

Mr. Henry Wermuth, reel five. I wonder if you could explain to us how things had changed when you got back to Klaj ammunition camp. Were you ever allowed to leave again or had things had the screw turned again here?

Well, I wouldn't put it in the words the screw turned. When I mentioned it earlier, it was meant to be, well, things went from bad to worse. And in that respect, maybe you can say screw had turned. Yes, because it went from being in the beginning, being taken to work, then wearing the armband, ghetto, and then into camps, working camps, then concentration camps, and so on and so on.

Well, that's the turning of the screw. Yes, I didn't believe it at that time as such, but yeah, you're right. All right. Now, I am now at ammunition work-- Klaj-- Munitionslager Klaj in German. And I'm thinking, well, I'm speaking slowly at the moment, thinking back.

Yes, well, I arrived there with very sore feet. I had the courtesy of a German unteroffizier, let's say a sergeant, taking me from the head office, so to say, to the actual camp where I stayed for about six weeks, which is something I couldn't think of that it would ever happen in another camp, a later camp, a concentration camp to be six weeks in a hospital.

Anyway, I could stay six weeks without work, and then I went to work. Now I better explain what type of work. Now, there was a camp, and this one was about 10 minutes through a wood. And from the head office, the head office was not very far from the station. And perhaps because my father spoke German-- I don't know how. He got a job as a painter, or a specifically a sign painter.

Does one say, say it in English? A sign painter? Yeah. All right, there was another quite elderly Jew. I don't call my father at that stage elderly because he must have been 46, 47, or something. And there was somebody well in the 50s, and he was really a marvel. But I'm coming back to him a little bit later.

Because my father worked there, and I was quite good at drawing, so he also managed to get me some work there. So actually we were separated from the actual camp. In a way, we had the freedom which none of the others had because I could, actually if I wanted to, walk out at any time.

But there was no reason for me to think in such terms of escape. I had to eat. I had food. There was no immediate danger of being killed, not even being beaten. I have to say at this stage that the camp was under the management of the Wehrmacht, the military, not the SS. And though it was, well, German discipline and strict, but no harassment as such, not unnecessary. And so time went by.

Could you tell me a little more about-- so you worked-- you helped your father with the sign painting. That was what you did.

That's right.

What were the other people in the camp doing? What work did you see them doing?

Oh, well, I had to join them later, and perhaps you gave me the cue to the reason why I had to join them. Well, first I made some graphs. There were some large tables put together and giant pieces of paper, about, I would say, 4 foot by 6. I mean, it's estimated measurements, or 7 foot long.

And I had to make some graphs. I didn't know what graphs were. There were special sort of instruments, and I quickly learned how to use them. And I would say they were made most probably for the ins and outs of transport of ammunition, et cetera.

All I did was to do the graphs. And when they were finished, I didn't really have anything to do, and I was looking around for work. And one day, I went-- there was a change of-- there was a lieutenant on [INAUDIBLE], whose name I've forgotten. You will soon find out that I'm very bad in names. Figures and other things are better, but names, it's really atrocious.

But his name, it sounded so good. It sounded nice. Delorme, it sounded so French. I mean, so I remember it. Oberleutnant Delorme. What oberleutnant means, well, it's a high grade of lieutenant.

Well, he saw me every day, and he didn't take any notice of me. And I don't know what kind of-- what grabbed me. I took a few essay books, and I had to sort them out, and I had to write outside what they were.

And I don't know. I can only put it to my age at the time. I saw him coming and put myself straight to attention, and he stopped and quizzically, and yes. And I said, Herr Oberleutnant, should I put this particular writing there, there, or there? And he said, oh, have you got nothing better to do?

And the next thing I knew, I was in the camp, slogging away with the others. And now I can tell you what they did in the camp. In the camp, there were arrivals of trains with ammunition. The tramp-- the camp-- sorry-- was-- not quite sure how to describe it, how big it was, but it was rather big.

And the huts or barracks where the ammunition was stored was strewn in irregular patterns. And inside the wood of course. And if there was a bomb attack from above, they would just hit one maybe, but not all. Anyway, we had to store, to load and unload, and, well, this was my work.

In the beginning, it was terribly difficult. Those, we call them grenaten. I think you say grenades. You think of hand grenades, but there were others. I would say shells for big cannons weighing about, I would say, nearly 100 weight. And to lift one and put it on your shoulder and load or unload and do it constantly, in and out and in and out for all day long-- oh, yeah. I felt ill.

But interestingly, and that is how you can learn how work makes you fit rather than weak. After one week, I didn't feel it so badly. After two weeks, I already felt it easy. And after three weeks, I started bragging. And a little bit longer, I asked some other people to put me two on one shoulder and a third on the other shoulder, just for the sake of bragging, and I could lift them. And I really became strong.

But still, who would voluntarily carry on with that if you could find a way out?

How many hours a day were you doing of that?

Well, it was quite normal, I think. Just an eight hour day.

We still--

The real tough stuff is still to come as far as hard work and all this business. That's later.

Were you still-- were you still workmen? When you first went to Klaj, you said your father managed to get work there and you got work there. Were you still workers? Were you still paid and treated as such? Or had you by now become prisoners? At what stage did you cross that line?

Well, you used a very funny word, paid. I can't remember having ever been paid. The best thing I can remember was getting food or ration. That was payment. But no, no, no actual cash or nothing. There was nothing we could buy anyway. We couldn't go anywhere.

So even when you and your father first went there, before the first resettlement train, there had been no pay?

No pay. No pay. No, no, no. There may be-- well, if I strain my memory, perhaps we were sort-- a little bit more food, better ration cards. I'm not quite sure anymore, but something there was.

But now it was actually you had to work. It was already sort of-- that's the pattern. You had to work. Well, so where were we?

What was the accommodation like that you were provided with at Klaj?

Well, there were barracks. There were bunk beds. And we had one to each bed. I have to mention it because that was not the case in later camps. And, well, it wasn't something special. I was young. I didn't care too much.

I mean, it wasn't comfortable or anything. It's a camp, and what do you expect from a camp?

Were you in barrack-like affairs?

Yeah, barrack, old barracks, yeah.

How many to a barrack? Was it very crowded or?

Oh, no. The whole labor force was only 150, about.

What was the atmosphere like in the barracks?

Well, when you say atmosphere, I kept myself mostly to myself and to my father. And perhaps throughout the camp, I didn't make many acquaintances for that reason. I made a few, and I will tell you when it comes to the point, but in the barracks, what can I remember there?

Well, OK. During the six weeks-- actually, I'm sort of going back a bit-- when I was ill, I was trying to write a book in German. Well, trying out if I could get away with it.

I had paper. I had a pen, and I started writing a book. I still remember I used the name of Fred Morgan. Everything sounding English was very elegant. And he was in prison in America, and the sun looked through-- through the small-- what do you call it, grate, windows?

No, no, no. Wait a minute. Iron-barred windows onto his bronzed body. He managed to escape, and there was an accident, and he found somebody who looked very much like him. And he took his paper and identity, and that's-- I was starting a very interesting story, so to say.

And in the middle of it, there was somebody else suddenly who was imprisoned there. He could speak German. Don't forget, it was in Poland. And I started reading to him. Actually, I put all these pages into a book, and I started reading to him. And suddenly, I stopped because--

My story stopped. It wasn't it wasn't much more than about half a chapter, but it was interesting. And he says, go on, go on. I said, there is nothing to go on. What do you mean, there is nothing go on? You have got a whole book there.

I said, no. It's just what I had written. But by this I realized that I could write. Anyway, that's a little episode. And just because you asked how I was getting on, it's nothing much to report how I got on with other people.

I managed eventually to go get back to work. And that is what's more important for the following story. Got to get back to work to-- some real work was found for me, and of course I avoided in future to cross the path of the oberleutnant who would perhaps then ask me what I am doing. But he never asked me, and I never asked him anything anymore.

What I did, though, and you must put it to my youth-- how old was I? About 18. Quite often when he was away and I had things to do in the main in the head office, I went into his room. And I was thinking if only there was an underground organization I could get in touch with. I could possibly put out some information.

But here there were the books. I could look into them, but I wouldn't know what to do with it. Some time I put his hat on and looked in the mirror. Well, childish things, I suppose.

And, well, I think we might come now to a point which should be of interest. Yes, one day, there was an unusual commotion. Now, it happened before that there was a commotion, but this was more so. I mean, let me explain something to you.

We had a general, a very high ranking general once visiting us. And there was a commotion, but this was something more, actually much more. And we started wondering what was going on. And rumors grew that it might be Hitler himself passing by to the Eastern Front.

And we were, listening and if we could hear more, any more information. And, well, nothing much more materialized, but just that-- Hitler is going to pass by to the Eastern Front.

Well, so what? Nobody took much notice. But in the evening, I was saying to my father, well, if we now had an organization, by tomorrow morning we could either be dead or perhaps rid of a tyrant. He said, well, maybe so, but we haven't, and what can you do? We have no ammunition, nothing.

And, well, I discussed it with him, but he said, put it out of your mind, whatever. It needs organization. It needs preparation. He's coming to tomorrow morning, and what can you do? Well, we left it at that. But I couldn't sleep very well that night, and I was remembering my train journeys and the wood. And I was afraid that if the wood falls in between the train, it might derail the train.

Remember when I told you about that? So, well, it was late night. I told you I could get in and out of this headquarters at will. I went to the East. That means towards the camp.

And halfway-- well, the camp was about 10 minutes away, so half way to the camp was a pile of wood logs actually meant for firewood. I don't know for whom, but that isn't the important thing. I went there, and I selected a sizable piece.

Well, I had learned how to carry heavy things on my shoulder. And I went towards I believe northeast, I should say, towards the rail and away from the station. I reached the rail. I went on a little bit.

Well, how could I-- it's just guesswork, say, between 2 and 2.5 kilometers away from the station. I rested there, put the wood off my shoulders. And I noticed that there wasn't need for bringing it. There was plenty of it about.

I was sitting there and thinking, what now? Well, I may tell you that I have been-- at that time, I was frightened. It wasn't just a casual thing for me to do. I was quite aware that I was embarking on something which-- something has driven me here instinctively. I don't think I'd give it a good thought, but I was here now.

I was sitting, and I was thinking. But one thing I was sure-- once I've come that way, I wouldn't go away doing nothing. Then I was just getting up to start my work, and I heard some voices. I withdrew. Their voices came nearer. They were in German.

It was-- well, it wasn't a moonlit night. I don't think so, but I could still see. There must be some-- I mean, there may have been a moon about it, because I could see more than just shadows on the other side of the rail passing by, and I don't think it was imagination. It was more imagination when I was saying they were in uniform.

And it being so quiet and so late in the night, I even heard some of what they were talking about. One of the two, his brother had a motorbike accident. He called him a lucky bastard, and he had a little accident, and now he didn't have to go to the East, to the army to fight. And they also had a dog. But they passed, and they went towards the station.

And there I stood, waiting possibly another half hour for somebody else to turn up, but nobody did. And, well, there was a time when I had to decide either now or never, and I started. I took some smaller logs at first and graduated them, the biggest at the end, as I say, going smaller towards the station where I expected a train from.

And at the back of the biggest log, which I would say, was about, hmm, let's say, 6, 7 inches in diameter, I wedged some

smaller pieces against the-- what do you call them? Sleepers, those pieces of wood under the rails.

I then-- not sure if it was necessary, but I collected-- what do you call them, pebble stones, ballast? These smaller type of stones between the rails, and keep them up as well.

And to my mind, it would have been good enough to derail a train. Well, having done my work, one more look, and I went, oh, what else should I do?

What was in your mind? Did you realize what possible consequences all this might have had?

Well, as I say, this is thinking back, I don't think I would be able to do it at a later stage. But I was 18 at the time, and all the guerrillas, which were the terrorists and the fighters nowadays, they are youngsters, nonthinking youngsters. They are thinking more with their blood than with their head, and that must have been one of those things.

And also, I didn't think of any heroic deed. I rather thought, well, if I'm lucky, the war, it will be finished tomorrow. But it must have been a bit of muddled thinking because I didn't-- later, when I told my father the next morning, he said, what have you done? How can we be sure that the war will be that?

He has got plenty of henchmen to carry on after him. Will he be-- might be-- might be-- I mean, it might be that there will be a revolution inside Germany because the military, the SS didn't get on too well. There was always the internal fights going on, and we were hoping perhaps something of that would develop.

But nothing could be sure. I wasn't even 100% sure if it was to be that fellow, Adolf Hitler. But there was too much of a commotion, too much going on for it not to be. Somebody at least very important.

But the rumors were Adolf Hitler, and so that's what I went by. I went home. I went to bed. Obviously, I couldn't sleep. I didn't sleep.

And I told my father. And well, all I got was a bit of a telling off. And he said, now we have to be prepared to be on the run perhaps in a few hours. And him being well acquainted there, he went into the canteen or kitchen anyway. He got ourselves and some food together to last us for a few days.

All this we could do now, but in later stages and later times, there wouldn't be a question of such convenience. And then we were dreaming, well, maybe we run away, and it will be over. We could hide just long enough until everything will be over.

But we didn't want to just run until we heard something. Well, it was early enough. I went out of the camp again towards the station. And there, from the distance of course, I could see a lot of military stood.

The train stood there. And just as I came nearer-- when I say nearer, it was still quite far. I can't guess the distance, but maybe 150 yards, meters-- the train started moving.

Now, it was a nice summer's day. It was daylight. What I want to say, the daylight was there and in full. It was early morning. I'm not quite sure what time it was. It's only guesswork when I would say it was early noon. Not early noon.

Should I just say between 8:00 and 10:00 sometime in the morning? I mean, that's how far my memory goes back. And I went closer, and I saw there was a few wagons, not many, obviously not an ordinary train. And in the middle, I saw a lone figure studying something.

The train was moving, and my imagination was heated. In my imagination, I saw the famous mustache, but I wouldn't swear my life away that it was him. And also, you must remember, I see this train moving, and I see this man.

Now I see him. Now I don't. There were trees. Now I see him. Now I don't.

Well, I moved back because now I expected something to happen. I was going already towards the head office. And I heard the train. I was waiting, but nothing happened. As I say, the biggest non-event that could be. Nothing happened. The train went into the distance as if that was quite an ordinary thing to do. And, well, somebody must have removed the obstacle.

It was only later that we speculated, my father and I, because it could have been that the Germans had it removed it and kept quiet because they didn't want to tell the world that somebody wanted to assassinate the beloved Führer. It could have been that a farmer saw it, just dismantled it. We don't know.

But if it was-- if the Germans had discovered it and had dismantled it, we expected some repercussions. We went to work. Nothing happened. Nothing happened that day. Nothing happened the next day.

Well, all I can say, the biggest thing has become the biggest-- for me, the biggest non-event. And, well, that would close this particular chapter.

I presume you were disappointed.

Well, that's a very funny question and deserves a better answer than what I would give. Obviously, I was disappointed. But you can imagine that from the moment I put this abstraction on, for the moment, I felt nothing really has happened, and nothing will happen to us. There was a state of feeling which can describe more than discomfort.

I mean, yes, something could happen that could free the world of the biggest murderer. But on the other hand, I myself, I am now tensed. I'm a spiral. You know, I could be released any moment to jump, to run. And myself, I didn't know how.

So in that respect, I felt how? Well, relieved, but of course disappointed. Of course yes, because in my mind at that time, I could have possibly saved my mother and sister. It didn't occur to me at that time that most probably, and as I am thinking now, they were already dead. But in those days I thought, well, that actually-- perhaps coming to think of it-- that must have been my main motive.

Mr. Henry Wermuth, reel six. Is there any other thoughts or facts you could give us about this, what you call the non-event, your attempted assassination of Hitler?

Well, perhaps I can't tell you any more except to my chagrin, or our chagrin-- I include my father-- we learned that he actually was at that time-- a few days later, we learned that he was at the Eastern Front when we expected him to be, and the likelihood that it was him was the more so after we have heard that. That's perhaps the last thing I could say about that.

What next happened in the camp at Klaj?

Well, as I say, I don't tell these things exactly chronologically. Neither have I got, unfortunately, a diary. But the important events, of course, stick in your mind. Well, the next important event that does come to my mind is one day, we were asked if any amongst us were Americans or had any connection with America.

Now, I have to go back a few years, when we tried to emigrate to America, still back in Germany. And we had a quota. There was a quota system to emigrate to America. They didn't just let anybody in, and otherwise many more people would be saved.

There was a quota system, so many German Jews and so many Polish Jews, et cetera. Now, we were under the German quota. And we were told the quota was quite good, but the war happened, and all these had finished. There was no more emigration after that.

Although I come to think of it, I don't know why not, because America wasn't at war at the time yet. Hmm. Well, I never thought about it. Anyway, the question in the camp was then, anybody with American connections? Now, we had

a lot of our own luggage with us and letters, and amongst those letters, also letters from my aunt in America who has sent us the papers, the necessary papers to emigrate.

And we handed those in, and we said, yes, we were somehow connected with America as in so far that we had a quota to go there. Not being real Americans, and they didn't express it exactly that you have to be Americans in order to step forward.

Well, like most of the times, we were not informed. It is mostly guesswork. We had to deduct from what they say what they could possibly mean. Mostly it was more dangerous than this particular event. We didn't trust it quite, but what should we do? I mean, if they want to shoot Americans? We couldn't see a reason for that yet.

So anyway, we went. I'm not quite sure if there were any more from this particular camp. I think we were the only two, actually. With great envy, they saw us go. And we ended up in Montelupich prison in Krakow. And again, I remember there were 73 males in one large room and the females in another room.

And we were told that our papers would be studied. The guards were probably SS. And, well, at that time they didn't do much to us. Well, we almost fell for eight days under the protection of America.

What were conditions like in the room? It was pretty crowded.

It was pretty crowded, but we lived in a very peculiar situation. We lived in hope and in fear at the same time. I mean, hope, we could possibly-- I mean, now the Americans must see what's going on, and they must let us go, and they must help us to go-- speed up our quota, what have you.

Alternatively, well, we were not-- we had no American passports. And as it turned out after eight days, I think one or two, possibly three out of the crowd, really went through, and the rest was sent back.

How are you fed and everything else while you were in this room?

Fed? Well, next to this room, there was, by the way, a small another small room, which was connected with a toilet and a washroom. And feeding-- well, I can't recall any hunger, so feeding must have been all right.

So although it was crowded, the conditions weren't too barbaric? Would that be--

Well, barbaric or not, it was crowded. But it was anticipation, and you could sort of-- we knew it wasn't for long. And we weren't put there for a reason. Our papers were taken away, so something must transpire after a certain time.

One little episode while we're at it, somebody asked me to cut his hair, and I found out that if ever I survive, a hairdresser will not be my profession. And I was asked by other kindly people to stop the butchering of this fellow's head.

But, well, you see there are some funny memories as well. Anyway, about a week, and it was all over. All into the yard, across us we could see a line of, well, uniformed men. And what do you call it when you sort of-- the rifle, get the rifle at the ready, that sound? What do you call it? Cock the rifle. In German, it's called Repetiergewehr, But I'm not quite sure what it is in English.

Anyway, they cock the rifle, and they put it at the ready. And I thought, well, are not going to shoot us. I mean, it looked like it. Anyway, they didn't, and we soon were back to our respective places. Where the others come from I didn't ask any questions. And if I did, I can't remember them.

But on the way back, and here my memory fails me a little bit, but I can remember I was lying down on straw and just next to me was a pretty girl. I think she was also from Bochnia, but I only saw her for that particular hour and no more.

And we're talking obviously about our relations, that she was alone. And, well, it doesn't take me to-- doesn't take me

long to fall in love. I mean, during that hour I fell in love, but to what purpose I don't know, because soon it was bye-bye.

But during that hour she told me, and that was important, that the transport went to a place called Belzec. I never heard of it. And English people, I've heard it later pronounced as "Bell-zeck." And it was-- and that I only learned much, much later, the smallest of the famous extermination camps. The bigger names were Majdanek, Sobibor, Treblinka, et cetera, and of course, Auschwitz.

But, well, at this time it didn't mean much. All it meant to me, that somebody has escaped when they were unloading them, and the destination was Belzec, "Bell-zeck." And I was dreaming maybe one day I will make my way there and free them from the camp there, or visit them.

Well, you and I know now that what would have happened if I did. It was an extermination camp, but I didn't know it at the time. OK. That was the end of that, and then we came back to the camp and--

Back to Klaj.

Back to Klaj and back to normal.

I'd like to look at just what was normal. You've talked a bit about your accommodation. What was the food like at Klaj?

Well, I'll tell you this. If for instance, my memory would tell me hunger, I would have something to tell you. But at this stage, I can't report that yet. Because, remember, I was working. I was getting stronger.

That means I must have had enough food. But also don't forget, my father was in the head of his, and always-- I don't know if it applied to most, all of them, that I had enough to eat, but I'm speaking of myself. I had enough.

And there was also a soldier there. Well, coming to think of it, you see, the more you jog my memory, the more I remember. There was also a soldier there who actually helped me while I was doing some work there, the graphs which I mentioned before. And his name was Bonatz, an ordinary soldier, if I would like to speak about him for a moment.

He abhorred the war. He abhorred the fact that he was in uniform. And he used some very naughty words to describe the whole situation. And funnily enough, this particular man I met after the war in Frankfurt.

He didn't look too well off. I would have liked to talk to him more. He spoke a few words to me. I met him on one of the main thoroughfares after the war in Frankfurt, and he disappeared again. What a pity.

I would have liked to talk to him quite a lot, even if I would only say, do you remember I had a father, or something like that. Anyway, yes. Oh, yes.

Would he give you extra food?

Yes, yes. Speaking about that, yes. At one time, he invited me. I remember I was in-- yeah, I was in a barracks, and he invited me to have a meal there. And I was eating what I was thinking a lovely chicken. And later on, I found out it wasn't a chicken at all. It was a rabbit.

Well, a rabbit is a delicacy, except of course that, from the Jewish point of view, that's one of the forbidden animals. But I mean, not that I cared at that time already. I mean, the people got past-- most of them got past caring.

[COUGHING]

Sorry for that. But anyway, I ate that, and I also slyly asked him a question. And I remember it, the question was, now you have invaded Russia. It's a very big country. How far do you think you can go there? I mean, you have to have what I call Nachschub. Nachschub is everything that comes after. You have to feed the people. You have to send transports



all that way.

There's a different word for it. Just a second. I will think of it. Yeah, "logistics" I think is the word, logistics. Anyway, those things which you have to feed the army and everything. And I was trying to catch him out on something, because obviously I wanted to say you can't possibly win the war. But I didn't dare.

But he then himself said, well, I don't think they will go very far. And I think we leave it at that. Well, anyway, he was anti-Nazi, anti-war, anti-everything. Well, he helped me, actually, as far as food is concerned. Yes, and work is concerned.

What about sanitation generally? Did you have adequate latrine provision or toilet provision at Klaj?

When you speak about toilet and latrine, I will come to that in the next camp, which I will touch upon very soon. Not in this camp because I have got no special recollections. In other words, there was nothing special to tell.

What about things like being able to maintain your personal appearance, washing, shaving, any way of washing your clothes, that sort of thing? Was that all right?

Yes. As I say, we didn't miss-- this was 1942 now. The transports went to the East, and I think I might have been in a camp which, well, were better situated or better circumstances than many others. And the story will soon unfold where you will hear quite different things to what you hear now.

So at this stage, you could still keep yourself clean and get clean clothes?

No, no. About keeping clean, actually, even in Auschwitz you could keep yourself clean.

OK. What about--

The Germans, as terrible as they were, this is one of the kinks. The first thing they did when you went into a camp, they put you into for delousing. But sometimes delousing means not just delousing. It means killing of all together.

Did you have lice at Klaj? Had they appeared by then?

Oh, funny you should say that. Yes, my father at one time discovered something on my sweater, and I felt terrible. Because, you see, you remember that you are almost an outcast if you have got lice, and I went to the doctor, and I remember all the dos. I mean, at the later stage we were full of it, and I couldn't do much about it. But at this time, we did everything just to get rid of it. And my father helped me. I had one or two, yes.

There's one other thing I will say. There weren't any women I can remember amongst the 150 of us, but I was still thinking quite often, if only my little sister had come or even my mother. We with our connection at the head office could have got them some work in the kitchen or so, whatever.

I was constantly dreaming about that. Because at that camp, we had no real deprivations.

Was there any--

Nobody was killed. Nobody was beaten. I can't remember anything, really. I mean, hard labor discipline, yes. But the real atrocities? Well, they are still to come. Not in this camp.

So the health of the people who worked at Klaj, the Jewish people, was fairly good?

Yes, there was-- I can't-- I can't say anything abnormal, except I witnessed my first death. But this was an accident. Somebody missed going. When we were pushing the wagons, and somebody missed the steps going up the ramp. And he was squeezed between the wagons.

It was one of those wagons without a top on at all, instead of a flat wagon. And all I could see is his hand reaching out between the ramp and the wagon. And that was the first casualty.

I didn't know the man. That was one of us. That's all.

You said you went to the doctor when you had lice. So there was adequate medical provision as well at the camp, was it, for if you did fall ill?

Didn't think about it, actually, until you put the question. Yes. Yes, there was. There was. When I was ill, I could go to a doctor. Yeah.

I mean, I reported sick, and somebody came. Yes.

What sort--

I do not remember if the doctor was in uniform or not.

Can you remember what sort of daily routine you'd have, from when you'd get up to when you went to bed? Just sketching, sketchily. Not exact times or anything.

Well, perhaps there were two routines. The one in the head office was trying in the end to find work to look inconspicuous. Because most of the time there was no work. But they were just used to seeing you there. Nobody bothered. In the actual working camp, there was a routine, of course.

What time would you get up, roughly, in the morning? Or would you all be got up at the same time, that sort of thing?

Yes, you'd get up all at the same time. I don't really know what hour, but it was a normal routine. I suppose eight, 8 hour work. I can't recall anything extraordinary. That is still to come, but not in this particular camp.

But there was one thing. Yes. Yes, another episode while you're talking about it. Yes, this other old Jewish painter, also in the head office, he made marvelous murals. And at one time, that was the day actually-- the day when I was expecting news about the train, if something happened.

He engaged me in painting another part of the wall in that barracks. He painted tanks, German-- no, Russian tanks and the Germans throwing grenades into the open turret. What is it called? Turret?

And marvelous pictures of the oberleutnant, I must find the English equivalent, actually. Head lieutenant? No, there must be-- what's higher than lieutenant?

I think it's captain perhaps. He was quite proud when we had these high-grade visitors and showing off his mural, murals. And I was then told by this other painter to do something. Oh, yes, yes, yes. I tell you something, what he taught me.

You take a washing up cloth or a floor cloth, rather, a rather rough cloth. You twist it, and-- no, no. You put it into the paint. You twist it so it's half dry, and then roll it against the wall, and it becomes a very interesting pattern.

Now, when I did that the first time, well, the mess I made is nobody's business. And when it came dinner time, my father came over, and he helped me. And he knew something about it.

And whereas I was scolded and sneered at by this fellow in the morning, he was quiet in the afternoon when I did quite a good job. That's one of the things I remember. The other thing is when I had to-- yes, each of the barracks with ammunition now back in the camp, had a number in Roman numerals sticking out from like a-- what is it called, a gibbet?

You know, like a gibbet from the roof? And we would then know that type of ammunition was in barrack number one two, three, four, five. And I had to paint these numerals. And he had the idea it had to be painted. Well, they shouldn't be, but not in such a paint. They shouldn't be seen from above if there should be an air attack.

Well-- well, I was thinking. Being clever, I went into the-- well, the place where all the paint was, and I looked at-- I looked at the sky. I saw, ah, that's a good color, the sky. I painted it sky blue. And he gave me a-- he gave me some choice words.

If an airplane looks down, he doesn't want to see sky blue. It doesn't look-- it has to be dark or blend in with the wood. Anyway, I had to do it again. Some funny episodes, nothing exciting. But as you were asking, that was the answer.

After you'd finished work, you said it was roughly an 8-hour day or a normal-ish working day. How did how did you spend the time before you went to sleep? What sort of recreation or facilities or occupations did you involve yourself in?

I'll tell you something. I very often thought about that, not only for this camp but for all the other camps. I cannot give you anything positive unless in one later camp, which comes in 1943, which we will talk about it at a later stage.

But at no time can I think of any recreation at all, definitely not officially arranged like in the POW camps that are playing ball and this type of thing. Definitely not.

I can assure you that was out. If there was any recreation, it was maybe just talking to my father, to anybody else.

What about reading? Would you have any reading materials there?

Not in this camp. In a later camp, I found a very sizable book all about electricity, not that I was interested. But there was nothing else to read. And how I got hold of that book I can't remember, but it must have been about 700 or 800 pages just about that.

And that was the only thing. When you speak about reading, that's what comes to my mind.

Were there any women in the camp?

Not amongst us. There were-- that reminds me of another little episode. Once I came across in the woods a group of women, but I don't think they were workers. I think they looked more like a school outing because there were rather young girls.

Oh my God, girls, girls. Did I-- did I-- I was thinking that-- I was 18 and nowhere near a girl to speak to let alone to be closer to. Anyway, I just passed by. I looked at one, and she looked back, and that was-- that had to do for the next three weeks, and then I forgot her as well.

No, there were no women as such. As far as entertainment or anything you can think of, no, no.

What about contacts with the outside world? Did you have any still at that stage? Did you get any news or any letters or any parcels or money?

No, no, no, no, no we were already cut off from the world nonentities. We-- just we-- that means my father myself, we could have got out if we wanted to just by being in somewhat elevated positions. But we wouldn't know what to do anyway. I mean, what would we do? Sending letters to where?

No, I don't think there was any contact. There were plenty of rumors constantly. I mean, throughout the war, rumors. And how they came through to us I don't know, but they reached us-- stages of the war, what happened, et cetera, et cetera. I mean, that's how we found out that Hitler was visiting the Eastern Front.

But you don't know the origin of these rumors?

No, no, no, no.

Well, you were able to maintain your relationship with your father. You saw plenty of him. Were you in the same barrack room as him or?

Yes, yes. We were constantly together. Constantly. Yeah, he was actually my-- he was more a mate of mine than a father.

Now I want to ask about the organization of the camp. You said that it was run by the Wehrmacht, not the SS, the German army.

Yeah.

How did they organize the running of the camp?

Well, the German discipline is well known. It was well organized. Nothing special to report. The thing to report may be the absence of superfluous harassment. I mean, they didn't use-- they didn't hit us kindly. And there was the odd soldier who made himself quite sport with us to make us work harder. And this was more of the odd person but not the management director thing, but there was the soldier if he saw us working, he pushed us to load or unload faster.

But it wasn't-- I'm always comparing with later camps, and this was one of the good ones. I had two good ones, and I am coming to that very good one later on as well.

What was the-- you say there was German discipline. What form did that discipline take? How were you disciplined if things didn't go to the Germans' liking?

Well, the discipline was timing. The discipline was everything what you can call to be straight in line, to make your back straight. You have to appear clean. You have to do what they want at the time when they want it and how they want it. And nobody went out of line.

There was no shooting or punishment as such because nobody dared to go out of line. There was really no need even to go out of line. Because you did your job, all right. You were-- some people, most probably, was trying to shirk a little bit of the hard work and step aside or get out of it a little bit.

If they were caught, they were-- I can't remember any beatings in that particular camp. I mean, they were shouted at and given some choice German words, but I can't remember any beatings.

Were you guarded? How were you guarded? Was there barbwire around the camp or?

Yes, yes. The camp was wired. But as I say, I had a privileged position. I could go in and out, and people knew me.

But most people couldn't get in and out?

No, no. The people who were in the camp itself, they couldn't. No, it was just my father, the old man, the mural painter, and myself.

So the normal inmate would, as far as he was concerned, he was a prisoner.

He was a prisoner. But I considered myself a prisoner because there was nowhere for me to go anyway.

And the fence was guarded, the fence to the camp?

Oh, yes. There were guards. I mean, you see, they also had it guarded not only for the prisoners. They were quite sure of their prisoners in a way. But there could also be-- well, what's going on in the war? I mean, there could be enemies, spies, anything.