, yeah.

They call you to the Torah. And I had the maftir, the haftarah, and then we went home. Came my grandfather, the uncles, the neighbors to my father's house. And we gave them a kiddush. A kiddush-- what was the kiddush? Whiskey. Yeah, everybody had a glass of whiskey and cake, sponge cake. This was my bar mitzvah. I remember that. That was the bar mitzvah.

Did you have any non-Jewish friends?

Over there?

Yes.

Yes. I have a lot of non-Jewish friends. We were very good friends.

What did you do together?

With the Jewish friends? Let me tell, you when you young, you do all kind of things. We went together. This was a dancing school, for instance. I want to go to the dancing school. My parents don't have. They, oy, so go to [? pitten, ?] they didn't want to know from that. So I went to dancing school, without my parents they should know, at night. We went with the Christian friends, the Jewish boys.

And my mother used to know. Just the father and my grandfather, he doesn't have to know. Because on the religious side-- I can't tell the religious. My mother used to say, wait, wait, your father is going to catch you. He going to catch you. I said, just, please, mom, don't say nothing. You know, a mother?

And a lot of friends I had, non-Christian friends, sure. They would do anything for me, also. We went together, so best friend. I didn't know those time are different. I heard in Poland was very bad with the friends. The Polish people used to, right away, you Jew, you so and so. I didn't knew that, those things. We was friends. We was brought up together with friends.

My neighbor was, on one side, a Christian, the other side, my grandfather, the other used to live. We were friends. Even that neighbor said, the Millers, is because we was all working. We didn't bother nobody. We kept our religion. And they kept their religion. I told them, Merry Christmas, for instance. And they told me, good yontif or a happy New Year in yours. they knew the Jewish holidays and that's it.

You had mentioned before that, when you came back from the army, in city hall, they had said nobody will touch the Miller family. How about the other Jewish families in the area? How were they treated by the non-Jews? And how did they treat the non-Jews?

The non-Jews? About the Jewish families you're talking, right?

Not your family but the other ones, how did they treat each other? The Jews treat-- how did the non-Jews treat those families? And how did they treat the non-Jewish families?

Also good. Just in the '40s, I wasn't home, not even, they started. They said, who is not a Hungarian-- those time was already the Hungarian-- citizen? Then they asked, who is a Polish citizen? They has to go back to Poland. And they took away not too many-- about 10 families from us, what they said they are not Hungarian. They are Polish families, Polish

citizens, let's say. They took them away. Yeah, I came home, then they told me what's happened.

What did you do in the army?

In the Czechoslovakian Army? Like a soldier, you know? I was they called it like a sergeant, here. And I had a great life in the army. That's no question about it. I had a great life. And then the army, in 1938, the Czechoslovakian Army made a-- how would they call it here? They called in people. They called in the soldier. In the 20th of May, in 1938, a little-- how they call it?

Not a draft?

A draft.

OK.

They called in what they was already soldiers. And they called in a draft. That's what they called in May the 20th. I was there, already, in Moravia. And then they took some soldiers out, and they went, like secret police, to the German zone, by the German zone and by the Czechoslovakian zone. We builded those bunkers for the Czechoslovakian. I was between them. I was so like a-- not everybody could go there. And like--

Sounds almost like a middleman.

They took. I could have go. You know, I wrote home letters. I didn't told. My parents didn't know where I am not even. I had to have an address through the police, because it was a very important thing where I was.

We could pick this up, then, on the second reel. We're about at the end of the first reel.

OK.

So we're going to have a short break, while they change the tapes around. And then we'll continue.

OK.