

RG-50.156.0018

Summary

Max Grosblat, born 3/7/22, Dubno, Poland. Name originally Grosjblat. Father, David, a cantor and a tailor. Mother Feige. Grandfather, Chaim died in Holocaust. Other grandfather, Benjamin Ludler a mashgiach. Grosblat had 4 brothers and sisters. He was oldest. Yiddish spoken at home. Religious family. 10,000 Jews in Dubno with several synagogues. He belonged to Hasidisha synagogue. Other Hasidic synagogues as well, Triskadisim and Quoisishear. He went to yeshiva after secular school where he learned Polish. Had 2 uncles and an aunt in Dubno. Uncles died and aunt went to Israel in 1937.

Russians occupied Dubno in 1939 for 2 years. Germans came 6/41. With Russians, Grosblat worked as an assistant manager of a Russian government store for military personnel (Moientork). Many Jews, including one sister left/ordered to Russia, leaving 6000 Jews when Germans came 6/24/41. Jews moved into 3 square block ghetto where he already lived. Shared 4 room house with 3 other families. He cut wood for the Germans. Ghetto divided into working people and non working people. Non workers killed over 3-4 month period. Grosblat and cousin stole a shotgun and a rifle and hid them. A Ukrainian helper smuggled the guns out of the ghetto. He and cousin decided to leave ghetto 10/4/42. Large part of ghetto liquidated the next day. Escaped by marching with Jewish ghetto police to a sausage factory out of town and fleeing. Stayed/hid in woods with other escapees and later split into groups. Betrayed by informer and two killed. Moved to Kaminagurak (means Stone Mountain) where he reunited with Joska Schuher who had smuggled his guns out of the ghetto. Became a partisan group of Jews, Russians and Poles. Made hit and run attacks on Germans. Grosblat and 5 others, including Chaim Riklis and Pully Shuk, split off and hid. Found by Ukrainians and Riklis wounded (later died) in firefight. Joined Russian partisans with Schuher. Group called Soyadinninya Oducha. Blew up bridges and train tracks. Also fought Ukrainian nationalists. Few Jews in group and some killed by partisans for being Jewish. Grosblat flourished and rose in rank to member of general staff. Called "Fearless Reconnaissance Man." Chased Germans across a river as war wound down. Russians disbanded the group in 4/44. Returned to Dubno and learned father probably killed by Ukrainians. Three brothers, uncles aunts and cousins all died.

Had met future wife in partisans in Kubichev. Later they met up in Stubenhoff and married 6/12/45. Went to Gliwice and opened a butcher shop. December, 1945, left Poland for Berlin. Ended up in Eschwingen DP camp in American zone. Stayed 3 years. Brother in law in Minneapolis and they came in 1949. He learned auto mechanics in the camp and became an instructor working for UNRAA. HIAS and JDC helped with move. Has a daughter born in the Us in 1956 and a son born in the camp in 1947. Belongs to B'Nai Emet Synagogue and the JCC and keeps kosher at home. Feels Jews need to have nerve to survive as he did and to fight back. "Be tough."