

RG-50.120 #167

WEISS, RITA [YAMBERGER] 5 Tapes

TAPE I

- 1.00 She was born in 1926 in Domokos Transylvania. There were 70 Jews in town of 300. The town became Romanian but they felt Hungarian. Had 6 sisters and one brother. Talks about family life.
- 1.09 Childhood memories. School and signs of antisemitism. Father's story, his marriages, business life and Jewish party membership.
- 1.32 Sept. 1940, Munich agreement and town reverts back to Hungary. Stories about Horte and Hungarian soldiers. Men taken to Ukraine to clear mine fields and many died.
- 1.39 Police from Hungarian Nazi party took inventory of Jewish property. Living under the Nurenberg laws. Germans conquered Hungary.
- 1.51 Life in town under Nurenberg laws. Fate of older sister.
- 2.00 Brother and 2 sisters stay in Costanza and then taken to Transnistria.
- 2.08 Fate of father.
- 2.10 Hungarians went by prepared lists and took all the belongings of Jews. Tortured people to get information. Sadistic treatment by Hungarians.
- 2.24 Chief Rabbi's drasha about God's abandonment.
- 2.26 Stories of 2 girls who escaped, about the pogroms in Romania and German actions.
- 2.50 Describes how all Jews in town were taken to a brick factory for investigation under torture. State of mind of people.
- 3.01 Life in ghetto. She works outside in a hospital. Describes work.
- 3.12 Torture of relatives.
- 3.16 She asks for transfer to ghetto but is denied. 3,000 people from the ghetto, including her family and parents were taken by train and died.
- 3.27 Rumors among young women.
- 3.32 Orders to leave the ghetto and march to train. Describes ride in cattle wagons.

3.47 Describes arrival in Auschwitz, selection by Mendele [Mengele?].

3.52 Describes arrival and initiation in Birkenau.

TAPE II

4.01 Story of parents and grandparents. Recurrent dreams.

4.09 First days in Auschwitz. A natural leader who comforted them.

4.13 They were transferred by train and arrived in [?] Krozigen [Krazinai] Lithuania. Describes the work camp. Jews from ghetto Riga were in separate barracks. She worked in a Wehrmacht factory repairing and shipping uniforms.

4.29 Describes work and treatment.

4.36 Suicide in camp.

4.37 A typical day in camp. Work, food, health.

4.56 Gestapo came to camp and later killed a girl who had smuggled out a letter to the BBC telling them about the horrors in camp.

5.04 Describes work, hygiene, religion in camp.

5.18 Saw the bombardment of Memel. The Russian front was advancing and the camp was evacuated.

5.25 They are taken by train to Stutthof. Describes camp, diverse population.

5.39 Describes sadistic Ukrainian block Alteste. How they kept up their spirits.

5.56 Trying to find her sister.

6.00 Crematorium in camp. Groups of sick and dead taken to crematorium.

6.02 A group of 300 women arrived who had worked for German peasants and were severely sun burned.

6.10 Describes Polish kapo Max who was a sadist and murderer and fell in love with one of the prisoners.

6.18 Describes harsh winter and disease. A Wehrmacht officer started camp Krotingen near Stutthof; they walked there to work.

- 6.22 Prostitution in camp.
- 6.23 Krotingen was designated as a protected work place and they were treated better by the Wehrmacht.
- 6.29 Severe winter, illnesses and disinfection. 20 girls were pregnant.
- 6.36 Theft of cabbage by girls and punitive action.
- 6.40 Births in camp.
- 6.43 She becomes ill and later is taken to new work camp. Describes conditions.
- 6.49 Episodes of women being beaten up because they stole sweaters.
- 6.54 She goes to sick block and is saved by Wehrmacht man when all the other women are taken away.
- 6.58 They are marched out of camp by SS.

III

- 7.01 Examples of 4 Wehrmacht officers who treated them well, Rohl, Sternberg, Kavnager.
- 7.05 Sent to work in warehouses in Stetin and Elbin. Describes work and supervisors who treated them well.
- 7.17 She is among 300 women who remained in the work camp. The rest of the women were marched out and killed by SS. Describes life in the camp.
- 7.27 Work in cellars. Sorting potatoes.
- 7.29 Cannibalism in camp.
- 7.34 Describes work peeling potatoes 12 hours a day.
- 7.36 3 births in camp. Babies were taken away.
- 7.41 She reads memorial article about children who died.
- 7.49 She accidentally electrocutes herself and is saved by other women and kapo.
- 7.57 Describes typhoid epidemic. She gets sick. Describes her dreams and hallucinations.
- 8.07 She recuperates. Had to bury dead. Finds a golden medallion which she gives to kapo for extra soup.

- 8.18 End of Maarch. They can hear Russian bombings as front advances.
- 8.25 Stutthof is evacuated, they were marched out by SS. Describes. They meet German refugees.
- 8.37 when they reached the river, 10,000 prisosners were loaded on 4 boats that had holes in them. The plan was to drown them in the Baltic Sea. She jumped into the sea and swam ashore; others were shot by the SS.
- 8.49 She walked to a German town and hid out in a vacant house. British tanks came and liberated them May 3rd. Describes treatment by British.
- 9.03 Goes back describing life in camp, her state of mind and what helped her survive.
- 9.10 Repeats story about being punished in camp for not leading group of women back to work.
- 9.19 Describes escape attempts in camp and punishments.
- 9.26 Talks about the price of survival.
- 9.31 Adds to story of her escape from the boat pursued by shooting SS.
- 9.45 Describes the German town she escaped to and the Germans in hiding.
- 9.50 Eisenhower entered the town she was in. She was crying and he asked her why and encouraged her. She was taken to a hospital and was treated by German nurses. Later she was sent to rehab hospital.

TAPE IV

- 10.00 Memories of home life. Her whole family died. Recurrent nightmares after the war. How her memories affected her family life later on.
- 10.10 She was sent to a sanatorium in Neustadt, supported by the Joint. Later in a relocation camp in Schleswig Hollstein. Describes camp organized by Brits according to countries. Describes life in the Hungarian block.
- 10.20 She is exposed to TB. Her state of total emotional exhaustion.
- 10.23 She meets Brigade soldiers.
- 10.25 Feeling and actions of revenge against Germans.
- 10.27 Tells about Hungarians who helped Jews.

- 10.33 Physical examinations for restitution in Germany after the war.
- 10.40 Describes revenge activities.
- 10.49 July '45. Return of Italian prisoners to Italy.
- 11.01 She reads a poem about her feelings after liberation and later in life. Talks about what Israel meant to her.
- 11.14 She leaves the camp and goes to Hamburg and then Bergen Belsen to find friends.
- 11.26 Describes demonstrations of Jewish survivors against the British authorities who did not allow them to go to Palestine.
- 11.29 She left Bergen Belsen and went to the American zone to Feldafink. Describes life there.
- 11.41 Relations between Polish and Hungarian refugees.
- 11.45 Refugees were encouraged to get married and go to Japan in the occupational army, as one way to become Americans. She decides against it and goes by train to Budapest. Gets help from the Joint in Budapest.
- 12.05 She goes by train to Romania, gets help from Jewish community there. Meets her future brother-in-law.
- 12.10 Tells story of sonder kommando man.
- 12.12 Tells story of husband who escaped from a work camp and went back to organize ghetto.
- 12.22 They are preparing to go to Palestine through Italy. Describes escape with false papers to transit camp in Budapest where they spend 3 months.
- 12.44 Describes pogrom in Hungarian village of returning refugees.
- 12.46 Describes difficult escape from Hungary to Vienna where they are robbed by Russian soldiers.
- 12.51 Describes Vienna, the Rothschild mansion/hospital. From there to Linz, Salzburg and then by train to the American zone in Munich.

TAPE V

- 13.02 Describes refugee camp in Munich in July '46. Camp was managed by Jews under American auspices. Political parties in the camp. Attitude towards refugees and Palestine.

- 13.33 More about life in camp. Efforts to get to Italy.
- 13.39 Revenge actions after liberation. Struggles of the German population.
- 13.45 Poverty of Romanian Jews and refugees.
- 13.49 Describes crossing into Austria.
- 13.59 Om Salzburg the 'Bricha' [escape] movement takes them in. Describes crossing the Brenner Pass, crossing the border to Italy, and being taken by truck to Milano.
- 14.08 Describes camp in Milano. In Dec. '46 they go by train to Rome and stay in Lido de Roma for 7 months, to be with her sister-in-law who was dying in a hospital nearby.
- 14.18 They move to Ladispoli to a Joint facility. Describes work for Aliya B. Describes life in the village organized by Aliya B, and relations with the Italian population.
- 14.32 Trying to get the new drug penicillin in Rome and the death of her sister-in-law.
- 14.38 Husband was smuggled back to Romania to organize escape.
- 14.40 After 2 years in Italy, they arrive in Israel in June '47. Describes trip and arrival. They went to Kibbutz Maayan.
- 14.48 Describes absorption and life in the kibbutz where they stayed for one year and then moved to Sefad.
- 15.05 The emotional impact of her Holocaust experience on her later life. The attitude of Israelis towards survivors.
- 15.12 Recurring nightmares.
- 15.18 Adjustment to life after the Holocaust. Emphasis on family and home.
- 15.36 Medical exams in Germany for restitution after the war.
- 15.38 Reads names of family members who died in the Holocaust in memoriam.