

Where's it at?

This is something that--

OK.

Anyway, we went to work in the factory. I worked as a lathe operator. And that continued until January the 17th, 1945.

In the evening, after we came from work, we were told that we have to prepare for a march. We were given each a loaf of bread. That was late in the evening. By very bright-- very early in the morning, we marched. We walked out of Sosnowiec. And we walked through, I remember, cities of Gleiwitz, Bytom, until-- [PLACE NAME].

For five continuous days-- for two nights we walked continuously without stopping. It was so bitter cold that if one-- we stopped a couple of times to urinate. I could not even button my coat, never mind my pants. My hands were frozen.

We had my-- eventually, the sole of my shoe came off, and I tore a piece of blanket off and wrapped it around. It was a pitiful sight to see as we walked through these German towns and cities of Silesia, until we came to a place, which I don't remember, some railway station. And there I managed to grab five raw-- I'm sorry, we walked for 12 days-- five raw potatoes.

And we were locked up for the last five days in that cattle cars. And eventually we arrived to Mauthausen. Those five days, it just happened that every morning I used to eat a raw potato for breakfast. That was my morning, my daily ration. Others maybe didn't have this item.

When we got out to Mauthausen-- in Mauthausen, the camp itself is on a hill. And already I was so weak--

[BACKGROUND NOISE]

That's OK.

Already I was so weak that I couldn't-- I couldn't-- I didn't have strength enough to walk up that hill. So I was helped by a couple of friends of mine to make it to the hill. We came into Mauthausen. And surprisingly, we must have-- somebody must have said a good word about us. We were given a slice of bread for every one of us, then given showers and underwear. And in the underwear, we were kept in a block for four or five days. Eventually we got clothes.

And from Mauthausen, I was staying in a nearby camp, Gusen-A. In Gusen-A, the Gusen-A one, one factory, which was producing machine guns. And I worked in that factory in Gusen-A.

The situation in Gusen-A was deteriorating from day to day. The food rations, there was nothing extras already, not like Auschwitz or Sosnowiec, where one can get from a civilian or something. There was no-- nothing, absolutely. The ration--

This was Germany already, wasn't it?

This is Germany, yes, Austria. And in-- and the soup was made out of dried pieces of beets and turnip. And eventually the ration got so bad that a loaf of bread used to be divided in 8, 10, 12-- the last few days already for 20 we used to get a thin slice of bread.

I have to tell it. What happened is is about two weeks before the end of the war, Frenchmen, Belgians, and Dutch people were taken away from Gusen. And about 10 days before the war-- before the end, we came from work. And our blockalteste, the men in charge of the barracks, says, tonight all the Jews are being gassed.

I believed him. And I lie down on my bed and, well, almost crying to myself, did I have to go for over, for 27 months

through concentration camps, to be-- to die? And we knew that the war is coming to an end. And I dreamed that I was at the railway station and seeing a train and all this friends of mine, the inmates as well, in civilian clothes, waving to me from the train and telling me they're going to Switzerland.

I woke up with a bitter taste in my mouth. After such a dream, I have to die. Of course, he said, 9 o'clock in the evening we have to all line up and marching to the bathhouse, where they converted it into a gas chamber. 9 o'clock came, and nothing happened. And that following day nothing happened. A couple of days later, after we came from work, we had to pair up in two. And we went to the canteen. And after 27 months, only Jews got Red Cross parcels.

Each of us, the two of us, one had to put the jacket. They opened up a parcel of biscuits and dumped it into the jacket. The other jacket, a parcel was opened up and the parcel consisted of, again, biscuits and marmalade and cigarettes and sardines and chocolate. How can I describe that?

[INAUDIBLE]

The only thing is that--

You couldn't eat, I bet.

Half of us lost their lives because we couldn't keep it. The other inmates used to literally attack us by the horde and take it away. So that now, whatever one could eat, fine, if not, to just distribute it. And I can-- I still remember of my friends lying in bed dying because they had eaten it all.

And I survived. I was sick, but I survived. And I don't remember-- it was Thursday or Friday. The last day we went to work, they used to cook a special kettle down there for inmates, for some privileged ones, for soup. And I remember the whole gang jumped. And I thought to myself, my God, that would have-- yesterday only it couldn't have happened.

The last day also I saw two SS men. So already we didn't have to work. Two SS men ran by. And I saw they took off their Toten cap, their crossbows and everything. You could see the sun tinted their color on their lapels. But the signs were off. We could see planes already diving. And we could hear machine guns.

May the 5th, 1945, 5 o'clock in the afternoon, we line up to be counted, following your every day's affair. And suddenly-- our barrack was way in the back. We hear screams of hooray in front, out near the gate. And the Blockaltesters says, stay, everybody. Don't move. Somehow everybody felt that something is taking place.

And we saw people from all the other barracks running to the main square, right in front of the gate. And we started running. And I saw a Jeep. The gate was open. And a Jeep stood in front of the Gusen camp.

Four guys in uniform with rifles to there. One of them was Black, and that's the first Black man I ever saw in my life-- stood there. And those invincible SS men and the Germans-- some of them already older men that were drafted later-- were climbing down from the watchtowers, machine gun in hand, coming down from all around, walking out of the barracks all around there, the German barracks, SS barracks, come in front of four, only four, American GIs, drawing the rifle in front of them or the machine gun in front of them or the revolver in front of them, walking away, coming out with a knapsack and two suitcases and lining up in three abreast in front of the Americans.

Some of the inmates, not Jews, because here were staying non-Jews who had still got some position they were-- felt physically better, jumped on the Germans and took away their possessions. They didn't protest, of course. They knew that it's a very small price to pay for what they've done.

Anyway, there were close to 300 Germans, and four Americans disarmed them. They lined them up. And they marched towards Linz. And the Jeep just slowly followed them along. We are free.

That was the end of your story.

It's not. I'm making it now short. And that's-- but this is the one that we'll finish today. Right now, I've been happily married for 33 years to my wife Ruth, former Ruth Pleet of Brockville, Ontario in Canada. We have three lovely children, a son of 30, who is an engineer in Toronto; a daughter, Esther Sharon, who is a former assist in Israel, married and happily in Israel, in Jerusalem; and a younger daughter, still single, Aviva, in Toronto.

I notice that you live in Newfoundland.

Newfoundland, right.

What do you do there, Moshe?

I am in wholesale business. Been in Newfoundland 26 years. I moved from Montreal.

Do you enjoy living there?

Yes.

Is it interesting?

It's interesting. It is a very quiet place. The people are the friendliest people you'll ever meet. And thanks God, there is no antisemitism. So I am happy, as long as we can get out of Newfoundland once in a while to travel a bit or see friends and so on. And we have a lot of friends in Newfoundland. And I must say that it has been a good life. And I'm grateful for whatever I've received afterwards.

Well, you should only have good news, good nachas from your children and your family and all us get.

Thank you, all of us. Thank you very much, indeed. And I'm really sorry that I--