

RG-50 120 #0264
YESHA'AYAHU FALKOVICH

Tape I

- 1.00 YF [abbreviation] was born on March 21, 1927, in Bialystok, Poland. He was 12 at the beginning of the war. His father had a soda factory 'Sanitas': he made and marketed it to his clients using horses and wagons. They were considered a family of means. His grandfather owned a grocery store. He was very observant. He would prepare the matzoh for the whole town. He did it, with an entire team, in a special basement room that was sealed the entire year, except for the 2 months leading to Passover. The maternal grandfather had 6 daughters and a son. They were all married by the time the war started, and had children - many - of their own: very few survived the war out of that large family [3 people].
- 1.03 Y was one of 3 children. They would take care of the business horses, and ride them too. Father also distributed ice to the town. [Interesting explanation of its production.]
- 6.39 If economics had been worse, they would have emigrated to Israel. Father was for, mother was against [Bundist]. Father's family did emigrate to Israel. Father had already obtained a certificate. But his mother refused.
- 8.00 Y's relationship with his father, beautiful.
- 15.00 Y's family's names. Older brother Itzik, younger sister Mindle; father Meir, mother, Sara.
- 15.25 The family was traditional in observance.
- 19.25 Y's education, and activism in youth movement.
- 22.18 Family had to 'buy' protection from the local Polish police, protection ranging from thefts to acts of anti-semitism [NDeks]
- 26.59 Y believes in the idea of 'like sheep to the slaughter'. He says the Jewish children were raised not to fight with the Polish children, not to go out among them, and not to 'make waves'. He feels he has a 'scared nature' due to his mother's method of raising them.
- 27.43 When the war started, Russians took over the area after a short German stay [shorter than a month]. they gave all residents Russian citizenship, and all the businesses were nationalized - among them the soda factory.
- 32.30 Meir's partner in the business: his brother-in-law.
- 32.58 Conflicts with his workers, ended many times in 'interviews' with the NKVD.
- 34.09 A manager, young woman, was appointed as factory manager. He was demoted.
- 35.38 Influence of the communists on the youth, who started bad mouthing their families.

- 36.42 In 1942, when war broke out between Germany and Russia, the latter left town.
- 45.39 Entrance of the Germans into the town. Men are rounded up 'for work', among them Y's father.
- 47.03 Anti Jewish measures. Ghetto is established in the area of Y's father's factory.
- 49.00 The move to the ghetto.
- 54.00 Y's activities in the ghetto, mainly reading.
- 58.17 First 'action' in the ghetto.
- 2.05.14 Y goes to work in a gravel producing place. Other jobs.
- 24.07 Another 'action', and another after that.
- 25.02 Liquidation of the ghetto.
- 27.41 Mother and sister were sent to one side; Y and the brother to the other. Mother's last words to the sons were: 'After the war, we will meet again in Bialystok.. These were her last words. [Y did go back to Bialystok, as he was told.]
- 27.47 Y and his brother were put on cargo trains and sent to Treblinka. In one of the many stops, many jumped out only to be executed by the Ukrainians. Y persuaded his brother not to jump. They passed Treblinka and continued on.
- 31.42 Arrived in Majdanek after a short stop in Lublin.
- 34.00 Processing in the camp.
- 38.00 Y wants to live; his brother exchanges his food for cigarettes.
- 44.07 Y is sent to work as a 'tailor' [in the ghetto, one of his jobs consisted of ironing the pockets in the sewing shop] and his brother goes reluctantly to the 'general workers' group. Y never saw him again.
- 44.06[?] Y is sent to Blizyn, in the the center of Poland, to a Jewish work camp. There were several shops there. He sewed buttons.
- 48.00 Y is an undisciplined worker, and his health began to deteriorate.
- 50.00 Surviving.
- 3.04.07 Y gets black typhus and is hospitalized.
- 7.00 His different jobs, in the kitchen, in carpentry.

18.00 Y learned how to be satisfied with the little food he is given. His philosophy on the matter.

33.14 They were transferred to Auschwitz. [Previous to that story, Y recalls the punishments at Blizyn.]

42.17 Y left Blizyn in the mid 40s. Description of the 5,000 people camp of Blizyn.

46.00 The hierarchy within Blizyn.

Tape II

4.00.00 About Y's childhood.

9.54 Life in the ghetto. Y's mother. Friendships in childhood.

24.31 Camps Y was in: Maidanek, Blizyn, Birkenau, Oranienburg, Sachsenhausen, Ohrdruf, back to Sachsenhausen, Neubrandenburg, Ravensbruck, and finally they were liberated by the Americans in Ludwigslust.

25.43 Birkenau. January 1944.

5.20.13 Transfer to Oranienburg, where they stayed for a short time. It was a plane factory. Short stay there as well as in Sachsenhausen.

29.19 Ohrdruf camp.

40.58 Back to Sachsenhausen, and then to Neubrandenburg. In this last camp there was a military parts factory [Krup?]

6.00.00 Hitler's birthday in the camp.

4.00 Back to Sachsenhausen stories.

10.00 Arrival in Ravensbruck, where they began to receive rations from UNRRA and the Joint.

23.50 Transfer to Ludwigslust.

32.25 The last, difficult days at Ludwigslust before liberation.

38.34 Encounter with the American soldiers.

40.00 The first hours and days after liberation in the city of Ludwigslust.

Tape III

7.00.47 Relationship between Y and his older brother.

3.54 Soccer in Bialystok in his youth.

- 6.23 The tattooing of the number on the arm. Technique.
- 12.30 Habituation on undernourishment in the camps.
- 17.30 Road from Ludwigslust to Bialystok after liberation took several weeks.
- 33.53 Arrival in Warsaw.
- 34.50 Arrival in Bialystok. The 'community house'.
- 46.59 Awaiting to go to the training farm in Sosnowiecz.
- 54.50 January 1946. Y was already in Israel. He had been in Bialystok from June to August.
- 55.37 On the way to Sosnowiecz they stopped in Lodz.
- 56.55 The training farm belonged to the Ichud.
- 58.48 Life in the Sosnowiecz training farm.
- 8.03.00 Organization to obtain fake documents in order to emigrate to Israel.
- 5.50 Stop in Austria, Graz for a few months.
- 16.30 Transfer to Foerenwald, where they were for a few months. There it was decided how they will 'escape' to Israel [through Marseilles]. Encounter with Israeli Jews who came to accompany them [the Jewish Brigade].
- 29.05 The way to Belgium, through the border.
- 31.05 Awaiting for the ship 'Tel Chai' for about 2 weeks.
- 33.11 Departure to Israel.
- 34.27 The journey.
- 36.42 Arrival in Haifa, surrounded by the British. Taken to Atlit, where they were for 2 weeks.
- 48.00 Arrival in Kibbutz Massade, in the Jordan valley.
- 50.00 Impressions of Tiberias.
- 52.00 The road to Tel Aviv and to Y's family' s home.
- 53.25 Y's family in Tel Aviv. He stayed there to learn their profession, and work with them.
- 9.00.00 Y's occupation upon his arrival in Massade.
- 7.14 First time with the family. Traiining to work in Y's uncle's pipes factory.

9.04 Y's military service in Israel.

20.00 The loss of Y's daughter to Leukemia, and his undertakings after near-death.

53.44 Y's motivation to leave this testimony.

55.02 Read of Y's family members who died in the Holocaust.