

RG-50.120 #0188 I Tape  
ALERHAND (ALERHANT), ALEXANDER

Born June 1928 in Krakow. Family goes back to 17th century. Had 2 younger twin sisters. Middle class family, store owners. Father was officer in Polish reserves, was called up in '39 and was POW in Germany. Krakow was an open city and many Jews from other cities came there.

When Germans came to Krakow they introduced anti-Jewish laws. All Jews had to sell their property at a symbolic price, Jewish kids were not allowed in schools, everybody had to wear ID. All Jews had to move to a designated area, ghetto. Hans Frank urged Jews to leave Krakow because he wanted to make it into capital of general government.

Alexander moved with mother and sisters to a village outside Krakow where they subsisted by trading their belongings.

In August 1942 transports to Auschwitz and Belzec started. Germans spread rumors that they were transported to the Ukraine to work, but people knew this was a lie. All the Jews from villages around Krakow were ordered to report to one village. 8,000 Jews were transported from there to Belzec. Alexander's mother bribed Germans to allow him to work at the airport and they were saved for a while and lived in the ghetto of Krakow.

At the end of October '42 they heard about another impending 'action'. Mother was able to smuggle sisters out to a Polish village, to friends. He describes 'action' in October. 600 people were shot during the night of Oct. 27. The next day 6000 were transported on trains to Belzec. He describes the transport, reaction of people, conditions, etc.

He jumped through a train window and returned to Krakow. Returned to airport ghetto to work and ultimately went to 6 other camps.

[There should be more tapes.]