

RG-50.091.0108

Summary

PART 1

Sally Pitluk was born in Plonsk, Poland (Hometown of David Ben-Gurion); father owned dry goods store, Poles went in the morning to secular school and the Jewish children went in the afternoon to the secular school, late 1920's; Language in home spoken Yiddish, spoke Polish outside home; no assimilation in Plonsk, September 1, 1939 war broke out; German planes bombed town; September 4, 1939 Germans occupied Plonsk; yellow patches on front and back, not allowed to walk on sidewalk, had to bow to German soldiers; two months later Jewish men were taken; formed Judenrat, two months later parents left for Warsaw; Gestapo told her and her brothers they had to leave apartment, Judenrat told her to move to Ghetto area; Plonsk annexed by Germany; Jews being taken away and shot (1939); accused the orthodox men of raping German women; all Jews ordered into Ghetto, 16,000 people; summer of 1940 closed ghetto; food rationed; 1941 – bloody Sunday, everyone ordered to go to square, Gestapo formed two lines and Jews had to go through while Gestapo beating them, so many dead and injured; if resisted Gestapo killed 100 Jews; shaved women's hair; typhoid rampant; Jewish policemen; hangings every day; summer of 1941 saw and heard Germans going to the eastern front; winter 1941 Germans took 14 year old brother to work, no shoes; emotionally devastated to see family so hungry and degraded; July 1942 began to deport people from ghetto, 2000 people transported in cattle trains every two weeks; first took old people; then people with small children; then middle-age people (in their 30s); no children in ghetto; Gestapo shot children; 5000 Jews left in ghetto, Gestapo took her parents and brothers; October 1942 she was taken in last transport; no one left in Ghetto; 5 or 6 days in cattle train; arrived in Auschwitz at twilight, about 2500 people; Gestapo hitting and shouting at the people as cattle cars emptied; men and women separated; selected others; 1000 taken onto truck and rest taken into camp; those on truck went directly to gas chambers.

PART 2

Late in October walked into Auschwitz/Birkenau, Buna, Budy in Auschwitz compound, 500 naked women in steam bath room overnight, walked into large room that was bitter cold, shaved heads, women did tattoos, capo women supervised, taken to Budy with 200 women 300 to Birkenau and given prison clothes; on the River Vistula, required to build walls to prevent river from flooding, after a few days without food or sleep were beaten at night, within two weeks only 50 left out of the 200 women, Ukrainian women stole her shoes, wrapped her feet in rags, Gestapo took her to Auschwitz and put in a hole, after few days taken out and taken to Birkenau barracks, searched for 300 women who had been sent to Birkenau, in barrack 8 beds were brick shelves and found her friends from home, selections every day on the way back from work, most of her friends were killed by dogs which scratched out the women's eyes, in 1943 people from Greece, Holland, Belgium, France and Germany, if 100 went to work would select 50 to die, women dies of pneumonia, Sunday had to carry bricks and selected, if sent to barrack 25 the trucks came to take to gas chamber, had to work with typhoid, demolished bombed houses to get bricks, then worked in munitions factory, new inmates wore civilian clothes with big red mark on back, she was still wearing stripped prison

clothes, so much mud in Auschwitz, people stuck in mud, before gas chambers they buried the bodies and then burn the pits, sent to work in hospital, Mengele and Hess would come to make selection sent 75% to gas chamber, injected a few women with cancer and diseases to experiment on them, knows of people who were castrated, sent to Birkenau near gas chambers, 1944 when people from Hungary, older people and people with children sent directly to gas chamber since Russians coming closer, her work was to take off stars off clothes and sort good clothes and belongings, in 1944 people from Lodz did not know they were sent to be killed, in beginning of 1944 prisoners blew up one of the crematories, children thrown into bon fires, only survivor from her whole family, mother's family and father's family, no cousins, no aunts, or uncles, no more than 50 survivors from her town, maiden name was Kurbel, mother's maiden name was Drexler ,in Auschwitz until January 1945 when taken on death march, walked and taken on cattle trains, taken to Mandenburg, left at train station and Russians bombarded the trains, then walked again and put on cattle cars, taken the Ravensbrück in Germany, laying on ice and snow, then sent to Mahoff in Germany, underground factories making ammunition, then taken to another camp Tauhoch, then another march in April 1945, April 27, 1945 all of a sudden no guards and saw jeeps and soldiers, they were the Americans, maybe she weighed 60 pounds, taken to a hospital and when she woke up she was free, some ate too soon and died, liberated near Leipzig, Americans would not leave her there since Russians were going to occupy, taken to West Germany, knew there was not more family, thought about committing suicide, all through the war never thought of suicide, suffered tremendous depression,