

All for you.

I'm Sue Danford. Today, we are interviewing Rena Rubinow, a Holocaust survivor. This project is sponsored by the National Council of Jewish Women, Cleveland section. We'd like to start this afternoon's questioning by asking you about your life today. Can you give us your name, and your age, where you live?

Rena Rubinow, born October 11, 1917.

And where do you live today?

In Shaker Heights, Ohio.

Do you work?

No more.

And what kind of work did you do?

Well, I was helping my husband, always working. I was helping in his store. I was a little-- for a while, I really stayed home and--

And?

Still doing some bookkeeping-- most of them bookkeeping.

Does your husband work?

Part-time, he's semi-retired.

And do you have children?

I have two boys-- single, unfortunately.

And where do they live?

One lives in Akron. He's a electrical engineer. And one is in Los Angeles, a mechanical engineer.

They're in their 30s?

Yeah. Yeah.

All right. Let's go back now to the war years. Can you tell us, where did you-- where you were born and where you grew up?

I am born in Kraków, Poland-- beautiful city. And my mother died when I was a little girl. So my life was always fighting, always a fight. Because my step mother married-- I mean, when my husband-- my father remarried, was three children left.

And my-- I was the oldest. And always, somehow, my husband-- when I tell my husband this, he said, you were a runaway. When I had a big problem, I ran to my grandmother. So we didn't have a phone there.

Well, in 1939, then, you were 22, right before--

Yeah.

--the war broke out.

I was married then.

Oh, you were married?

Oh, yeah. Yeah, I was married and got married in '36-- '35, end of '35.

So you were not living in the family home at that point?

No, no, I had mine own.

Did you have children?

I have one little girl.

In 1939, you had a child then?

No, I had the child in '37.

Well, yeah, OK. So she was two.

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

And did you have any other family members living with you, just your husband?

My husband and I, yeah.

How did your husband make a living in 1939?

Oh, we had a store. We had a hosiery store.

Did you work too?

Yeah. I was always working. And it was-- a woman had to help. And I was always working. And I liked it.

How would you describe your family-- well-to-do, comfortable, or poor?

Comfortable, not wealthy.

Did you have help in your home?

I always had help, yeah. And my parents had help too. Yeah. It was even-- at times, they had two. They had a cook and a cleaning woman, my parents. Yeah, yeah. It was.

How religious was your family?

Orthodox. But my father was a wonderful man. And he understood if I wasn't sort of-- I played tennis when I was a young girl. And I remember, one Saturday, what was against the Orthodox religion, he saw me with a tennis racket.

He went across the street. And he never mentioned that I did. It was a big thing for a Orthodox father. He never mentioned about this. And I married young because of my stepmother. It was always some problems. So I married young.

Did you keep up with your father and the other children in the family, your sisters, brothers, younger ones?

Yeah, not too much. Yeah.

But you were your own family unit, the three of you?

Yeah. Yeah.

Were you and your husband involved in politics at all, Zionism movement, or anything?

Oh, yes, we were always Zionist-- even my father, he was Orthodox, but he was a Zionist. Yeah.

And what about socialism?

I don't know. I wasn't too much in politics, no. I used to want to-- I live-- play chess. No, not too much, no. We're not involved. We're not.

What was the main language spoken in your home?

I was speaking Polish, only Polish. And I understand Yiddish. But my mother-- my stepmother was speaking a lot of German because she was in the Austrian-- the part where I am from was-- belonged to Austria. It was a little more education and more. So we-- I knew very well German.

But you spoke Polish?

I spoke Polish. Yeah, like here, people are speaking English the young-- I was young then.

What kinds of books did you have in your home for cultural enrichment, for instance?

A lot of books. A lot of books-- any book, any book. We all were sitting to midnight and reading. It was no radio, no television then. So it was only books. Even my stepmother-- we went every day to the library, all the sisters and my stepmother, yeah-- yeah, a lot of books.

What about museums and movies?

Well, we had movies, yes, the same movies were-- the American movies, most of them, some German movies, I remember-- still remember the movies. Yeah. Yeah. My stepmother had free tickets. So we went to every-- almost every movie with Chaplin, with-- what was the name with the-- Key Cops.

Oh, Charlie Chaplin.

No, but before-- Kovacs, Konak? My before years. But when I was a little girl, we always went. We had free entries from the store. I was helping in my father's store. And I was the oldest. I always-- yeah, it wasn't bad.

What about sporting events? Did you ever-- were there things-- did you go to that?

Oh, I was playing tennis. I was the only one who played tennis. I was going ice skating when I was a teenager. I was never a good skater, but I went, yeah.

Did your family go on vacations-- the three of you, I'm talking about.

When I was married?

Mm-hmm

Yes. But the timing was no-- then I didn't go to much. Because I went-- in '39, when the war started, I was then in Zakopane. It's a resort in the mountains. I was then-- was it-- the war started in September-- what was-- June, July, August-- in August, I was in the resort. And when I came back, he said, my god, the war start. No, he said, they say like a war-- my husband said, it looks like a war is starting.

So the day when the war start, I was, I think, on a beach. I still was under the influence of the vacation. I took my little daughter. And I went out to play. We were playing ping-pong. I was a good ping-pong player when I was a teenager. I was a champ in Kraków. So I played a little ping-pong.

When I came back, he said, people are buying groceries. And so they said, the war started already in the Katowice and the border was already. We didn't know because the papers didn't tell anything what's what was going on.

And one morning, I get up, and we hear the weapons, whatever, the airplanes. And we all thought that this is maneuvers-- how you call it-- the military-- how we call it-- maneuvers.

Maneuvers.

Maneuvers.

Demonstration.

Yeah, tryout. Tryout.

Practice.

Practice, yeah. But it was the real war. And so-- and my husband ran away then to Russia-- came back. He came back. Yeah, he came back because people were running. It was then--

How much education did you have?

I had a--

High school?

It was like a business school. Not on a college, in a high school. I didn't finish it, but I was quite good in it. I didn't finish it. I think I went only three-- this was four years. I went only three years. And I went after, at night, to-- no, I went two years. And after, I went one year at night to a night school, the same, like a business school.

And then you got married?

No. I was working for my father and got married when I was close to 20, 19, something like this.

When were you first aware of any antisemitism?

Always.

Always?

It was always, yeah. Yeah. But OK, I didn't have any big town. We didn't know as much then in a small town. But it was always-- they hated Jews, the Polacks. They hated them.

When you came home from vacation and you realized the war was breaking out, was the treatment of the Polish people different? Was it more antisemitic? Did it become different than it had been?

I didn't notice it. No. I don't think so that I notice any-- not toward me. Not toward me because I don't know. I didn't look too Jewish.

They didn't stop shopping at your father's store?

Oh, yes, of course.

They did?

Of course, they did. And I had another store after the war and I got married. And of course, it was-- how you call it? They had those-- not to buy from a Jew. They had-- how would you call it. It was-- I don't know. I don't know how to express it.

In 1939, you're saying?

No, this was in '37 it started. It started in '37 not to buy from a Jew. My father used to have, from all the cloisters, from the school, Catholic school, customers. And after, they were not allowed to buy from a Jew. So this was in the same in my store. They were staying pickets-- pickets, that's the word what I need. And they didn't let into the stores, of course. So this was-- I don't know.

Prior to '39, what kind of plans and hopes did the three of you have?

Very bad, very little hopes. No, it wasn't good. I mean, we tried to-- we were young. So we didn't look as gloom as the situation was. And I was maybe too young to realize the whole situation.

Did the Nazis enter your town, then, in '39?

Yeah, in '39, they were there maybe the 2nd, the 2nd of September, I think, because they didn't fight-- Kraków was too many antiques, too many old churches, too many. So they didn't start fighting. They gave up right away, like Paris gave up. They didn't want destroy their city because it's a beautiful city-- beautiful. We had old cathedrals, all old churches, old synagogues. There is still a synagogue what is maybe 1,000 years old in Kraków. It's beautiful. So museums-- we had beautiful museums.

What changes occurred when the Nazis came?

At the beginning, nothing. Maybe three months later, they kicked out-- kicked us out. I had in a neighborhood-- they had a ghetto, still the old ghetto. So many Jews lived there still. It was like a center, Jewish. And I lived where we had the business.

So they came and they kicked us out in one day. And we had to leave everything, the furniture, everything, and leave. So you could take a bundle with you, some clothes, something. And we left everything. And we had to go to the part where the Jews were living.

To the ghetto?

Kind of a ghetto-- it was a open ghetto. It wasn't a ghetto like after. After the next year-- this was in '39-- 1940, they made a-- build wire on the other side of Kraków. This was-- they call it Podgórze, the other side of-- southern part of Kraków. And they made a ghetto there. And this was a closed ghetto. You couldn't get out.

But we ran away. I had a friend. So we ran away to a small town, about 20 miles from Kraków. And we were there about a year and a half. And my-- after, my mother-in-law came there to live.

And in '42, in maybe the October or November, this was everything exterminated. They killed everybody. There was maybe 1,000 people. My little sister came running to me there because when my father was-- there was extermination too. She came running. In meantime, she was witnessing-- like when they killed 10,000 people in another city.

So the city where-- the small town when I was from, there was people who, let's say, they didn't have a profession. They were not tailors, or shoemakers, or carpenters. They didn't want them in the ghetto. So when I said that I didn't have a profession, I wasn't a tailor or one of them, they had to run away. So we went to that small town. And we were there a year and a half, struggling--

In 1940?

--and selling our clothes. 1940, end of 1940.

The three of you-- your little girl and husband?

Yeah, yeah. We rented from a peasant a room. And we were there. And after, when the extermination came, they told us-- a friend who was in the-- they had a Jewish police there. This was Ordnungsmann-- Ordnungsmann. They made the-- Ordnung means police, but working for the German.

So we-- one of them told us, it's going to be extermination completely. They are going to kill everybody. So I had the information. And we ran away in the morning. He called me. He knocked at the door. He said, it's going to be today. The people, the killers, they came already. They are there. And we ran away.

The three of you?

We ran away, three of us, with a neighbor who had-- Jewish neighborhood who had-- he was-- he had a horse and a buggy. And we ran away. And we were hiding there for three weeks at a peasant. A peasant, he kept us.

How far out of town did you go?

Oh, about 15 miles. Then 15 miles we walked. We went with the horses. And after, he went away. He left us. And I went to a peasant. And we were hiding the whole day there in his stable. And after, at night, it was night. So I went in. My husband was afraid to-- he looked Jewish. He was dark, dark eyes.

And I went out and knocked-- went in the peasant's home. And I noticed that he has-- there are some guests. So I said, I want to buy some bread. Will you-- I didn't mention anything that I am there hidden. And he-- the way how I approach him, he liked. And after he knew that we were there for three weeks, he was selling us bread and selling us milk.

And I thought, maybe it will get quiet. I didn't know that everybody was killed there. I thought, maybe the German are there and they had killed some people, what we knew they do. And maybe it's going to be peace again.

But after, when I walked out, in three weeks, they told me that everybody was killed. Nobody survived in that town. So we started to walk to Kraków, what was about 50 miles with my little girl. We were holding her, walking, holding, till we came, we didn't have where to go.

We came to the ghetto. And in the ghetto, there was right away in the ghetto after one extermination, I would say, maybe killed or-- maybe 5,000 people, they already killed there. And it was temporary peace. So we got there someplace a room-- was maybe five families in a room, little room. And we were there till March '43. I started to work for the German.

You went back in '42? You went back to Kraków in '42?

In '42. And in March '43-- meantime, when I went to work, I was going to work-- I was sewing then pants-- uniform for German Wehrmacht, for the military. I learned to sew there. I never knew how to, but I learn. I had to make with a treadle machine seven pairs of pants. And when I was walking to work, I met my maid, my old maid who was raising my child.

And I said to her, Tola, can you take my little girl? She said, yes, I will take her. And she came to the ghetto, I gave the child out. If not, I would go with her when the Aussiedlung-- Aussiedlung means what they exterminated-- came. I said, I'm going to go with her. But meantime, she took the child away.

And I was very sick in the ghetto. I got yellow and jaundice. I got some poison food, some meat, something. And I had the jaundice-- so sick, I thought I will never make it. We had no medicines, we had nothing.

So in March 13, '43, they made two ghettos. One ghetto was ghetto B, what they already killed everybody there before. A day before, I had there even my cousins in that ghetto B. I saw them through the wires because somebody told me.

And the ghetto was terrible. It was hunger. It was terrible. But I managed because I was going to work out of the ghetto, to the Madritsch, was a company what was making for the Austrian--

Uniform?

What?

Austrian uniform?

No, no, an Austrian-- he was a friend to Hitler once. So he had the right to have-- he had a factory to make uniforms for the German. And I was working there. And while I was going there, people were giving me something to sell, a coat, something, a dress. People-- we didn't eat anything. And I brought a bread for my husband.

What did your husband do while you were in the ghetto?

In ghetto?

Was he able to work?

I think so-- no, no, he couldn't work. No, no. I was the only one. I was lucky. I got a job.

And you-- am I to assume that you--

He was doing the cook.

Pardon me?

He was doing the cooking. I was-- I went out. I went out. This was-- I don't know how far, maybe a mile we walk to the-- it was-- the factory was in the same part, but it was out of the ghetto. So I went out. and I was selling after work. We were working from 7:00 till 5:00, I think.

And we had about an hour for dinner or whatever it is-- lunch. So instead to eat, I went down. And people came, the Polacks. And they were buying the clothes, the old clothes, and bringing some bread, or butter, or piece of something, I don't remember what.

And this was till March 13. March 13, they took us to the concentration camp in Plaszów. This was a very bad concentration camp. And we could hear, while we were leaving, my face was still yellow.

And I was afraid that Goth, the one who was the leader, the Lagerführer, they call it, the leader of the concentration camp, he was checking everybody's face and everybody. And my face was yellow, completely-- even my eyes. But I was quite looking-- I didn't look sick. And I put rouge. And he let me through.

All right. Before you leave the ghetto, let me just ask you a couple of questions about it. Did you have to sign in and out? And the gates, were they closed at night?

We were not allowed to leave. You couldn't. But no, we came-- when I was working? No, because it was two policemen, the Jewish policemen what were assigned by the German taking us. It was maybe 300 women, only women, going to work and coming back at night. So this was probably their responsibility.

And you would--

And nobody escaped because we couldn't escape. It was no way. Maybe somebody could. I didn't even think of it. I was glad to be there because after being-- walking so far and this, I was really-- and being sick there too.

Did they give you food, the ghetto?

We had some-- one day, they gave us mustard.

Mustard.

They gave us-- no, people were starving. People really were hungry there. I didn't hunger, no, because I had-- I was young. I was pretty. I had a lot of friends. And I had a little more maybe connection. So I was not hungry in the ghetto. I ate and I could eat anything. If I ate a stone, I was-- but when I had the jaundice, I really was very, very, very sick. I don't know how I made it.

When you gave your daughter to your old maid, this was, I assume, to save her life?

Yeah. Yeah.

To take her away from the ghetto?

Because the children were taken away from the parents and killed.

And so you had her keep her?

And so I-- yeah. But she was there a year and something. And after, somebody gave her up. And they brought the maid with the child to the concentration camp next to Kraków. Was Plaszów, Kraków, a concentration camp.

This is where you were taken?

Yeah. And they kept her in a prison for maybe six month. And I didn't know, when I was in the hospital, that she-- killed her with maybe 20 other people after they brought to the camp, after my father too. And they killed them.

So in March of '43, they came and took you?

March 13, '43. Yeah.

They took you and your husband?

They brought me to the ghetto. Yeah. I didn't know even what's happened with my husband. But we found him there. We found him there. So all the able people--

And what was the name?

My name?

No, what was the name of the concentration camp?

Plaszów, Plaszów, Kraków. This was a suburb of Kraków. Yeah. And this was on a cemetery. The concentration camp, they had barracks. They built the barracks.

There Kleenex there if you want.

What?



There's Kleenex there if you want it.

Oh. After they built the factory what I was working, they built it in the concentration camp. And I was sewing there for-- I was there from '43 till '44-- from '43, March, there till October '44, was there till October-- a year and a half, something like this or tell you.

And this was a terrible concentration camp. Every day, there were-- we had to witness how they hang people, how they-- the people had to dig their graves. And they throw them. And we had to witness every day. Every day, we had to witness. When we came from work, we had to stay there, and check, and look.

What was your daily life like? I mean, you got up in the morning and?

I was working, nothing else. After work, we went in the morning. And it was for-- we work night in concentration camp, let's say from 5:00 till morning. After the morning, I don't know what we ate. They gave us something to eat, maybe, or maybe not. I don't remember if we had food or not-- probably had something.

But in the morning, we had to carry stones, rocks-- has to be a big rock-- from one place-- after work, after the whole night of work, we had, for two hours, to carry rocks from one place to the other, big rocks.

For what purpose?

Because this was-- just to punish. So this was after a whole night work. But this was the punishment.

Was your husband in the same camp?

Yeah, he was in the same camp. And he was working for a-- I don't know, a tailor or a shoemaker. This I don't remember-- I think a tailoring.

But you were not living-- you didn't see one another, the women and the men?

No. Oh, we could-- we were separated. But he could-- at the beginning, he could come in in the camp. We were sleeping on the-- on bunks without any bedding, nothing-- nothing, just a blanket to cover up, not even a pillow.

After, they-- when more people came, they brought in some barracks from the Russian prisoners, what they killed out the whole war prisoners or everybody. And the barracks were left. So they brought the barracks.

And the barracks were full of bud begs-- bed bugs, bed bugs. So the bed bugs were flying. I mean, it was just terrible. So my sister and I were sleeping outside. This was in October, November sleeping.

And it was-- this was-- the camp was on a cemetery, wet. So in the morning, we had to wring out the blanket. And I didn't get sick. I did not get sick. I was strong. Once, I was sick, yeah. Yeah, I was there in a hospital. They had a Krankenstube. Krankenstube means a sick--

Infirmary?

Yeah, something like this. Yeah, yeah. I was there. I was very sick. I forgot. Yeah, I was very sick there.

I don't mean to keep bringing this up but how did they find out that your maid had a Jewish child with her?

Somebody gave up, a Polack, a neighbor. And they forced her to bring her to the ghetto. Yeah. And she was in the concentration camp too for a year. And they let her out.

The Gentile maid?

The maid, yeah. She was because this was-- many Gentile--

The punishment.

From there, I went to Auschwitz after with my sister. I didn't know that my little girl was killed. And I was still talking, telling to everybody, I hope my child was sent to Auschwitz because when she was killed, I was then very sick. I was very sick. I had a infection, something what I never knew. I couldn't even walk-- very, very sick.

And somehow, I made it. And I didn't know that she was shot. Nobody told me. And when I mentioned, I want to see where the children are, this and that, nobody said anything.

Even my husband never-- he never mentioned. He loved this little girl. So anyhow, in October, I think '43-- '44, my husband-- my father was killed there too in June, I think. She was killed in May. And my father was killed in June. They brought him from another city.

Were you mistreated physically in these camps?

Oh, you say, maybe with a whip. I was hit many times with a whip. But not-- OK. We were so down, we didn't care. We didn't care if it hurt or not hurt. It was just to bring us down, the morale. And the morale was so low, you didn't feel like a human, you feel like a worm.

You didn't have a toilet. You didn't have water, warm water. You didn't have-- I mean, below understanding that this could be human, no, not a piece of tissue-- I mean, toilet tissue, nothing, not even a newspaper. So it was just-- we didn't feel like people. We didn't feel like people.

Were the guards mean to you?

The guards-- the Ukrainian guards were worse. It was a time when the guards was changed from the German to Ukrainians. And they were even worse. One whipped me so badly that I almost-- my breast was black for six months. So this was in Plaszów.

But from there, we went to Auschwitz in '44. We went to Auschwitz. My husband went to Mauthausen. And he was killed in Mauthausen. I didn't know till after the war, of course. And I went to Auschwitz.

And Auschwitz, this was at the end. I was there only about two months in Auschwitz. Next to the crematorium, we were waiting three days. When we came to Auschwitz at night, my sister, who was working, a little girl, she had a beautiful voice. So the Ukrainian-- the guards liked her because she had a beautiful voice.

So Ukrainian or German, I don't know. But I think most of them, the guards were Ukrainian. And she had a beautiful-- so when we came to-- at night, we went with a wagon. Was 500-- train, like a train for the horses, the animal train. How you call it? A freight train, yeah. We went with a train, 500 people in one wagon, without nothing. It took--

You mean in one boxcar?

In one boxcar, yeah.

You Couldn't breathe, couldn't go to a toilet, I mean, no facility, nothing. And we came at night to Auschwitz. To Auschwitz, my sister ask one German, she recognized, she said, Fritz, where are we?

So she said, Rose, here, the people are making so. And we could smell the crematorium. We were staying next to the crematorium for three days and three nights. They didn't know what to do with us. It was 500 women.

In the boxcar?

In the box. And we were staying in Auschwitz, in a place for horses and mud for three days. And after, they made-- came the order, the Befehl-- that's German. And we were separated. Mengele was staying in a door.

And he was sending one group people, what some of them were my friends. They were skinny, or the breast was a little longer, or she was she wasn't built right, she wasn't this or that, or more than 30. And they sent left. And the one who were to work, capable, through the door. Mengele was the one who was sending here and there people.

I was afraid. My sister was then only maybe 12-13 years old. So I wanted to wait till the quota. He had enough people for the crematorium. He had to have enough people too. So I was waiting till the end almost with her. In meantime, they were shaving the girls' hair, everybody's hair, just to make them feel like animals.

Some were beautiful girls, especially Kraków had beautiful girls. So they were shaving their hair, shaving their-- OK. And we went through. I was waiting till very late at night.

And after, when I went, I-- my sister was in front of me. So Mengele ask, [GERMAN]? So I said-- how old are you is to her. So I said, she's 16 to him in German. But she looks young. So he let her through. And I passed after him.

And they didn't cut our hair. They looked. And my hair happened to be clean. I was always washing myself, even with cold water and no soap, but my hair was clean. And I looked quite healthy. I was well-built. And we passed through. I remember, when we went through. This was late at night.

We had after a-- they gave us a shower. So this was-- the bathhouse was-- all windows-- this was in late October-- all windows broken. And it was very cold. They gave us a little cold water and some old shoes. I got two-- one shoe was narrow, one shoe was long.

And I had a nice coat, just not-- no underpants, no brassiere, no underpants-- panties. So my sister, she was so sharp, she found her a pair or she stole-- there was a bunch of clothes what the people who were taking to the gas chamber. So she took a couple of panties.

And I had this. And we had one brassiere, one something, a old dress. And we went to to the ghetto B-- ghetto B in Auschwitz. This was-- oh, I forgot the name. I forgot the name.

A barracks, you mean?

Yeah, barracks B, but this was-- it was worse than Auschwitz. It was in Auschwitz, but it was-- I forgot the name. I don't remember the name.

Maybe you'll think of it later.

No. No, if I don't remember-- I never thought about this. Now, it came to me, the name. No. I don't have it. And it was seven girls. Ah, while I was going with my sister at night came a guy, a German, and gave me one bread here, one bread here, and he ran away. That was-- I said, it was a angel. And so I had two loaves of bread.

And I came there to the camp. It was cold. It was terrible. Seven girls, they gave us on a bunk-- seven girls on one bunk one blanket. And everybody was pulling the blanket. So I developed some bladder trouble.

And they brought-- they throw in-- no work, nothing. We were just laying on the thing. This was terrible. But I-- the girl who was signing us up, I knew she don't know how to spell. She didn't know how to write, probably. She was, I think, a Slovak or something, I don't know what.

So I helped her. I said, OK. Write this. So she said, oh, you be a Schreiberin. You be our-- on this. So I was afraid to get any position, anything, because all of them who had a special-- how you call it-- office or a job, legal job, were the first one to go to death. So I didn't want it.

But after, she said, OK, you're going watch when they bring food, they bring food. We had food once a day. Once a day, we had some soup. And every morning was Appell in Auschwitz. We were staying from 5:00 in the morning till 11:00 to count us. We were being counted there.

From 5:00 in the morning till 11:00 in the morning.

To 11:00.

In the morning?

Yeah, in the cold.

Outside.

And after, they gave us a piece of slice of bread and a piece of liverwurst. So it wasn't-- it was better than in other place-- and go back to our camp. But meantime, this-- we found out the Gypsies came. They were there in Birkenau. Oh, now, I got. The camp name was Birkenau. Birkenau, yeah.

So came Gypsies. And they stole from everybody their food. So this was at the beginning. We didn't know how to take care on that. They came hungry. They were there. And we saw the Gypsies. The Gypsies, all of them, were after put to-- in the crematorium. They killed all of them. So OK.

You didn't do anything then, except after--

No, no, this--

--at 11 o'clock in the morning, they put you back in the barracks?

Barracks.

And all day?

After that, we had dinner again. We had soup. So I went with the girls with the big, how do you call it-- we call it [NON-ENGLISH], a big thing for food, those big pots. How you call it, like a bushel, like a barrel, like a metal barrel, something like this.

So we went. I went with the girls. He said, you are the Aufseher. You are the one to watch that they won't steal, something like this. And you shouldn't help them because this was very heavy. So I did because the other girls were in much worse shape than I was.

Ill, you mean.

Sick, sick people, yeah. So it took about two hours to deliver the soup and to take back after that. So I was a little bit more busy than the others. But we didn't have nothing to do, nothing to do. And I was there only till the end of the year, till the end of the year. After, I went to another camp. This camp was Lichtenberg then.

We went--

Why did they move you?

Because Auschwitz was-- the Russian were coming. And they wanted to hide all the-- they burned the-- it was like a revolution. They burned down the crematorium then and-- because the Russian were approaching. So they sent us to another camp. And it was three days--

With your sister?

Yeah, with my sister. It was three days. We were three days in a train, the same barrack like this, 300 or 500 people in one wagon. We went again through a-- for health. I think-- I don't know if Mengele saw us again or somebody else-- naked, of course, completely naked. Yeah, again.

And those who are able went to this other camp. Was three days. The train was left on the tracks for three days until we came. This was a beautiful place. We looked through the-- we were approaching. It was beautiful, in the mountains, close to Karlsbad.

But they didn't give us to eat there. We were there starving. This was people-- I mean, one slice of bread, we had for three days, one slice of bread. And the-- we were working-- they used to call it a [GERMAN]-- thread, the big bunches of thread, putting on rolls, something like this-- hard work.

And I was so hungry. I was so hungry that we went-- we ate wheat. We couldn't even get a raw potato. But this was just-- this was a such starvation that it's unbelievable. So they brought us from work back to camp for dinner because we had-- with a guard, of course. It was high snow there. And gave us some soup, like few noodles, and worms-- wormy soup, the worms were.

And after-- at the beginning, I couldn't stand it. After, I ate the worms. And I ate this everything because-- and my poor sister, my poor sister, her gums started to bleed. She was a child. So it was just unbelievable, the hunger.

They said it's 500 calories in that soup. But how could it? Couldn't be 100. And one slice of bread every three days-- they gave us a loaf of bread for maybe 10 people, 12 people. And this was it. So this was just terrible. This was just-- if we could get. It was winter, we couldn't find any wheat either or raw potato. OK, she--

Go ahead.

This is it?

No, go ahead.

Oh.

We'll finish this tape and then we'll take a break.

Oh, oh.

All right, so you're in December. You were-- you're now moved to the second camp-- the third camp.

The third camp, yeah. There was still-- I was in this camp till the Russians liberated us. And it was May, May 5-- I think May 5. From there, we walked to Kraków. It was maybe 500 miles. It was no transportation, came back to Kraków, nobody was alive, nobody survived, my husband was killed.

Well, we'll pick up with your last concentration camp and the liberation when we come back. Thank you.