

Testing 72, 43, 41. This is the tape of Marcus Heller.

Yes. Should I just say what--

Say whatever you want to say.

My name, my parent's names, just say it?

Yes. That's a good idea.

Yeah. My mother's name was Basia Heller. My father's name Berish. Had two sisters, Chava Leah Heller and Chaya Esther Heller.

I was born August 18, 1919.

In which part of Russia?

In Poland.

In Poland?

Yeah, a small town Sokolow Bystry. In Poland, they have wojewodztwo. They it Stanislawow wojewodztwo Yeah.

Sort of like provinces?

Yeah. Poland is divided. They had-- I don't know, maybe 36 wojewodztwo. So this was Stanislawow. So it's not too far from Lvov, Lemberg, Lvov. Is a lot of people here from Lvov.

Poland was divided by the Germans. And the Russians took over in 1939. So I was under the occupation under the Russians. Eastern Poland was occupied by the Russians in March till 1939. And so was two years under the Russian occupation. The Germans didn't come that far. So it was 1941 before the Germans were fighting the Russians.

They took me away and the-- the Russians took me. I was 21 years old. They took me away in the Russian army. And I moved over into Ukraine. Kyiv was the town. But after-- it was six weeks before the Germans start to fight, invaded the Russians.

You went in the army just six weeks before the German attack.

Yeah. Yeah. And here, but I got sick. I wasn't used to it, that eating the food. I was from kosher house. And I got sick to my stomach. So after six weeks, they didn't even teach us with the rifles, nothing. They had no time. They are marching us at 40, 50 miles at night, night, marching back toward Poland.

And every division had a politishe fuhrer. And we start-- he was telling us the Western, France and Americans, and they say we're going to fight with the Germans. He says, no, will not come to it. We are friends with the Germans. At that time, they were friendly with the Germans.

Yes. Yes.

But I was sick from that marching. So one of the-- it happened to be a doctor or something. It happen to be a Jewish Russian doctor. And he checked me. And he says, you know what? I'll leave you over in a little small hospital here.

There was a little town, [NON-ENGLISH], near Kyiv, between Kyiv and Kharkiv, in Ukraine. And he left me. He said you'll be able to stay a little longer here, he says to me. So I was there quite long because I didn't

rush to get out.

I was trying to stay in it because I don't know what they will send me on the front again. I know it was a mess because the Germans-- the Russians started to move, run away. The Germans were invading. And I was-- I was about at least two months. Six weeks I was or two months I was in the little hospital.

But after the Germans started to be pretty close to Kyiv Kharkiv there, so they took us out from the hospital. And they released us. We were looking, me and other boys, are looking-- there were other Jewish boys. We were looking for our division. We didn't rush to [? it by far. ?] We went towards Stalingrad.

So I was around Stalingrad. They took off all the Polish citizens from the Russian Army. They put them in the working camps. So we digged-- because they didn't trust them, especially a lot Ukrainians. They were running back to the Germans.

So most of the Jewish boys, they didn't want to go back. So we were digging trenches around Stalingrad. And so the Germans were able to-- big trenches, to the height of this room, for example, big trenches, so the tanks wouldn't be able to come into Stalingrad.

And the Russian, the army, and the civilians, the trains, one after the other retreated. So we are going-- I had the uniform-- from one train to the other. It's walk and trains because they're very slow because the was all congestion from the army retreating, everything, on top of flying the German airplanes. Sure, they were flying and bombing us. Well, we didn't care at that time.

Then it's telling us-- I was for a little while digging trenches around it, as they formed this labor-- they put us on the laboring, and we didn't have no rifles at that time. But later they released us. And I was living in farms, kolkhozes in Russia, central Russia.

As a member of the Russian work armies.

No. More like-- the Polish refugees more or less. I don't know. We had-- you had only a couple-- like Polish refugees. And we were Polish citizens. We were working in the farms.

Then in 1942 organized another army, the Anders' Army, the one Menachem Begin went out.

Yes. Yes.

I tried to go. I was near Iran. I was trying to get on with this army. I see in Russia what's going on. I don't want to stay there. So I went to Tashkent, near Iran. I tried to get out with the Anders' Army. But the Russians released all the Polish. Polacks [INAUDIBLE]. They took them in the prisons when they came in to us.

A lot of Polish, they said they were policemen or political something. They thought it's only that, you know. They took them for labor camps. But they had a pact with the United States after, with the Allies. So they released them. And they organized that army.

But the Russians didn't want to let out more than 100,000. That's all. So the Polacks, they tried to sift through, [INAUDIBLE] for checkups. They only gave me a C or D. I'm unfit to the army because they-- some Jewish people did go out.

There was a lot of bribing at that time too. I had no money. I came to the army. Some, they bribed them too. They had a little money, some. That's only. And they went out. Menachem Begin went out at that time. And they were fighting.

This army, Anders' Army was fighting with the English army in Tobruk, Africa. They were fighting there then. They had the war.

But then meanwhile, I went back to central Russia, worked on the farms and live over just on-- matter of

fact, I bought-- one man went to the-- a fellow went to the army. I bought two machines, the clippers. I came back on the farms. I used to give them haircuts. I told them I'm a barber, just to live over the war, help me to get some food. We didn't have enough to eat.

But 1943, organized the other army, the left-- the army what's there now. They organized to fight with the Russians. I forget the name of the army they called it. There was a leader. A woman was it-- and fight with the Russians against the Germans.

So I went in this army. They recruited me. I was in Kyiv later on. They took me.

Were they all Poles?

At that time, they started-- the Germans were already retreating-- 1943. They were already retreating. So Lublin-- Lublin was taken. I was in Lublin station, from Kyiv. This is in Poland already. They are pushing them.

I'm making short because during the war I was there. I used to see the Russian. In Stalingrad, the Russians going to the front, back and forth, with a force. And they had better than the Germans had. The Germans are not used to it, that winter. You know, it was that winter.

So I went in that Polish Army. And I was in Lublin. Then later on we took Warsaw. January 8, with winter snow, we took Warsaw. And then after, we stationed us-- there was a big river in Germany already. The Germans are retreating at that time.

And there was a big offensive. We're preparing for it for weeks. And suddenly I was-- I was-- I was-- they start shooting. I couldn't talk to you, so loud everything. And then at that time, they broke through. There was a river of some kind, in Germany already. And they were pushing back everything.

Other one started. And I came to-- it I was already in Germany. And then-- oh, I was in Łódź, stayed a couple months. From Warsaw, we stopped in Łódź, Łódź. You've heard of Łódź?

Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes.

And I was there a couple of months in the antiaircraft. See, I was first on the radio all the time with the headquarters. But there was a cook from Lemberg, from Lvov. He was cooking for the general and his wife, for two people. It was very good.

So I said sneak in. He used to give me some, sometimes, something to eat better than-- so and also, they needed somebody to help with that cook's help. So I suggest-- I mentioned I will be a cook's help. So I learned how to cook, which I didn't mind at the time. And later, I cook for the officers in that division, 80 officers.

Matter of fact, I was a cook, and I had to cook for-- first cook for the [? three, ?] for the whole division. I had to cook. They had a celebration in Łódź. They were sworn in, and they celebration. So I cooked for the whole division.

So I remember, we made some pig's feet, jellied feet like, you know? This is cold, so we had a celebration. But then I was a cook for-- then, in the beginning, I was for the soldiers. That's right. Then later I was a cook for only for 70 officers, Polish and Russians, some Jewish officers.

There was a doctor from Lemberg. He used to come check, check the foods, you know. And till the end of the war I was-- even on the front, I was a lot of times in danger. We were surrounded. Sometimes some of-- I was always with the headquarters.

And I talked with the headquarters. The officers were going, I went with them because I was the cook, so they needed me.

There was a girl, a Russian girl. She worked in the office, sitting on the top. And suddenly the Germans were shooting from-- we didn't know-- surrounding, was shooting from the wooded area. She be right away left her there, and buried her there, Russian girl. Natasha was her name, I think.

I jumped down right away. She was with me, next to me. So after we was-- until the end of the-- until the end of the war, I was liberated in Germany. It was Bautzen, I mean--

The Germans, they were retreating. The civilian people, they were-- they'd rather go-- the English column with the Americans came from the other side. They rather fell in the other side than to the Russians to the Pole. Yeah, they didn't like.

Well, they did. I mean, Russians. I myself, I knew what's going on. I didn't see it. So I couldn't-- they used to call me to speak to them, a civilian. He was a SS. He was with his wife. They took him in the back. And I couldn't even shoot him. I just didn't.

So there was a young Polack, Polish boy. He was in the partisan before, in Poland. He used to-- for him it was nothing. He was so mad on them, he use go, he'd shoot them, you know, shoot them, back up, you know, civilians what they were running away from us.

They found a gun, [INAUDIBLE] too. That's what happened. And some were maybe the SS--

Found out he was an SS man.

Yeah. Yeah. But I mean, I didn't went through what a lot of these people went through. I did go through a lot of thing. I had a lot of [INAUDIBLE] in Russia itself. But I didn't go through that as much as-- but after the war, I wrote a letter to Sokolow. As I said, I came from Sokolow.

So I got a letter back. I was still in the army. The Russians were occupied-- the Russians were there. I didn't want to go back there because I know a lot of Polish Jewish boys, they went home. And they were this side of the Russians, then where the Polish-- Poland is now. And some, they had trouble.

There were a lot of the, even Polish, against the Russians-- the Polish soldiers. They were shooting. They were afraid to go home even, you know, in the beginning.

Your town is now in Russia or in Poland?

What is it?

Your town is Russian now.

Russian, yeah. Yeah, Russian. Yeah. So, oh, I did get a letter from-- as a Jew, I'm obligated Polish. Sends me a letter to the army, in the army when I wrote. It says no one is living in your town. Maybe somebody is living [POLISH], outside the town maybe somebody is living.

Did you ever after find out anything about anybody?

No. No. I couldn't. I didn't want to go back. I met few people. There were two sisters and two brothers. They were outside of a little town. They had a-- their father, they were-- it's like they had farms. No, they didn't own it. It was a big [NON-ENGLISH], a [NON-ENGLISH] like. And the father was like a manager.

They were hidden in the area there. They were-- they're around. I met them in Germany. I was five years-- after-- That's right. I mentioned after.

After when I came, after the Polish liberated us and let me go, the Polacks, I could have-- I could have gotten property, a house from the Germans. They took away from the Germans, you know. They gave to some of the soldiers. But I didn't want anything. I rather want to get out and go to somewhere.

At that time, I felt like Israel. So I came to Krakow. I went to Krakow because I met somebody, my friends. Matter of fact, he was with me. I helped him in the kitchen too. He helped me. I needed a waiter. So I pulled him in as a waiter to-- we had like a hall, eating hall.

And he met somebody from his town. And they're not under the Russians. And he was living. And he paid for me, and they took us over from Poland, from Krakow, in a truck. It was easy at that time. And they are covered with those-- for the rain, what they use it?

Tarpaulin.

Yeah, covered. They took us over-- I remember they lift it up-- to Czechoslovakia, to Praga, and then to Bratislava. I stood a couple of weeks Bratislava. And then the Zionist organization, I think it was later, slowly with a boat, with little boats-- there were a lot of Hungarians. I had only a suitcase. So I had Hungarian Jewish, and they are nice.

They took us over. I came with little boats to the American zone. So I was in Munich, for four years in Munich. Yeah.

You went through Czechoslovakia and then up to Southern Germany.

Yeah, in Germany. Yeah. I was waiting for immigration.

Yeah.

First we felt-- I felt and we were saying we want to go. I did have some second cousins in United States, in Bridgeport. My grandfather had a brother, and they settled here. They had a lot of children. They were pretty good up. They manufactured something, a chair company at that time. Now they are scattered all over.

And my mother's cousin, a second cousin, they send me papers through the HIAS, send me papers. And I came to Bridgeport.

So you got the Bridgeport in 1949.

1949. And then I met-- I met Americans-- American. So this is my--

Really?

Yeah. American, and American-- this is my-- 1951 I got married. My-- religious family, same as my parents were. This is my wife and me. This is me in '51. It was the wedding. This is my wife.

You've been married 30 years.

Yeah. We went to [PLACE NAME] city. I had no-- we went by train. I didn't know we have to go on a honeymoon. But the honeymoon, it's, you know--

This is my wife and me. This is my-- now, this is my son. He went to Georgetown law school. And this is my daughter-in-law, went to Georgetown law school too. And they live in Washington. Yeah, they have a condominium here.

So they're practicing law now.

No, they're in the law office. Yeah. Are you familiar with law offices anywhere?

Yes. [CROSS TALK]

He works.

I'm a lawyer. I don't practice now, but I went to law school.

Yeah? He worked for-- first there was 120 lawyers. He worked for George first. And he asked him. George let him out. He worked for a big law office, 120 lawyers. One of his partners that's here was with [INAUDIBLE] Iran.

Oh, Cutler.

Cutler, yes. This is the office he worked.

That's a good firm.

Yeah, he worked there for two years. But somehow he doesn't see no partnership. So he went in just about a month ago with this company.

Yeah. Brownstein, [PERSONAL NAME].

Yeah.

[PERSONAL NAME].

Yeah, he went with them. He likes this better somehow. He's working a lot of hours. Matter of fact, tonight he might go. He had a chance to come in here. Now I have my youngest son, I told you.

And my daughter-in-law works over in a different law office. She was-- he went to Georgetown. When he finished-- they couldn't get together on the same law school. So he-- she went for journalism. So she was on a journalism school in Chicago. But then he finished, she went to Georgetown.

She graduated, and she's now working all the different-- also here. And then when I come over here, they got-- they were living here.

Nice.

Nice, yeah. Now my youngest son, he went to Harvard, David. He was here till this morning. Yeah. He went to Harvard. He graduated summa cum laude in Harvard.

Oh, wonderful

He wrote about the second generation. A whole year took him-- a second generation, the Holocaust survivors. He went to the colleges around Boston, where he goes in Harvard. And he had bulletins, and they interviewed a lot of the second generation people. So he wrote a-- was a essay you call it, or-- a big one. Yeah.

Now he's in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He's got another year and a half. He is-- he's already working in a clinic. He's still in school. He's got to write something. I don't what-- a year. He's got a couple of years to writing [INAUDIBLE]. He also is teaching too. He's 25.

He was in the-- he was here a couple of days. He came Saturday night. I came Sunday from Bridgeport.

So you stayed in Bridgeport since you came here.

Yeah, I'm still in Bridgeport. Yeah. But he's smart.

What-- were you able to be-- I guess you were. When you were in the Polish Army, you were with a number of Jews. Both Jews and Poles together?

Oh, yeah. Yeah. There were some Jews, some Jews. Most of them came from Russia or from the partisans, some of them went in and picked up from the partisans. But some came from Russia.

And how were the Jews treated in that army?

In the army? Army was all right at that time. Yeah. Oh, yeah. In the army, yeah, but but God forbid you are surrounded, so when they took Berlin, God forbid, if the Germans would have took-- would imprison, they would probably show, this is a Yid, Yid. This is a Yid. They'd probably show it.

But otherwise, it was all right. Because we all were in the same boat. We were. And we used to-- I used to walk over, I remember, sometimes, the soldiers laying with prayer books, Polacks. You know, laying Polish. You know, we were the same boat.

But a lot of Jewish boys, they afraid to go home. I don't know, kind of a lot of against the Russians. They didn't like the Polish. The Polish Army, they knew, this is the same fighting now, now the Russians. You know, in Poland, the same. They're very right wing, you know.

And then they never did like the Russians, the Polish. And they are-- some Jewish boys, they were afraid to go. Matter of fact, one boy went home, and then he came back right away. He was there at home because the home was on this side, now the Russian side. They never liked to go to the Russian side then. I don't think so.

And he met his father in Italy, was hiding in Italy. One of the boys I knew, he met his father hiding in Italy. And then they went to Israel.

I was in Munich for a few years. I was waiting.

What was it like in Germany after the war?

Huh?

What was it like in Germany after the war?

In Germany after the war?

For a Jew.

No, it was all right. But in the beginning, the Germans-- it was all right. I mean, in the beginning. Well, yeah, they were-- I remember very in the beginning, 1945, some of these KZ, they came from the concentration camp. They used to do things on the subways, push them off, the Germans. They did things. I wasn't used to it, you know, in the beginning, only in the beginning. They hated them so much, the Germans.

They say the-- I was living, and I had a room besides in a displaced person camp. I had a room also. And they used to-- they say they didn't know anything about it. You know? That's what they used to tell us. They didn't know about it, you know.

Well, how would they know? The children were in the army. It was-- you know.

Were there are many Jews in Munich then?

There were. [INAUDIBLE] All these came later on. Either they went to Israel, either they went to the United States, either to Australia or Canada. They're all waiting. I was waiting four years. I was interviewed by the FBI. They were coming checking on me about communism, you know. And the neighbors, they asked.

I had to go through a lot to come here.

When did you learn English? After you got here?

Yeah, I came here and learned by the dictionary. I learned [INAUDIBLE]. I came when I met my wife. Then my cousins, they not living, he brought down somebody from Poland before the war. And he used to play cards with somebody that had a little store. So I got a job for him to work, for a little nothing.

So he was going to- see, I learned. I look at meat carving course by mail, with a dictionary. My wife used to help me sometimes. She used to help me. I'd ask her questions. And from Toledo Ohio, cutting meat, a meat carver. So I learned.

Then I changed jobs. I'm with the Grand Union 27 years. I'm a meat manager for 22 years, carving meat. And they, things going good for them. They were-- yeah, because I'm [INAUDIBLE]. Yeah.

How many Grand Unions are there in Bridgeport?

In Bridgeport, there are around-- here in Washington, we have Grand Union in Washington around. Yeah. They are remodeling them all. They look differently now. I don't know if they did it here or not. There is a Jewish man from England owns them now too.

Oh. They're not big in Washington.

No. I know. I know. I know.

I've seen them, but I don't--

There' not that many. They cut a lot, or they closed down, the ones didn't make any money. They're remodeling. They're putting a million half dollars, every store. They're remodeling. They call themselves no more supermarket. It's only food stores.

If you see-- I saw the paper here. They must have remodeled here too. It's not too many, no. They closed down a lot of them because they-- and it's an English company. And I know the names. They're Jewish too. The English, they want to make money. Any store doesn't make money, they just close them down.

They put money in, but they want to make money. If there's no profit, so they close them.

So how are they doing in Bridgeport, all right?

In Bridgeport, there is not work in Bridgeport. The stores were-- there was in Greenwich, Stamford, the good towns. I was in Stamford. You hear about Stamford, Connecticut?

Oh, yes. I know that area, yeah.

Yeah. I was there. Nine years I worked there. But Stamford is building up, if you hear it. Very good. So for jobs it's very good there. But the whole shopping center where I was is knocking down. A big hotel-- a lot of hotels are building there, big hotels, 500 hotels. And we had to get out. They knocked down the older stores.

Matter of fact, six months before there was a big boss. And we had a meeting. And I said, Mr. Paul, what's going to happen? He says, it looks like they're going to kick us out. He says, six and-- They kicked us out.

So I'm back-- I live in Bridgeport. I was started in Fairfield, in the Fairfield store. This store is remodeled already. It's doing good. So I'm-- meanwhile, I'm supposed to be a lead manager, I'm supposed to be. But I'm doing good. I'm with them in Fairfield, so 10, 15 years. I said they're remodeling two other stores, Greenwich and Norwalk, Westport they'll remodel.

So I might have to go there for them, either a few days there because I'm ready-- they would like to see me-- I'm 63. They would like to see people retire because they have more help than they need right now.



But they're waiting. They're waiting to remodeling. They're going to need more help. They closed down a lot of stores too. They did. Any store didn't do good, they closed it down.

And you met your wife after you got to the United States?

Yeah. Yeah. I met her. There was, at the synagogue, was a dance. And I met my wife at the dance. And we got married in New York because my older sister-in-law-- my brother-in-law-- my wife's sister got married in New York. They had like big wedding, so they had a big wedding-- three ushers-- six ushers. Let's see, six bridesmaids, big wedding.

Well, my father was living with me. So that's why my wife couldn't come.

How did he get out of--

No, no, no. He was three years old when he came here. Three years old when he came.

Oh, her father.

Yeah, her father. Yeah. Yeah. Oh, I have nobody. Nobody is living in my family. No. But he knows the towns. Matter of fact--

So he's from the same area originally.

Yeah. He comes a little closer to Russia, closer-- also Galicia. It's called Galicia. Galicia used to be on the Austria. My wife says to me Galicia. Galicia is not a town. It's Austria had part of Poland. They called it Galicia.

Krakow is also over there in Galicia called, Krakow, you know.

Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah.

It's an area.

It's an area. Yeah. But now the Polacks don't call it Galicia more. They separated Stanislaw [NON-ENGLISH], maybe [NON-ENGLISH], you know. My mother-in-law was living there. We were living together. But then my mother-in-law died. And then my father-in-law was by himself. So I had to-- and so we moved out. We had not enough room with two boys.

But later on we moved back. And my father is staying with us now in that house in Bridgeport. Yeah. I didn't go through what other people all went through. But I lost everybody, which I'm looking to find somebody.

Yes. This would be the place maybe. Have you found anybody here?

Nothing from my family. No, nobody. No.

Anybody from the town that you mentioned?

From the town I mentioned? Yeah. They're not here, no. I don't know. I didn't see them here. There are some might be in Canada. Two sisters and two brothers, they're living, you know. I met in Germany.

Matter of fact, when I was in Germany, some came. They had some relatives here. And some of the officers came to see them, a Jewish officer. I remember, I came to tell him [INAUDIBLE]. I didn't see him. He said he says you all have the same story. He says that he doesn't like it because he was an American young boy, you know, an officer. You all have the same story. You know, but that's what he told me.

The cousins are not leaving. But there's still second cousins, younger. The children are still here. But I'm not so in contact with them. They are pretty better off than me. They're different-- Americanized all together. You know?

They live around there. So once in a while I see them. When my cousin died, I went to see them. They are in furniture business.

Are there many people from Europe in your-- Jews from Europe in your area where you live now?

In Bridgeport?

Yes.

Yes, there are quite a few. Yeah. Some Russians came in. They come in now. Yeah. Yeah. There's some here, Hungarians, a lot of them-- in Bridgeport, a lot of Hungarians. I came on the train. I don't see why to drive. I used to drive down. If my wife would go, I would have drove. But by myself, I don't drive. It was raining Sunday.

So a lot of Hungarians, most of them, I couldn't really-- I didn't [? see a ?] Hungarian. I tell you, some know me. They know who I am.

Yeah. Bridgeport, yeah.

Yeah. Because some I knew. They live not too far. But they speak Hungarian most of them. They like Hungarian language or what have you. So when they came to me, they speak-- they speak American. But they know. I was sitting with them, and they speak Hungarian mostly, at least 20 people.

But not Yiddish?

No. No. No. The Hungarians like to speak Hungarian. What nationality are you, your parents?

My parents were both born here, so I didn't learn any language.

No. The Hungarians, they-- I remember, my grandfather came from Hungary originally, a long time. I knew that.

[AUDIO OUT]

When they-- after the Germans were already getting ahead, or after already, after Stalingrad, it was after they let us go. I was in--

Mark, when you left the hospital.

The hospital? Yeah, this is true.

But then you were--

The hospital-- after I left the hospital, it was still the war. The Germans were ahead. And they let us-- me out from the hospital. And I didn't feel how to go back to the front. I knew they're going-- because I met, in the hospital-- a few weeks I was there. I met people that were wounded already-- not Jewish, Russians.

This is in the fight when the Germans first attacked in 1940, I guess.

Yeah. Yeah. 1941.

'41.

'41, yeah. '41 was, right? Yeah, '41.

In the spring of-- no, it was '40 I think that they--

In 1939, the Russians came in.

Maybe it's '41.

'41, yeah, '41.

Yeah.

Bob, have you had-- from the hospital, so I don't know what-- I didn't want-- I know there's a lot of wounded. I saw them in the hospital. I mean, they said they told me-- I don't remember there-- for that division, they're wounded. I know they didn't let Polish citizens, they didn't let them go back to the front anyway.

So I was in the hospital. And some day I was a nervous wreck too. I know that. So they-- I remember one-- at the head in the hospital mentioned I need a specialist, a special, a big-- so they took me to Kharkiv, big town, Kharkiv. It's between Kyiv-- I was in a [NON-ENGLISH], a little town.

The war was so they had a chance even to bring me to that hospital. [INAUDIBLE] They bring me to Kharkiv in that hospital. So there, there was a woman tested typhus. They're just testing me if I am, you know-- first they were going-- or they put me a few days in a mental hospital.

And I knew I'm not mentally sick. But just a few days I did see what was going on there. They came from the front, officers came from the front.

To this mental hospital, officers who have broken down?

No, no, no. Not yet. No, it's in Kharkiv. Yeah. They brought me to that mental hospital. I was a few days. I did see certain things. Like there was a Jewish young man walking back and forth. The parents came to see him-- Russian, Russian Jewish mostly. Yeah.

And he didn't want to even talk to them. I did see Russian officers came. They're laying down. They had to tie them down. They were hollering, they're selling our government. The government they selling us. You know, you know, they were mentally--

Then after she came to me, came a woman, she was testing me in case I'm-- see I'm sick or nervous, all kind of pain. She's testing me about my nerves, you know. I might be a little active at that time, you know.

That's were they kept me there, in that hospital. They kept me for a while, in the little hospital, in the little hospital.

Yes. Yeah.

And after-- I was a few days in that mental hospital. Then after, they were taking me somewhere. I don't know where. So a soldier with a rifle, just taking me somewhere, you know. I just disappeared. I disappeared.

And since that time, that's why I was civilian. You know, since that time. I disappeared among the trains. I disappeared because I wasn't sure where he was going to take me. And the war was going on. But later on, I met a lot of Jewish boys. And we were all going, let's say, one was from Lemberg. He says, we'll go to Stalingrad.

We'll go towards a Stalingrad. So we went to Stalingrad. We were looking for our division, to find the division. So meanwhile, we were just traveling.

Yeah.

Yeah. But later there came that law. They took us from the front, all the Polish citizens. So they let us as civilians all over. But being in the farm-- oh, yeah. Then I went back to central Russia.

The Muslim areas?

No, later the Muslim areas. Yeah. Just to central Russia-- central Russia they say I want to go to the Muslim area, near towards Israel. So I want to-- they say-- I had a little money, not much. You buy 5 pounds tea. There you double, triple, 10 times. So I bought 5 pounds tea. And we're waiting for a train.

The train takes a week to go to the Muslim area, so a week. They were slow. So I got sick on typhus, typhus. So they put me in a hospital. I had a little money. The hospital took the money from me, not much. Then I was in typhoid about a month.

Well, that wasn't typhoid. That was just a fever. I was dreaming of my parents. They would send me things. You know, stuff like this here.

I did see Jewish boys. Was a Jewish healthy boy. I was small, you know. And I saw him. They just came, they cover the sheet on the top of him. You know, he died. He had typhus, you know.

Enough of the typhus. Yeah, I was already [INAUDIBLE] from the sick. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. It's from the uncleanliness or what was it. In the army was a lot of times we had the clothes, we didn't change it. We had lice, a lot of times. But we used to take them, and we'd keep them on the-- the cold weather, hang them up, you know.

I wasn't sick in the army. But here, in civil, I got the typhus, you know. And I was in the hospital. Later on, I came out of the hospital. They gave me the money back. So I had a little.

There was a little hotel. Not much money I had, but just I couldn't walk even. I learned how to walk, just learn how to walk. I was holding onto the wall. Not too far was like a market, outside. They were selling [INAUDIBLE], honey, butter, they were selling.

It was in the morning. I paid in hotel. It's not expensive at the hotel. It's not a big hotel like here, you don't think. It's a house. And I walked in the morning. I stood all day there. I was eating, buying and eating stuff. At night I went back.

So every day I start to feel a little better. So then after I went back to the farm. I worked on a farm, the buildings. Was hard work too. Somehow that's why I lived over the wall like this, you know. That's why.

But thank God, I'm just-- I mean [INAUDIBLE] there were stronger boys sitting next to me. I saw him dying from typhus.

Oh, yeah. That's right.

Yeah. Yeah. And I was a little one. And I survived, you know. I just happened to survive. Yes. I just happened to be luck survive. two years ago, I had a big accident before, when I went to work. Was the first ice storm, going to work, to Stamford. The car turned completely over, completely-- the first snowstorm. It was December 8.

And I just-- my manager called me. Some of the men called in sick. So I went [INAUDIBLE] It was dark yet. And a day before it was raining. So I don't know how. I had a '78 Pontiac. The car just turned over completely. And thank God, I came out.

Then two guys stopped and asked me, are you all right? I came out through the back window. You know, glass on my where the hat is here. I felt myself. It looks, it feels like I'm all right. You know, I just survived.

I had to survive. Yeah. Yeah.

And then insurance company paid me out the insurance. And I had bought another car. Yeah. I just-- I don't know.

We get in trouble, I'm going to stay near you.

[LAUGHTER]

Yeah, I survived. Yeah.

Have you told most of these things to your children?

Yeah. They like to hear it more time. They don't have time. They just, he is there and he is here. If I had a tape recorder.

Yes.

Yeah. Yes, why. What else was it? Oh, that was in Germany. Being in Germany even, there was that market, you know the black market [INAUDIBLE] trying also to make extra because I sold to the-- I had a-- me and another partner used to go from Munich to Stuttgart, you know, just two of us.

A police school was there. And to bring me to [? Bad Reichen ?] is to buy cigarettes, just to bring it over to Frankfurt, to Frankfurt, to Frankfurt. They just-- all the [INAUDIBLE] had a chauffeur. And the car turned over 2 and 1/2 times, 2 and 1/2 times. It's my partner's car, a regular car was all. And I survived also. We came out through a window. I survived. I was happy to survive.

They measured. The police came and measured. 2 and 1/2 times the car turned over. Somebody came from afar, from a-- just like from the field and hit us, hit him. And as I came out through the window, I survived. I had to survive. That's for the whole war, I survived.

Yeah.

Is that what you want to report.

I think that's more than enough.

OK. Very good.