

RG-50.120*061

Hammermash, Helena **Tape 1 of 4**

- 1.01 Hammermash, Helena (born Rosenberg) was born in Turka near East Galicia. Grew up on a large farm. Father exported wood. Describes her childhood in a religious, well-to-do family.
- 1.07 Jewish education.
- 1.09 Moved to Turka at age 8, learned languages, music.
- 1.15 At age 15, went to Czechoslovakia, joined a Zionist youth group.
- 1.20 She knew what was happening to Jews in Germany. She knew that Ukrainians were with the Germans against the Jews.
- 1.24 Describes the Jewish community in Turka.
- 1.25 Her Zionist ideology.
- 1.35 She had a visa to go to the U.S., but war broke out. She wanted to go to Hungary, but her parents made her stay.
- 1.42 Met her future husband, who was a doctor from Lodz, in Turka.
- 1.46 Got married over parents' objections.
- 1.48 Russians marched into Turka; all Jewish organizations were dissolved.
- 1.56 1941, Germans entered Turka and Russians withdrew. She was pregnant.
- 1.58 Describes the pogrom by Ukrainians.
- 2.08 Gestapo comes to Turka. Describes "Actions."
- 2.12 Describes Ukrainians slaughtering Jews.
- 2.33 She is giving birth to her son and stays with friendly Ukrainian family. Hunger.
- 2.46 Is interrogated by the Gestapo and released.
- 2.58 Describes big "Action" in Turka.
- 3.04 Describes her escape with husband and baby to Hungary.
- 3.22 Sends baby to peasants in Munkash to be saved.

- 3.28 Train ride to Budapest and arrival.
- 3.49 She and her husband go to a refugee camp under assumed identities passing as Hungarians (non-Jews). Went by the name of Rosie Burger.

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- 4.08 She was interrogated and on the transport list.
- 4.18 Describes her emotions and state of mind.
- 4.25 She was taken off the transport and taken to Tokay, Hungary.
- 4.39 Latzi Levinger, a communist, saves her. Works in a kitchen.
- 4.47 Her husband is saved to become the M.D. of the German unit.
- 4.51 Describes a day in the camp.
- 4.58 End of 1943, she is sent on a transport to Poland.
- 5.00 Describes transport in a cattle car to Auschwitz.
- 5.02 Arrival in Auschwitz. Selections by Mengele for “twin” experiments. Dr. Klein is doing research.
- 5.06 Sent to Birkenau, Block 13. Kapo was okay.
- 5.12 Repeats story about her son.
- 5.22 Story of her mother and sister who died. Father and younger sister escaped to Hungary.
- 5.33 Talks about Bernard Kalush and his help to refugees. Also, Dr. Berger and Robert Brash.
- 5.45 Describes her state of mind and that of her husband.
- 6.13 Meeting Uziel (???) Lichtenberg in Ricze. The social hierarchy in the camp.
- 6.21 Her absorption in Israel and why she did not tell her story before.
- 6.26 Talked with Dr. Kander and Robert Brash about the killings in Carpato Russia. She wrote poems about the killing of Jews in Galicia.
- 6.32 People in Budapest did not know what happened in the camps.

- 6.37 Describes Nodka Nisha and camp near Yugoslavia. She talked to Partisans there about escape plan.
- 6.43 Her search for her son.
- 6.49 Telling her children what had happened to her.
- 6.50 Fate of her husband.
- 6.51 April 1944, describes transport from camp near Yugoslavia.
- 7.07 Arrival in Auschwitz; selection; Dr. Mengele, Kramer, and Klein.

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- 7.16 Medical selections by Mengele.
- 7.19 Arrival in Birkenau; gas chambers.
- 7.33 Describes initiation; number, clothes, bunk.
- 7.40 Describes Irma Grete and Hessler against whom she testified.
- 7.50 How to survive in Auschwitz.
- 8.00 Describes work in leather factory, and sorting out of confiscated articles from “???”
- 8.16 Describes Kapo Elsa and their relationship.
- 8.34 Talks about Yurek who was in the underground and her contacts with him.
- 8.38 Story about Kapo Elsa.
- 8.45 How she found out about the outside world. She is collecting evidence about Auschwitz. Block 10 was a research lab for sterilization studies.
- 8.54 Mengele’s lab for twin studies.
- 9.08 End of 1944. Phenol injections in camp, burning of cadavers and use of ashes.
- 9.16 Death of Kapo.
- 9.24 Hungarian camp Munkacz.
- 9.25 Fate of father and sister killed by Hungarians.

9.33 How she pleaded with priest and bishop to save her baby.

9.38 Gassing by Sonder Komando.

9.42 Gassing in Auschwitz and phenol. Repeats what she saw.

9.55 Gassing, burials and golden teeth.

10.00 Testifying in Germany.

10.04 Searches in Auschwitz.

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10.22 She is moved to Auschwitz I.

10.25 Klauberg had Block 10, did experiments Otto Graf was in charge of gas. She testified against them. Wrote poetry about her experiences.

10.32 Different jobs she had.

10.37 End of 1944, hanging of friends, Mala (suicide), Eda Golinsky, Regina Robotka.

10.41 Dr. Felix Schmueller and Dr. Dering who were made to work for Mengele.

10.48 What happened to Mala and the hanging of friends.

10.53 Approach of the Russians and death March to Bergen Belsen.

11.06 Describes Bergen Belsen. She got Typhoid fever and was sick until the liberation by the British. She was hiding the evidence she had written down and her poems, as well as some phenol.

11.16 She worked as a nurse with the British and later Belgian doctors on the TB ward.

11.19 Was sent by UNRA to study medicine in Munich.

11.22 Leaves to testify against S.S. in British military court.

11.26 Talks about her testimony.

11.37 Met up with husband in Rome and describes their journey to Palestine.

11.43 Arrival in Haifa, then back to Cyprus; birth of her daughter.

11.47 1948, arrives in Israel and settles down.

11.50 Her reasons for giving testimony.