

Mr. Henry Wermuth, reel 21. You were telling me about you got back to your wagon with the corned beef. I wonder if you could continue, Mr. Wermuth.

Yes. That was the end of the last reel. How I opened it, I didn't know. But I was eating just a little bit. And then I told you that I was trying to preserve something for my father, et cetera. Yes, that's where we were.

It was night. And obviously I couldn't get out to see my father. He was standing still at the same place. And now perhaps I have to put the listener into a frame of mind which I'm quite sure I can't do in the proper way to imagine that not having eaten anything of that sort for a month, maybe years, being hungry to the point of starvation, but real starvation, starvation which will end in a foreseeable time, whether it's days or weeks in death, inevitably so. Because I became thinner and thinner.

And now I have got with me a little bit of whether it was corned beef or pressed meat, next to me. So I ate a tiny little bit more. I'm hesitating. Because now I have to tell something which I haven't forgotten. I will never forget till the end of my life and I'm ashamed of it, although people, whenever I mention what I did said it wouldn't have helped your father anyway. But by morning there was nothing left of the tin. It was empty.

And I cannot say it was hundreds of thousands of times I asked myself the question. Had I given, as I intended to, half the tin to my father, would it have saved his life? Because the next day, I must just for a moment reverse to the day before.

When we were searched, it just happened to be in front of the wagon where my father was. And I saw what I was explained to be a Russian doctor, sitting and operating on my father. The operation took place in such a way that my father was sitting on a stool, perhaps a low stool, but on a stool just the same with a back to me. I was calling him. He looked sort of sideways a little back, while the other one was still working on his head.

I do not remember the marks or the exchange. But that was the last I've seen of him. That was the last picture. Because the next day, well, I'm just thinking. I'm just turning over in my mind if it was still a possibility, if there was time to give him half. I do not know. I think there must have been. Otherwise, I wouldn't have had that bad conscience for so many years, that maybe there was a day in between this episode, the eating and one more day. Anyway, I was told he had died.

And it's so unnecessary. Because he was a very, very sporty and strong man, much stronger in build and everything than I am. And he would have had a definite chance to survive if not for this mishap in the camp, A, and for this hit over his head, B.

Now, at the time, I can well remember I did not cry. But one single tear came down and ran down the side of my nose. And I almost shrugged my shoulder. And I said, so what. In a matter of days, it will be my turn. Because I was going down fast.

One more episode I remembered, I only mention it, although it is of no great importance. For one reason or another I must have annoyed one of the Russian prisoners, not a very tall fellow, but a roundish face. And he came to me as I was lying in the wagon, and he kicked me in the face. And I was thinking, I was grateful that he had some sort of soft shoes on. That's another memory just by the by.

Anyway, we were then--

Did they tell you what was the eventual cause of death for your father? Was it the consequences of this operation, or was it just starvation? Did you ever find out?

No. They did not tell me. But I don't think it needs telling. It was. I mean it was not starvation. He was still stronger bodily than I was. It was not starvation. We were both going down hill. But no, no. It was this operation, the pus that developed inside the head on his brain, or wherever it was of which he complained before the pain was getting bigger

and bigger. And he was a hero. He did not complain easily.

He was a tough man. He was tough. I haven't in those 20 reels spoken enough about him what he said, words of wisdom, encouragement, and especially about his toughness for his age. I mentioned that perhaps in Kielcz, I believe I did mention that he was showing everybody how to play football. Yes.

At 40 years of age, 48 years of age. Anyway, we were then a day later or so unloaded. And we ended up in the Mauthausen concentration camp. Now, I must say something. I did make a point of memorizing the day he died. Today, when I'm speaking to you now it's the 8th of April. On the 15th of April 1945, the Americans met the Russians in the middle of Germany somewhere at the River Elbe, and we were still toing and froing, in these wagons, and suffering. And most of Germany was already liberated.

And on the 27th of April, my father died, eight days before my liberation, 11 days before the war officially ended. There is still an episode to be told. Because now we have reached Mauthausen. I have reached Mauthausen minus my father.

We were told that well, the first things you ask, what kind of a camp is it? Oh, well the gassing had just stopped just recently. Well, good point. Gassing had stopped. So we were put into barracks which were terribly, terribly overcrowded. I'm not quite sure how I lost all I wore, but maybe it was taken from me. Because a very famous German thoroughness, most probably taken away for delousing and cleaning, but I never got them back. So there I was naked with a blanket.

And we were put five of us into a bed. It is about one meter wide, I would say, if that, which is about three feet and a bit, a yard. Two on one side, and three on the other like sardines. Between myself and my neighbor, we were on the two sides. We had the feet of the others between us on our faces and wherever. And our feet landed on the others. And we were all naked. But we were all, including myself, very, very thin. It's only a degree of thinness which is from very thin to Muselmann, the skeleton type of no return, to the actual skeleton, to death. And that was practically the whole barracks.

But I was a lively character. I don't know what I did. Something I did which displeased the Blockälteste. He was actually not a bad faced man. I don't really know. I mean I had even with a smile I remember him. But he took me in-- the barracks was in two parts-- through a door into another part of the barracks. And there I had to kneel on a stool. They took away my blanket.

And I'm sure I looked like hundreds of others there, shaven, no clothes on. And as I say, we practically look all alike. And we just arrived. So as I was kneeling there with my hand over my head, he went away. And immediately, I wanted to rush away. But I saw him looking back. And I pretend that all I did was turning the stool around, and make myself a different position. I had a feeling that actually he smiled. And he looked away. And I had gone back through the door to my place, and I doubted whether he would run after me or come after me neither. Well, he didn't.

I then learned a little bit later that the guards had run away. The SS had run away. But still we were guarded, I'm not quite sure by who. The next thing I remember was the rations. There were pitifully small.

Well, I also remember that I almost expected that. It was what everybody knew it was going towards the end of the war. And whereas in Auschwitz, perhaps we had four to one such little loaf of bread, it was now eight. And I think it was going on for 10 or 12. I'm not quite sure, oh, just a pitiful amount. And then there was a little bit of watery soup. That was our daily ration.

There is no wonder that whoever was down, that was no sustenance. In the camp, there was a certain amount of food which if you didn't have to work, I mean previously hard, you could stay alive for a long time, not really live not be healthy and well, but not die. The combination of little food, and hard work, and everything else made people go downhill, and in the end became Muselmann and die.

Here it was now that there wasn't enough sustenance. It was inevitable it is now going to be a point for everybody to die. Now we were five in the bed. And I offered, I can remember that, next to the bed-- no, wait. I have to tell you. Again, it

was three tiers. And they can imagine in the space of the size of a bed three tiers, about 15 people, live. Because all the others were as full up as ours.

Or some had only four. And well, we were soon to be four only. But just a minute. We were five at this point of my story. And I offered the others, if they would give me the blanket. I would sleep, there was a small table just under a window next to our bed. And I would say I would sleep, well, I would get out of bed. There would only be four. My offer was accepted. I get a blanket which was taken from me before, remember?

Now, I have that position in mind, as if it was yesterday. On that small table you couldn't stretch out. I was kneeling on that table hands crossed in front of my head, and my head leaning on my arms or arms crossed rather. And also on the table and that was in a kneeling position with head down and blanket on top of me. That is how I spent a few nights, one or two or three. I don't know, I think one or two.

Then something happened which we were all looking for in the bed. One person got, listen to that, diarrhea. And whenever everybody else got up during the day, he couldn't anymore. We knew then one of the-- I don't know, there are always sort of wardens in the barracks which, as you know, there were always some people looking after. I don't know what I could classify him.

Anyway, he was somebody who did something in the barracks. And he came along with some kind of a marker. And he asked his name. And I know it was the name is L-E-V-I. And he put it on his chest. And he died the same night. He was taken away. I haven't even seen it. But we are sleeping for a night or so with this fellow with diarrhea.

But everybody else had actually now developed diarrhea, including myself, except it wasn't so bad that we couldn't get up. And then we were only four in the bed. And it felt after five, four felt comfortable. Now comes another episode, which is very clear in my mind.

The time came for the soup to be brought in. It was watery soup. Well, it must have been perhaps when I was, say for instance, I only give you by example. When it was an Auschwitz, maybe a pound of meat or a kilo of meat cooked for 100 people. It may be now for 200 or 300 or 400 people, you understand? So much more watery, you understand? I mean perhaps it's not the right proportion. But more or less, it illustrates what I meant to say.

It had just a touch of a taste. And it was what was in it, I don't think it can be sort of fished out. It looked like grass anyway. But my spirits were there. I must survive. I must survive. And I was remembering my old conjuring tricks.

A very weakened fellow, but my head was working 100%. I took the blanket which I now was master of. I had a little tin dish and a spoon, all my possessions, earthly possessions. And I left the spoon under my pillow. Oh, not under the pillow, God forbid what is a pillow? Under the straw mattress. And I took the dish, hidden under the blanket. And I strolled up and down the middle of the barracks, the corridor, each time sort of like playfully looking at the barrel, or big bucket or what was called of soup of the canister, which was the lid of it was-- it was pressed down and it was with a clip. Yeah. It needed a clip or two to hold it.

I lowered, you had to bend down a little bit while I was passing that canister of soup. And I lifted one of the clips. And then I lifted another of the clips in passing. People were of course observing me, but that didn't mean much. It was done under the blanket, while I was going there just in passing, like a conjuring trick. People didn't see why I was bending down, so just bending down with my arm to go low enough for that clip.

Then I tried something else. Could I lift the lid. Yes, I could. And now comes the daring bit. I don't I could, the best conjuring trick could get away with it. Nobody's seeing it with about 600 pairs of hungry eyes looking in my direction. Anyway, nobody of the warden has seen it. That's the main thing. Otherwise I would have been punished. I lifted the lid and put my dish into the soup, lifted it out, and I had sort of a good half pint of water there, hot water soup.

And I casually strolled away, towards my bed which was nearby, took casually the spoon from under my straw mattress. And I could not possibly-- I couldn't eat in front of everybody. I bent down, I knelt down, and with my head under the lowest tier of the bed, I tried to eat my soup. Yeah, I tried. Immediately, I was surrounded by a threatening mob. And I

had to dish out to everybody including myself a bit. It didn't matter.

It was the spirit that kept me alive, not the extra bit of soup. I got still a few more spoons than the next one. That wasn't all. I noticed that across cross on the other side of the barracks, a line of beds. There were only three. Now the food was given out first on one side and then to the other. So when they reached me, I quickly ate my soup. And then hey presto, I was part of a foursome, where there was a threesome before.

They didn't like it. But I didn't let them push me out. They threatened. But in the end I said, I'll share it with you, and that kept them quiet. I got another bowl of useless, watery-- oh, well I can't call it a brew. It's a soup, but it was just hot water with a bit of color. And well, I shared it with them. And so I am absolutely positive that was the spirit to keep me alive.

What motivated that spirit? Why did you want to survive in a sense? What was it in particular that made you keep going when others didn't?

You may want to hear some answer which may not be what I'm going to give you. I just tell you this. That's the way I am made. That's the way I conducted my life before. I was more so and became more so during my camp years, and continued with that type of spirit being the one of many. No, not one of many. The odd one out, being the odd one out, ever since in whatever I did, the way I drive a car, whatever I did. That is the same spirit. That's not always just the complementary way. Perhaps sometimes just the opposite, but that is me.

So it was inbuilt, the survival instinct? Right? There was no motivating force, other than it was--

It was not perhaps what other people would say, oh, I wanted to survive to tell the story. No, I wanted to live. And I wanted to outdo and I wanted to win, perhaps, that's my makeup.

I believe there was another example where you managed to get some more soup by a ruse. Could you tell me about that?

Oh, yes. I forgot to tell you. When the soup was given out, you see, it was given on one side. And well once they finish with one, they go to the other side. I finished my portion quickly and I spotted across on the other side of the bed where there were only three. Now the distributors of the soup were now at the far end of the barracks. And while they were turning that back, I nimbly crossed over and made up a foursome in the bed where there were only three.

Well, I wasn't exactly welcomed with joy. But it was a bit peculiar. They didn't say anything. But three pairs of big eyes stared at me. And rather angrily, out of these skeletal faces. And I got a bit panicky because they might give me away. I said to them. I will share with you. So their angry expression relaxed. Well, what should I say? The three had no spoon. And we finally got our soup.

Just picture that scene. I then had to lean forward with mine, and feed them one by one, clockwise, taking my turn until the dish was empty. And well, as I said before, it was not the extra bit that kept me alive. I'm sure it was my iron will to live.

How did the dysentery begin to affect you?

Well, actually I was coming to that just now. In short, I came down with dysentery too and it affected me badly. And funny now, perhaps you recall in the previous chapter I think it was in Kraków Plaszow, in the camp when you asked when I told you it was only sanitary and toilet facilities which I remember, the latrines. And the rest was sort of a mental blockage. I had no memory at all.

And now it did trigger my memory. Because, well, I will describe it to you. Now the toilets in this barracks, there were three of them next to each other at the end of the barracks, and enclosed by another larger sort of ante room partitioned off. And when I went towards them, you smelled it from already from the distant, atrocious. And the nearest beds, poor people there. They lived with that smell for 24 hours.

Anyway, the nearer you came, the more the smell and also traces of excreta on the floor, just showing that people didn't quite make it. Now, that's what triggered me off really. triggered my memory. When you entered this anteroom, well I waited in the stuff. And I was queuing too, because only three toilets in such a huge barracks with so many people, I mean there were many more than there should be, because as you can see, four or five to a bed.

And well, there weren't enough and so we were queuing. And people couldn't hold on much longer. When you have diarrhea, you can't. And that is one of the things which even if people who listen or read about it, can't well are not perhaps so touched by the older stories. But--

[AUDIO OUT]

Mr. Henry Wermuth, reel 22. You were telling me about the latrines. I wonder if you could continue.

Well the latrines are only mentioned because my memory at first only thought of the latrines in Plaszow, the only memory of toilet facilities. And then the memory was then jogged when I was describing the place in Mauthausen.

And the three not latrines, but actual cubicles and with flushing water, whereas in the latrines had none such. But the conditions already just described in the previous reel were indescribable. There was queuing, as I said, to get onto one of the three pens, toilet pens. And people, the diarrhea couldn't hold back. And my blanket, by the way, I draped around my neck. I couldn't leave it behind. Because it would have gone, would have been lost.

So it was so filthy everywhere I didn't want it to be soiled by anything. So anyway, when I left the place, outside the first clear spot on the floor. I used like civilized people use a doormat, I cleaned my-- not my shoes, but the soles of my feet. And yeah, well diarrhea was in full swing. And practically everybody had it I think. And it took it's toll of my body.

My weakened body could not take the additional strain. And I would say it was about the 2nd or 3rd day of May. And I'm now perhaps describing the 4th day of May. The 4th day of May, I didn't get up, except of course for going to the toilet. And I would say there was really an eerie silence. Nobody talked anymore. Hundreds of people were there, but nobody talked.

When I say we started with hundreds, but we were a few hundred fewer. Beds were emptying fast. And every hour or two, the well-dressed prisoners came in, and well, when I mean well-dressed, dressed people, and well nourished, and collected those who had died. Within an hour or two in the afternoon, my two colleagues in the same bed, we were four now as you know, stopped breathing, and were duly collected too.

Well, I'm quite, at that time it didn't touch me at all. But now, I'm quite emotional to think of this enormity of it all. Anyway, yes, in the evening there was a little commotion, a little life came back into people when the soup was brought in.

Before you go on, you actually mentioned in a conversation earlier when we talked, that you'd never actually got to know anything about these two people, even though you'd lived-- Yes, of course. Yeah. Well, the whole thing is macabre, isn't it? The people in my bed, I never knew them except the one where I didn't know him, but I know the one is called Levi, because they spelled his name and put it on his chest. That's the only thing I knew.

We were never introduced. We were bed mates. We ate together, slept together, almost died together. And that was it. Not a word was talked. There was nothing to talk about. We didn't feel like it. And it is, well ships passing in the night maybe, but not quite, a different thing altogether. Anyway, it's the whole thing is macabre.

Just as for instance the next thing, when I was reminded when the soup came. I was absolutely unable to perform the same trick again. Because I couldn't get up and walk about easily. And neither could I go across to the other bed. And when I looked there, the bed in which I had the most macabre dinner of my life, it was empty. And well, I think we were all in a stupor by now, because why on earth did nobody make use of the empty beds.

There were still some with three and four. Nobody had changed or moved now. It was just everybody has given up. I haven't exactly given up, but we were only two now. And well, I don't know. It was for me hard to move about now. As I say, I was fast death was approaching and very fast.

So does this mean that in a sense your will to survive had been overcome in a sense by your body's inability to carry out anything?

Not at all, as you can see by my memory. That was clear the will to survive, if anything, was stronger. And I must tell you something else, not a trace of fear. I do not understand it. And let experts, let psychologists explain it. I don't understand. I tell you the incredible thing, not a trace of fear. It was I could neither imagine nor did it seem possible that I would die, not me. Everybody else, not me. It was just a feeling. I don't know why and how. And there was no fear. Can't explain it. Let somebody else.

And so it went on. The 5th of May, the morning like any other, it was sunshine outside. Nobody got up except for the not the latrines, but for the toilets, if they had to. And it was nearly midday when a prisoner stepped on the table next to my bed. He wanted to see something which was going outside. And then I heard him shouting in perfect German [GERMAN].

Well, the moment of my liberation. Something at me exploded. I covered my head. I broke down. And I cried, and I cried for at least 10 minutes. I shook and cried. And I knew I had so many tears in me, especially as only just one week before, there was only a single drop released when I heard of my father's death.

My first thoughts were that I am alone-- mother dead, sister dead, father dead. I was alone. Yeah. After about 10 or so minutes, I got up and my bed mate was still asleep. I tried to wake him. I couldn't. He was dead. And out of the five bed mates, I had it now all to myself, all to myself.

Yes, the bed all to myself. But there was no joy because of that. It was the impact of happiness and the impact of sadness which I simply can't describe. The irony of it all was that when my father died a week ago, even by then most of the camps had already been liberated. And as I have later learned, liberation affected many people in different ways.

Some people walked away and did their thing, just as normal and well of course with euphoria and the happiness, and well I was coming to that too. I mean it has to break through. I mean I was young. Life is just, well, I was reborn. But I couldn't walk. I remember I just walked on all the fours.

And the Americans, of course, could not organize everything within a day. And I remember that very same day or was it the next? It doesn't matter. It was before the Americans organized things, I crept on my fours and I saw somebody who was a bit stronger and somewhere and somehow had already got for himself some potatoes from the stores. I don't know how. I'm sure the stores, everything was open now. Every guard was gone.

By the way, I've forgotten to mention that the guards had already, the SS guards already had gone days ago. And some other guards, civilian or something, had taken over. But everybody had gone now. We were free to go. Now we could go. I couldn't walk. Yeah, well this fellow I was just mentioning, he had some potatoes. I'm not quite sure how he did it. But at the end of the barracks just outside, he had a fire a little fire. And he baked these potatoes.

Now, liberation does not mean that yesterday we were animals and today we were human beings. That was going to be a very slow process. And at that stage, I was still an animal, on all the fours, hands and knees I crept towards him. I can't remember if I had a blanket or not. I'm just picturing it all. I don't think I had. I don't know why. Maybe I left it on the bed now. There was no way to there to steal it.

It was a warmish day. It was May. I'm trying to picture it exact. I was creeping towards him and he was just taking one of his potatoes out, and tried to peel it, and had finished peeling and put it next to him when I pounced. I grabbed it, but I couldn't run. I crawled away on all fours. Now he apparently wasn't too well on his feet either. He didn't run after me. But he threw the boiling pot-- he must have organized that too-- of water after me, which luckily missed me.

Well, yes, that was still my animal period. A few days later--

What do you remember of your first contact with actual Americans, when you actually first met them? Did they come into the barracks where you were?

No. My first memory was a few days, perhaps two days later, when I was taken on a stretcher into what they call lazarette, I suppose. Lazarette, is there a word such things? No, no, no. No, there isn't. What's the English word for it? A tent for-- a hospital tent.

First aid tent.

First aid tent, something like that. Yes. And there we were on stretchers. There were no beds. And it was I think within the camp. Mind you, I knew nothing of the camp. I have been actually, Mauthausen is a camp which was famed for its cruelty, and gassing, and one of the cruelest that it was. But when we came, gassing had just stopped. I mean apparently because it was the last few days, they didn't just outright kill us in the state we were in.

Anyway it was, I'm not going to destroy what other people can read about Mauthausen. I'm going to describe my own surroundings and what I experienced.

When did they give you the first food, the Americans?

I'm coming to that now. In that lazarette, in that hospital tent, they gave us food. And I must say they meant it well. But the food they gave was too rich. They did not know that our body couldn't take anymore food. And people died of food left, right, and center.

The great moment had arrived for them. And they did not see the next few days. And I do not know whether it was instinct or it was to me as if my father was talking to me. Don't eat this and this. I remember a soup was dished out. Well, that's what I was used to. But I'm not sure. I selected what I was eating. There was a few noodles in it. And I had ate just a few. I mean I did not grab the food or fill myself with food.

I just got my body used to a little bit more, and the next day a little bit more. Some sort of tablets I was given, five of them, every four hours, even at night he woke me up. And then I got, I remember because I was so thin, that my bones, my what's it called?

Your buttocks?

The buttocks, yeah, were sticking out, and the skin outside was then raw from lying on the stretcher. And it really hurt. But I remember that both sides were sore. And that's how I remember that the upper part of my thighs, the upper part of my legs were just bones as thin as, well, as a skeleton, as the lower part.

A boy of 14 was next to me. And he had blood transfusion. And when I woke up in the morning, he had gone. He had died. Now comes a story which I'm not quite sure whether it was exactly before or exactly after I was released by the Americans. The Americans released me very soon. I wasn't up exactly well, but they released me soon. Because maybe they had too many others to take care of, when they found out that I wasn't going to die.

So there was one little episode. I think it was even before the Americans took me in. Sorry, to switch forward and backward, because as I say, I'm searching my memory here. Yes, I got out of the barracks. That's right. And I walked with a stick, not a walking stick, but a yard stick, about the size of myself, holding on to it.

And I remember that the size of my steps was exactly the length of my feet. I couldn't make any proper steps. One by one, foot by foot, I went forward very slowly. And I went for the first time outside the barracks, for the first time since I came into the barracks about a week ago. And outside there I saw two conical shaped heaps of corpses, much higher than I was six or seven foot high at least.

I passed by them there. I wasn't, again, emotionally not moved at all. Except it occurred to me that my father might be amongst them. But I still didn't look, because A, the chances to see him there was remote. There were so many. And then there were chances he wasn't there. And I just didn't feel like looking in all the faces, the multitude of terrible faces with their terrible expressions.

I went forward. I was free. I could go, a lovely feeling. It was sunshine, even I knew I was alive. I knew that other people died, and I knew I was going to make it. Because up to now, I would make it. As even before as you say, as I told you before, before I didn't believe that I would die.

But the one thing that comes to my mind now, when I passed, it was sunshine I told you. When I passed, an empty barracks, this was dark inside. And I looked inside as I passed. And when I looked inside in front of me there's a skeleton. I looked at it. And I moved away. And as I moved away the skeleton moved away, and I then realized I've seen myself for the first time in many, many months. It was my mirror image.

I didn't recognize myself. I estimate my weight about 30 to 32 kilos, about 5 stones I would say, 5 stone and a little bit. Well clinically, I would say I was dead. Because, well, ask anybody if you could go from 11 stone which is my normal weight, down to 5, any doctor would say you're dead along the way. So I would say clinically I was dead.

Anyway, I think the hospital episode comes after that. And well, from now on, I can only report--

Were the Americans kind to you? Did they treat you well or did they mean well in what they were doing?

Of course. The food they were giving us was meant well. But they were killing us with it, until they noted it. And they sort of changed to the right diet, until the doctors arrived and all this business. But quite a few were killed by just food.

People were finding sacks of sugar. I've seen somebody was just pushing his head into the sugar. He was eating on one side, excreting on the other and dying. We were animals. Yes.

Did the Americans betray any emotion when they saw the state that you were in? Did they say anything?

I did not speak. I did not discuss anything with them. My English was very poor. I had about 100 words of school English which I remember. And I couldn't make use of it anyway. My brain was already slackening and then I was asked by an American if I knew somebody in America. And I remembered, well, obviously you can't but help looking concerned when you see such people. And so he looked concerned. But I did not discuss anything.

And I think it was pretty obvious without me studying it that what they saw was a sorry sight. And yes, he asked me. And I remembered, oh, at one stage when we lost everything in Auschwitz, I tried to memorize my auntie's address in New York. And it was even in normal times, I mixed up the street number because there were all street numbers and the house number. So when it later appeared in the Aufbau, which was and still is, the paper of the German refugees who emigrated to New York.

They found my name there. And of course, almost not telling me off, but saying, oh you. I felt like it-- felt as I said it, a little bit of a peculiar way as if not to scold me. But ah, you have forgotten even our address or so.

And I couldn't-- did they know at a later stage what stage I was in, what state I was in, I don't know. I couldn't speak properly. I think I'll try to imitate. They live in New York, well, as I say, a slurring speech it was. That's the best expression.

And, well, everything was just-- it was the normal self, it was far from being normal self yet, far from it. It took, I would say, yes. It took about 4 to 6 weeks until I really felt I was over it.

How long were you in the hospital tent?

In the hospital tent, only a few days. Whether they needed the bed, whether they have decided that I was clever enough



to look after myself now, and I was out of danger. I don't know. They released me very shortly after that. I was there for a few days only. I still couldn't walk. I still couldn't do things but. From then on maybe there were worse cases. I don't know how they worked it. But they released me soon.

Well, perhaps they checked me up and thought it was a weak body. But he knew how to eat. He knew all this. And they gave me the tablets. And from then on, I gradually, very, very gradually recovered.

Where did you go from the hospital tent?

Well, back to the barracks. I believe even to the same barracks.

Had they been cleaned out?

I cannot tell you this. You see, I can only tell you the things that my memory tells me. It may not even have been the same barracks, or it may be a different part of the barracks. I believe they were the same barracks. But they were different people. Suddenly I was together with well-nourished people. And we all were dressed. And it was sort of back still in prison garb. It was gradually it was only a gradual process.

So you were issued with prison garb for a start. You were given--

Yeah, yeah. Yeah, there was nothing else there.

And the toilet area, was that cleaned up?

Again, you asked me something which I cannot answer. Again, it's blockage. It was only on that occasion I remember. I mean it was something to remember. Normal things you don't remember. You only remember the outstanding things. And that was really something which outstanding when I entered these toilets, and had to wade through all the muck.

You say you were now with well-nourished people. Did you start to talk to each other again now?

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, it was not only to talk. I started trading. I was a non-smoker. And for some reason, we got a ration of cigarettes. And now, a ration of cigarettes was worth so many eggs. And eggs were worth something else. I'm not quite sure what it was. But anyway, I started trading then. And I was a non-smoker and so I quickly became a man of substance.

I gained from one egg, I suddenly had maybe 10 or 15 eggs. And from perhaps 10 cigarettes, I maybe have 100. And I was in terms of those days, a rich man. And well, I don't know. Now, we will see what has become of this young man with a new personality, bound to have changed by his experience.

And if you like, we can end this reel just by saying that well, I was wondering myself what person I had become. And it was bound that the past will reflect in my future deeds. We are, after all even now, everybody of us is the sum total of our past, aren't we?

And this is what I studied at that time. As the first thing occurred to me, the world is mine. The world owes me. I can do what I want. I can kill if I want. I can do and I dreamed of killing a few times. But I have never killed anybody in my life, not even the person who I tried to find later who killed my father, who was instrumental to kill my father.

What about your weight? How quickly did that get back up to 11 stone or towards 11 stone?

Well, the story will come in perhaps the next reel or so. Because the weight, well, I'll have to tell you my adventures up to the next six months. It was certainly not in the camp. But after six months, I weighed myself, and I gained hold onto it 100 weight. Just under 100 weight in six months. But of course, between where we are now and between the six month, quite a bit has taken place.