

RG-50.120*101
MARSHAND YHUDA
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01:04:06 My name is Immanuel Mrshand. I was born in Amsterdam 27.9.1914. As far as I know I'm 8th generation in Holland. My father was Sfaradic and my mother Ashkenazi. They got married in 1907. My father was 6 month old when he lost his parents. He grew up by his family. When he was 20 years old, he inherited 20.000 Florins (a lot of money in 1900). After 2 years he lost all the money and started to work. My mother was from an Orthodox family. At the age 18 she wanted to enter the university, but her parents refused. She worked for a big brokers firm. Remarkably, in 1901 her firm suggested that she would be the first woman to represent the firm in the Amsterdam stock market, which was unheard of in those days. It didn't happen. My mother was very conscious of women's rights. My father worked as an agent for bicycles. He did a very good business, until 1932 when the depression started.

01:12:03 I was the only child for my parents. I had a normal childhood. My friends were all Jews. When I was 14 years old my parents moved to Hilversum. I finished High School there. I know 4 languages: English, French, German and medieval language. When I was 17, I had to start working. I was an accountant in the Panhaueter(?) firm for cacao. I was fired after 3 months.

01:16:21 Then I worked for Von-de-Rhiegn (?), a firm for importing metals.

01:20:45 After 2 years I was promoted. In the end of 1935 I was asked to work for another firm. They promised better conditions. It was a very Jewish orthodox firm. I got a car for my job. I decided to offer our service to clients I knew from my first job. When I told in a weekly meeting about it, I was asked to leave.

01:24:15 In the next morning I met my boss. I told him what had happened yesterday. He promoted me to be the vice president. Our firm started to sell heat resistant steel. I was sent to Austria to study the technical process. I arrived to Blackmond(?). It was the first time that I felt Anti-Semitism. We went to drink and to dance in the evening, I asked a girl to dance with me. She said she doesn't dance with Jews. Many of the workers at that factory had a green slip on their socks. It was a sign for being Nazis. I returned to Holland 1/2 a year before the Anshlus. In 1938 we worked for U.S. STEEL CO. and ALUMINUM CO. OF AMERICA. I became the liaison officer between those 2 firms and the Dutch industry. I had an every day contact with the Dutch's Security Office.

01:35:54 My parents were not Zionists. Before my Bar Mitzvah I joined a Zionist club: "Hatzair". In Hilversum I joined the young Zionist club. When I went back to Amsterdam I joined the revisionist movement.

01:39:20 At the age of 16, I joined a club of young military education. We had uniform and a revolver. At 18, I became sergeant. In 1939 I became the first officer of "Beitar" organization in Amsterdam.

01:42:10 I fasted on Yom Kippur each year, although I was secular. I served in the Dutch Army and became an officer when I was 22.

01:45:00 I met my wife, Hetti, in 1935. She worked as a secretary at K.L.M. her per antes were Zionist.

01:48:35 In 1938 Jewish refugees from Germany came to Holland. We were asked to guard their offices. We did it with sticks and dry salami.

01:50:00 Hetti was born in Rotterdam. At the age of 20 she moved to Amsterdam and lived with refugee family from Berlin.

01:52:38 Shinkel Louis, an American author wrote a book "It can't happen here". We too thought that nothing could happen to us. In September 1938, Hetti and her sister went on vacation to Paris. In the same time the Germans took over Czechoslovakia. Europe was in panic. I asked her to come back immediately, she said it was so beautiful in Paris and came a week later.

01:57:40 The Dutch government was not enthusiastic to get the Jewish refugee from Germany. I remembered that we hid our silver plates.

02:00:15 Our group of "Beitar" met at Retiff St. in Amsterdam. It was a community of Social and Communist Jews. They didn't like us.

02:03:10 I have blackout of many things that happened during the wartime. I didn't come to Israel until 1939, because I had good and comfortable life.

02:08:30 In February 1939 the Dutch government assembled the German Jews and sent them to a camp in Vasterburg(?). We also heard that they sent some Jews back to Germany.

02:17:30 31.8.1939 was the day of general draft to the Dutch army. From that day life changed tremendously. My father lost most of his income.

02:21:45 I joined the army. I was lieutenant. Our task was to defense the northern shore. In January 1940 Hetti and I got married in Rotterdam.

02:26:45 The Germans invaded Holland in 10.5.1940. I was 26 year old and my duty was to command the south front.

02:35:45 The Dutch built bunker for the heavy infantry on the seashore. Later we found out that it was impossible to be in the bunker and to shut the door. The chief engineer was Nazi.

02:42:00 I was totally ignorant of what happened to the Jews in Poland. Some years ago, I visited an exhibition in Philadelphia about the last 150 years of journalism. For the first time I was aware how the Americans knew about what went on in Poland and in Russia, while we knew nothing.
We had friends in Belgium who told us to run away. We thought that they are mad. The German invasion was a surprise for us.

02:44:45 Holland signed the “capitulation” (surrender) at 3:00 p.m. One of their officers didn’t know of it and bombed Rotterdam.

02:47:14 For the first time I felt the difference between me and the other soldiers around me. I thought to take my motorcycle and to take Hetti, to go to the port and see if we can escape to England. I met my officer and I told him my plan. He asked me why? I answered: “if everything got worse you would be able to say:”Hile Hitler” I wont”.

02:58:30 The Queen and the government left for England on the 12 or 13 of May. Hetti and I decided to escape to the south. On the radio I heard a message, those who wont come back till the evening to their army base would be considered as deserters. I went back to the army and Hetti returned to her parents in Rotterdam that was burning.

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05:03:00 My parents hid in Appeldorn. When they were discovered as Jews they had to move again, this time to Eindhoven.

05:07:05 Hetti’s parents had to leave Hilversum and found 2 rooms in Amsterdam. Her brother was sent to a work camp; we didn’t know he would be send to the East. He took with him condoms. What a naïve?

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05:10:50 My sister-in-law, Lenni, got married in 1942. They though that if they would be sent to a work camp as a couple it would be better for them. More than 5000 people came by themselves to be sent to the camp. In September 1942, more than 8000 people were sent to Restoberg(?) and then East.

05:18:20 In 2.10.1942 the organized rounding up of the Jews had started. The Jews were not allowed to enter shops, to sit on benches in the park.

05:21:30 My uncle was a famous painter who died in 1936. He lived with a Christian woman in a wood.

05:25:00 In Amersfoort I met a woman who was active in the underground. I met in her place a nobleman who agreed to give me his name, so I'll have a new identity. Hetti got a stolen identity card.

05:36:50 We lived with my uncle's lady friend. Then we moved to another Christian family where we had 2 rooms. She told us that the mayor of the village (who was a member in the underground) and the chief officer of the police wanted to meet us.

05:40:00 We lived in constant fear. During the night we woke each other and asked: what is your name? Where have you born? And so on.

05:45:30 Hetti had an uncle in Utrecht. The family was very orthodox. We wanted to save them. We knew a man in Lyren(?) our village, his name: Herman Truder. He agreed to hide them. However, the uncle asked to pray in his own Synagogue during the coming Shabbat, and on Friday the Germans took him and his family.

05:53:51 My parents hid in Eindhoven
Hetti's parents hid with a Christian family, but they felt insecure and decided to run away. They moved from one chicken coop to another, until the Germans caught them.

05:59:30 Our work in the underground was not activity against the Germans, but helping other people to escape from the Germans.

06:03:40 One of our members was Vons. He was an expert in graphics, who knew how to forge documents. For example we gave to an engineer a document that allowed him to work in a factory in Frankfurt. He became the head of the workers there, and survived throughout the war.

[He gives some other examples and said that this job gave them a great satisfaction.]

06:08:30 We worked in very small groups in the underground. Many Jews were smuggled to the north: to Friesland and to Groningen.

06:13:13 We had contacts with students in Amsterdam who helped us to save Jews especially young ones. I don't remember how we got in touch with them.

06:18:12 In 1943 we decided to go to Groningen. We had to give our documents to the manager of the hotel who had to give them to a German policeman.

06:26:15 At the end of 1942, I visited a Jew in Appeldorn. I didn't want to sleep in his place, so he arranged for me a place at a Christian family. They didn't like me because they said I had a Nazi appearance. This indicated to me that my fake Christian image was successful.

06:28:30 The fear, the panic and the anxiety were awful. I don't have words to express it.

06:32:00 Hetti smuggled guns in her bra. When she came late and didn't call me I was in panic.

06:36:30 It was hard to play our new image as non-Jews all the time. We had to work for our living. We made wool threads. It was forbidden, because the Germans needed all the wool for their soldiers uniform. One evening our landlords were not at home. The policemen knocked on the door. They gave us report. I took one of the policeman upstairs, told him that I'm Jewish. He canceled the report, but took the spindle.

06:43:35 When we needed desperately money, I asked one of my friends that I worked with, in the past. He gave me 1000 FL. It was a lot of money. One-week salary for a worker was 20-30 FL.

06:46:35 In February 1942, in the weekly magazine "DE VONK"(?), it was written about the Gas Chambers. I didn't know anything about it. I learned it later.

06:53:00 We had contact with the people we hid during the war. With some we have contact till today.
People say now, that 2% of the Dutch population helped to rescue Jews. I think it was more. The Protestants helped the most.

07:0:00 On 3.9.1943 the Italian army signed cease-fire with the British. My parents heard a great joy from downstairs, where they hid. My mother went down the stairs and injured her head. They had to call an ambulance to take her to the hospital. I went to see her in Eindhoven. By the time I came she was dead. My father had to leave his hiding place. He came with us and we found a new place for him.

07:08:10 On 15.9.1943 I got a postcard asking me to be at the train station in Utrecht at 12:00. I met there one of our men, pale to death. He told me that he and his group were caught. Then I knew I was going to be caught.

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07:22:00 Most of the Dutch people were passive. A small percent were Nazis. On 14.7.1942 it was the first time that Jews were rounded up and sent to Vasterberg(?) All the Dutch people who worked in the tramway and in the police were helped the Germans.
Whenever I meet a person in my age in Holland, I wonder what he did during the war?

07:26:50 (Back to the story of how he was caught)
I had never blamed my friend who broke down and gave my name to the Germans.

I was strong and healthy and I thought how I could run away from the train station. I found a door that was opened; I jumped over the table and started to run. I heard shootings, and I was hurt. I fell down on the floor. Twenty-six people came to catch me. The Red Cross came and they took me to the hospital.

07:40:20 They operated me. I was kept under 2 guards for 24 hours. My friends tried to smuggle me from the hospital, but I was too weak.

07:46:10 From the hospital I was moved to the police station in Utrecht, from there to a prison in Groningen.

07:54:00 In the prison they asked me when I was born? I told them 29 years ago. It was September 27th. The policemen came to me and shook my hand and congratulated me.

In the cell I had a bed, blankets, a small table and armchair. I didn't feel bad. In one way, the fact that I didn't have to hide any more, was kind of relief.

08:00:30 My investigation started. I knew I would have to tell them stories. For 3 days I didn't tell anything that could help them. On the third day they asked me to tell them my real name. They examined my identity card to see if it's forged, but they could not find anything. On October the 10th they told me that they would send me to an education camp. I suggested a better option, since I was a metallurgic, they can send me to work in Germany.

08:13:30 Next morning I was among 16 other people that were sent to a concentration camp.

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09:21:00 I came to s'Hertogenbush(?) camp. We worked for the Philips factory. It was hard for me, since my wounds didn't heal. Then I moved to another camp.

09:27:00 By then I knew about the fact that people were sent to the East. We got postcards from Birkenow and Auschwitz. The postcards told what the writers were ordered to write: that they worked hard and the weather is good...but still not about the extermination.

09:30:00 On the next day the discipline officer: of the camp, Sathoff(?), investigated me. He hit me with a whip. My punishment was to stand in the "rose garden" – a hole in the barbed wire.

09:37:50 I was sent to block 22A. We were 70 people who were accused of political action against the Germans. I was the only Jew.

09:40:40 We were a group of several prisoners that were all the time together, eating, working etc. We developed our own humor. In the camp we had a hospital, and a department for dental care. Most of the equipment was stolen from Jewish hospitals.

09:52:10 One day I was called to a senior investigator in the camp. He was not from the S.S. but from the "Brown Shirts", who were Hitler's most loyal soldiers. He asked me to tell my life story. I told him that I was an officer in the Dutch army. He asked me to sit down, he gave me a cigarette, and I was released to my block. Then I got another punishment: 25 hit on my lower back. I couldn't sit for 2 weeks.

10:08:40 The work was boring. I became the expert of metals in the camp. We had to restore broken planes.

10:13:20 The prisoners were divided by colors: green, red, and purple. I was the only one with red and yellow triangle and a white spot surrounded by black circle, on the back. Near our block there were 2 blocks for Jewish prisoners who worked for Philips. They got a warm meal each day. It was one of 2 factories that tried to help the Jews, the other was Schindler's.

10:17:00 In the camp we had an underground that helped to smuggle prisoners out of the camp. I got an order where and when to be. It was heavy snowing day, the truck that I was to jump on couldn't come...

10:28:30 The people in the underground were from the top of the intellectual Dutch people.

10:31:00 In 20.3 was the last transport from the camp to Fucht(?) camp in the east. We arrived to Vesterberg(?). On Tuesday was the transport to Auschwitz. In the evening I met Hetti's cousin. He was there with his family: his wife and 4 children. The fifth child was born in the camp and died there, the rest of the family moved to Bergen- Belzen and survived.

10:33:40 On Tuesday 1000 people were transported to the East. I was in charge of one of the train wagons. It took 70 hours to reach there. We had food and drinks. We reached Birkenow. (?)

10:45:00 We stood on the campground. I saw 100 meter ahead of me a building with matt glass wall. Inside I saw people who got undressed to take a shower. We entered a huge hall. Mangle(?) or one of his helpers divided us to the right and to the left. One man told me, now I'm lost. I said to him: Why are you talking like that? I stood in front of one man who came from Turkey. I didn't know that there are Jews in Turkey. Then we moved to Auschwitz. We got a number on our arm. We marched naked through a tunnel, our body was wiped with Lysol, and we got uniform. I was in block no. 10 or 11. We were several hundreds people in one block. The dirt and the bad smell were unbearable. Our capo was Jacob. His No. was 33. The block in front us were for women who were used for experiments. Our duty was to bring them food.

10:56:30 From there I was sent to Monovitz(?) We didn't know about the extermination of the Jews. I didn't hear about extreme cruelty of the Germans. We were afraid and it was normal.

11:02:00 I don't remember that we were dirty.
I didn't know what the women went through.
I don't remember how we got to Monovitz, by foot or by train.
I was sent to work in the "Cement Commando". It was a very hard job. My partner was Karl Kan. He was from Germany, the president of Macabi in West Germany. He was a strong man, a great hero. After some weeks he moved to another job.

11:06:30 I got Dysentery. I was sent to the Revir (hospital) in the camp. I was treated with Opium and cured.
I heard that the Ober Capo is from Holland. I went to meet him and told him I was an officer in the Dutch army. He said he couldn't talk to me while my appearance is so awful. He sent me back to my block and said he would take care of me. I got new uniform, shoes and food. On the next day I went to the Capo again. I was assigned to a Commando of accountants. They worked for Egefaman, a German factory. The Capo sent me to work with them. We were 26 people. Each one of us had to calculate the salary for 500-550 workers.

11:06:00 We worked out of our camp in the factory.
In good weather we walked there, in bad weather a truck came to fetch us. I met there again with Karl Kan. We had excellent conditions: a table, a chair, light and heat.

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11:26:05 (back to s'Hertogenbosh, wanted to add some stories.)
I didn't want to give the impression that it was heaven in the camp. We had some awful punishments like: The commander of the camp ordered to take 7 women and to put them in a cell 2.4 meter by 1.75 meter. They had to stand barefooted for more than 12 hours. Ten died, some got totally mad and never recovered from the trauma.

One day I talked with the Capo. The S.S. soldier saw me and hit me with his stick on my head.

11:31:20 One of the S.S. men told me what I happened in Poland. I didn't believe him.
Most of the capos were Germans. I don't remember that I suffered from them.

(Back to Monovitz)

11:38:10 Karl Kan had good connections with the manager of our factory. His name was Larsen(?). He told him that the food that we got in the camp was not enough to keep us alert in order to do our job without mistakes. Larsen(?) ordered Max Straus, one of our group to go to bring us food.

11:42:10 In the factory 10.000 people worked. They were divided by their Ethnic origin: Italian, Polish, Germans... Each group had its own kitchen. We were lucky to get 3 big pots of 50 liter. It went on till our last day in 15.1.1945.
Max had good relationships with the cookers, that how we got plenty of good food. We were not allowed to bring from our food to the camp, but in the camp we didn't need the "Bone Soupe" and the bread, so we gave our portions to other people, (but not for money).

11:50:10 I gave mine soup to Kicsh, one of my former bosses. In one of the counting routines he died. I had to find a new candidate for my soup. We didn't see any value for our life, especially for others' life. We had a layer on our skin and brain: what happened to the others was not so important.

11:53:00 We worked with enthusiasm. We were allowed to make up to 9 mistakes. If we didn't do any mistake we got 10 Marks. For each mistake we got one Mark less. I could buy a pipe and a tobacco from this "Lager Gelt" I got.

11:55:00 We had black hat. It meant that we were one of the superiors. Among us were the capos, the medical people, the shoemakers, and the orchestra. We all were allowed to go out at night in the camp; we didn't have to be naked or to stand in que when we went to the clinic.

12:00:35 In work we had to calculate the working hours of the workers in order to pay them their salary. It was an interesting job. Once every 2 weeks one of our group went to bring a suitcase with cash money. It was some 1 million Marks. We had to put for each worker his sum in an envelope. As far as I know, our group was the only one in the history of the camps to deal with money.

12:08:30 Egefarmer paid to the S.S. for our job, 1.40 Marks per hour. Regular workers got some Pennies for a whole day!
We had good relationship with our "Fuehrer commando". He told us information about the war.

12:16:00 Karl Kan was a very wealthy man. He was chemist and had a patent for making food without oil. He donated 50.000 FL to the Dutch underground.

12:21:40 Karl met a Nazi from Amsterdam. That man loved money. Karl suggested him a nice sum so that he would help us to correspond with people from Holland. I could write to Hettie. The last letter I got from her was in January 1945.

12:27:00 We destroyed the letters we got. I know that the police took the letters I send to Hettie.

12:31:40 Our life in the camp were quite easy. We had good heating. For most of the other people lack of food was the major problem. I'll always remember a sentence I heard from one man in the camp. His duty was to clean up the pots. He told me "The Nazis can get my flesh, but not my bones." This sentence helped me a lot in my last weeks of the war, which were very difficult.

12:42:30 The Germans knew we had weapons in the camp. We had only 2 pistols. They found a man to blame for it and ordered to hang him. When someone escaped from the camp we had to stand for hours in the yard of the camp.

12:52:45 In the block we kept ourselves with cultural activities such as: lectures, games and discussions.

12:56:00 At the beginning of the winter of 1945 I was sick and moved to the Revir. We laid 3 men in a bed 65 cm wide. On the selection day, the 2 other men were selected out and were sent to be burnt to death. I don't remember if I felt sorry for them, at least I had the bed for myself.

12:59:00 On 16.1.1945 we didn't go to work. We knew that the war is close to its end. We got cloths, shoes and coats. On 19.1.1945 we got an order to move. It was a heavy snow. We marched a day or a day and a half, till we arrived to Nicolaie(?), half way between Monovitz(?) and Glaivitz(?). It was one of the death marches. Those who were in the end of the line were shot, 40% died on the way.

13:06:50 In Glaivitz(?) we entered one of the 3 camps. The blocks were so crowded that the prisoners closed the door to prevent other people from getting in. Those who stayed out froze to death. I was with Karl Kan and Max Straus. The young S.S. man I mentioned before brought us bread and sausage. It was just a humanitarian step.

13:11:30 After 2 days in the camp, we went into the death wagons, coal wagons without a cover. In each wagon hundred people. The "trip" took 5-6 days. Many people died on the way. We piled the dead bodies and laid on them.

13:15:45 We reached Retesburg(?). There on the same platform with the Germans people who traveled, we had to move the dead bodies to another wagon. The Germans weren't shocked. I remember in the pile one muzelman, he moved his arm and eyes, but we couldn't help him.

13:18:17 We continued to Durra(?). My first memory from there was a huge hall, crowded with people. I sat near a faucet and drank water as much as I could. There were no toilets; the dirt of the diarrhea was all over. Karl Kan managed to get out of the place to speak with the administrator. Our group moved to the quarantine. We had good

conditions, heat and food. After some days I got bad diarrhea. I had to get to the Revir. I got opium and was cured. I lost contact with my group and became an ordinary man. It meant no more privileges.

At the end of January 1945, I moved to a new camp Zane house in Austererude(?). I worked in tunnels in the Hartz(?) Mountains. It was very hard work.

13:29:00 I remember one day that one man from our block stole bread from someone else. We beat him to death.

13:33:00 I met Ralf in the camp. He was the Ober Capo who brought me cloths and food in Monovitz. He asked me how could he help me, I told him, I want back to Durra. (I didn't know how bad it was there). The same day I got sick again and moved to the Revir. We were 7-8 patients in the room. My bed was near the heating. I took the bread and toasted it on the radiator. Then I moved to Durra. I laid in the wagon in my diarrhea. In the camp I washed myself and had the choice between a short and warm t-shirt or a long thin t-shirt. I choose the warm one; knowing I could cover my bottom part of my body with a blanket.

13:38:30 I remember they took blood from me. I found myself in a new room with 12 people. We got more food: bread, eggs and our sanitary conditions were better. Only after the war I understood that we were "experimental rabbits" for the Germans, who wanted to know how to treat their sick soldiers who came from the East front.

13:43:40 We were in total apathy, but still with a desire to live. I knew that the war is close to its end; I knew that Hettie is alive and I didn't want to die now after all what I went through, before the victory.

13:46:14 In order to keep myself busy, I decided to make my mind and my brain working. I planned that when the war will be over, I'll go back to Holland and I will build a house. I planned the house for all his small details. I knew I would need a big cellar for food, for the next war. I imagined everything: How many cans of oil, flower, sugar I would need, how much space I would need for them and so on. It kept me busy till 3.4.1945. Then the British bombed Nortehouzen(?) a city near our camp.

13:52:30 I couldn't walk by myself. I had to crawl to the toilet. On 4.4.1945 the Germans decided to send us to Mountenhouzen(?), first the sick men. They wrote me on the list. It was the worst night in my life. The war is almost over and I am going to die.

13:57:25 On the next day I crawled to the officer, he was Gunter, the one who was in charge on the Revir in Monovitz. I told him: 'You must save me'. He answered: "I can't, your number is already written down, there is nothing I can do". I went back to my bed.

When the S.S. arrived to my room and shouted my name, Gunter said; "He is Dutch, let him stay in bed". He saved my life.

14:01:50 During the next 2 days, the camp was almost empty. When the Wehrmacht officer came to our room, he burst up with tears and said: "This I didn't know". The camp was liberated in 11.4.1945. We found plenty of food in the storage of the Germans.

The Americans gave us food. Some ex-prisoners ate too much and died. In Bergen-Belzen 40% of the liberated prisoners died. I was one of the few who knew English and could communicate with the Americans.

14:10:35 I don't remember anything that happened between: 4.13.1945 – 4.28.1945. I guess I was in coma. Later I found out that in April 28th I was moved to a hospital: Krim-de-Rode(?).

14:13:50 After the S.S. left the area, the people who worked in the tunnels locked the doors and escaped. The Americans didn't know anything about the missiles project that took place in the tunnels. Nine of the workers were Dutch. They suggested showing the way for the Americans. Herman Top was the leader of this group. He led the Americans and British scientists to the tunnels.

14:21:25 Herman told the Americans about me. He said that I'm nearly dying, that I worked in the tunnels and therefore it will be worthwhile to get more information from me.

14:24:40 I got stronger. I could go by myself to the bathroom. My connections with the Dutch group were very close. [Only a year ago, Herman Top, with whom I keep intimate relations till today, showed me a letter I wrote to him from the hospital, in which I'm asking for more food supply to the hospital].

14:27:30 Nortehouzen(?) was the only place in Germany, where the German citizens got a collective punishment, because of what they have done in Durra. The punishment was to get half of the food supply. It was forbidden to have contact between the Germans and the Americans. When the Americans caught Germans who stole food they killed them.

Our group was authorized to live in a big villa that belonged to a Nazi industrialist. I moved to live with them.

14:39:30 Our duty was to take care of 20.000 liberated prisoners. We had to send them back to their countries, or to other places that they wanted to go to, or were accepted.

My weight was 35 KG. But I drove a car.

14:42:00 I had to go back to Durra several times on my duty. I don't remember any special feelings.

14:50:00 I never talked about what really happened to me in the camp.

15:55:00 Some episodes:

We knew that the area in which we stayed was about to be given back to the Russians, according to Yalta Agreement. On 7.8.1945, I met Gunter. He asked me to help him and his girlfriend to go to the British area. I gave him a forged visa.

15:02:18 I found army uniform for myself, and I felt much better.
I can remember the hatred and the hostility from the Germans, but we felt very good about it. Now we were on the winning side.

15:07:48 One day a mother and her daughter came to my office to complain about an American soldier who raped the daughter. I told them: good for you, you are going to have an American father. I couldn't care less.

15:13:20 I went to a room where Americans had a meeting. On the table I saw leftover dry bread. I couldn't resist it and took the bread and tucked it in my pockets, although I didn't need it, since I had enough food in the villa.

15:15:40 I didn't know what was going on in Holland at that time. I knew that from October 1944 they didn't send any more Jews to the East. I was confident that my wife would survive. I sent a letter to her, telling her where I am. I didn't know her address, so I sent it to her aunt in Hilversoom. On 7.8.1945 I came back to Holland. I found Hettie in Laren. She lived there with my father. She was so sure that I'd be back, that my slippers were near my bed.

15:22:25 In Nortehouzen(?) we did preparatory work for UNRA. When they arrived we could go back to Holland. We had a farewell party. One of the officers told us that there is no food in Holland. He encouraged us to make a list of products to take with us. He quadrupled the amounts. We found a car and painted on it: "United States of America Unit"

15:27:58 On our way back to Holland we were stopped in a road-block twice by the Russians, but they let us go.

15:32:30 I remember one anecdote: we got a barrel of jam. Near the UNRA office it fell down on the road and all the jam spilled out. The Americans ordered the Germans to take toothbrush and to clean it. It was a nice revenge, because that is what the Germans ordered the Jews to do in Vienna.

15:33:30 When I returned to Holland I had to see the doctor for some check-ups. I had Tuberculosis and I had to stay in bed for several months. I could go back to normal life only a year after I came back from the war.

15:36:35 There was no food or any other supplies in Holland. The Germans took everything they could. When we arrived to the border, the Dutch army didn't allow us to bring in the food we got from the Americans. It was a total disregard towards us.

15:40:30 In Eindhoven (?) there was a center for helping the Jews who returned from the camps. One of our friends worked there. On one Shabbat she wanted to go to the synagogue. She was dressed poorly, so the people from the Jewish community didn't let her get in.

15:42:20 We had tickets in order to get our food. People who were in the war got two tickets. Those who were in the camps got three.

15:44:00 The Dutch customs asked me to pay taxes for the car I brought with me from Germany. I refused, because the car belonged to the American army. It didn't help me. I had to pay some amount.

15:46:15 I wanted to go back to serve in the Dutch army and then to make ALIYA to go as fast as we could to Palestine.

15:47:00 My wife, Hattie became a practical Zionist and not only theoretical Zionist. She didn't want to stay in Holland. She said she doesn't feel good there any more. During the war she worked in a Christian hotel pretending to be Christian. In the evening the guests sat together near the candle, since there was no electricity. The people in the hotel were very distinguished and they talked about the Jews. They said that it is awful what the Germans did to the Jews, but in some way they deserved it....

15:51:58 During 1944-45 I remember that there was Anti-Semitism in Holland. They couldn't understand how a survivor from Auschwitz could have a car and ride it on Sundays when it was forbidden to drive a private car.

15:55:50 Only 5000 Jews returned to Holland: 4000 women and 1000 men. They wanted to go back to their homes, but their homes were taken by the N.S.B (the Dutch Nazis).

The Dutch minister for justice, who was Catholic, gave an order that the Dutch people don't have to give the house back to the Jews.

15:57:00 I returned to the army in the middle of 1946. I was an officer for special duties in Utrecht.

16:00:05 My wife became pregnant. We didn't want our son to grow in a place where he would be different. It was my motivation to go to Palestine. I don't see the Zionism as an ideal. I would prefer if we could have assimilated, but we knew by then that we could not escape the reality and the fact that we are Jews, so the only conclusion was to live among other Jews.

16:05:50 I remember, once we had a meeting in the army. We were 30 officers. Across me sat a Catholic officer. He said some Anti-Semitic sentence. I told him: if you are going to repeat this sentence I would through the ashtray on you. He repeated his sentence and I threw the ashtray. I missed him and hit the puddings that were for dessert.

16:09:05 Our son was born. I refused to circumcise him, until he was six months old. A friend from Palestine convinced me, that if we were going to come to Palestine, our son would have problem.

On July 1947 we got permit to go to Palestine on Aliya Dalet. It was with our own real passport but a false visa. I took Hettie and our 8 months old son to Paris. We stayed there in a small Jewish hotel. There I saw for the first time Israelis and I heard Hebrew for the first time. I was very excited. We knew very little about Palestine and the life there, and what we knew was very inaccurate.

16:16:30 In Holland we lived in a villa in the village, so we wanted to live in a moshav (village). We had no money. We went to Palestine with 2 suitcases and 2 English pounds for each of us.

16:19:40 We arrived to Marseilles. I had to go back to the Dutch army. Hettie was in transition camp: Mayar. She was the only one from West Europe; all the others were from East Europe. They told her that she would never see me again, like the men who went to America during the 20th and the 30th, promised to send money, and their families never heard from them.

16:23:30 The time was after Exodus, there was hermetic closure of all the ports in Palestine. Hettie had to stay in the camp for some weeks. When she arrived to Haifa, she called her cousin from Kibbutz Tirat – Zvi. He took her to the Kibbutz. She didn't feel well. She found she was pregnant again, so she asked me to come as soon as I could. She got a job in The Dutch Consulate in Jerusalem.

16:27:00 End of November 1947. I was released from the army and got my visa. I planned to come with a friend by a car. I bought a Jeep but Hettie asked me not to do so.

16:32:25 In Amsterdam I went to the Aliyah office to get a visa. They asked me to leave my passport and to get it back on the railway platform. In the train I was put in a wagon with a woman and three children. She was supposed to be my wife. In Brussels we had to meet the mother of the younger child, but she did not show up. We drove to Paris. There was a strike in the railroad, so we could not reach Marseilles, so we stayed in a hotel in Paris. When I asked from the woman to pay her part of the hotel fee she said she didn't have money. I went to the Sochnut (Jewish Agency) office. They said she is Revisionist and they couldn't pay for her. I made a fuss and got the money.

16:41:57 I rented a car and drove to a camp in Marseilles. The camp was run by Shulamit Arlozorov (daughter of Chaim Arlozorov). My name was not on the list for going to Israel.

Shulamit told me, it is because I had a Revisionist wife. I made fuss and was allowed to get on the ship. We arrived to a hotel in Haifa on 12.6.1947. We send the woman with the three children to the Jabotinski office in Tel-Aviv. The real mother of the younger boy arrived to the hotel 2 hours after the woman and the kids left for Tel-Aviv. We sent her with a taxi after them.

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16:48:30 After the war, when I returned to Holland I gave some testimony of what happened in Monovitz(?) and s'Hertogenbosh, but I don't remember that we talked with our friends from the underground about the camps.

16:54:10 In 1951 ten families from Holland joined our moshav (village) Hadar – Am. We were in a very close relation and were like a one big family, but never talked about our experience in the war.

16:57:00 A good friend of us asked me in the eighties to help her to get compensation from the Dutch government, since she was in the underground during the war. It was the first time I heard her story. Another neighbor, 2 houses from ours, was involved in rescuing babies in Amsterdam. I didn't know anything about it till 5 years ago.

The silence between us was enormous.