

**Interview with Henry Greenbaum
December 20, 1999**

Beginning Tape One, Side A

Question: This is the **United States** Holocaust Memorial Museum volunteer collection interview with **Henry Greenbaum**, conducted by **Esther Finder** on December 20th, 1999 in **Rockville, Maryland**. This interview is part of the museum's project to interview Holocaust survivors and witnesses who are also volunteers with the museum. This is tape number one, side **A**. I want to thank you for doing the interview with us today. Let me start by asking, what is your name?

Answer: **Henry Greenbaum**.

Q: And what was your name at birth?

A: My first name was **C-h-u-n-a G-r-y-n-b-a-u-m**.

Q: And how was that pronounced?

A: **Grynbaum**, and my first name, **Koona**.

Q: Where were you born?

A: In **Poland**, in a city called **Starchowice, S-t-a-r-c-h-o-w-i-c-e**.

Q: And when were you born?

A: April 1, 1928.

Q: What were your parents' names?

A: My mother's name was **Gittel**, and my father's name was **Nuchem**.

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Q: Did you have any brothers or sisters?

A: I had two brothers and six sisters.

Q: And their names?

A: The first girl's name was **Brundl, Raisl, Faige, Chaja, Yita and Dina - Diana.**

Q: And your brothers' names?

A: **David** and **Zachary.**

Q: Where were you in the birth order?

A: I was the last one, I was the baby.

Q: Can you tell me about your hometown, and describe it for me?

A: It was a small town, and we had a lot of ammunition factory, steel mills, copper foundries and a lot of wood [**indecipherable**] the people would buy wood, and a lot of people had businesses. Most of the Jewish people were in business, some -- one owned th-the lumberyard. And we were in the tailoring business. My father was a skilled tailor, my brothers were tailors and some of the sisters were helping along sewing, too. I was too young to do anything but go to school.

Q: Was there a large Jewish population in your town?

A: I would say maybe about 5,000 people, I would think, in that area, with all the little surrounding, little **shtetls**. Approximately that's what I would think it would be.

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Q: Did your family have a long history in that area?

A: I really don't remember. I do remember way back to my grandfather, that's the only one I -- that I remember, and anything be-before that, I am not aware of.

Q: You said that you were too young to do too much tailoring. What kinds of chores did you have around the house? What were your responsibilities?

A: Well, ma -- my responsibility was to make the iron so they can press. In those days you had the iron and it was hollow inside, and they would put some kind of a coal it looked like and you would have to lay it on the floor and blow at it to get it started. And I would start the iron for them. And just help cleaning up a little bit, the scrap stuff that they were cutting away, that's about it. Then go to school.

Q: What language or languages were spoken in your home?

A: Mostly Yiddish. Mostly Yiddish. But we were also speaking a little bit Polish too, not that much.

Q: What religious traditions did your family observe?

A: We were reli -- pretty religious. My father was a **gabbai** in the **shul** and I remember going twice a day to synagogue, morning and the evening. And -- and with my father, before the school started, early in the morning we'd go for prayers, and of course in the -- in the evenings [**indecipherable**] we used to go. And **Shabbas**, every holiday we would ob-observe. I mean s -- the dietary laws were

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strictly -- I mean, enforced in our house. And if you had red handles and blue handles, everything meant differently. One was for dairy and one for -- was the meat. And we also had dishes for Passover separately. So we were pretty religious at home.

Q: Did you have a favorite holiday?

A: My favorite holiday was Passover. That was our favorite holiday. The reason, we used to get all new clothes, new shoes, new -- new shirts, we'd always dress up for that holiday. And there were lots of goodies to eat, besides the matzoh. My mother was pretty good then at baking all kinds of goodies.

Q: Did you go to a public school, or a religious school?

A: I went to both. I went to public school and also the religious school, too. In the Polish -- in the regular school we used to, you know, go to -- go like to -- you go here, like, you know, to learn the language and the history of **Poland**, I guess. And then when we come home, we would go to Hebrew school every day, in the afternoon. The Hebrew school was small, it was a **shtibl** like what they used to call, and the **rebbe** was there and he was teaching us Hebrew. And then we'd finish, went home and eat -- and eat and do your homework and that's it.

Q: Did you have any favorite subjects?

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A: Not re -- I used to like -- the Hebrew was my really -- I used to love that, I learned and -- and -- believe it or not, that I don't know too much now, I have forgotten most of it, all of my Hebrew. And I forgot Polish too, I didn't -- you know, I was too young, and I didn't learn -- up to about seventh grade, what could I learn up -- by seventh grade? Not too much.

Q: When you were little, what did you think you would be when you grew up?

A: Well, believe it or not, in my house they were always teasing me what I'm going to be, and I used to tell them I'm going to be a **rebbe [indecipherable]**. Somehow, I don't know what that got into me and I would tell them I'll be a **rebbe** and a **[indecipherable]**. I used to like the **rebbe** and th -- and they used to come dressed with their **payos**, you know. On **Shabbas** they would dress real nice and I used to say that's what I wanted to be. But that never materialized.

Q: When you weren't in school, what did you do for fun?

A: For fun we used to play soccer, mostly, then like kids, played around, all kind of games, you know, Hide and Seek, you know, all kind of game, like -- like everywhere else, children do. We have our own games to play with. Ride the bicycles, that kind of thing.

Q: What were relations like between the Jews and the non-Jews in your town?

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A: Before the war we were pretty much getting along with the non-Jewish population in our own city. I can only speak for my city. They were pretty nice, we used to do most of the tailoring for the non-Jewish -- also the Jewish too, but 90 percent we did for non-Jews. They come in, pick material, my father would make them a suit, or they would make a pair of slacks out, whatever. And we got along pretty good. In school we used to have our little fights here and there. They didn't like our curls around our -- our ears, our **payos** we used to wear around and they -- sometimes we'd have the boys come up and try to pull on them, you know, just teasing you. And we were fighting back, we -- we weren't afraid of them in school, just like kids here. We have our skirmishes and then we forgive each other and we play again.

Q: Did you experience any anti-Semitism as a child?

A: Not -- there was always something a little bit, but I was too young to even realize what that even -- what that word meant even, anti-Semitism. I didn't realize this til later on in life.

Q: What did you know about **Hitler** and what was happening in **Germany** before the war?

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A: I myself did not fi -- hear anything. If my parents did they never told me about it. I -- I was not aware of it. I don't even know who he was or even he existed until later on.

Q: Had you heard about **Kristallnacht**?

A: Ef -- during when I got -- during the war I heard about it, af-after I -- when the Germans invaded our city then we -- then the news came around to -- then it was more open, people were talking about it.

Q: Before the invasion, had any German refugees come through your town?

A: We had German Jews who would come in, yes. But then again, I was too young to pay attention to all of that. I wasn't paying -- I remember the-they would always sometimes complain that the people who put them up didn't take good care of them as much, but we just had little. So whatever little we had we were willing to share with them. But they thought maybe we didn't share enough, I don't know. I was in - - that's what I heard.

Q: Did you get a sense from -- you know, when you were a child, did you get a sense from the adults that they were concerned or alarmed by events in **Germany**?

A: Not really, because everybody was doing their daily -- going and doing their work and going to the synagogue to prayers, and going to do their regular things that one does during the whole day of going through. But I didn't ever see anybody

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be talking about that, or -- or you know, about -- about the -- **Germany** and all this business. I didn't hear it, I was too young, I guess.

Q: Did your parents ever talk about possibly leaving **Poland**?

A: Well, we were talking about leaving. My oldest brother, he always had that -- wanted to leave. But -- my father had two brothers in **America** and also a sister in **America**. And my oldest brother, he was the main correspondent, he was writing in Hebrew, and he would write to them all the time to see the situations here that -- not so good. We're not that wealthy here, we want to come to the land of honey, so to speak, and he kept writing to them, writing with -- to them all these years, and finally in 1937 they decided that, for one child only. And so we picked one -- one of the girls to go to **United States**. And she did immigrate to **United States** in 1937. And the rest of them, then the war broke out there again and so it was too late to do anything then.

Q: Which sister?

A: Ma -- **Diana**. I don't know what -- what down the line she is, the fourth or the fifth, I'm not sure. But she was, in 1937 in **Washington, D.C.**.

Q: What was happening in your life right before the war? When you think back on the days right before the war, what was happening in your life?

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A: Well, right before the war, my father died. That was a tragedy right there. Two months -- I think it was two months before the war, and I was only 12 at the time. And I remember going into the synagogue and talking to the man -- one of my brothers was in the Polish army, and the other, the oldest brother, he was around with us, he was not married yet, and I remember going with him to the synagogue. And the -- the caretaker in the synagogue told me that I should start laying **Tefillin**, at my age, you know, I was with [indecipherable] because your father died, I don't remember what it was, what reason, but he told me I should wear those -- start to wear it. And they gave me a **Tefillin** [indecipherable] and I started wearing with the **tallit**. And that was -- I mean, I lost my father, I mean, you know, and the way I lost him is I came home one Saturday, and of course, children is children, you were religious, but you still liked to play a little ballgame on the Sabbath. So we snuck away to go play ball. When I came home, my father was in bed, and I was only with my father and my mother was home. And he told me as -- as he was laying in bed that I should close the curtain on it because the sun was coming in on his -- where he was resting. So I closed it up, and as I closed it up I turned to look at him, blood rushed out of his mouth and he told me to go get mother. So I ran in the next room, I got the mother and she came and she says, run for the doctor. So for me, 12 years you know, running was pretty good, I could run fast. And it was only about four or

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five blocks away. And I went to the doctor and the doctor came back on the bicycle and I was chasing him on foot. And by the time we came he was already dead. And right after that, I mean, you know, things changed a little bit. But I had my older brother which wasn't, you know, too bad, I mean he kept the business going, sort of. And --

Q: Which brother was that?

A: **David**. He was the oldest. I think one of the girls were older than him, I think, at least two or one, of which I don't know which one was first. And -- and then what -- w-we stayed there and you know, things were sort of -- we were lonesome at the house, it wasn't the same like it was. You know, you lose a parent how it is, at the age of 12, you miss them.

Q: I'd like you to take a moment to give me a physical description of what you looked like at age 12, including how tall you were.

A: Well, I hi -- I remember how tall I was, I was -- for my age I was pretty tall, which helped me during the war. And then I was ab -- I was -- did wear **payos** believe it or not, I have the **payos** and **tzitzit**, I have the whole thing, I was like a -- like a Jewish boy wearing i -- in a kosher home. And I looked pretty goo -- I thought I looked good, I was healthy, and that's probably what saved my life.

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Q: Is there anything else that stands out in your mind about your life before the war?

A: Well, the only thing I -- stands out is my be -- holidays that we had, which oh, the holidays were so happy time. My mother was busy cooking and the children would come over. And she already had grandchildren, I was young -- I was only, in that time when they started coming in, 10 years and we already had grandchildren, I was their uncle already, at the -- at the age of -- of 10 or 12, I was already an uncle. So that made me -- I was playing with the little kids. I was one of them. And that was the happiest time. And you sang at the table after you finish eating, it was a happy time, we enjoyed ourself.

Q: Please tell me about the beginning of the war. What was your experience at the very beginning?

A: Well, at the beginning, I wa -- my father passed away and I would have to go the morning to lon -- to the city, I could say Kaddish in the morning. And as I went there, I used to hear the airplanes coming already overhead. And the -- the synagogue had metal roof and I could hear banging on top th -- from the shrapnels were hitting it and it was noisy. But it didn't scare me, I did my job, I went to synagogue, came back home to Mom. And we didn't see anything yet, but then all of a sudden one night we go to sleep, we get up in the morning, we woke up very

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early in the morning, the Germans invaded our city, and the whole city was shaking, it was a little, small town, we have cobble -- cobble o-of the streets with cobblestone, not regular cement, so it was noisy and the houses were shaking and there was -- like it was terrible noise. The airplanes with the tanks with the -- with the big trucks coming through, and it was a small town, I don't think I ever saw a car in my town. Maybe a bus coming through with some people transporting, but I never saw heavy -- heavy equipment like this before, so that was fascinating me once I -- I woke up in the morning to look out the window. And they looked very scary, but as a child I wasn't -- I didn't fear them, you know, I didn't know what they were like until later on. You know, later on things changed. They kept **[indecipherable]** right away you ga -- within about, I would say two or three weeks, maybe not even three weeks they already singled us out, all the Jews were singled out. I mean, we looked Jewish, we had **payos**, we wore the tz -- th-the -- the **tzitzit**, we had -- were never bareheaded. So they knew who we were, but the **payos**, the curls under you -- that gave it away anyway already, but still they singled us out, the we -- they gave us -- the order came out that said we have to wear the Star of **David**, I think from four years on, a child four years and up we had to wear the yellow star, one in the front and one in the back. So that was right away identification right there for us. And then they were coming around later on in the

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streets, grabbing you for doing all kinds of dirty work for them. And they would kick you and they will hit you an-and cuss you in their own language. And we did -- you know, you didn't get good treatment at -- tried to help them working for them, but they mistreated you.

Q: You mentioned that the Jewish boys were easy to identify because they had the **payos** and everything. Was there -- was there any segment of the Jewish population in your town that was not religious?

A: True, true. We had some that didn't have those, the **payos** on, not as religious, it was still religious, but that -- not religious. But of course in the -- the Germans knew who they were, and if they didn't know where they were, the Polish -- the -- th-the Gentiles from that city soon pointed them out to them, who the Jews are.

Q: Were there any acts taken against the Christian population at the beginning?

A: At the beginning the only thing I remember was my -- I was introdu -- introduced to hanging. I was watching na -- I wasn't really watching them hanging, but the next day I saw them hanging. There was at least 10 to 12 people who -- there was some Jews. For what reason they were, I don't know. The Polish, some Gentiles were hung on the same hanging [**indecipherable**] and there were like 10 who were hanging there for about, I would say, a week. They left them on for us to look at them. There were two Jews and the rest of them were Gentiles. We don't

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know what the reason they hung them for, but that's the introduction, I got to see people right away, you know, hanging. I never witnessed that before in my life.

Q: How soon did that happen?

A: I would say within a week. Within a week. They must have known those people already, who they are, and when they came in -- I'm sure they must have had some spies in the city to see who was who.

Q: How did the civilian population react, both the Christian population and the Jewish population to the German invasion?

A: Well, they couldn't do anything. They -- they -- no matter what -- they might have been talking in private to one another, but I don't know what the -- everything went about the regular way to work and come home and that's it, they didn't bother us with the, you know, from beginning [indecipherable] was still to go to synagogue still, but this -- we went all -- later on, we s -- they -- they stopped all that.

Q: Walk me through the changes. How did they start to change from just the star on the front and back to some of the other changes that were mentioned?

A: Well, th-the first thing they change is in, I'd say less than a -- I was less than a year, I believe that they chased us out of our homes. We have the -- an-and we went to -- they -- they put a -- a ghetto, they made us a ghetto in our city. And most of the

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Jews were living around the area synagogue anyway. We lived next to the synagogue, so our -- our zone -- we stayed in the house. And -- but we had to take other people in, because for -- what they did, if you lived in a -- in a section with the non-Jewish area, you have to leave that area and come into the Jewish area and that area was -- they -- they made that a ghetto. And they blocked off all the intersections, they put barbed wire at every intersection with a guard and a dog, and you could not leave -- you could not leave unless you had a permit, a pass, or if you're going to work. That's the only way. And then, of course, it overcrowded -- and then we had, from the outskirts, some Jewish farmers we had, that lived in the little **shtetls**, outskirts of the city. And if the Germans didn't know, they took a non-Jew with them, a Gentile on the -- on the **Jeep** to show them where the Jews lived. And then they rounded them up and they told them to leave. Left the house. Whatever you take with you, they'll let you take a few suitcases, whatever you want and you had to wound up in this ghetto. And of course, overcrowded. You had to put up people, help to one another. So food was scarce, starting to get scarce, sort of every day less, less, less and less. People were bribing the soldiers, they had something to bribe them with, but then as the thing got around you didn't have anything to bribe them with any more, everything you had you gave away already. So, you couldn't even bribe them then. So you -- then there was a lot of suffering going on with --

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especially with food and -- and health too, because we had the overcrowding caused the -- the sanitary conditions were very bad and typhus broke out. And when the typhus broke out then they -- they would pick up the people with -- that had fever, took them with trucks away and we no longer saw them any more. They shot them and killed them and buried them somewhere in the outskirts of that city.

Q: You mentioned that you were in the area became the ghetto, you already lived there. Were you aware of the procedures that the Germans used to get -- to get the other Jews to move into that area, or had you -- were you aware of it at the time or had you heard about it --

A: Yes, I did. By that time I was already aware of [indecipherable] we were talking in Yiddish, what they were doing to us? They crowding us up, they pushing us in in one area. We -- I see streets that I was able before to go out, go freely, move about wherever I wanted to, I could not go in no more there, I had to stay, wait for him to let me out for some reason, unless I went to work. That's the only way you could leave the -- the area. Otherwise, you stay put.

Q: What about job assignments?

A: Job assignments they -- they -- we knew somebody in that factory, in the ammunition factory, and the -- the -- the man in charge of the factory gave us jobs. They gave me a job, at my age and also my three sisters had jobs in there. And so

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we were able to go from the factory back into the ghetto by -- by permit. You know, we worked, we didn't get anything over there, no more than you -- you eat a little, whatever they gave you in -- in the ghetto, you -- whatever your portion was and then when you went to the factory, they gave you a little bit of soup in the factory at that time, and then back home. We did -- worked along the Gentiles, we worked along, whatever they did, we did the same work they did. We didn't get paid, they got paid. We got cursed at, we got beaten for it, they didn't. That's the only difference I could start seeing at 12 years old, I -- it was hard for me to -- what's the word? Comprehend, I guess, or to understand why, why? What do they want? We -- what did I do to them that they ha -- give me that type of a treatment.

Q: Which sisters worked with you?

A: I had **Faige** and **Chaja** and **Yita**. And I was sort of the youngest on the line. **Yita** was two years older than I was. **Chaja** must have been maybe three years older than the other sister. And **Faige** was already married. She had a child, a four year old child, and her husband was also in **America**. He left -- they lived in a city called **Kielce** and in 1937 too, he left for the **United States**, hoping to bring his wife, my sister, and a little, four year old little girl to **America**, and that never materialized because of the war broke out. So my sister left **Kielce** and moved in with us, where

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we were, and we sort of -- we stayed together, so had the little child, my mother would watch her during the day so that -- you know, take care of her.

Q: You mentioned that the ghetto was surrounded by barbed wire. Was there any other enclosure around the ghetto?

A: Well, it wasn't really by barbed wire, only the streets, the fi -- the street corners were barbed wire [indecipherable] wire, just say all around -- all around it, no. We had just the intersections that you could not leave. They know where to block them off to keep you within the premises of the ghetto.

Q: And who guarded the ghetto inside or outside?

A: Well we had SS men and also the Ukrainians who joined the Nazi regime, and they were really vicious too, just the same as the Germans were. They were our guards, and of course with the -- with their dogs with them, too.

Q: Were they outside the ghetto or inside?

A: They stayed outside, sort of, in the corner.

Q: Was there any guarding, or any police service inside the ghetto?

A: We had some Jewish policemen who -- who they assigned to keep a little bit of law and order, what they thought, law and order. The Germans really were [indecipherable] interested in our law. But they helped people, you know. They

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were more communicating with the guards. Easier to -- police to -- to talk to the guard than us individually.

Q: Was there a **Judenrat** in your s -- in your ghetto?

A: Ah, what is?

Q: A **Judenrat**, a government.

A: A government? I di -- I can't remember that, I was too young. I don't remember if they had something.

Q: In your ghetto was it only Jews from your town?

A: Well, from our town and also the surrounding areas. The little st -- the little villages, the little **shtetls**. We had quite a few little ones, you know, some of them maybe 10 miles away, 15 miles away from the city and they would also bring them into us, overcrowded. And we were already overcrowded anyway, we had small homes and big family, but that -- we were able to, you know, help out one another.

Q: How did people get along inside the ghetto?

A: We got along pretty good, I would say. We didn't have any problems with one another, because we knew each other from before, and so it wasn't too bad. I mean wi -- we didn't have any disagreement with one another, no, not in the ghetto.

Q: Did you witness any beatings or killings or suicides in the ghetto?

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A: I didn't see any suicides in the ghetto. Beatings I saw, if somebody did something, I saw the Germans would throw a man down and kick him, what reason I don't know, I wasn't ne -- I was too frightened to go find out why, so I stayed away. But I did witness it, I saw them kicking them with their boots and hitting them with their rifle butts as they were laying on the floor, on the ground. I did witness that. But what the person did, I don't know. To me I think just merely because he want to beat him up.

Q: Were you aware of anybody escaping the ghetto?

A: The ghetto was not too hard, you could really get out if you want to. There was ways, we found out how to get out so they don't see you. But there was [indecipherable] where are you going to escape to, because they will report you in a second and bring you back and then you would either get killed on the spot, or they would make an example out of you. So they, you know, they treated you real bad for that. I do remember though, my mother would sneak out sometimes to get food from the farmer. We knew some of them because we would do work for them before, she happened to know this farmer. And she would sneak out in -- early in the morning and go to a farm and bring back a little bit of milk and some bread sometimes. But that stopped after awhile [indecipherable] was unable -- they found

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out the area where we sneaking out and they s -- they closed it up. That was just in the beginning.

Q: While you were in the ghetto, what did you know about what was happening in other parts of **Poland**?

A: Myself, nothing. All I know is I was only interested within our city, what they doing to us. I wasn't aware what they did anywhere else. I was too young perhaps, I don't know. Maybe my w -- my more -- brothers might have known, I personally didn't, until later on.

Q: When you went to work, you said you worked with Jews, and there were some non-Jews at work?

A: That's right. We worked with the non-Jewish population in the factories, in the ammunition factories with them. But fl -- right after that, they had nothing to do with you. They were sort of like -- didn't go near you, didn't have nu -- even though they -- before you -- w-we called each other, you know, so to speak, by the first name. And then as we were working with them, they didn't say hello and they didn't say any -- a word to you, they just -- that you were -- not existed. And they know that they could have helped, they could have brought a piece of bread, they could have brought a -- a -- a raw potato or extra piece of bread for lunch. Throw it on the floor, somebody -- we'll find it, don't worry. The Germans won't see you

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handing it over to me personally, just throw it my way. I'm working alongside you, I'll pick it up. But we -- no such thing was done. So they were not that friendly to us.

Q: Were there transports leaving the ghetto?

A: I don't think so, not from our ghetto. We kept sort of thi -- because what they did, they put every -- m-most of them to work, because we had -- we even had a -- a stone quarry we had, people working down -- I remember my job too, at the beginning I was working up there, cutting up the big rocks for small rocks, chopping them up, and they gave you a certain amount you had to do for the day. Like you buy a cord of wood here, that's how we would pile up the stones, and they measured to make sure that they -- this -- you did your day's work. But that was even before the factory, I was working there. And what else can we say about this, what -- we were working in the [indecipherable] but they kept us busy, we -- I mean, everybody was busy. If they -- if you didn't go to work in the factory, they came in with the trucks, picked you up in the -- they'll pick you up in the -- in the ghetto, load you up on a truck, take you away. Woman, man, don't make any difference, you go out and clean their vehicles, clean their barracks where they live. The women would have to wash their laundry for them. And I'm sure we didn't get paid, we -- all we got is beating. But --

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Q: I-I'm sorry, we have to pause so I can change the tape. One moment.

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Q: -- and taken off to work. What happened to them?

A: Well, not in the street, they came in -- into the ghetto within the compound and they would just grab people [indecipherable] men and women and sometimes some of them wouldn't show back up. So what they did with them, they either killed them somewhere or they shipped them away somewhere, we don't know, I don't really know, but quite a few they did that. But as I say, for me to remember, I don't remember who they were, I know they were friends.

Q: How long were you in the ghetto?

A: The ghetto I was from, I believe about til -- from 1939 -- I know I was there til October the 27 -- I do remember one -- vividly one day, October the 27th, 1942. We were -- up til then we were in the ghetto and October then came and they came out on the loudspeakers early in the morning, they banged on our doors with the rifles, scared to death, early in the morning, **raus, raus**, everybody out. Where we going? To the marketplace. Everyone had to leave the area of the ghetto into the marketplace. And we had to wait for the people to come over at night for the night shift, I wa -- I had the night shift from 11 to seven in the morning. When I came

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from the factory they did not take us back to the ghetto, we went right to the marketplace. In the marketplace we all had to stand around it until -- from five a.m., I would say about til three in the afternoon, until -- til the selection started. They -- they started picking the -- before that even, people were coming towards the -- from the ghetto towards the marketplace to walk. It was a little distance, I don't know exactly the amount of the distance, but on the way there they were -- the Germans were screaming loud, **schnell**, fast, fast. And children would get separated from their mothers, and you could hear the children screaming Mom, they were screaming for their mothers, the children -- and the mothers would scream for the babies, they got lost for a second or so. It caused a lot of turmoil to -- to -- to get all these people lined up in the marketplace. And they finally did line them up with the selection and that guy -- we stayed, and he would say left, right, left, right. And of course, th-the old -- the old ones, the old people and the real young, they would take them right over to one section. They didn't go right, left, they just take them over, you -- looked at you, you were old, over to the section. If you had children, over to the section. I had one of my sisters with two children. She held onto them, both girls. That was the -- my sister's named **Reisl**. She held onto the two children with my mother, they held on, stayed together. My other sister worked at night with me, **Faige**. We came in the morning, so the child was with my grandmother -- with the

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child's grandmother, which was my mother. And when the child saw her mother, she was screaming for her, she wanted her mother, but her mother -- she started running over to the mother and the German would start hitting her, kicking [indecipherable] back to the grandmother. He would not let her go over to the sister -- to -- to -- to my sister, which was the child's mother. And the child was crying. She finally quit crying and my -- my mother, which was the child's grandmother, held onto her. Until this was lined up and I would say at -- by five o'clock it was -- everything was straightened out. They took the old people and the real young and marched them towards the railroad yard. And the people that they picked, the younger ones, they looked like the ones that had already jobs and the ones that didn't have jobs, but they looked young, strong, were moving over to one area. And after the old ones marched away from us, then they started on us. They start lining us up again, checking us over again. And on the way when the people left towards the railroad yard we could hear screams going on, we could hear the rifle shootings were going, maybe they shot in the air, I don't know, but there was a lot of commotion going on until these people were settled towards the railroad yard. And ones then they -- we heard they packed them in and we heard the train, the noise of the locomotive and we knew they were heading away. We didn't know where they were going, we never did know where. They went to us, they lined us up

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again and they told us five in a row, and line up, and the Germans were standing there, and -- with the guards and the Ukrainians. They even had the Lithuanians with them, too, who joined the Nazi regime. Those were also no good. Very, very bad. And they lined us up and they told us to march, start marching. And we marched. And you had little satchels with you, they told you to take whatever you want with you, so you gra -- how much did I have? I had a little satchel with me, I don't even know what was in it. Mother packed it for me, she said you take this with you. So wis -- when we were heading towards the destination where they told us to go to march -- and on the way they kept beating us too, we didn't walk too fast, then they told us to jog. And it was all uphill. And the place we were heading for was six and a half kilometers from the market. It was hot to -- October, very hot. Usually it's cool already, but that was a very hot October. We didn't have anything to drink from five a.m. in the morning [indecipherable] to drink, no water, nothing. And on the way they kept beating us and -- and some people were falling down on the ground. Then they beat them up and they made us lift them up again and walk with them, he-helping them along. We finally did come to the destination and we looked and there was a camp for us. And we were not aware of it in this outskirts of the town that they built -- in fact, there was two camps. They took one bunch over to one sa -- area, to one camp, and one to another, was two camps in that city. And

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that was the **Arbeitslager**, the -- what they call a slave labor camp. They -- they didn't have any electric wires around us, they had regular barbed wire. But they had the guards on the towers and they had guards below. And barracks. And that was a surprise for us, I suppo -- we didn't even know what was going on there. They built it secretly. We knew nothing of [indecipherable] of it until we go -- finally got there to the gate and the loudspeaker again out, and he says everybody **achtung**, **achtung** whatever their name is and whatever they said, and they said empty your pockets, all that -- what you bring with you, dump into a little box, there's a box sitting there on the side, and the satchels went into the box. There was another box, they said, take all your jewelry, all money, dump it into this other box. And you'd better aboi -- abide by it because you will get killed. So we all listened, of course you had to do it, otherwise you don't want to get killed over there, so you search yourself, make sure you don't have a nickel left. Empty your pocket, you empty it, everything, with the jewelry and threw it in. They pile it [indecipherable] behind the gate of the camp, and assigned us to different barracks. We came into the barracks and all they had was empty bunks. Was nothing over there, just wood. They put us three to a bunk. It was, I think, three or four bunks high. And --and they had nothing, no water, not a thing for us, just shoved us into those barracks. And we didn't get out from those barracks until five a.m. in the morning the following

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morning. The -- the -- the loudspeaker again, **aus**, everybody **aus, aus, aus, aus**. And then they would give us the **[indecipherable]**. The ones who had jobs working in the ammunition factory, line up to one area. So we all knew where, you know, we were already **[indecipherable]** so we stood in one area, then he filled in others with us, then they marched us towards the factory. As we came into the factory, we were -- they're like a -- a -- a herd of cows. We were walking in and they were stand with the long whips and they're beating on us **[indecipherable]**. And the overseer with the **SS** man was right there with him. With the dogs barking and screaming, grabbing your legs if you didn't walk fast enough, or your clothes. And I remember there was this shouting shout **[indecipherable]** we didn't walk fast enough to the gate. And that was a regular ritual with them, in the morning to go in we got a beating and then when we left we got a beating. Either way we didn't walk fast enough **[indecipherable]** a good excuse, because we were all bunched up in one area, trying to get through the gate so that we can go about -- to march back to the camp, and we'd always get beatings over there. And then, you know, once we got up to the -- inside the factory compound, we all knew where our stations were. And the new ones were assigned to the areas wherever they assigned them to. And we stayed there in that factory til almost -- I would say til 1943, or -- or the beginning of '44, we stayed in that **Arbeitslager**. And there too, typhus broke out. Very bad

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typhus, I had it myself. And I lost a sister that way. One of my sisters, **Chaja**, they drove in a truck one morning before I came back from work, the night shift. And seven o'clock instead of letting us into the -- to the camp, they would let us in between the barbed wire, like six feet apart or something like that. And all of us had to stay in the barbed wire til the two truckloads came out of the camp. And these were supposedly going all infected people with the typhus. And we no longer saw them after that. That's -- I lost one sister right there. Of course, the others, in the beginning when we had -- when the -- what do you call it, the -- when they took everybody, the old and the young away, in the beginning I lost a sister there, too, in another town. But that's how I lost one of them. The other sister, my t -- the -- the one that was two years older than I was, she came down with typhus. And they had, believe it or not, so to speak, a hospital. There was one room at that bunk, one bunk bed, on one side, one bunk bed on the other side. No blanket, no nothing to cover yourself with, just plain old wood. And I still til today don't know why they didn't kill her and why they let her stay in that little hospital. She stayed there -- I would check on her every morning when I come in from work, whenever I got off I would always go in to check on her, see how she is. And one morning I came in, she was no longer there. So I went up to the Jewish policeman which I knew, and I said -- his name was **Muttle, Muttle Hilf**. I said -- I ran into him and I said, **Muttle**, what

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happened to my sister? He said, she died during the night and we already buried her in the bottom of the stone quarry [**indecipherable**] a stone quarry, and we buried her there, but the two -- one that was two years older than I was. So I was only left with one more sister in the camp, **Faige**. And I lost her too, as we going to come into it. We stayed there in this camp, then we -- the -- the Russians advanced a little bit from the east coming in, and then we could hear the artillery pounding already and we knew something was going on. So my sister **Faige** and this Jewish policeman got together, and there was another Jewish policeman who -- his name was **Moishe Herblum**, he was sort of related to us, a distant cousin. She and him got hooked up to work out some way that we going to try to escape from that place. And I came home from the shift -- that -- that shift I had from three to 11 that e -- in the night. Came home 11, she looked me up, my sister and she says, we're going to escape tonight, don't tell anybody, no one. I said, okay. So she -- I said, when am I going to know when to run? She says, I'll come and get you. So she says, just be ready, stay in front of the door in -- of the barrack and I'll come and get you. She and the policeman came along and got me. By that time other people knew it already too, because I saw a lot of commotion, people were running. And somebody got into the -- to the barbed wire and cut through the barbed wire. And as we were running, the cue -- the cue was if the lights are off, we run. So the lights were off. So

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the people what their mission was to cut the wires, they did the job. And a lot of people was -- tried to fight through that little area to get out, and they got entangled to one another, and a lot of commotion. By that time the guard heard a lot of -- more noise going on, so he took the lights and put the searchlight towards that area where he heard the noise and he saw people were running out. He opened fire and I was running with my sister and the Jewish policeman together, and I got hit in the head, wounded, and I dropped. My sister, after I dropped I don't know what happened to her, o-or to the policeman. I know people were running back, the lights went on and people were running in every direction, in, out, in and out. Somebody jumped on me with a **[indecipherable]** and put a scar on here, I was bleeding from here, I was bleeding from my head until I -- they were stampeding me. So I finally woke up and came -- a few seconds, I came up to myself, I said -- I started screaming for my sister, **Faige, Faige**, and I didn't hear from her. So I said to myself, why don't I go into he -- the women's barrack and look for her. So, I was a little bit disor-oriented, I didn't know which -- I lost a lot of blood, and I did manage to go into the women's barrack, which she shouldn't have gone in, but I took a chance, I went in there. The -- the lady in charge of the barrack was one of our Jewish women from our city, so I knew her, sort of. So I figured she's not going to bother me too much. I went, **Faige, Faige** in th -- in the barracks, no **Faige**. So my -- my first cousin,

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Ida, she was my first cousin, she says, what are you sh -- she says, what are you looking for? I was looking for **Faige**, have you seen **Faige**? She says no, she's not here. And then she saw I was bleeding [indecipherable] from my head, so she grabbed that shirt, dipped it in some water [indecipherable] I put it on my head, tried to stop the bleeding, and -- and I couldn't leave that women's barracks that night, I had to stay overnight there, underneath th-the last bunk, I squeezed myself underneath there. And she told me to hold this over my head, which I did. And then -- because all night long they were -- they were angry that we were trying to escape, so they were shooting all night long into the barrack with the -- with the rifles, boom, boom -- with the machine guns, boom, boom, boom, boom, all night long, until early in the morning it stopped, I snuck out of there and went into -- back to my barrack. And three days later the rumor was sure, that we are going to be shipped out. My sister didn't tell me that, but that's the reason they wanted to escape, because we going to be shipped out. And one to the other was talking, they said here we helping, actually, the Germans. Everybody has a job, we work in the ammunition factory, and all kind of copper foundries, each one had a job. We were actually helping the Germans, and if they ship us out of here, where can they take us? To probably [indecipherable] extermination camp. We didn't know. So my sister was trying to escape with me and the policeman. Now, the rumor later was

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around, saying that the underground was supposed to have met us there. There was -
- the way they worked it out, they wouldn't tell me anything about it, they didn't want me to know, in case I get caught or something, so I don't have nothing to tell them. It was all arra -- arranged with the partisans, who were supposed to meet that -- at 11 - 12 o'clock in the night, and to eliminate the guard and knock the lights out. And it so happened there was an air raid, so the lights went off anyway, and there was -- got a little bit mixed up. It so happened that the -- the partisans never showed. Maybe they got some problems, they never showed. So we proceeded with our stuff that we said we going to do, we did. So, a lo -- some of them did escape, I don't know how many, so the next morning roll call they wanted to see how many escaped, so they chased everybody out from the barracks and they would start to count the names and the -- and they marched us over to the place where -- where we were trying to escape, we cut through the wires. And right in the front of us there was the policeman, wounded. My sister was there, but she was dead. But there was about, I would say 10 - 15 people laying there, moaning and moaning and groaning, blood -- lot of blood flowing around and -- and they made us look and they took the machine gun and killed every one of them. And they said this is the lesson that you will learn. If you escape, that's what will happen to you. So from now on, stay put,

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don't -- don't escape any more. And this is the lesson that we learned right there.

And sure enough, within about four or five days later we were shipped out of there.

Q: Didn't any of the Germans notice your head wound, or your chest wound from the **[indecipherable]**

A: The head -- the chest wound they couldn't see cause I wore the jacket on top, you know, th -- they couldn't see that. But my head wound they could have seen, but we were -- we had ba -- you could wear anything you want on your head, a beret, or a hat. Then wa -- in that camp, it wasn't where you had a striped uniform yet. We didn't get that til later, we were wearing our ra -- normal clothes, a pair of pants and a shirt, whatever you had, you wore. So I had a beret and I covered it up, and they didn't see it at all. And of course I washed everything away from the **[indecipherable]**. And they didn't check me over at all until I got to the destination where -- I'm going to tell you where I came to, and then they asked questions.

Q: How did these wounds heal?

A: The wounds did not heal until I was liberated in 19 fort -- April 25th, 1945, I **[indecipherable]** 1945 of April the army medics, **U.S.** medics treated it for me. It would get infected and re-infected, infected and re-infected for so long a time. Only time it felt good, when you took a shower, finally they let you get -- washed it, so the scab washed off and then the new scab came on the -- of course, you know with

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the sanitary conditions being so bad, that infected again, so that's what I said, didn't heal up til I was heal -- til the vet -- the army medics helped me after the war, after I was liberated.

Q: When this wound was not healing properly, did you have pain and fever?

A: I would get a lot of headaches from that. Until today I still feel headaches, I think it's maybe contribute to that, I'm not sure. Whether I got fever, I don't know. I did get typhus, I had fever. So I'm aware of what -- what fever is, but you know, you had so many other problems, this was just a little minor thing in your life, other than the wound, you know.

Q: How big was your ca --

A: I would say about three inches long. Right in the back here, in my head. By just a little bit, maybe an eighth of a 16th of an inch deeper I wouldn't have been here talking to you -- this interview here.

Q: So it was just a flesh wound?

A: A flesh wound, but it opened up almost to the scalp, almost to the bone it separated. Was pretty deep.

Q: When you told me about going into the women's barrack, you said the -- the woman that was in charge was from your town.

A: Yeah.

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Q: Were there other Jews from other towns in this camp with you?

A: Yes, there were some other people in that camp, ou-out of towners too, yes, because they kept brining in extra people every -- every week, every day they brought a few extra ones in. And some of them looked pretty strong when they came in already to our camp towards the end, we were already weaklings. We're not skeletons yet, but we were [indecipherable] weak. They were still strong, they came from some other part maybe, where they were not mistreated yet. And so they -- when they came into our camp, then they learned a lesson right there, they gave it to them the same treatment we had. And people were losing weight. But it wasn't just -- just as bad, you could still survive, yeah.

Q: You also mentioned that after the escape attempt, they took the wounded and they executed them. Were there any other executions as a result of that attempt?

A: No. They were just threatening us, saying if we would think about again escaping, this w-would happen to us. But before that -- before that, the order was, one had to watch the other, because sometimes we did have escapes. And they would take just five out, innocent people, and kill them because this one person would escape. They did that in the beginning when we went into the camp to be told -- they were telling that over the loudspeaker, every day we heard that. But during that time they just killed -- they -- they just killed the wounded that were trying --

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that were on the other side of the fence, which escaped, they were already on the other side.

Q: While you were in this camp, did you have any idea of what was happening elsewhere in **Poland**?

A: Not really, no, because we couldn't talk to the people who were on the outside, the non-Jews, they wouldn't tell us nothing. Not me, let's put it this way, I can't speak for the whole town, maybe somebody did know. I did not know what went on. But towards the -- later on we heard stories that -- not until I got to **Auschwitz** I heard that -- the rumors what went on.

Q: Is there anything else that comes to your mind about this camp, before we leave?

A: Well, before we left this camp is -- the only thing I can remember, how they were doing, they -- they came out -- we had like sobriety tests like we have here for somebody who drinks and drives. The policeman stops you and they make you walk to a straight line. And they -- there was one German there, his name was **Al -- Alto**, that's the only name I remember, how it's possible that you could only remember one miserable man, because he was very bad, he was bad. And he was a heavyset man, and I remember he'd come in and everybody who was in the shift -- the worst shift by the way, was night shift, because that means you were in the camp all day long. And all the trouble started during the day. If they needed extra help they

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would come in and drag you out of bed, and go do extra work, plus he makes sure he brings you back so you can go on the regular shift. We might put that day on 16 hours or 17 hours. And that was the worst shift. But he would come in during the day and have everybody outside and he would -- like target practice, he would have you walk a straight line. If he knew you were sick in bed -- so-sometime you would see people laying on the bed with foaming from their mouth from the high fever from the typhus. I had the typhus too. So-Some -- sometime maybe [indecipherable] or heavy, I don't know what it is. My sister, the one who died, she had typhus, but for her, hers turned into the tu -- tuberculosis I think it turned into, she never recovered, she died. They let her die on her own. That was in the a -- in the camp yet. And what -- he would bring them in and he made you walk a straight line. If you did -- if you wiggled a certain way, he would put a bullet in the back of your head. And this was like ta-target practice for him. And he had other accomplices come with him, to show them what he is doing. Trying to show them that gee, he could do that too. To harden them up, I guess, like weren't hard enough. And I remember one of my neighbors, his name was **Luther**, I don't know his last name, he was my -- my age, and he had a bad case, cause he was foam -- I remember seeing him in the morning, he was foaming from the mouth. And he would tell us to go out, so we had to leave, you could not stay inside or he would

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kill you in your -- in your bunk if you stayed. And he -- that's how he died, because he was wiggling when he was walking, his fever was so high that he could not walk straight line. So therefore he shot him in the back of the head. This is the only one that I saw him shooting, by the way, but he would do that every so often, every so often. I remember this young man when he was my friend, he was my neighbor before, we were living near each other. We were the tailors and they were the carpenters. Yeah, we knew each other pretty good.

Q: Before the escape attempt, had there been any deportations from the camp?

A: No, they would only bring people in, not -- not out, just bringing them in, they were bringing extra people in from other towns, but who -- I never see anybody leaving there until they deported everybody out of the camp.

Q: Tell me about the liquidation of the camp.

A: The liquidation of the camp, like I say, after we tried to escape and three days later the rumor was true. My sister didn't want to tell me, but then we found one another to see how they -- the people were trying to work this out with the -- with the partisans somehow. And they pulled up the train and the camp was maybe a block away from the -- from the railroad. We could see the railroad yard from far away. You know, it wasn't that far, it was -- maybe it was longer than a block, but we could see the cattle cars. And one day they told us to line up in the morning, and

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-- and march towards the railway yard. Well again the beatings [**indecipherable**] on the way it was the same thing, that we would walk past the -- it was constantly beating, beating with the long whips, just like -- just like the cowboys here with the herd of cows trying to round them up, it's constantly beating, beating, beating. When we finally came towards the railroad yard they started to line up people. See, you go -- to what wagon to go into, push them in. And we were packed in, 125 to 150, I would say, approximately to i -- to each car. They would set us down between each other's legs so that we could fit more in. And then once was full, he s -- closed the door up and sealed it up so no one can open it up. And they finally, after leaving and we got through, we finally pulled away, we could hear the locomotives, the noise of locomotives and we were heading out, we were three days on the road. No water. We stopped at every station. We didn't know where we were going, but we stopped in so many stations, I know, because this was not a priority train, the army has to go through first, so there was -- they let everybody else go, but we stopped in so many stations, and in unison, I remember we were screaming, **wasser, wasser, wasser**, and the Germans know what **wasser** means, because in their -- German language I think it's the same. We didn't ask them to feed us, all we asked, water, water. No water was given, nothing at the station. We finally did arrive -- we finally did arrive at the destination in three days fa -- after three days

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you finally arrived in this camp, it was very scary for me personally, with -- to see all these electric wires with the -- with the current would kill us, with seven foot tall, they had to be at least, or 10 foot tall. It was a different ballgame there. And as we were looking through the barbed wire, we saw people walking around with skeletons, with thin and striped cap and a striped uniform an-and wooden shoes, we already saw that. But the people who came to meet us in the front of the car, they pushed those little carts. And they came and told us in Yiddish that this is **[speaks Yiddish here]** we were burning, we were burning the Jews here. This is not a work camp, this is strictly a killing camp. And that's when we first got to know about this from the -- from the people from within the camp, when they met us in front of the railroad yard. Then they opened up the -- the car, each car -- each car separately, and they were saying, **raus, raus**. Again the same thing started with selection. Right, left, right, left. Even -- even we were all, so to speak, the cream of the crop. We were working. We -- we were healthy, so to speak. Still they wanted, still line up again people, and they put them off to one end, and we went to the other end. They took the -- the one end away, we don't know what happened to them, til we found out later on that they took them for gas and killing and then -- and **[indecipherable]** right away. With us they took us over **[indecipherable]** a little bit younger, they took us over and we marched towards the inside, I remember. And

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we came up to a big table, and there were **SS** men sitting at the table, there must be about 10 of them, and they had some kind of instruments in their hands. And that's where they were tattooing us. So we rolled up our sleeve and they gave us our numbers on the arms.

Q: What is your number?

A: My number is **A18991. A18991.** And they tattooed everybody. Next from the tattoo -- and mind you, we still didn't get any water. We still -- it's already **[indecipherable]** three days now, no water at all, nothing. We were tattooed, then they checked us over, they told us to go into **[indecipherable]** the barbers were standing, and women and men, their hair was cut off. Before, in our camp, where we came from, the -- the Jewish population in that camp, the women wore the hair. They cut their own a little bit shorter, but when we came to **Auschwitz**, they chopped all the hair off, they took off that the girls looked like boys already, everybody looked the same. And that's when they noticed, the barber, I don't know whether he was a German, or whether he was one of the -- from the camp workers **[indecipherable]** but he asked me about my wound. The first time. He asked me about my wound so I told him I had a fight inside the car. We were pushing each other trying to get to the -- which was true, we were trying to get to that little window to get a breath of air. And there was fighting, really fighting going on in

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that car with us. And then -- so I told him I got hurt that way. He took -- he didn't question me after that. Shaved it off. It felt better after he cut away all the hair, but again it still was infected. And after the haircut they told us we had to go get a shower. So they lined us up again and like in a maze where you couldn't get out any more. You got in, you couldn't get out. And we went in, they gave us -- they told us to leave our clothes on the inside and when we came out on the other end of the shower, we had our striped uniforms ready with our wooden shoes and we got dressed, went back into the barrack and we stayed there in the barrack. Finally somebody brought in some buckets of water to get -- to get drink. And you could have drank up a whole bucket yourself as thirsty we were. And we -- they delivered the water and then during the night -- during the night was a terrible noise going on next door to our barrack. Very noisy.

Q: I'm going to interrupt you for just a moment because we need to change tape.

End of Tape One, Side B

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Beginning Tape Two, Side A

Q: -- of the **United States** Holocaust Memorial Museum volunteer collection interview with **Henry Greenbaum**. This is tape number two, side **A**. And you were -- you had finished telling me about your transfer from one camp to the other, but can you give me the names of those camps, please?

A: The camp -- my camp was called just an **Arbeitslager** camp. And the factory that I worked in was called **Hermann Goering** factory. But the destination that we evacuated our camp, we came to a camp and it was called **Auschwitz**. And I do remember **Auschwitz** had this famous sign, **Arbeit Macht Frei**, work makes you free, I guess that's what the translation is. But that was **Auschwitz** that we came to before we got -- after -- after the train stopped and we were unloading, and the Germans were screaming **aus, aus, aus**, everybody. So you know, you have to jump out of the carload real quick. My -- my legs were entangled with people that I thought they were sleeping all night, I thought, because we started on the floor, and when we came to the destination I could touch the roof of that car. So I was laying on top of other people, and I thought they were sleeping. But then I found out after I got out, got myself free and I jumped out and I saw all these people -- I don't know the exact amount, but quite a few were dead, never left the car, because they were suffocated, from not giving us any water, or enough air. And people were fighting

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with one another trying to get a little bit of air. So there was quite a few dead on that -- on that train.

Q: When you say **Auschwitz**, are you referring to **Birkenau**, do you know?

A: **Birkenau**, **Auschwitz**, it was in about the same area where you came to.

Everybody says **Auschwitz**, but I believe where you really drive up to is almost, it's called **Birkenau**, I think, but --

Q: So wer-were your barracks brick or wood?

A: I believe ours was wood, wooden barracks, I think.

Q: Before we had to change tape, you were telling me about your first night in -- in **Auschwitz**. Could you continue?

A: Okay. After we -- during the night when we spend -- in the first night in our barrack, we heard a lot of noise going on next door barrack. I mean, not just noise, but screams, screams, people were like with s-somebody be cutting somebody or hurting somebody. And this went on almost, I would say half of the night, until the next day we found out from other sources, from people around there, from -- that had been in this **Auschwitz** camp longer than we were told us that that night was the Gypsy night and they were killing all the Gypsies that night. And that's where the noise came from that we found out the next day.

Q: And your first day in **Auschwitz**?

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A: The first day really not -- well, we didn't do too much over there, just hung around in the barrack and just talking to one another. And we did walk out a little bit, we had to wait for our food, they give us this little piece of bread in the morning. A little piece of bread th-th-the thickness of two slices of toast, I would say. Black bread and some ersatz coffee, which was imitation black coffee, we had that in the morning, early. And after that, eating for three days and drinking, this was like nothing compared to what we did where we were before. But a little bit more to eat, we had extra soup over there because we -- when we went to the factory, in the **Arbeitslager**. But here so far we didn't get just -- just this bread in the morning and the watery soup in the evening. And then we were hanging around every day the same, talking to one another and we could smell the stench in the -- in the -- in the camp. Of course by that time I already knew what it was. Th-The people that worked there told me, I was aware already what this is -- was. And now and then we would also help picking up bodies in there. They would grab you, say come on, go to work, they -- and they would give us one of these carts, we'd go ahead and pull somebody just naturally dying in the -- on the street. We would take them and put them -- put them on a pile next to the crematorium over there, we'd put them in a pile like -- like y -- like you pile up wood, they were laying there. And we didn't do too much other things than that, just a -- until one day. I was there, I

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think about -- I would say at least six months, until this German well-dressed man came in, into the camp. And we -- we were sort of -- we picked out the youngest of the groups and we lined up and he went and gave us a selection, he looked us over. And he would point to go over towards him. So I was the one that he picked. Went over to him, I wasn't aware of what he picks me for, I was not sure. But then they took us on a truck after that and they took us to another camp called **Buna, B-u-n-a, Buna-Monowice** I think it's called. They took us to that camp and we got to get this man to -- he was giving us jobs. I don't know how many he got out of there, maybe it was 50 - 100 people, I don't know the exact amount. But he took a pretty good group, I'd say two truckloads and we went over to **Buna**. And from --

Q: I want to ask, before you get to **Buna**, I have one or two questions

[indecipherable] Auschwitz.

A: Okay.

Q: You said you were in **Auschwitz** for about six months. During that time did anybody notice your head wound?

A: Nobody. No-Nobody own -- nobody even noticed it because when they gave us, it was a striped little cap that I wore. So that covered it up, too. The only time they would see it maybe -- I don't think they ever noticed it on me, but if I did I was

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prepared to tell them that I got hurt on the -- on the wagon, on the train, on the cattle car.

Q: While you were there for those months, just waiting, what could you see around you? How far could you see around you as to what was happening?

A: Well, I could see -- I-I was roaming around in the -- in the camp, I was seeing what people looked like, they -- they were already skeletons in that camp. We were not yet skeletons, we had a little bit more food where we came from. And there, the people over there, they would just look like skeletons, it scares you. Some of them were laying on the ground, they couldn't walk, they couldn't talk any more, sort of. And it's the only thing that I saw, there was not too much to observe except the smokestack. You could see the smokestack coming -- the -- the -- the smoke out of the chimneys. We could see plenty of that, but the stench by that time I was already aware of what it is.

Q: From where you were in the camp, could you look out to any area that was not part of the camp?

A: There was nothing to see, it was just a empty area. I don't n -- I couldn't see much out there. I could see empty areas where I was facing. Maybe some woods far away, that's about the only thing I could see.

Q: Now tell me about **Buna**, how did **Buna** compare to **Auschwitz**?

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A: Well, **Buna** was a little bit cleaner than **Auschwitz** because **Buna** was already like a working camp. At least we didn't have any crematoriums in there. They did have punishment by hanging in that camp, but not crematorium, no burning people in that -- **Buna-Monowice**. And this man picked us up and the job that I was assigned to was to **I.G. Farben** company. And so anyway, so we did get -- we were still able to get a little bit extra soup over there in the -- in the **Monowice** in the factory. So we would get -- actually you would get a piece of bread in the morning in -- in **Buna** with the black imitation coffee. Then around one, two o'clock in the afternoon they give you a little water soup, a little bit extra. And then when we came home, to home, when we came home back to the camp, we got another watery soup. You had a spoon with you, but believe me you didn't need a spoon, there was nothing there to eat with a spoon. There was cabbage, you couldn't find a piece of cabbage. Or turnips, you couldn't find a piece of turnip. It was just watery soup, you could drink it. So that made us a little better in that camp, I think, it looked a little bit cleaner too in th -- in that **Buna** camp. Like I say, every morning we would get up, and -- get up in the morning, get to -- get this little piece of bread and on the way you would -- sometimes they would transport us by truck. If it was foggy -- they used to be very foggy sometimes there that you couldn't see but maybe 10 - 15 feet away in front of you. So they would put us in trucks to take us to the factory

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back. But of course -- and in the factory the same thing what happened there. We didn't get as much beating, but you still had guards with you, so you had to watch your **[indecipherable]** you couldn't talk to one another. If we did, we -- he'd -- in the evening -- they wouldn't bother you while you were talking, but before you left to go back to the camp, they would call you into a certain area, you know, like an office where they were and they would ask you, why were you talking so much to this man? What were you talking about? What we talking about, we hungry, we talking about food. We talk about -- we not have -- and we talk about the families we lost, that kind of talk, that's all the talking that we did. And one day he didn't take -- he didn't take that and he gave us -- there were chairs that you put your head through, your knees on the ground, your stomach on the seat of the chair, and they take your -- take your shirt off and they would give you a whipping with a whip. And when you get through, your back looked like a city map, a road map, with the beating that we used to get. So you were actually -- you were not a -- you shouldn't have been able to talk to nobody. Just do your work and don't say nothing to one another.

Q: Were you able to form any bonds with any of the other prisoners, though? Any friendships, though?

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A: Yes, we did. We -- we did. We s -- we -- we were -- the guys we kept together trying to help one another, we did. Specially by when we were marching later on. But then the -- why we -- when we came, we sort of kept with one another too. I had this one young man, he was my bunkmate. That happened in **Buna**. And in **Buna** we used to get air raids. And the air raids would come also to the -- to the **I.G. Farben** company, too. And while we were in **I.G. Farben** company, the Germans had a German kitchen there for themselves, or maybe for the non-Jews, too, I don't know. But all I know is whenever the air raid came and that young man would find out where the kitchen was, he was running to the kitchen to see what they threw out. And he would sometime come back with food, like so -- sour soup, old -- old -- that they throw out in the trash. And I used to tell him, I told him, I said, don't go, you're going to get hurt, don't do that. No, he said, I'm hungry. I said, I'm hungry too, but I'm not going to do this. And he went, and he finally did get caught. When it's -- his punishments was hanging. And he didn't listen to me when I tried to -- to warn him. He was my bunkmate, we were three of us in a bunk. He was my age. I don't remember his name it's been so many years. And we had to go out there and watch three -- three guys -- three and him, four guys were hung in the -- in that -- **Buna**. The German got up and he read a protocol. I don't know what it was, what he was reading, I didn't understand a word he said. And then after he

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gave the -- the order, and one of us -- not me, but the people of [indecipherable] and they had ropes around their neck, and he was one of them, I don't know what the other ones were punished for, but I know he was punished strictly for just getting just a little bit sour soup out of a trashcan that they -- that the German kitchen threw outside. That was his punishment, that's only no -- that's the only thing I know about it. And after that, after they were hung, the people who were the -- they had a regular band, instead of you know, we all were **sobbering** and sorry to see this little boy, especially me, I felt very bad, my friend. And they started playing with the cymbals and the drums and the things like you go to a -- to a high school football team, what th -- a hi -- a game, when they play after it's finished. And this is what the Germans, they -- they think of the -- or -- or -- or the -- the Nazis, whatever they were, think of -- of a Jew. Or of anybody, to kill anybody. Inhumane, inhumane, it's the only thing I can describe it, that's what they are. Inhumane.

Q: Were you ever beaten?

A: Oh yes, I got beaten when I was just telling you previously, when he asked us why we were talking. And we went to his office and he didn't go for it when I told him we were talking about food and we were talking about family, he didn't -- he didn't believe us, so he gave both of us a beating with, like I say, you get on your knees, rest your stomach on the chair, the head went through the back of the -- of

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the chair, and you t -- without your shirt, and he was whipping you with a whip.

And more you -- more you screamed, more beating you got, so you had to calm down and don't scream, try not to scream so maybe he won't give you bad beating.

But I remember my -- for two, three weeks my back looked like a -- like a road map from the beating.

Q: Was that the only time you were beaten?

A: That's the only time I got that kind of beating, yes. I used to get plenty of beatings with the rifle butts, that I got plenty. Kick, rifle butt, hit with the -- slap in the face, hit with the -- sometimes they would hit you with the -- with a ladle when you try to -- somebody pushes you to the front to get the food, you get hit. I don't know who these were, were these **capos** or were they Germans, I don't know, but I got hit plenty of times with that, too. Mostly rifle butts as you were walking, marching.

Q: How long were you in **Buna**?

A: In **Buna** I'm not really sure, I think -- in **Buna** I think it's -- I really li -- I think maybe also about six or maybe a year to something like that, I don't quite remember the time. But I know that the -- the war started already, the allies got into the war, I think, at the time. And the Russians were coming he -- already in from the east, we

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could hear all this banging away. We saw some activities with the bombing, so we knew something went on. And --

Q: Is there anything about **Buna**, or about **Auschwitz** that you didn't mention that you would like to talk about?

A: Well, th -- **Buna** was a little, like I say, we didn't have any crematoriums there, that's the only good reason, although it probably is not that far away from **Auschwitz** anyway, it was a subsidiary of **Auschwitz** anyway, and -- and **Birkenau**, it all in one line, I think, all those three. But there is -- it was a little bit cleaner. I remember I was looking out, I used to look out in **Buna** and see a sign, it was 37 miles or 38 miles to -- to **Kraków** and I would always say, if I get out of here, that's where I'm going to go, to **Kraków**, big city, which I never made it out of there, never made it, never materialized. We were shipped out of **Buna** when the allies, I think, started coming in, they started bomb -- bombing the **I.G. Farben** company what they were bombing that time and I remember being with English war prisoners in that camp. But they were dressed well, their shoes -- they shined -- their shoes were shined, they looked well cleaned, well fed and they were working in the streets picking up dirt, too, like -- and we were working in the -- I was -- myself, I was building the roads in -- in the -- in birk -- in **I.G. Farben**, my job was to build the roads. My job was the curbs, set up the curbs and then -- then the guy came with

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the sand, with the cobblestones, you know, this kind of stuff, that's what I learned in there after I left the -- the **Hermann Goering** factory, that's what I did in **I.G.**, building roads. And then I left from there and they put us on the marches again. First they put us on trains from there, and then the allies were bombing the trains, and there was like a cat and mouse. They were bombing the rail and then they repaired the rail, they started again, and again they bombed it. So they gave up, wanted to start marching us. And we were marching, marching and I came to a place called **Flossenbürg** after that.

Q: Do you know when they marched you out of **Buna**?

A: What -- end of '40 -- it was almost -- probably be '44 already then, I think. I'm not too sure of the dates.

Q: How long were you marched?

A: Until I was liberated, march and the train, m-mostly marching until I was liberated. At first we came to -- to **Flossenbürg**.

Q: How long to **Flossenbürg**?

A: In **Flossenbürg** we stayed there, like again, not too long, I -- not quite a year, I don't think, we stayed there. And there -- my job over there was to sort clothes and there was a pile of clothes, I mean two stories tall. And we were out there s -- sorting clothes. Matching up shoes, tie them together, men's clothes from ladies'

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clothes separating. Gloves, eyeglasses, all separated in that camp. They had -- other people had other jobs over there, they used to work, I think in a -- in a airplane factory, I think **Messerschmitt** was there, now that I know where it is, I was told that there is -- a factory was right there. But my job was not that, my job was just to sort clothes over there. And there our men -- we didn't do too much, we didn't, except for sorting the clothes. And of course we -- by that time we already skeletons, starting to lose a lot of weight by then. And I remember one day in **Flossenbürg** the Red Cross came to visit us, and we had to clean up that camp that you could not find um -- it was always clean anyway, there was no food to throw away, and [**indecipherable**] paper, nothing, cleaned up clean. And that time they gave us, instead of that water soup, they gave us -- I -- the only way I can describe it would be like Cream of Wheat, thick Cream of Wheat. And we said wow, all of a sudden we're getting that, maybe because of the visitors. We never talked to them, we saw them talking to the Germans, and they would come around and pointing barracks out. They even had us go out there and play soccer in front of them. We could hardly walk, but we played soccer. You know, we still young, like young kids, you don't care, you still want to kick a ball, you know, you were so young yet. And I remember them playing and then, couldn't they see our faces? They could see how we look. The Red Cross couldn't be that dumb, that naïve that they can't see

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that we get this kind of food every day, that -- the way we looked? They could have seen that. Then after they left, back in to the water soup.

Q: During the times that -- the time that you were in these camps, the **Arbeitslager** and then **Auschwitz** and then **Buna**, did you have any idea what was going on with your remaining siblings?

A: No. No, I did not know. For one re -- think I didn't know is because my -- one of my brothers joined the Polish army, **Zachary**. He was -- they drafted in the Polish army, so I never knew where he was. Then I had my oldest of the brothers. He escaped before the Germans came into my town. And by that time we were on a farm because we were still living in the home. So when the bombing started my mother -- my father was already dead, my mother knew this guy at the farm **[indecipherable]** used to do work for. He came with the horse and buggy and picked us up and took us into his farm until the bombing stopped. And luckily we did because there was a lot of shrapnels in our house that flew in with -- from the bombs. I mean, big chunks. So we were sort of lucky that we didn't stay there. But while we were on the farms, we were outside, I remember til today, I was eating tomatoes that were like, I mean, real tomatoes, big. Take off the vines and eating them in the farm. And my brother was out there and he saw the soldiers coming through with torn up -- these Polish soldiers coming with torn uniforms, and ripped

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[**indecipherable**]. So he was t -- asking them in Polish, where are the Germans, where? He says, they're not far from here, you know, maybe a few kilometers from here. So he took off, my brother, walking with that soldier somewhere. I ma -- later he said he separated from him, but my brother walked, he says 1100 miles, I don't know, that's what he tells me and he went to **Vilna**. From **Poland** to **Vilna** he escaped into the woods, and I was trying to chase with him, but he chased me back, go back to your mother, he was -- I -- til today, I -- I don't forgive him that. I tell him, I said, why you did not take me with you? He said, what am I going to do with a little boy? I was -- hardly knew where I'm going. So I mean, I -- you know, I could understand that. But he chased me back and I went back to my mother and he didn't even say goodbye to my mother, he ran off. So I didn't know where he was. And the others, I already saw the three of them die, you know. So -- and then I knew the one sister here. Where she lived, I did not know. I know she d -- she was in the **United States**, but I didn't know where.

Q: How were you transported out of **Flossenbürg**?

A: Of **Flossenbürg** was strictly marching. Marching from **Flossenbürg**. Where we were marching, I don't know.

Q: Describe the march for me, please.

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A: Well, we were marching five in a -- in a row. We tried to help each other, if one was weak, we tried to put his arms around the next one. By that time we sort of weak, we lost our weight already, we started losing weight. And marching in the woods. Sometime we come through a town, and why the German population tell me that they -- after liberation they told me that they were not aware of all this, is beyond me because we used to walk through this, sometimes a little town and we would have the **Hitlerjugend** out there with rocks. They're throwing the rocks at us and spitting at us and calling us all kind of names. So I am sure that they were aware of it, maybe they didn't want to tell us that. But then we marched [indecipherable] food got scarce some -- again at -- when we were marching because they didn't have the supplies. Like you have an army, you have the -- the supplies come with them, we didn't have that. We had to -- we had to wait until we came to a farm. And if the farmer was nice -- nice enough to give us some raw potatoes, then tha-that's all you can get. You will not -- you will not get bread. You'll get a raw potato, you'll get a turnip or something like that. Which helped. If he was nice, but sometimes we went through farms they wouldn't give us anything, just stayed over overnight and continued.

Q: What happened to those who couldn't go on?

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A: Well, the ones they couldn't go on, we -- we all know what happened. They fell and they -- they -- they shot them. They shot them right on the spot. And then they must have had some other people marching in the front of us because sometimes we were then -- would run across bodies that were laying in the ditches with the striped uniforms on. So we n -- we were already aware of what happened to them. And you could see always their eyes open, the sku -- front skull was always out, because they had these certain bullets, the -- the -- from the guns that they was using that if you got hit in the back of the head, the whole front of the skull would go out. And we knew that that's -- the man didn't die th -- on his own, but he was shot. And we marched and marched un-until we were liberated. It was somewhere in -- in **Bavaria** where we were liberated. And one morning -- we stayed there overnight and we were in a circle. We're staying in the woods and wa -- I remember eating berries and the next morning you got up and I was looking for berries. They might have been green from -- the blueberries yet, I knew what they looked like, I ca -- I remember that, but I was eating **[indecipherable]**. They had a little creek coming through here and I remember drinking water out of that creek. And then I heard low flying planes coming through, a lot of commotion. And then we're seeing trucks come in. We weren't that deep into the woods where we could see the road. We'd see a lot of trucks, tanks, but we didn't know who they belonged to, whether they

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were Germans, or Russian, or American, we didn't know who they were. As we were sitting around a circle, a big tank came along and knocked all the underbrush and some trees down to get to us. And we thought they were what -- they going to kill us here, probably. And then lo and behold this one jumped out, a boy jumped out, blonde hair, short [indecipherable] hardly have any hair, in Polish he says, hey, you are free. But before that, to back up here just a few seconds, before that we were -- while we were sitting, after all this commotion we heard, we saw the -- the guards disappearing. They left us sitting by ourselves and they just [indecipherable] they had at least four of them with the four dogs, they disappeared. So we, a-as a -- as already experienced in trying to escape and got hurt, I told them, better stay put, because it might be a trick. So they listened and we all stayed there. By that time, after we didn't see them, and this tank came along, and then we saw we were free by that time. Oh, was that -- that was a feeling that's just hard to describe, what that means. We were hugging that guy, kissing that guy, we didn't know what to do with him. But then he jumped back up on the -- on the tank, I remember this time, to throw at us some rations. And I remember the -- the block of candy that they had. That was hardly [indecipherable] we were fighting like cats and dogs to get it. So he saw he's not going to win here. So he stopped. He says, follow me behind the tank and we'll get you across to a -- to a farmer house. And

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your friends already there liberated, a lot of them. So when we went across the road with him, walked behind the tank. We came in and then the guy had mixed up some -- I'll never forget the front of the door, next to the entrance, mixed up some big trays of whatever -- whatever they used, with potato peelings and white powder mixed up, some kind of ca -- stuff. So it must have been for the animals, I suppose. And we didn't get it -- we didn't -- couldn't wait to go into -- inside the door, we didn't know what they going to give us there. So of course everybody was fighting over this, until the farmer came outside yelling at us, don't eat this, this is for the pigs and the -- don't eat this. And he was take us away, and he told us to go inside the house. Once we came in the house we saw a big table, people were sitting, laying on the floor, some of them already sick from overeating. And some of them were eating bread that I -- first time I saw a big chunk of bread like this, in my life, you know, for five years. And I started eating too. I got a little bit sick too from it. And then the medics came in, that's the medics when -- when they healed my wound on the head. I told him about it and he shaved it and he put a bandage on it, medicine on it. I don't remember if he gave me some pills to take, that I can't remember. But I know he gave me some pills to take for my stomach, cause we were sick, all of us were sick. He says, don't overeat, just go slowly. Don't -- don't -- don't do too much. But we were -- water [indecipherable] stop drinking for that

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day. It's hard to describe a day like this, you know, it's -- for the lifetime. And we were liberated and that was it.

Q: At liberation, were you with anybody still from your hometown?

A: Yes, I was with my -- quite a few from my hometown, my friends. We sort of decide to stick together, one another, help one -- we said, if one gets weak while you're marching, let's help him, put him under the arms an-and -- because if you didn't, if you get left towards the end when everybody walks and you get stopped, and you keep walking away from him, they kill him on the other end. And I do remember then, three nights before we were liberated, and it was near **Neuenburg** [indecipherable] that was in baria -- in **Bavaria**. He chopped away a few people from our group, I don't know how many, and he told them to go the other direction into the wooded area. And as we were marching away from there a mile or two we heard lot of gunshots going. And they killed them. Three nights before, they just killed them over there. And somehow, I don't know whether they had -- they had the grave ready for them or not, but when we came back -- because that was the nearest little town for us to come back to, **Neuenburg** [indecipherable]. When we came back we were told that they -- the army discovered the freshly dug grave, and they didn't know who that -- what it was. So this captain, I remember he had two little bars on the top of his shoulder, I think he was a captain, I can't remember his

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name. And he says he gave orders that Sunday after liberation, the non-Jews -- that the Gentiles are going to church, they cannot go to church that day. And then he had all the carpenters build boxes, coffins. And they came over there and they had to dig out the grave, that was hardly covered. The Germans, they had to take the -- the Germans had to go down there and they take the bodies -- we -- were seeing -- we see -- that's where we saw that this -- these people belonged to our group, that we lost three nights before we were liberated. And I remember seeing the soldiers, American soldiers crying, they were -- tears came out of there. And usually a soldier is harder, th-they're tough. But they were saying how these people got killed and shot in the head. It was just inhumane. And they made these people put them in boxes and they put them on a truck and they took them to a regular cemetery there in -- near **Neuenburg [indecipherable]** and they put them in the cemetery, all in one grave, but each wa -- each body in a coffin, that I do remember. And that was just three days, they didn't -- their luck was not there. When I was liberated I did see a few of my friends, yes, from my own town, even, that we got -- th-then we had a -- from out of town we had a lot of that we've got -- became friends with. We stuck together, a-all til I was separated an-and sent to this country and they went to **England**, some of them.

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Q: You told me the story a little while ago about following behind the tank. How many of you were there at that time?

A: Maybe a hundred. That's about it, I think. Maybe less.

Q: And do you know what part of the American army liberated you?

A: No, I don't know, but I know this -- this young man spoke Polish, so his parents were from **Poland**. He was not Jewish, he was not a Jew, he was Gentile. But his parents came to the **United States** from **Poland** years ago, and he was born in **America**, but he could still speak a few words.

Q: I'm going to pause and change tape.

End of Tape Two, Side A

Beginning Tape Two, Side B

Q: -- right, now that you're liberated.

A: What means free, you don't have a guard near you, you're free to roam around wherever you want to. It is a good feeling, the best feeling in your life. The worst feeling is when they take your freedom away from you, this is the worst. And I can tell the difference, and the difference makes a lot if you're free. It was unbelievable, unbelievable. You -- you thought the heavens opened up and the Messiah came down here. The freedom, it was unbelievable to -- t-to see that happen, at the time.

Q: What did you look like when you were liberated?

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A: I was a little -- skinny, little -- little boy. Bones. You could -- you could count every rib in my body. I must have weighed maybe 75 pounds probably. That's exactly what they -- this is the way I was fed. I know I was very thin, and weak.

Q: Were you at this height, your full height?

A: No, I was not in my full height, I started growing a little bit, I thought, after that because I didn't have any food, so I don't think the food -- the gr -- the growth didn't come in til I started eating normal food again.

Q: You mentioned that you had someone from the **U.S.** Army treat your head wound. Did you see how other freed prisoners were being treated?

A: They -- everybody was treated really, really nice by the American soldiers, they were very, very nice. And they treated us royally, really. They took good care of us. They were watching us to see we don't overeat, and the ones that were overeating, they gave us medicine to take. And they really took good care of us.

Q: Did you witness any acts of retaliation or retribution against former guards or collaborators?

A: I be -- leaving **Flossenbürg** -- when we left **Flossenbürg**, we had this one guy in **Flossenbürg** that every morning we would get a speech. He -- he's -- he'd [indecipherable] pounding. He would say, don't get excited over this, he says, you'll never make it out of here. He says, I'll make sure of that, before you get out,

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that you'll all be dead. In the meantime, after we got liberated, we came out of there, we saw that man on th -- in -- somewhere in the trenches laying dead.

Somebody killed him, I don't know who. Now who this man was, I don't know. He was the **blockalteste** they call him, in charge of the barrack, whoever he was.

Q: After liberation, what was the first thing you chose to do?

A: The first thing I chose to do is food, was my number one **prorioty**. And then -- then I was trying to get myself together, started to think about my family right away. So I said, where are these people, I don't -- I knew I had a sister in **America**, I didn't know where she lives. I knew I had it, so with every soldier I saw I told him I have a sister in **America**, and I thought it was **New York**, the ba -- th-the capital of **America** is in **New York**, I didn't know. I didn't know it was **Washington**, and then -- til I met my brother and he happened to have the -- the address and he wrote to my sister in the **States** -- **United States**, and she sent papers for us.

Q: Which brother?

A: **Zachary**.

Q: After liberation, where did you live?

A: After the liberation we lived in -- I lived in different places. I was in **Neuenburg** [indecipherable] first, and then we moved to **Zeilitzheim**, near **Frankfurt**. There was a **DP**, displaced person camp, and I remember the **UNRRA**, run by **UNRRA**

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503, I remember the number, I still got a picture of it, too. And there we came back like to civilization. We came in there and there were beds for each one of us with a mattress, with a pillow, with a cover. We had a kitchen. Whether it was kosher, I don't know, but we did have a kitchen and we had lots of -- we had plenty of food to eat in that -- in that displaced person camp. And then we were scrounging around for clothes, started dress, you know, nicely. And we were able to do that, and waiting to get to this country. And also, I was also -- before I came to this country I wound up working with the American soldiers. They chose six of us. They took us in to work for them. Our job was to hand the food out to the soldiers. So we had been -- we had a -- a check on the fingernails and the hands every morning before we handed the food out. We didn't wear gloves, but he made sure that our hands were washed clearly -- clean and -- and we handed out all the food to the soldiers. So we got along fine. We -- we lived with the soldiers within the compound and we -- we were one of theirs. So I hated to separate them, but -- you know, but I had to leave for this country, I had to come meet my sister. But they treated us real nice.

Q: How did you reconnect with your -- with your brother and the other family and friends?

A: Well, this one brother who was in the Polish army, was **Zachary**, I heard -- one of my cousins, the one that helped me the bleeding in the camp, she survived, **Ida**.

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And **Ida** found out that her brother is liberated somehow. And he is in a cor -- in a place called **Lódz**. I am not sure, but I think it was **Lódz**. And before she left, I happened to visit her in **Bergen-Belsen**. She -- she survived in **Bergen-Belsen**, so I went to visit her there, and we were talking, she said she's going to go to **Lódz**, go see where her brother is. So I said, while you're going there, I said, maybe you'll run into brother. And sure enough when she talked to her brother, her brother said that my brother has also arrived there. And they got in touch, so my brother sent a note with her saying that I should come to visit him. And I was a little bit scared to be anywhere except being with the **U.S.** Army. I was safe with them, and I felt that I shouldn't go no place. And we got back to him and told him, wrote him a li -- a note saying that he -- if he wants to see me he has to come to **Zeilitzheim**, near **Frankfurt**, and I'll be there. And he decided, and he did come. When he came we got hooked up together. And we still didn't know what happened to the older brother until we found out, after we wrote to my sister in the **United States**, she told us that **Dave**, the oldest is in **America** too, already living with her. He came in 1941 to this country, through -- from **Lithuania** through **Japan**, from **Japan** to the **United States**. He came just before **Pearl Harbor**, by maybe a month or so. And so he was -- he yel -- he escaped all the punishment from all the concentration camps. He was the lucky one, I think. So we all wound up here in **America** with my sister,

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three guys living with my sister. She took us in, all three of us. She fixed up her -- her attic with hardwood floors, beautiful up there. We really had a nice place to live up there. She fed us well. My sister **Diana**. And she treated us royally, really, like she would be our mother.

Q: After the war, did you list yourself among the survivors?

A: List?

Q: Did you give your name to be listed among the survivors for people who were searching for you?

A: Yes, oh sure, I gave -- we gave them names all the time [**indecipherable**] names, we were looking for people, always searching, searching, all the time.

Q: Did you ever go back to your pre-war home?

A: No, because I had a bad taste over there and I said I would never go back because my -- I could only spe -- I cannot speak for all **Poland**, I'm sure there must have been some kind Polish people, but in my town, no. My town, nobody would help you, no one would help you. So therefore I had a bad taste and I don't -- I don't intend to go back there ever, I don't think.

Q: When did you realize the full extent of the genocide?

A: When I -- when I finally got into **Auschwitz**, that's when I first saw what was happening with the piles of bodies laying around there and the stench and the

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burning. And then we saw what happened. And then of course I -- I was always thinking about my mother and the other sisters that were taken away and I didn't know where they were taken away and I still was hoping someday that maybe they're alive, but -- but it's not so. They perished somewhere.

Q: You said you were in **DP** camp, but were you living with the other prisoners, or were you staying with the Americans?

A: No, in -- in the **DP** camp I stayed with the -- with all our people in the **DP** camp. But after that, when we got -- the six of us got jobs with the American soldiers, they took us out of there and we no longer went into that **DP** camp, we stayed with them in the -- in their barracks. In fact, there was a building in there that we stayed with. We had our own beds and we stayed with them. We even wore the uniforms. We didn't have any insignias, no sn -- no -- no anything like that, but we wore the -- they gave us the uniforms we were wearing and handing out the food. We didn't have to wash dishes, we didn't have to scrub floors. So the ge-ge --the German wor -- prisoners did have to do that, thank God of that. They didn't ask us to do all that. But we was really treated real good by the Americans, no complaint at all. Too bad it didn't come a little earlier, and thank God they came when they came because had it been another couple of weeks, I don't think I would have survived.

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Q: I want to stay in the **DP** camp for just a couple of minutes. When you were with the other survivors, what kinds of things did you talk about during the days, and what did you do?

A: Well, we talked about our families, where the families are, and what this one can't find, what he can't find. And then the most al -- our young -- young life in the camp, especially me, my teens. 12, and I didn't come out til I was 17 or -- 17, I think? 12 - five -- 17 years old. And you know, I lost all my youth, and you can't get that back any more. I lost my whole -- my education. I was not -- they -- they deprived me of my education. All I had was seventh grade. How much can I learn in seven grade? [indecipherable] I learned in the seventh grade, and they take away the pencil and the paper and the books from you, for five years you don't see it, believe you me, I don't remember a thing. It was hard to even think anything that I remember from the school, whether it was Hebrew or -- or -- or -- or the regular school. I couldn't remember too much at all about that, because as I say, I was deprived of all that. And that's what we're talking about. Then we were talking about families where you have -- everybody was jealous of me that I had a sister here in **America**, and I'll be -- I'll -- in fact, I came one of the earliest, cause I came here 1946 when I came to this country, one of the second boats, I think, that it -- with the -- the displaced persons.

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Q: Were there any opportunities for you to get any education in the **DP** camp?

A: Nothing, the **DP** camps, I mean we -- we had some education going on, but th -- I didn't feel like -- I was not in the mood to learn anything there about -- I was thinking about coming to this country. And when I came to this country, yeah, my sister was always telling me I should go to school, and I went to night school here, learned the language a little. I learned a lot from the soldiers, but you know, you learn their language sometimes from soldiers. But when I came here, my sister would go to the movies with me, she would [indecipherable] me sometimes to see two pictures at the same time, you know, one after the other. And that's where I learned most of my English.

Q: Still back at the **DP** camp. After the war, did you notice any different religious or moral standards among the Jews?

A: Not really. I didn't see anything like that, not where I was, I don't know, it probably did exist, maybe, but I am not aware of.

Q: Do you remember how long you were in the **DP** camp?

A: Not too long, I mean, I -- when I came here ju -- June the 18th of 1946 I came here and I was liberated in April, so a few months.

Q: And how long were you living with the Americans?

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A: Ah, maybe a month or two, maybe. Something like that, because they had to be shipped out again, but it was really nice to stay with those guys.

Q: Tell me about coming to **America** and your first impressions.

A: Oh, the first impression when we arrived here and I saw all those cars going over the bridges from the boat, and I said, how do they [**indecipherable**] right along, with these cars don't hitting each other? Up and down, sideways, they were going everywhere, every direction. And until -- I didn't see much from -- after I got off, but then my brother, the oldest, met me, **David**, he met me at the -- at the -- at the -- where we got off from the boat. And he took us into the city. And then when I saw, I couldn't get over it, how tall those buildings are. We looked like real flies t -- t-to see the buildings like that, so big and tall and so many. There's so many beautiful things in this country, although -- I mean, **Germany** had it -- some of it too, but I mean, I didn't really see much over there. But the **United States** there was -- especially in **New York**, it was so pretty, it was so beautiful, I couldn't get over it. I really liked everything that I saw. My brother took me over to see my aunt. He says, come on. My -- my uncle already passed away. He says, while we here, let -- I'll take you over -- sh-she lives in **Brooklyn** somewhere, I'm not sure where it was, and he took us over there. And na -- she was all right, she didn't give me such a good greetings like she's supposed to. But she was busy cooking, I guess I'll

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forgive her. She was pretty nice. But she didn't ask too many questions. People -- a lot of people didn't want to ask too many questions in those days. First I didn't believe -- they didn't think something like that can happen and you still be alive. And there was just a lot of silence going on. And when I came here, my sister, yeah, she wanted to know everything what happened to the rest of the family, and I explained. I had to meet my brother-in-law in -- in -- in -- I think it was in **Coney Island** he had -- that I met him, and then he took me back to his place where he was in **Brooklyn**. He had a -- a shoe factory, ladies' shoes. And he said he did not get married -- he's waiting for [indecipherable] to say you tell me, is my sister dead? And I said, yes, I'm the witness, I saw her, we were trying to escape, she got shot, she is dead. He said, now he is going to go on with his life. He was waiting all these years for her, hopefully that she would come down here and she didn't make it. And he was so -- and so -- what would be the right word? Kind, or not -- I don't know right word to say, he was waiting for her. He didn't want to get married until he heard from me that she is -- that she is dead. And then he -- after a few months later he met somebody, he married and got a life of his own then.

Q: And his name?

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A: His name was **Osher, Haskell Osher**. In Polish -- in **Poland** it was **Osha Lovitz**, but when he came to this country he changed it to **Osher, O-s-h-e-r**, I think.

Q: After you came to this country, how were you able to support yourself?

A: Well, my sister supported me for awhile. And then, I didn't want too much handout. I was already 18 years old, I got to be able to do something. And being I was familiar with metal and I worked in the factories, I -- my first job was with **Kugart and Dubb**. And that -- they were -- this company was making checkout counters for all the grocery stores, for those giant **Safeway's** and my job was to work with the steel **[indecipherable]** long time. **[indecipherable]** to -- to cover the metal -- to cover the wood with metal. And I was working for them for awhile. And after that, of course, I met my wife. So I met my wife in the -- and my future father-in-law told me, this is not a job for a Jewish boy. Sheet metal work. He says, you come and work for me in the clothing store. So I got a job with him. And after that I still wanted to be on my own, I didn't -- I didn't like it. So after we got married, with -- I got -- took a job with a department store, my -- my sister knew this guy in the **Landsberg's** department store, that's before you, I think, I don't think you will remember that. It was a nice department store here. And he gave me a job, his name was **Eric Rapp, R-a-p-p, Eric**, he still sees me all the time, says, I gave you the

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first job in **America**, I said, you're right. And he gave me a job and he told me to be stock boy, because of the language. I couldn't speak too -- I was speaking English, but not that good. But then I worked for about three, four months in **Landsberg's**, a stock boy, he told me one day, **Henry**, I want you to put on a suit and a tie and nice clean shined shoes and come on in. And I did, and he put me on the floor to sell. So I was tell him, I said, Mr. **Rapp**, I can sell, but how do I get the names from the people? I don't know how to spell the names. And I still remember it, the words he told me, he says, in this country you don't have to worry about it. Ask you how you spell your name. Even if it's a **Smith**, you say, how do you spell it? And so goes with the same with the address, and people will tell you how to spell it. So that shouldn't be a problem. So I got in, I was doing good, I was working there for six years after that.

Q: You didn't tell me how you met your wife.

A: Oh, okay. I met my wife with my sister, when I was living still with my sister. She had friends in **Baltimore**, so she was always traveling to **Baltimore** in weekends. So I went along with her, me and my other brother **Zachary**, we went there with her. And this older gentleman who was in the house that she was visiting, he was visiting too. And he says to me, oh you're such a handsome guy, he said, come over, we don't need to stay with these people here -- he was driving -- he said,

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I'll take you down here to this -- something going on, people from **Washington** came here, like the women's Zionist organization, into a synagogue and I'll take you down, maybe you'll meet somebody nice. He took me, I think by myself or with **Zachary**, I'm not sure. But all I know, we went there and the people that came from **Washington** had [indecipherable] with her. And we l -- I looked at her, she looked at me, we sort of eyed each other and we started ex -- talking. He came over, the old man came over. He says **Henry**, come on, I'll -- I'll introduce you to a nice girl. I says, you don't know that girl, how can -- he says, don't worry about it, I'll go over there. He talked to the father and mother, he says, is this your daughter? And they said yes. Well here, I got a friend over here, a nice looking boy, he's looking for a girl. So I met her and [indecipherable] been 52 years going to be, this December that I'm married. I came back to **Washington**, I call her, she called me, and we dated for about a year. Came '46 -- end of '47, I was already married, one year later.

Q: And she's American?

A: She's American, she was born in this country. Her parents come from **Europe**. They came in the 19th century some time to the -- 1902, I think that's on the paper.

Q: And you have children?

A: I have children, I got three sons and a daughter.

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Q: And their names?

A: Their names, **Norman** and **Bernard** and **Stanley** and **Gail**.

Q: How did you choose their names?

A: My wife chose the names. She was -- she was choose them wi -- chosen -- it's not choosing the names, we named them after our parents. **Norman**, he's named after my father, **Nuchem**. **Bernard** is a -- is named after part of my sister **Brundl**, cause her -- the **B** will be in there. **Stanley**, I think is named after an uncle, I think. But my -- my daughter, she is named after my mother, **Gittel**. And it so happened that she was born -- I lost my mother on the 27th of October, 1942, and my daughter is born on -- on October the 27th, what does that mean? October the 27th she was born. And she is -- she is named after my mother.

Q: What did you tell your children about your childhood?

A: Well, not for awhile, when they were young I didn't tell them, but later on, as they got older I told them all what happened. And they couldn't believe something like this would happen, that one human being could do that to another human being. And they couldn't get over it, but yet -- they did -- kept asking questions. My number -- for awhile I would tell them that's my phone number. I wouldn't tell them, I didn't want to tell them. Until the picture came out. It was in 1978, I think it

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came out. It was called the h -- it was called, "**Holocaust**," and it played for four days, was like a documentary.

Q: On television.

A: On television, of course. And then they sat with me and we watched it. And then when the questions and answers opened up, that's when they were really into it and then they were [**indecipherable**] or not, they didn't believe, how could you ever survive all this? My God, how could you ever survive this? And I told them, it was even worse than that. They di -- they didn't put everything in that picture, because people wouldn't have watch it. They had to -- so it wouldn't be so horrified like -- like it was. We had the -- we had a much, much more problems than what they saw in the picture. And that's when they -- I told them all what happened.

Q: I'd like to -- to go back and talk a little bit about the history of what was going on in this country when you came. Let's start with the **Nuremberg** trials. Do you remember following them --

A: I followed it a little bit, yes, I followed it, yeah.

Q: How was it reported here?

A: Well that -- there was newspaper, and I think we saw some -- I think on television, I think, some parts, I think years ago, or later on maybe, I saw it on **TV**,

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part of it, but mostly in the paper. Like I say a -- everybody was denying, because somebody else says that it wasn't their fault, they took orders.

Q: Did you feel justice was done at **Nuremberg**?

A: Well yes, yeah, justice was done, they should have killed every one of them, na -
- nobody should have gone out of there alive. They should have punished every one of them, cause they knew what happened, they knew what they were doing. They -- this escape goat that they took orders is -- is not -- no such a thing. They were educated people. The-These men -- these men were not primitive, they -- they were educated, they had college degrees, they were professors. They were very well educated people. How does an educated person let himself get away to kill other people? An-**Annhaliate** a whole nation, how do you do that? A whole race, rather. How -- how di-did you let yourself do all this? Whether th-the order is right or wrong, you should be able to tell whether you do the right thing or not. And you did it, so don't try to escape now.

Q: You were also in this country during the **U.N.** partition of **Palestine**. Did you follow th-the debates and -- and the partition vote and the actual independence?

A: Yes, I did, and I was hoping that's what would happen and I hoped to God **Israel** wouldn't had a -- wish **Israel** would have had a country five years before that, maybe wouldn't have had all this problem. Somebody would have been out there to

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speak up for us, somebody would have opened their arms and gates to let us in.

Instead, where we were, we couldn't -- there was no way, we couldn't travel, nobody wanted us. We were -- we -- we were -- like everybody had a deaf ear, they didn't hear wa -- no matter what they did to us, nobody believed it

[**indecipherable**]. But in -- in -- in this country here --

Q: Is there anything else that you wanted to say about the -- did you ever consider going to **Palestine** or to **Israel**?

A: We were -- I was listening on the radio with the partition, I remember [**indecipherable**] it was going on, the votes that were taking, and thank God of Mr. what's his name? President **Truman**, if it wouldn't for him, I don't think we would have had an **Israel**. He was the only, kindest president we had. **Roosevelt** **supposingly** supposed to have been good to the Jews, but I found out later, I understand that he was not that good to our Jewish people, that he did not help much, especially with the -- with the letting people into this country. The -- the -- what do you call those, the law, what do you call that law?

Q: Oh, they had quotas for immigration --

A: The quotas, when we immigrate, yeah, immi -- to immigrate people to this country. I mean, we are good people, we were hard working people. He could have left us in here, we would have prosper here. Our children did good. We -- we took --

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we show -- we showed **America** that we came here not for a handout. We came here, raised children, professionals, to make a good living. They are hard working people. We didn't cause anybody no problems.

Q: What do your children do for a living?

A: My children do for a living, I got -- two boys are dentists, my daughter is secretary, my eldest son used to work in business with me as a businessman. So everybody had some -- did something, there was nobody was waiting for a handout from nobody. So if -- if **Roosevelt** would have let us in right in the beginning, we would have been an asset to this country, I think.

Q: Tell me what was going on in your life, now in the 1950's, as you were having your family and -- and your -- your career was beginning.

A: Well, in 1950 I started to, you know, get my family, I'm married and I have one son, trying to get a job, the job worked, and I wanted something else. So I went into a dry cleaning business. Worked with my brother in the dry cleaning business. Then I bought my brother out of the business and I went by myself, me and my son was running it. It was hard work, every day, 12 hours a day, working every day, busy working, trying to do -- make a living. And I thought I made a nice living here, I did okay. And everybody's fine.

Q: The **Eichmann** trial, did you follow it?

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A: I followed that in **Israel**, yeah, I followed how they caught him, the Israeli, they're geniuses if they ever found that man. And how they got him out of that country, too. They -- they something are, they are the best in the world. They got him, th-they did the right thing, punish him. Whatever they did to him, he deserve it. They just set a e -- too easy of a death. They ought to put him in a cage and keep him in a cage and -- and send him over the world, and keep him in the cage and see what he did to human beings. This was too easy for him, to kill him that way they killed him in **Israel**, hanging him. Was too easy for him.

Q: How was that trial presented to the American people, and do you remember what the American reaction was?

A: The American -- I can't remember what happened, but I know there was fors and againsts. People thought maybe they shouldn't have got him out of there the way they did, with the laws and all. But this was a -- a murderer, he was killing millions of people, and experimenting on -- on children, I mean, he -- he deserved what he got.

Q: During your time in this country, this country went through some pretty dramatic changes. You saw the Civil Rights movement and you saw the sexual revolution. What stands out in your mind about the -- the 60's and the 70's in terms of social

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change? Did anything -- was anything particularly of interest or special meaning for you?

A: Well, wa -- when I came to this country though, we had the segregation here. Well, that made me feel a little bit uncomfortable. I said, they are human beings, why don't they have -- why can't they go to drink water at the same fountain that we drink? What's the difference, we -- if you're going to war, you fight with the guys, soldiers, black or white fight together. Why shouldn't they be able to go into the same bathroom, for instance as we -- as the whites go on the same water -- or live in the same area? That made me a little bit uncomfortable, I was happy to see what had happened with **Martin Luther King**, he spoke up for them, he one of the greatest spokespeople in the world, I think is, the way he carried himself through. Sorry that he had to be killed. And he did a lot for the black population, the black -- black people. And also, I didn't -- I was uncomfortable coming to this country and I remember driving along on **Massachusetts** Avenue in my brother-in-law's car and I remember seeing a sign on **Massachusetts** Avenue would say, this area is restricted. And I would ask my brother-in-law, what does it mean restricted? He says, that means no Jews or no blacks can live in this area. Now, I was very uncomfortable with that. And then driving through the White House one time and I saw the skinheads with their swastikas in front of the White House. I could not

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comprehend that either in this country, but I wasn't aware yet that this Freedom of Speech business is, I was not aware of it. I -- now I know why the reason they let them do it.

Q: We went through some wars in this country, **Korea, Vietnam** and there were many conflicts with the **Soviet Union**. Did you have any personal reflections or thoughts on that?

A: Not really, I mean, that's th-the -- the -- the -- **Vietnam**, the war was -- that was an uncomfortable war, lot of young people got killed for no reason. But -- you know, and all that, but still the **United States** speaks out now, they speak out for the world now. They don't let things get away out of hand any more like they used to. They shove it under the table like it not existed. Now if something breaks out and you wonder o-or -- or the other countries where -- no matter where it happens, people speak out. In those days when we were suffering and we were getting killed an -- and burnt and -- a-and -- and everything, nobody would ever take up for us. You didn't hear anything. Why didn't all these people speak out in those days, maybe they would have been saved, a lot of people, if they would have spoke out at that time.

Q: I'm going to pause to change tape.

End of Tape Two, Side B

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Beginning Tape Three, Side A

Q: This is a continuation of the **United States** Holocaust Memorial Museum volunteer collection interview with **Henry Greenbaum**. This is tape number three, side **A**. Have you experienced anti-Semitism in this country?

A: When I first came here, yes, I did. I was driving along in the str -- in the roads, I seen, I guess [**indecipherable**] I think that this -- this is restricted and no Jews can go here. Some -- I understand some department stores wouldn't hire Jews. I don't remember the name of the department, I think it was **Garfinkel** when I came here to this country, I think. I think it was **Garfinkel** that said there was no Jews hired in this place. And I mean, you could see it, even when I was in business I could see -- detect a little bit anti-**Semism** -- anti-Semitism, but that's not much, that's not much. It was not like it was on -- in **Europe**, definitely not.

Q: Tell me about the work that you do at the Holocaust museum.

A: I'm a volunteer, and I -- I'm a volunteer for the museum, I go out on speaking -- they ask me to go out to talk to schools, or churches, or some organizations that want to hear a Holocaust survivor, I do go out to speak. Or sometimes within the building a group comes and they want to have a survivor to speak to them, and they ask me to, I do it. And tho -- that's the way I do my volunteer work.

Q: How often are you down there?

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A: Well, I'm down there every week on Fridays, I'm -- then I can -- except for either other meetings that they have or other functions when they have, I do get invited, I go down there. No matter what they ask me to do, I do it.

Q: Do you have any other duties or responsibilities on Fridays?

A: I'm home, I go -- I'm sitting at the desk on Friday and the -- the donors' desk and -- and membership desk, that's one desk and we see people come up and -- and they want to become members of the Holocaust museum and I talk to them. They do ask me all questions and I'm -- if I'm a survivor, I do tell them that that's what I'm doing. And some people are very generous, they come up to donate a little bit money sometimes. And we do a good job over there overall. We're like the ambassador or the goodwill at that desk.

Q: What do you bring to your volunteer work that is special and rewarding for you and for the people you meet?

A: Well, I guess my experience in the -- in the -- in the camps that I had and through all that terrible -- bad time that we had, I guess I do talk about it to people if they have some questions they want to ask, I do tell them well, what I saw and what I think.

Q: What is your reaction to this resurgence of interest, this new interest in the Holocaust?

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A: Well, we don't know what happens. All of a sudden everybody wants to know about the Holocaust. It's so many years before, I wish they would ask all these questions 50 some years ago, I would have remembered a little bit more than I can remember now, because the mind bottles, y-you can't remember a lot of things. It's been 50 some years now. In the beginning no one was interested, nobody wanted to talk about it. They want to shove it under the table like nothing happened. How can you shove something like this under the table? Six million Jewish people and children killed, and plus five, I think or six others, for other reasons that were killed. 12 someth -- 12 million people died. And thank God the -- that the museum is here, because us survivors, how long are we going to be here? Another 20 years, I -- hopefully, and then -- well, no, you have now some professors or book writers trying to write the book saying that the Holocaust never existed. But how can they say that? We are here. The survivors are still here. And once we go, then they'll have to look up into the museum, see our records, our talks, our speeches, our documentaries that we gave. They'll have to pay attention to that. So [indecipherable] now, what gets me too is, wa -- if they don't believe us survivors, why don't they check with the army? The U.S. Army has -- has liberated many [indecipherable] liberated me, and I know they saw what happened to us. So it must -- it had to be a Holocaust. So these people trying to make a -- a fast dollar,

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writing these books that the Holocaust never existed -- when I go into the museum I think I'm in a memorial place. I'm thinking of coming to visit my parents, I'm thinking it's a cemetery here. I have nowhere to go to, to see my mother, my other siblings that have passed away, or they're killed, they took them and murdered them. I go there, I'm thinking I'm like am-amongst them. When you go up upstairs and you see the -- the shoes or the brush -- toothbrushes or the glasses, you look -- I'm thinking -- I said, mine might be right in there. And I'm always thinking about that when I'm upstairs.

Q: In your opinion, do you think American Jews might ever be in danger?

A: If we let it get out of hand, yes, definitely. You al -- you always got to be vigilant, you always got to keep abreast. You can't hide anything. You got to speak out, just like we do now, what happens in other countries. If we keep that up, I would say no, it will never happen again.

Q: Have you been to **Israel**?

A: I have been to **Israel** only once, with the Holocaust survivor gatherings we have, in 1981, and I love **Israel** very much.

Q: What was that experience like for you?

A: Well, it was a experience that I was in a Jewish state, I didn't have to look up in the back of my shoulder and say who is following me? You're free to walk around

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with your **Shabbes**. You're dressed whatever you're dressed. If you want to walk with your **tallit** outside, you walk with your **tallit** outside. You feel more free than I am -- which I love this country dearly, but a little bit more free there with this religious as here.

Q: Israel has fought several wars. What were your thoughts during the times that **Israel** was at war?

A: While **Israel** was at war I felt bad for them because they stood all alone, by themselves. And all these hostile countries, all of them against them. And thank God th -- only the **United States** was helping a little bit, which that helped, otherwise they would -- they had to do the job on their own, fighting all these enemies. And it brought me back to -- a little bit back to the concentration camp. We were all alone. Nobody speaks out for you. They had -- they had to fight their own battles, so to speak, the Israelis. Which they did. And thank God they did. Thank God we have a state now. If something happens, they'll be wide open -- they'll hold their arms open, take everybody who wants to come in.

Q: How has your Holocaust experience influenced the choices that you've made in your life?

A: Well, the choices are made that you got to live day by day, you know what tomorrow will bring. Try to get along with your fellow man. Get along with people.

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Try not discriminate against anybody. Just get along, mainly. Live a good life. Keep family together, be happy and -- and the rest comes by itself.

Q: Has your view of Judaism changed since the Holocaust?

A: Well, I was more religious at -- like the beginning -- in my hometown -- when we were at home, it was very strict. I had ma -- I [indecipherable] I believe in God, definitely. I try to live the right way. But you do the best you can in a country that it's not all Jews. So you do the best you can here. But my views on religion very -- I love -- I -- I love being Jewish, I'm a Jew. That's how I was born, I'll die that way.

Q: When you look back on yourself as a parent, what influence did the Holocaust have on the way you raised your children?

A: Well, I raised my children -- the first thing is education, I did not have the education. So I tried, in my house, I was strict rules of what -- you've got to study. I want them to be educated because I was deprived of this. So the main goal was the education in my house, that was the main thing. And then of course, protect -- overprotective, which the kids say that I was, and -- both of us parents, my wife and -- and me. But that comes from where I was. I mean, we had to protect your children, so they don't get in any problems with -- with the law, or that they had all these problems they had in the 60's here. Thank God I didn't have any problem

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with my children. But I was vil -- I can't pronounce the word -- vigilant? Vigilant of them, to see what they doing, where they going, who they associate with. And so far they never gave me any trouble, thank God. I thought I raised them right.

Q: Are you involved with any survivor groups?

A: Yes, we are, we're survivor [indecipherable] with the survivors group, we go back to 1978, when we first [indecipherable], our organization was Club **Shalom**. And then in '78 I became the president of Club **Shalom**. And I been with Club **Shalom** ever since. Now it's changed to Jewish Holocaust Survivors and Friends of Greater **Washington**. And I'm still a vice president now with the organization. And we work very hard in that organization. If we hear something wrong, some injustice was done, we always talk about it, we bring attention to somebody about it.

Q: Have you had any recurring nightmares since the war?

A: Oh yeah, plenty. Every night I get nightmares, every night. Just never goes away. If you watch a picture the night before on the -- on that particular subject, you will dream about it. If I go out to talk during the day, to a school, or to chil -- or anybody, I will dream in the nighttime about that subject. [indecipherable] that never goes away. At least with me it doesn't. I dream about the trains, I dream about the marches, I dream about the -- watching the hangings and all this kind of stuff.

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Q: When you look back on your life in this country, what has been your best surprise about **America**?

A: My best surprise is freedom here. You're free, you're free to do whatever you want. The -- the -- it's open for you. It's just your ability. What you want to do if you -- it's up to you. You can go as far as you want, no one stops you. And that's what I like about this country. Nobody tells you what to do. You want to become rich, you want to become poor, you do what's -- it's up in your hands. Whatever you do with your life, it's you. You got to do it.

Q: Have you had any big disappointments in this country?

A: You mean with myself, big disappointment? Oh but -- you mean in general of this country? No, no. I just had a disappointment when I first came here and saw this -- these signs, these ridiculous signs and they said restricted. That bothered me a little bit, but I got over that.

Q: What's next in store for you?

A: For me? To have a nice retired life, continue doing what I'm doing, speak out on the subject. As long as I live I will always talk about the Holocaust and tell -- this is the reason perhaps that God has saved me, to stay alive so I can keep talking, tell the world of the children or to different people to see what they did to our Jewish race, what they did to us, the families and I j -- I feel the whole Jewish race.

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Q: What would you like your family and your friends, or people who in the future will listen to this tape, what would you like them to know about you or your experiences that they may not already know?

A: Well, they know the experience already, but they -- I think they should keep it up. They should definitely keep wide open, they should carry on the tradition, carry on that this what -- that did happen. Don't let them murderers ever try to deny that that's what they did. They did that. They did kill us, they did murder us and mistreat us. That definitely did, and I hope from this [indecipherable] children's children and [indecipherable] remember that.

Q: Do you speak to your children's children about your experiences?

A: Oh yes, I do. My grandchildren, yeah, I always tell them, yes. They're old enough, I do always talk to them about it. They ask me questions all the time, and perha -- now that's -- the curriculum in the high school that they have, or the schools, or middle school, whatever it is, they usually have the curriculum on the Holocaust, so they come home sometimes with questions. And they do ask me, they do call me and ask me some of the questions. So they are aware of it.

Q: Is there anything you'd like to add that we haven't discussed, that you would like to discuss now, before we conclude?

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A: Well, the first thing I want to do is to thank the American Army for liberating me, and I want to thank the **United States** for giving me a chance, when I came to this country to do what I did, it gave me a chance to start my life all over again. Which I did, and I want to thank them for that.

Q: I want to thank you for doing the interview today. And this concludes the **United States** Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with **Henry Greenbaum**. Thank you.

End of Tape Three, Side A

Conclusion of Interview

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