

Interview with Eta Peleg
November 11, 1994
Tape 1 of 2
RG- 50.120*247

Basic information about her family, years before WWII. She comes from Bardejov, family name is Landau, and her parents were not very religious.

01:01:30:00 In 1921 she attends basic school, describes relationship of Jewish and non-Jewish children and mentions the establishment of Jewish schools in 1939 –

01:02:50:00 – Talks about her father’s occupations. –

01:04:00:00 Mentions that Bardejov had a nickname “Small Jerusalem.” –

01:04:40:00 Talks about political situation, compares years before the war and after 1939: before 1939 she felt no anti-Semitism. –

01:05:50:00 Mentions her job occupation after finishing her studies. –

01:07:30:00 Talks about the family environment: Yiddish was spoken at home, sometimes Hungarian. She was the oldest of five children. –

01:08:40:00 From her wide family only few survived the Holocaust: her cousin from Lipany (now living in Montreal) and another cousin who was hiding during the war, she mentions one or two names later on. –

01:09:35:00 Mentions September 7 in Poland. –

01:09:50:00 Mentions an encounter with German soldiers around that time. The soldiers were led to their courtyard by their Slovak neighbor. The neighbor just showed the Germans the traditions Jews keep on a holiday. The Jewish family was a little afraid but the soldiers were polite. –

01:15: 16:00 Talks about her siblings. –

01:15:52:00 Talks about a Polish girl, a Jew, who fled to Bardejov

from Poland, came to Bardejov with foot injuries because of the winter frost. The girl's name was Leika Landerer. It was after the occupation of Poland in 1940; the girl was from Bielsko –Biała and she was talking about concentration camps where people are being killed and they starve; the interviewed person then admits that it might have been in 1941. The girl talks about the condition of Jews in Poland. Those who did not have citizenship were being sent across the border. –

01:18:00:00 Mentions an incident of a young Gardist with an older Jewish woman. –

01:19:10:00 Talks about situation around March 1942; they knew about the incidents, but they did not feel threatened.

01:20:00:00 Talks about a family named Tipul where their mother sent them to hide from a coming deportation. – Talks about the release of all Jewish girls from Bardejov because the local rabbi, [Rafael Löwi], acquired a certificate for a 4-week quarantine due to typhoid. –

01:23:50:00 Talks about Polish smugglers of everyday goods, Šermer family. –

01:25:10:00 that their neighbor informed police about the Jewish family of the interviewed person. –

01:26:00:00 Plans of the parents, what to do with the girls after those four weeks. –

01:28:30:00 Mentions another report on her family from their neighbor. –

01:29:30:00 They were collected in the local school, and then they went to the train station. –

01:31:50:00 They were waiting for a week in Poprad. –

01:33:00:00 They traveled in regular, passenger wagons. –

01:33:00:00 Talks about the train journey.

01:35:10:00 Talks about arrival to Auschwitz.

01:39:18:00 Talks about her job occupations at the beginning and about life at the beginning there; also how the girls around her reacted to the situation. –

01:44:20:00 Mentions that they did not know about gas chambers at the beginning. –

01:44:35:00 She describes an encounter with an SS high-ranking officer. –

01:47:30:00 She describes German women prisoners. –

01:48:50:00 Describes how she first heard about the gas chambers. –

01:50:25:00 Moving of the Auschwitz camp to Birkenau They were in Birkenau in August.

01:53:20:00 She describes how people were selected for Birkenau. –

01:59:00:00 She describes an incident when they did not have enough drinking water. –

02:03:30:00 Mentions her ill friend who was probably taken to the gas chamber. –

02:08:50:00 Describes the selection in winter, a big event, her sister was not selected to survive, she did not “go through.” –

02:13:30:00 Describes incoming transports. –

02:14:35:00 Mentions an encounter in Bardejov when they were leaving with a local member of Gardist units who told someone that it was the last time they would see Bardejov, and what happened to him after the war. –

02:15:40:00 About illness and conditions in the camp.-

02:16:00:00 Mentions her cousin that she was most with after her sister was gone.

0217:20:00 Mentions incoming transports and numbering of the imprisoned people. –

02:19:00:00 About her job occupation at Rotkápchen/ Canada department. They were sorting clothes, organization of this job occupation in the camp.-

02:21:30:00 Mentions trafficking with different goods. –

02:22:15:00 Mentions a lot of children's shoes in the department of sorting clothes. She says that gas was already generally known and mentions the ways they had found out about the gas chambers. –

02:24:00:00 About working on the construction of buildings team and injuries there. –

02:27:10:00 About smuggling and acquiring food. How she was caught smuggling food and also cigarettes. –

02:37:00:00 She was working outside in February 1943, removing snow; she describes trafficking cigarettes with Roma/ Gypsies, Germans, and political prisoners. –

02:40:10:00 Mentions the farm where animals were held, outside Birkenau. –

02:42:50:00 Mentions that at Rotkapchen and at "revir" (rehabilitation unit) they were quite well off; at "revir" the German warders were not seen much because of typhoid. She mentions one lady from Slovakia there, Ms. Orlean Orleanova who was a teacher and spoke Hebrew; therefore she could speak to Greek prisoners who could (some of them) also speak Hebrew.

02:45:30:00 She talks about her new job occupation in,, Leichenkommando" dealing with dead bodies (not from the gas chambers). –

02:50:10:00 About her plans to flee. –

02:53:50:00 Then she worked at Buna. –

02:56:15:00 In December (1943), the whole camp was being cleaned, they got new clothes. —

02:57:10:00 Mentions that she got her tattoo number at the beginning of 1943.-

02:58:20:00 Describes the nationalities/ religions of the women working there. –

02:59:09:00 Mentions a Polish woman called Hanka Zajdowa who was released. -

03:00:25:00 Mentions an incident when she was in „Leichenkommando.” –

03:03:15:00 The interviewed person then asked for her address: Sucha.

03:06:55:00 Mentions how she could not work long in Buna, because she had to look for another job. –

03:08:45:00 She mentions a woman working in the office of a German supervisor – Kata – Schreiberka who tried to help the 500 Slovak Jewish girls who survived in the camp. –

03:09:50:00 She was looking for different kinds of jobs, and she describes those attempts.-

03:14:00:00 Mentions that Polish Christian women were sent to Germany because the front was near.

03:14:55:00 Mentions Hungarian women, it was in 1944. –

03:15:40:00 She was helping in the kitchen. –

03:16:30:00 Mentions Czech, Roma, and Hungarian camps/units. –

03:17:20:00 After being a „Vertreterin”(deputy) she repeats that when was at „revir” she was signed in as ill, and after finally trying to find a job she finally worked in the kitchen.

03:21:00:00 Describes how she helped an acquaintance of her cousin. –

03:24:00:00 She talks about the uprising of Sonderkommando, about two gas chamber units being destroyed by prisoners. In this connection, she mentions the name Róża Robota.

03:28:00:00 Describes evacuation of the camp on January 18. Mentions the village of [Poromba]

03:34:00:00 Describes how she avoided marching further.

03:43:55:00 Being in [Ples] (a town).

03:49:10:00 She wanted to go see the Polish woman in Sucha who was released from Auschwitz.

03:49:20:00 Describes her journey and arrival to Katowice.

03:50:10:00 Mentions how she pretended to be Polish and Christian.

03:51:05:00 Train journey and further traveling. She tried to find a place to stay.

03:55:00:00 Meets a man who fled from the camp of Buna. She stays at his place

03:59:00 She decides to go further to Sucha, she leaves his place.

03:57:45:00 Mentions working in the kitchen. – **End of Tape 1.**

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Tape 2 of 2

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Tape 2

04::01:07:00 - Transferring from Auschwitz to Birkenau in autumn 1942.

04:02:00:00- Sanitation in the camp.

04:02:50:00 – Story of Edith Chaluckà who was sent to death by mistake, an activist, and employed a warden.

04:04:20:00 – Describes how she herself, Eta Peleg, was chosen to go to death and how she escaped.

04:11:09:00 – Mentions a woman named Englanderová.

04:12:45:00 – Talks about the transports to gas chambers, their procedure, and who was chosen.

04:15:30:00 – Talks about attempts of prisoners to escape the camp.

04:16:30:00 – Talks about the consequences for the other prisoners – there were none- of the escapes.

04:17:40:00 – Mentions Vrba and Wetzler.

04:19:30:00 – Mentions the communication between the women's and men's camp.

04:20:08:00 – Compares conditions in Birkenau and Auschwitz

04:21:22:00 – Mentions Leichenkommando (work team in charge of corpses).

04:21:45:00 – Mentions women's and men's camp.

04:21:51:00 – Talks about diseases in the camp.

04:23:15:00 – Talks about the rebellion of Sonderkommando (groups of camp prisoners made to help the killing process) in 1944.

04:26:00:00 – Mentions punishments and Himmler's visit.

04:26:50:00 – Talks about Leichenkommando broader.

04:27:56:00 – Contact with SS soldiers.

04:28:00:00 – Mentions a Jewish doctor.

04:28:33:00 – About SS members. She describes brutality as well as more humanistic behavior by them.

04:30:00:00 – Mentions Czech family camp.

04:31:43:00 – Talks about some privileges she experienced.

04:34:00:00 – Describes the event after December 4, 1942 when her sister was sent to death, three days after this happened, Slovaks, men from Sonderkommando were shot and killed.

04:34:50:00 – Gypsies in the camp.

04:35:50:00 – About Mengele.

04:37:30:00 – About her family members in the camp.

04:40:25:00 – About her journey when she escaped the march from Auschwitz.

04:45:25:00 – Meeting with Russian soldiers.

04:50:00:00 – She arrived to Sucha but she could not find her friend from the camp who was released from the camp, earlier.

04:50:30:00 – She stayed with a family, whose father was a strong anti-Semite.

04:53:25:00 – She met with her friend, finally.

04:54:05:00 – She mentions her situation from 1943 on in the camp, that she lived in better conditions.

04:56:00:00 – She soon went forward to Nowy Sącz.

04:59:50:00 – She went to Bardejov with a man who recognized she was Jewish.

05:05:50:00 – She traveled further with the Russians instead.

05:07:30:00 – Describes her arrival to Bardejov.

05:10:50:00 – About Jews who survived (hiding) in Bardejov.

05:17:50:00 – About a nearby conflict of Germans and Russians.

05:18:20:00 – About her visit to Bystré.

05:18:45:00 – About Jews who were killed in the mountains.

05:20:35:00 – After the war.

05:23:25:00 – About a supposed collaborator with Germans from Bardejov, partisans killed him. He was probably Jewish; his name was [Heněk Feuer].

05:27:00:00 – She moved to Israel in 1948.

05:27:35:00 – Describes her visit at Kežmarok, her friend from Leichenkommando lived there.

05:29:55:00 – Mentions the brother of her friend and his situation during the war; he was a partisan.

05:31:35:00 – About the situation of Slovak Jews in Budapest, their conflicts with Hungarian Jews.

05:32:57:00 – About her journey to Bratislava and then to Piešťany for recreation, she had health problems.

05:33:45:00 – About her departure for Prague.

05:34:45:00 – Describes her stay in Prague.

05:34:70:00 – About the change of currency.

05:37:00:00 – She returned to Bardejov.

05:37:57:00 – She got married in Bardejov.

05:38:10:00 – Mentions her trauma after the war until present.

05:39:00:00 – Mentions some positive experiences from the camp.

05:41:20:00 – About her family in the present.

05:42:10:00 – Talks about relationships between Slovak and Hungarian Jews, and about differences between people who were in the camp for a long time and those who were newcomers.

05:46:30:00 – About her contacts with people from the time when she was imprisoned.

05:47:21:00 – She does not want to visit Auschwitz today.