

There are many orders that the Germans came in requesting that they want to have for their families-- rings, and earrings, and dresses, and things like that. The first thing they did is they came in to us because we were the first house almost in town. And my father was the person that used to deal with them.

They came in, they gave all of us orders. They need this and they need that, if not, they will do this and they will that as punishment. And most of the time he succeeded to annul this or to come down with the orders that they wanted. And sometimes happened that they couldn't do it either.

They killed a family of two children and a friend of one of them was a very bad situation. But most of the time, although it was very painful, but it did succeed a lot of them.

Now there was no wired ghetto though?

No.

It was just a designated area?

There was a designated, the ghetto was whatever the Jew lived, in Kaluszyn it was the ghetto. That means--

But it was not closed in?

There was no closed in like you had in Warsaw ghetto with a gate or with a closed around. There was no closed in. But the closing in the ghetto, but meant that they cannot go beyond the area where they live. They can only go in the town.

They're not allowed to go to the village. They're not allowed to go out of the city without a permit. There was also was succeeded, my father succeeded is to bring back food from the County, because the gendarmes, the police, the German police used to confiscate from the farmers. They used to bring to take food to sell in Warsaw and other places.

When they passed by, they did not allow to do it. They used to confiscate it. So they used to give out to the churches and to different areas.

So my father used to go there and ask him to give some of them to the town where they made a kitchen to feed the poor people and children. My mother was attending this kitchen for a long time to see that they would supplies are enough.

But your father's business was totally disrupted? Or did he continue to [INAUDIBLE]?

There were no, the business was disrupted in 1939 because there was no guests. Jews could have no guest business and the trucks, they were not available and we did not have any supplies. The only thing is what he had was the store that we could still have, the restaurant going for a part time, and some groceries to sell. But most of time my father was busy because they made my father busy with Judenrat business.

What did you do?

I was also getting there. They also requested that the Judenrat get the Jewish police and Jewish sanitation people, people that help out to keep the clean, to keep clean the houses because on top of that, our town was destroyed in 1939. They send in a transport of Jews from two other towns that the Germans annexed to Germany.

There was a town called Pabianice and Kalisz. A few hundred people from each of those towns were brought into Kalisz. And they were settled there. Said this is where they have to live. They had to be given a place to live and to other families and some to live to repair in the buildings that were destroyed.

And many of them couldn't do it. And they felt that to go away someplace else where all of their relatives lived. And that remained. Then to be able to keep the apartments, or their houses, or their houses clean, there was no facilities to

bathe. There was only one mikveh.

And to have these people, they did not have much. And to have these people to have clean to where to take them properly by inducing them with bread or with other things. They should go and take it because they were afraid that going to the mikveh or something being that is an order from the Germans will be something wrong. And being that everything was closed, the city had become infected with typhus.

I was one of the men going to the sanitary committee, about a dozen friends. Not friends, a dozen friends and non-friends, other people that were designated to go out to those houses to see that the people keep clean. There were times that we used to take a brush and clean up so many, you could see on the floor so many lice walking like bugs, was terrible.

And slowly we had to induce the people to come to get clean. So every day, every day of the week, we had other groups of people to take in to the mikveh so they can go in there and take baths and get clean. And the meantime some people leftover, while they were in the bath to clean out the house that they can go back and clean.

What would the non-Jewish have?

The non-Jewish population, they had not do anything. They were staying--

Lived there?

--They still lived there because many of them, they all got burned out. But they had the right to go anywhere they wanted. They were not restricted. It's only the Jews that were restricted.

And that went on and on. And then came the German companies.

Wait, what was your sister?

My sister wasn't do anything. They occasionally they used to-- yes, occasionally my sister also helped out to induce people to go because they needed to have people direct them where to go. Because some of them were children without families. Some of them were older people and they needed help.

And so all of you were involved in some way in the effort?

Yes. In the effort to, yes. And this went on to in many ways that the beginning of 1940, 1939, '40.

And your grandmother and your grand uncle, they were all--

I don't know what happened to my grand uncle during the war. I don't know what happened to him. But he died.

But was still in--

I don't remember him what happened to the war. But my grandmother went to live because they were burned out. They went to live with my uncle's family, with my uncle.

Which uncle?

My mother's sister, my mother's brother-in-law. My mother's sister's husband had relatives in Minsk Mazowiecki. And Minsk Mazowiecki was not destroyed. So he went to live in that town. And it took along my grandmother. My aunt with her husband took along my grandmother.

She lived there until 1942 or even before 1941 because they, my aunt did not have a apartment large enough, so they send in my grandmother to live with us. My grandmother, my mother's mother, lived with us. My father's mother also

lived with us during a time.

And she died of heart failure. My mother--

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

--My father, my father's mother.

In 1940?

In 1940 or '41. '40 and '41.

But did people have enough to eat? Did your family have enough to eat [INAUDIBLE]?

There was always enough, not enough to eat. But you could always get for money to buy, was very expensive. We managed, there was a lot of, of course, there were-- there was a flour mill nearby. They used to mill flour. We used to get it, and the food was a problem. It was expensive. But things a lot of people did not have the money.

And they did not have much to do in the work. So I'm coming back now to work, they came in a time that the Germans came in to take people to work. But they needed to clean up the roads because the army used to pass by and the road was full of snow.

They could not pass by and they grabbed Jews to clean. Later on, they had to repair the roads and came in a civilian company, a German civilian company by the name [? Vulffer ?] & [? Gable. ?] And they used to grab Jews to come to work for them without anything just to come in as Germans.

Although they were in civilian clothes, but he was a German, he had the power. Nobody could go fight against them. They used to go for days. Grab every day some other people to come to work, and take them away four or five kilometers from the house, from the town, and used the work on the roads.

Break stones and work on the road, and do different things. Later on, being that this has happened, and my father used to go to the Germans for many things that they wanted. So he said, you always coming to bring me this and bring me that. Why don't you see that the company that takes the Jews to work that they should pay?

So he was calling the German civilian company, told them that they have to pay for the work that they did. And although before, more people wanted to go to work because they got beaten up. They didn't get paid.

After there was the arrangement that they have to pay, a lot of people wanted to go to work. But it still was not enough payment what they wanted to pay because at that time, they paid 5 zlotys a day, which is a kilo bread, which is about 2 and 1/4 pounds cost 10. So all they could make is a half a kilo bread.

So how could they go to work? So being that the people, the Judenrat wanted to have the people work and do in something, so the Judenrat supplied with the bread with each worker that goes to work will get a half a kilo bread. And the money, what we will get for the work, you will have for other things. And there was also some other supplies that used to bring in from sequestered merchandise.

The potatoes, or onions, or salad, or some vegetables just to bring in for the kitchen. There used to many times to be extra potatoes used to give the poor people to, and this is how they lived. Was very hard and, but this how they--

They were alive, yes.

--Yeah.

But you had typhus.

That's right. A matter of fact, [INAUDIBLE] typhus a matter of fact, I got sick of typhus, too.

And your family was able to get medicine, or?

Yeah, the only thing we got is there was strychnine, there was the injections. And my brother was also got sick of typhus.

That was in 19--

That was in 1940. And they established--

You were really sick?

Yeah. I was sick. I had a lot of fever. The typhus, it's not water typhus, no. It's [INAUDIBLE] typhus that you get a very high fever. I say to--

[INAUDIBLE]?

--Well, a lot of people died. And there was also they built a hospital. They established a hospital. There was only one doctor and there was one nurse. One, she was actually, before the war she was a midwife. And when the hospital established, she was supposedly running it.

And the only thing the hospital to do is to at least take out the patients from the house that they should not infect the others and attend to that. But later on, other patients from that family also came. A lot of them died, which there was no medicine to support, and some of them came out.

So how long were you sick?

I was sick about I would say about three, four weeks.

And you and your brother were the only ones who got it?

Yes. My brother and I was the only ones that got it, because we stayed in our house because we tried to keep the house clean that should not get someone else get infected. And this is how we got out of it. But a lot of people got out from the hospital [INAUDIBLE] it's the luck, it's the attention, and everything.

So well more explanations is in the story that I wrote in Yiddish when different sections of different times. What the Judenrats had to do and how they did it, and who was responsible, where, and how, and so on. How many people were working and what the work was there. If it would work out from on the pages, what would be if you are someone that reads Yiddish?

[INAUDIBLE]

Yeah. If you will make the copies, so if there's any question, you'll tell me which page it is, then I'll call on the phone and I'll talk to the person exactly what it is. Then when it came in 1942 when they started to send the Jews to the gas chambers and supposedly to work in the East for the start of the Warsaw.

Then we get closer and closer again to Minsk, and they came to Kaluszyn. And--

Did you have news of what was happening in the war?

--Yes. We had news of the fact. Matter fact, we had news because there was a time that we could get a permit from the German authorities to allow us to bring in the family from Warsaw. And there was also many German wehrmacht

soldiers that were drivers that were there. That was in 1941, '41 or '42. They were working and to dismantling the synagogue.

So we used to induce him to go to Warsaw and bring out some people. So my brother used to go out with him to Warsaw and bring out the relatives and some other relatives of other people who used to be there. And of course, we took them out from there, and they came in to us. And they perished through later on. It was very hard, but this is what happened.

Did they have to sneak out of the ghetto in Warsaw?

Oh yes, unless they come with a group that was going to work outside the ghetto. This is what happened when I was in Warsaw.

Didn't the East German army people know what was going on? They were bribed, or?

Most of them knew. Those that knew that were working in around say if there were guards around the ghetto, they knew, they guarded the Jews not to go out. Or many, many Germans that were just in the wehrmacht, just in the army did not know, they just knew that the Jews are their enemies, but they didn't tell them anything.

But those that they used to take care of all these the re-settlements are mostly SS, and their helpers were mostly Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Estonians, Latvians from Latvia, and Poles. Or Volksdeutsche-- the Germans they used to live in Poland before, we used to call them Volksdeutsche. That means they're Germans-- Poles of German extraction.

And they were the worst, because they knew exactly who was who, and what is what, and they were the biggest obstacles.

So you got some people out and then what now?

When Germans came in 1942.

What month was that?

It was in September, which I already told in the beginning. Yes, when I ran away, then I ran away to they came to Warsaw.

Can you repeat that story?

Yeah.

Or [INAUDIBLE].

In 1942 when the Germans came, it was in Yom Kippur, it's 21st of September. And told the Judenrat that they have to have people to go to the camps to work in camps, because they need a lot of people there. Whether they needed or not because Germans want, a lot of Jews don't want to go.

But some of them, a lot of them went and they remained alive until later on. And those that didn't want to go, there used to, they remained there. Four days later they came and they had an action to take to send them out to Treblinka. At that time, I ran away from the marketplace through a [INAUDIBLE] that I took pails of water to supply the people that were on the market.

And I went a few times with a friend of mine. And later on, at the evening when the evening approached, his name by [? Yosef ?] [? Gontarski ?] he was a neighbor of mine and lived across the street. And after we watched them taking away the people in the horse and buggy to the railroad station.

And when the night approached, we ran away to a camp to our labor camp called [? Nienya. ?] There I was for about a month. And I met my brother that was in another camp. So we got together and we stayed there in a little place working on the roads until December 1st.

On December 1st, the Germans released all the labor camps, which were around the city, around the coalition, and other places, and sent them all into town to make a new ghetto, supposedly. But that was only for the reason to make another settlement instead of sending each one from 15 different places, they got everybody in one place and sent them out together.

At that time, I ran away again and tried to run away, but one of the policemen tried to cut us and was aiming at me and at a friend of mine running together. And he killed him. I ran back and hid in a cellar all through the night and about 3:00, 4 o'clock in the morning, I walked to another to the County town, Minsk Mazowiecki where there still remained a place of work.

And I was there for a few days, and I met another friend that was came there and we both made passports, Polish passports that we are Poles, that we are Christians. And he looked for a place for us in Warsaw, and they are inside. We lived with a woman whose husband supposedly was in a prisoner of war camps with the Germans or was killed during the war. And she was a poor woman, and we paid her well.

And we were there since more or less December 15 'till about January 10 or January 15. Where we heard that there's still a lot of Jews in the ghetto and that life goes on as before, and there is nothing much is expected. So we decided that we'll go into the ghetto to see what's what.

My friend had a sister with a family living in ghetto.

In Warsaw?

In Warsaw ghetto. And while there, I found out that I had cousins living in Warsaw ghetto. So he went to the sister and I went to the cousins. We were only about a block away, let's say about 200 yards from each other. And we saw each other occasionally.

And this, we were only there about a week, maybe less than a week, 'till January 18, 1943, when we got caught in another deportation. The Germans surrounded again the Warsaw ghetto and took out a lot of people, a lot of people to send them to Treblinka.

So my cousins and I were going to the place to the gathering place. And at the gathering place, I met my friend with his family together. So I said to them and they said to me, let's stay together. Whatever we decide to do, we'll do it together.

Meantime, my cousins were wise guys. They did not let themselves go that easy. And they run away right away from the gathering place. They went back and hid and then was all right.

My friend and his family, which was a couple of mother and father and two sons. One son remained hiding. And just the couple, and the son, and I, and the friend went into the train. We were together with a plan that as soon as we move out, we will jump the train. And we made up that whoever jumped--

This a regular train with--

--No, not a regular train. Not with seats. There was no first class train, or second, or even third class. It was a cattle train.

OK. So this was a deportation?

It was a deportation.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

It was a deportation to Treblinka, not a--

Forced labor?

--Forced labor. This a deportation to Treblinka. So my friend, and his family, and I decided that he will jump first to go forward to meet the other jumpers. And this one that will jump the last to go backwards to meet the jumpers.

So the first one jumped, the woman, my friend's sister. She was also from Kaluszyn but she lived in Warsaw. His father, his name was Michelson. I mean my friend's. His father was originally the president of the Jewish community in Kaluszyn His name was Michelson.

In that explanation in that story what I have there is written about that he was there. Anyhow, when she jumped perfect, very good. Then jumped her husband.

What was it below? Was there a ravine or?

Below was just a train. But on top on the roof were the Germans with guns. And you only had to jump to realize where you're jumping because along the railway, there were poles of telegraph, or electric poles that you should not hit.

The second one that jumped was the husband of the woman. The third one jumped, the son. I jumped the fourth one and I started to go back. So I found the son a little injured.

Then going more forward, I found the father more injured on his head here. And we were waiting to go forwards the three of us because we didn't see the woman coming forward because it was already quite a distance. So we presumed whatever happened to her, she has to be on her own.

We were three of us. So I said, let's go forward and we'll see whether his relative, my friend, which was a brother-in-law of the father, whether he jumped.

Wait, so the train was moving very fast?

The train was moving very fast and to me, the only thing that happened to me is a button. I button from my overcoat on my jacket that broke. But the two, Michelson, the two friends, the two people from the family, one got injured alongside on his face, and the other one on his head, very heavy injury.

But we had no choice. I could not take him the way they are. And we went over to where I knocked on the door. And a farmer saw a village. There was--

Did a lot people try to jump?

Oh yes, there were a lot of people jumping and a lot of people got killed.

They were being shot at [INAUDIBLE].

[INAUDIBLE] they got shot because you were, you had no-- there was no other way out. You got to take your chance here while you can.

But you knew that you were taken to be killed?

Yes, Yes.

How did you know that?

Because we already knew that everything goes to Treblinka. The way the road took, because see, I know the area Warsaw. Then the whole land of the road, I know whether the goes if the train goes East, it's on the way to Treblinka.

And Treblinka was from Kaluszyn was about 50, 60 kilometers.

And you had already heard [INAUDIBLE].

We already-- at that time, we already knew because when they started at the beginning to resettle the Jews, the news was that they are resettling to the East because they need a lot of workers to help on the front because they are attacked the Russians in 1941. And they need people to work there, and this is what they need people.

So this was the thought. But later on, we knew because there were a lot of people that ran away from Treblinka. So being that I knew that I'm going, here is my chance to do it now or to do it later. If out right now, I have a chance.

So I jumped from the train and nothing happened to me. But I had to do something with my two friends. I could not leave them. So I knocked on the door. And there was a woman that opened up and she let us in.

She gave us some water. She gave us some things to clean them up, that they should not be visible on his face and his head that something happened to him. Being that was wintertime, took heavy clothes. They had a big hat.

I fixed him up good and then she said we have to pay her. All of us had money. The money we had were bills, not double bills, they were bills that you could put in money in between belt. He had money, the son had money, and I had money.

But he told me he cannot take out the money yet because she'll see it. I should pay her. So I had actually money in the belt and I had money in my pockets. So I took out the money and I paid her a few thousand zlotys, I don't remember how much it was, but quite a lot and quite nothing, but we were saved.

We went back to the station, to station was a station away from Warsaw was Rembert³w. The name of the station was Rembert³w. I went to Rembert³w--

How far was that?

We walked about three kilometers to the station. And I went in and I bought three tickets back to Warsaw. My looks were like a Pole. Nobody could recognize me that I am a Jew, because I had from pictures that you will see, you will see if you know the features of Poles and see my features.

I bought the tickets. They had a place, my friends had a place in Praga. Warsaw was a two town, there was one side of Vistula called Praga, on the other side of Vistula called Warsaw. But together was Warsaw.

They had a place prepared. So I took the train, and he went off with his son where they supposed to. And they got to the place where they were hiding then right when I took him back. I went further to Warsaw, and I had also a place that I could go in because my brother had a friend, a Polish girl, and she took him.

That Polish girl's sister got an apartment in Warsaw. And she took my brother there. She was hiding him for them. When I came back, I had to go someplace in. I went in to that place together with my brother.

We were staying there together 'till a few weeks, maybe two, three weeks. At that time, there were two ghettos in Warsaw. There was the regular ghetto and a small ghetto. The small ghetto was a place where many Jews and tradesmen, tailors, or [INAUDIBLE] to work and letter things to provide the Germans with their needs for their clothing, for whatever they needed.

So they needed people that know how to sew, how to cut things. So we thought we'll go in, my brother and I, we'll go into that ghetto and see maybe we can stay there, because we did not want to antagonize the people that took us in. But

being that there is a place in case something will happen, we have a place to fall back.

So we went in there, but we couldn't arrange anything. We couldn't do anything. So we went back. He was staying there, but being that my brother was there and I seen that this will not be too good to stay two together, if something will happen let happen to one, not to two.

So we'll look for another place. And I went to a separate place to another Pole. He was a shoemaker, and I remember how much money I paid him. And every time I paid him for the week, he said oh, the price went up so much, it cost so much money and this, and this.

I've seen that shortly I'll be out of money and I want to have a place to be there. At the same time, I knew that there is a place that the regular ghetto is still alive, still there. And so I thought, I'll go into the ghetto again.

When I came in to the ghetto again, I found my cousins, the same ones that we were taken to the umschlagplatz, to the gathering place to go away. And they hollered at me, why didn't you stay with me? Why did you run away? Why did you went with them?

I said look, he's also [? calashina. ?] Well I started to live with them, period. And we went occasionally we went out from the ghetto because you could go out with a group, supposedly to work to get the bricks here and there. And I saw my brother and told him what's going on that they're still alive, and we could come in there.

And being that they were my cousins were dealing in food, the place what they had, where they lived was called [? Smutcher ?] and Miller. There was almost a corner building. And right after the building was the wall.

From one side of the wall used to come in the workers that used to work in the canals in not the underground, the, you call it? Where all the water goes through, the sewers, to work in the sewers. They brought in through the sewers, they brought in to my cousins hams, and butter, and breads, and everything. And there was a regular business going on.

So it came up with the story in case something will happen, those Poles will lead us out to the inside to take us away from there, which was good. But nobody trusted them it was said, and we built a bunker in the building we were there. The bunker, what was you call the bunker? That was closed from all the sides. They could only know one opening to get inside and was so camouflaged that seldom anybody could find it.

Of course, we did. As a fact, when the--

Say that again. The bunker was made of?

--It was a basement. It was so camouflaged to get in there that you could not see that this wall, one touch of this wall would come out and be able to go in. Was camouflaged. So we were there until May 8 since--

May 8.

--1943 when the action started I think in the 19th or the 18th or 19th in Warsaw ghetto. I have it written someplace. So we were there up almost three weeks. We were there and we couldn't be found, because we always heard that the Germans are coming in through the walls to the places and they're looking because they were knocking in places, they couldn't find it.

Finally what they did--

You hid in the basement?

--We hid, we hid under the building.

Three weeks?

For three weeks.

How many of [INAUDIBLE]?

How many we were? Well, my cousins there were three boys and two had wives. Is five, the wife had a sister, is six. Is six and there were all, those people that live in the building was a dentist and his brother was eight. The brother has a girlfriend is nine and a child.

We were about 15 people.

In this cellar?

In this cellar.

That was connected by sewers [INAUDIBLE]?

Yeah. We could go out through the sewer. And from there, we could go out into the sewer and go out, in and out.

You did that all the time? You went in?

No, we did not go in. The workers, the Poles that sold all the merchandise, they delivered to us through the sewers.

Was this common in the ghetto? Were the other people building bunkers like this?

That's right. That's right.

And the Germans, they didn't know about it?

They knew, but they didn't know which way to get in there. But you see, there is when to get into a building in Warsaw were built in such a way that there's an arch. The two sides of the building, inside is an arch. When you go in the middle, usually was concrete in the middle and the like trucks or wagons used to go in used to pass by here and then they realized maybe they should bomb here.

So they started to throw in bombs into that concrete while getting into the building into the complex with gas. And this gas got to us. So instead of being caught by them, we went out through the sewer to another place to another bunker, which that bunker was already raided.

And that was a bakery, we went there and we hid behind, my two cousins and I hid in that bakery behind the flowers, because a lot of-- the bunker was already raided so there was nobody there. There are few people came back.

But my brother meantime wanted and another cousin and one of the other people that were in the bunker wanted to know what happened to the people across the street, because we were live in the side of the street. And another side of the street was another bunker. We were connected.

We could go to them, they could come to us. So while they went to see what happened to them, my brother got caught from the Germans. And they took him to the umschlagplatz. And they sent him away. We were waiting a whole night.

He survived?

He survived.

We were waiting almost the whole night or a day, we don't remember whether it was day or night. And they didn't come back. So we presumed that what happened. Meantime, the Germans knocked us out from our bunker and we went into

the bakery.

And they came, later on, they came into the bakery. We had some guns with us. And--

You did?

--Yes, we did, but we were afraid to shoot because as long as you were quiet, they did not find us. And they find us this way, we would been there much longer. But we were thinking the only time we'll use the gun is for last resort, you or me.

How did the Germans try to find you?

They knew that each building, they know that each building had people in there. The upper floors were bombed. There was nobody there. But the main floors were also nothing there. But they knew that people in there, but how they get there, they didn't know.

Then they would put tear gas?

So they put tear gas in. First they bombed it to make a hole, and then they put tear gas in. Or there was tear gas or whatever kinds of mustard gas, or other kind of gas. As matter of fact, I got gassed, which I'll come later on to tell about it.

So they came in to the get us out from the bakery bunker. We, my friends, my cousins and I we had, there were two guns between us. We were three of us. And we threw the gun away.

When they took us out, they found the gun [INAUDIBLE] and they ask, whose gun is it? Said, we don't know. We just came in this morning. We know nothing about the guns. And they looked us and they didn't find anything.

What language did you speak?

German.

Oh.

I speak German.

Oh, you speak German.

Yeah everybody spoke German. I mean, they spoke Yiddish, they spoke German. I speak German well. So they took us into the gathering place, the umschlagplatz, to the place where this and that.

I was gassed heavily from the gas they threw in. I could not breathe too well. But my cousin, one of my cousins was worse. So I ask to drag him to come to the place because he at least while they're pushing you and they shoving you and this, so you should not get killed on the way there. Maybe you'll sit down and relax and feel better. Whatever happens later on.

Before we got into the umschlagplatz, he came over a German says, why your [INAUDIBLE] this dog or something. He took me away from him, put a bullet in his head, finished. So I remained.

[INAUDIBLE]

His name was Manischewitz. This leave this now because we'll cover a lot of thing. And I remain by myself there with two of them with another cousin because there were two of them. One cousin was been my brother.

And somehow, the other cousin either he wanted to run away, I didn't hear from him since then. And I came in on the road to my Majdanek. I could not escape anymore, because I felt very bad. I could not get into another window to crawl out to escape. And then in the condition that I was then, I wasn't sure that I would make it. But I'll see what happens where we go.

Where did you go?

We went to Majdanek. Majdanek is a camp near Lublin. It was a concentration camp.

You were deported in the train?

Deported in the train, whole train to Majdanek.

How long did it you to get there?

Overnight. Well, I don't know what time it took, but we left in the evening and we will not how long we were sitting in the trains until we were send out.

That was what month?

That was in May, in May 10. I came to Majdanek May 10. Then we had to, Majdanek we had to strip. They said whoever has a double built throws it away over there, because they knew that double belts contain money, jewelry, anything that they wanted.

So I happen to have a double belt. I throw it away, a single belt, but means it's only a piece of leather like this. No danger, so you could keep it.

OK and then they were taking, go here, go there. There's and Majdanek also had gas chambers. They also had the people that did not take into the camp. So they killed by various means.

I was into the line to go into the camp. I showered, and they throw us, they gave us some new clothes, camp clothing. And I went into the camp. I was assigned in a certain bunker, a certain bunk to be there. And that's what there.

The following day, they took us out to work. Yeah, while they were assigning us, they name this. I got a number 14677. My number in Majdanek was 14677. I realized later that I not the 14,000th men there. These numbers are taken away from one died before and given new ones.

So that same number could have gone out four or five, 10 times of the quantity that the number said.

But did they put that on your--

No, no. It was a not a bracelet, but a piece of metal, a piece of thing you put on and scraped on the uniform, the number what you have. There was no tattoo. In Majdanek was no tattoo.

In the barracks in Majdanek was it mostly men your age?

Mostly men my age, older ones, younger ones mostly my age.

How old would you say the youngest was?

The youngest was, later on came younger ones. The oldest must have been about 16 at that time. But because I felt very bad, I was afraid if I would go out, they took us to work to dig ditches, what kind of dishes was for before, I don't know. But we had to do whatever they wanted us.

And I felt that one of go another day, another day, I'll collapse. And at the end of the work, they in the Kapo ask who wants to go to the hospital? Who feels bad?

I volunteered. I had no choice, because if I'm not going to hospital, I'll be shot on the road going or coming.

You couldn't breath.

Lucky me, I couldn't breath. Lucky me, I got into a hospital. The [INAUDIBLE] hospital and I was there and they gave me medicine. I remember that I was on a diet. They gave me a hard boiled egg where nobody else got a hard boiled egg.

The medicine that they gave me, everything was on my chest. I couldn't breathe heavily. I couldn't breathe. And they gave me a medicine like a liqueur, a little sweet, and it put the flag down and it helped me.

By coincidence, I found a man in the hospital that was a son-in-law of somebody that I knew in Kaluszyn he lived in Warsaw. And I asked him what happened to your family? No.

And he was there and I said, your here, they treat you, it'll go out. I never heard from him again, because he went probably went-- either he was in another-- what happened to the man, I do not know. But anyhow, I felt better.

And I went back to work in Majdanek. By coincidence, I heard that my brother is in Majdanek but in another camp, in another part. And going to work or from work I met him. And we talked, and we greeted each other and we'll say we'll talk. We hope that we'll see [INAUDIBLE].

We did see another time also. At that time what also happened to be transports. There was picking up people that were there to send of transport to some other places.

So being that it was end of transport, I communicated with my brother and he with me that when it comes the next transport, we should run to get into the transport. At least, maybe we'll be together, shipped out, whatever is going to be.

Something happened that he went and when they came the next transport, he was taken. I was not. And he was sent to a camp called [? Calzrisk. ?] There was a camp that they were a place of work that they were making ammunicions for the Germans.

From there, they sent them to Czestochowa to different places, to Buchenwald and there where he was liberated. I remained in Majdanek for about two months 'till about July or mid-July.

What did you do there?

Pardon me?

Did you work?

Yes, we worked on the gang outside digging ditches. What kind of, what the ditches were for? Many times we were thinking digging ditches for us, maybe one of these days, they'll line us up there and that.

Then it came new transports. And we're talking, we've got friendly with one another. And said look, what do we have here? The war is up. At the beginning, when I came there I couldn't eat anything because nothing tasted good. I came out from a place that the Poles brought out hams, and cheeses, and butters and breads and all kind.

So you come into a camp, they give you water and soup and nothing help you. So I said, let's go in a camp. Let's go someplace else. A little water and soup we'll get someplace else also. Or the piece of bread, whatever it was.

Well they came, the next transport came, and I run in there to the next transport and we shipped me out to Auschwitz. We came to Auschwitz was in July, end of July or beginning was, I don't remember. And we came to a camp and they--

So it was totally your choice? The way you described to me, they just wanted a certain number of people?

Probably. I was lucky. They kept send me from one camp to another. So I came to Auschwitz, it was part of Auschwitz two, Birkenau. There where the gas chambers are.

We came in, we met by car person, by other one and the language that I heard there, I did not hear until at that age when I was there. Such foul language, unbelievable. And such murderous language not by Kapos, not by SS, but by Kapos, by Jews, by Germans. All [INAUDIBLE] all people that were in the camps.

What date did you arrive there?

End of July or August, 1943. And we were assigned to the camp which the camp Birkenau was just building. It was started to build maybe three or four months before. And when we came in, we're all going to have to start building.

The grounds were all full of mud, full of clay. We had to straighten out and this, and work was not easy because everything was hard to push wagons, and rails, and with a shovel. And pick and shovel, and carry cement up or down in different places.

But you still

I was still--

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

--because the fright made me strong.

But I mean, constitutionally--

Yes.

[INAUDIBLE]

My mind was strong because I always said whenever I've been assessed, I have to live this through. Because if anyone in the camps that said, oh, what should I do, was beaten up and if he would stood up because they're beaten up by a German, by SS man because it didn't work. If he would get up by the first hit, he wouldn't have beat him anymore.

He would go up and start to do something. But he didn't, he beat him more. And we ask why didn't you do it? I says what for? I'll be killed anyhow.

My philosophy was different. I said, I have to live it through. And no matter how much of beatings I got.

Why did you think you had to live it through?

I wanted to see the end of Hitler. I want to see why is it that the world-- later on, will you close it? And I try to do my best to work as hard as possible, as cooperative as possible. Not to give anyone a chance, whether it's a German, whether it's a Kapo at the work, whether it's a blockalteste, which is the headman of the block.

Whoever it is, not to give him a chance to beat me. I could only take a chance to be beaten when I've seen someplace that were like it's a piece of bread. That I have to nourish me. That I have to take a chance. If I'll catch it, I'll have it. If I'll get beaten up for it, but I had a piece of bread.

Did you get beaten?

Yes. I got beaten, but I had a bread.

How many months were you in [INAUDIBLE]?

I was there 'till May 8. 'Till May 8 'till the end of the war.

Oh you were? OK, so you were there almost three years?

Yes. So then the work place is in-- Birkenau worked mostly those people that belong live in one bunk in one place, they go out altogether with a Kapo work from this place. So he does not have to go out from other places to look for people to work.

So I was working there from one or two places, but not steady. They transit me from there to another bunk. The first one was block number 24. From then, they transferred to block number 16.

Was a Kapo, a Czech. He took us in to work and in the third camp with which was the hospital camp. See there were four camps, four blocks, four camps. The women's camp, the men's camp, the Gypsy camp, the krankenhaus, the hospital. And beyond the hospital were the crematoriums.

So we were, I was working with the--

You were all Jewish.

Yeah, but all Jews, there were occasionally some non-Jews, but most of them Jews.

All of you from [INAUDIBLE].

No, no because there were no such thing as from. We did not have a name. We had a numbers. And Birkenau I got a number 129354 it was a tattooed number. I forgot to mention that while we were still in Majdanek came a transport from Greece. And they were very, very, very fast to fall.

It was, even if it was summertime, they were not used to the climate. And they were falling like flies, very bad. We, although we had it bad, we had pity on them. So when the Dutch Czech Kapo that was the last-- that was another Kapo have to work, he was from Krakow. We used to work in the hospital block because the hospital they had lot of people, although they were taking people to the crematorium, but they're still taking people, taking the inmates to the hospital.

Why? I don't know. First they made them well and then they took them to the crematoriums. So we worked in the hospital block in hospital camp to straighten out the roads or they should be straight. There should be no mud. And the walkways and flowers, and there--

Would this be considered an inside job?

Not an inside job, because we came in the morning and went out in the evening back to the block.

Oh, so how far did you have to walk?

To walk, maybe a kilometer. And not far to walk. And the later on we were told that they beautifying up this path that the Germans ordered to beautify up the hospital camp, because there eventually is going to be a International Commission come to see how they treating the people.

They will show that they have a hospital, and they have a nice place to stay, and so on. Somehow I lost that job. Not that I didn't lose the job, but I lost the work in that area. So being that I was left over, they transferred me to another block number 4.

The prisoners that were in block number 4 did not have a steady place of block. So whenever somebody needed some prisoners to work, you went there and got them 10 people. So they were never steady. Today you worked in one place, tomorrow they take you, another Kapo takes you someplace else.

So I was in that place maybe for two months, maybe for a month or six weeks. That was the worst block, the worst that I was there because you would never know where you're going tomorrow and where you're not going tomorrow. Also at that time was a selection.

They came in, the Germans, the SS and took out a selection of a lot of people to dig right into the crematorium. We won an appeal [INAUDIBLE] outstanding and they used to take out, this out, this in, this out.

People who looked most ill?

Not the looks who was more ill than no who had swollen legs and who had injured legs, and this, and that. And I remember like today, there was one prisoner that they choose him to go to the crematorium. And he ran away and he hid.

He hid someplace, and they couldn't find him. They couldn't find him, and they were held up practically a whole day, but they could not let go because they thought who knows what this guy is? Maybe he's a spy, maybe he's something that he knows?

They finally, they took the rest of them that selected to go to crematoria, took them and they kept on looking for him. They finally got him. And they walked with him through the camp that everybody should see what happens to somebody that runs away.

Separately, I witnessed they were in camp, they were brought back some guys that run away. That run away from the middle of work because they want to run away from camp. And they got a beating. I don't remember whether they shot him or they hanged them. I don't remember that. But the hanging was in another place.

You didn't see any public hangings?

I saw. They were also the one, two bunkers, two blocks that I call it bunker or block that we lived in. That called [? affect ?] kommando and Sonderkommando. They were all our people. The Sonderkommando worked-- excuse me-- the first, the [? affect ?] kommando.

When the transports came to Auschwitz II-Birkenau, the [? affect ?] kommando used to look up and look at all the clothing after they got undressed. They look all the clothing and looked for all the hidden valuables-- rings, and the money, and all the things that they have to bring it all there.

They themselves had nice uniforms because the Germans treated them nice. Everybody wanted to go that job to do it because you had a lot of bread, and a lot of this, and all that. They well fed. And this what they did.

The other one was called Sonderkommando The Sonderkommando were the ones that were working to put the people in from the gas chambers into the fire. And they were also well fed. But they were also very dangerous.

And the [? affect ?] kommando they are black. And the Sonderkommando they are black, being that they had fed, they were fed before very well so they had portions, they had rations. What they were getting, they gave it away.

So it comes after we came back from work, we all congregated in front of them because they were throwing out their bread and their potato. We could have a piece of potato, something we're all-- separately, the Sonderkommando made a revolution then they was trying to-- so they was the one's that were working for them.

And they realized today they work, tomorrow don't know. What's the difference? We got to do something. And they tried, some of them, they got caught, and this is what happened. I was in that block for 'till about December 1 or

December 10, something like [INAUDIBLE] when it got colder.

When it came a new transport, they're sending away new transports. The new transport they used to send to the coal mines. There were coal mines [NON-ENGLISH] there were different, I don't remember the other one's. There were more than few different ones. So we thought we'll go there.

As long as we go away from the crematoriums. Let's go away from the crematoriums. But we didn't realize that they can bring you from there to here too. And they send us away to a new camp to build a new camp called Lagischa.

At camp Lagischa, they had almost two barracks. And we had to finish up all the things what was necessary to live there to stay there. And lageralteste. A lageralteste means that German that he is the head of the lageralteste. You'll build yourself a camp, you'll have it.

That means it's my business, I have to have a camp. Otherwise, I cannot live without it. But we had no choice. We had to build one. And the building of the camp is the worst thing that can ever happen, because you come in to roll places that there is not anything there. You got to start from scratch.

There was very little food, and very little bread, and very little-- but hard labor, and a lot of beatings and a lot of that. Well--

So you were doing like pick and shovel?

We even doing the things that we didn't do. Everything, there was no water. Winter time we had to get the ice, not ice, snow to if you want to wash yourself because if your hands were dirty from the work, one thing we could do is to wash with snow.

Where did you sleep?

We had bunks. We had had some [INAUDIBLE] places to sleep and this is how we did. Slowly, it build up the place. But it's still coming, there was in the winter of 1943 December or beginning of January. I found and when I was in Birkenau, I found a [? lance-men ?] of mine from Kaluszyn.

That they also came from Majdanek, but he was in a different place. So we didn't see each other, but we came to Lagischa we saw each other. And we're keeping together to see what we can do. He was an older man.

He was a man maybe 10, 15 years older than I was. And somehow, he got beaten down. And they were starting to get a selection to get some people and-- no, I'm sorry-- it was not a selection. He registered to go to the hospital to the krankenhaus, they call it a krankenhaus, the infirmary.

He had an infirmary and he had, and one thing I have to mention whenever I see my friends of mine, I mention it because I was frightened that I was sorry about for asking him. Of course, you did not have anything yours, everything was from the camp.

You got a jacket. You got out pants. You got a shirt. Somehow he had a sweater. And you knew it that whenever you go from here to there, they take away everything, even the spoon. And I ask him, would you please give me the sweater?

And he said to me, I'm still alive. You want to be my inheritance? You want my inheritance? I said, please, you know that you'll go there, they'll take it away from you.

At least, I'll have to the time for the time being. And if you come back, I'll give it back to you. He said that I did not take it from him. And for this day, I'm sorry that I mentioned it to him. For this reason I keep repeating.

You should forgive me that I ask of that. It did not take a week or 10 days to send him to crematorium. He's gone, we remained there. We remained there working and they were building their new factories, new buildings.

The buildings we were working on with the wagons and on rails to supply coal, to supply cement, and sand different things. And to work different, to work a lot. And the one time as I got beaten up. I got beaten up from here, I got a scar.

That whatever, was no blood. Everything was so thin that water was could not heal. For working there for a few months and it came sometimes in May, April of 19. April, May or maybe June of 1944. It came in a new selection, a new guys from another place taking away people from our camp either to send them to the crematorium because they couldn't work or sending from there to coal mines.

I presume that I will go to a coal mine. So I was rushing to get into the line to be taken to the coal mine. When the SS men showed me, he put me out over there. That means he doesn't want me.

I did not want to give up. I wanted to go to coal mine. I sneaked in again. And he recognized me because he said, he took his stick and he hit me. He says, you are already here. I told you I don't want you.

And he called in the other SS men said to give me a beating. So I got a beating from him later on. But I got lucky, because the men from the block for the head man from the place we were there, he went over to the SS man says, I'll take care of him.

That means he'll give me the beating. He was not a Kapo, he was he'll give me the beating, not he. Which was good because I saw of course many times Kapos were beating up guys, but it was still better than the SS men were beating up.

So he said to the SS man that he'll give me the beating. Of course, he gave me the beating because there was somebody was squealing. I was glad that I got it from him. And I was there, I wasn't taken not to the crematorium, and not to [NON-ENGLISH] to the coal mines.

Later on came, of about a month later came another group to go for another transport. And they were sending me into Monowitz, Buna was another Auschwitz camp called Auschwitz III, Monowitz II-Buna.

When I came to Buna, I got a vacation. For a week I walked around the camp and I didn't do a thing. I was just getting breakfast and dinner. In morning, I got a piece of bread and at night I got a soup. Nobody took me to work. A whole group of us because we were so undernourished that couldn't do anything with us.

Why they did us to us? I don't know. They could have as well sent us to the crematorium. There I got, they sent me to a place where they start take us to work and I was working in a place they called Karbidworke.

They produced synthetic carbide. Know what carbide is? It's a chemical that when it comes together with water it gives out gases. And we were work in that factory to make that.

There was also a place they said that they making their synthetic gasoline. I don't know, this is what the synthetic gasoline or whatever it is. And this is what I was doing in Buna. Later on, I left that place and I went to work in a [NON-ENGLISH] it's called they put up pieces of to go up to a building alongside the building to go higher there.

Builders using it, not to put up stents to--

Oh, scaffolding?

--Scaffolds. I work with the scaffold part. Until it came 'till 1945 in January 18. But during the time there were some prisoners that wanted to run away. And they caught them, and brought them back and everybody had to come out and watch hanging them.

There were two men that were hanged that I had to watch. That was the most horrible thing. The horrible thing you could ever see. And then they played the music, and they-- it's terrible.

And came January 18, we knew that the Russians are coming closer to the camps. And we had to evacuate. And they sent us out an evacuation.

We walked towards an area called Gliwice different cities. We walked until we came to a place that we couldn't go any further. They load us up. We were in trains.

And there was one time we stopped in a train, we couldn't go and not left or right because the Russians had bombed the railroad. That the cart, we could not go either there or here. And they took us out, and we started to march.

How did you walk to the train? That wasn't very far?

Well the train, we were loading the train from Auschwitz. But the train stopped in the middle near Gliwice a place, [NON-ENGLISH] is in place there that the train could not go any further because the rails were broken. And that then we started to walk on the roads.

While walking, we came into a place called Woldenberg. Today belongs to Poland called [? Wolbzech. ?] They had no place where to put us to sleep, because we were working days, days and nights. And some places, they had to place to put us up in a school or another place.

And in this place, they did not have a place. But there was, Woldenberg was a mine, had a mine. I don't know what kind of mine, but the entrance to the mine was a big entrance. When I say maybe 30 feet wide and maybe 30 feet high.

And you had to walk, and walk, and walk. When you walked in, they closed the doors. We were maybe 1,000 people, maybe more. And from the heat, a lot of people got in heat and hunger and everything. They collapsed I think.

I had two friends that were with me. And although I was very poor and at that time, we walked out of Buna we wasn't that bad because we had the situation was bad, but not as bad as in Birkenau or in other places. And they got where they made [INAUDIBLE] themselves and they had to be cleaned up, and they opened up the gate in the morning, there was a leak from the water from the snow was a leak.

I took them over there. I cleaned them up. And there were a lot of civilians that were also evacuated. And I went toward the civilians to beg them for a piece of bread, a piece of this, and a piece of that.

And I brought them something to eat and there for myself also. And we stuck all together, the three of us continuously. And that was one of our first days of on the road. We were walking in I don't know whether we're walking towards the East or toward West.

And until we came to a place that was almost in the front with the Russians. We were in stalls in places that farmers left. And we were there. The German, the army took us to the front to dig ditches.

Wait a minute. So you escape from the--

We did not escape. We could not escape. But all this time while we were with the Germans from the camp--

Oh, the Germans took you to dig ditches near the front.

--They took us on the road, we were always on the road.

How many days were you after you left Auschwitz?

'Till May 8.

Oh, OK. So you walked--

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

Through all this time, we walked. Where we were tonight, we were not tomorrow. For every, let's say we found a place that we could stay overnight, the Germans could stay with us overnight, then we stayed for a few days.

How many were with you [INAUDIBLE]?

We were few hundred. It was less and less because they're falling.

All men?

All men. And especially when it's not only that it was hard to walk in the snow, but we were walking, Silesia-- that is the area are a lot of hills. We had to go up hills and down hills. And we also had to carry or push the equipment of the Germans that walk with us.

They had their backpacks, and they put it all on a wagons, and we had to push and pull. That was--

You have blankets or jackets?

They had blankets. The Germans had blankets. We didn't have any. We just had what we had a little jacket. The jacket depends what we were. There were no such thing as winter clothes as anything.

We had nothing. But we had to carry them. The later on for maybe there was some blankets. No, I don't think so. We were sleeping in our clothes and just like that. One next to the other.

Our bodily heat to keep us. We were pulling and pushing a wagons with their equipment with their packs, with their guns, and so on. This was a type of death penalty.

Each wagon, there were no horses, we were the horses. Each wagon had about 15 or 20 prisoners. Those that were on the sides and the back were beaten up by the Germans to push to go faster. Those that were in the front to pull were beaten up while you're running so fast to pull back.

So no matter what, if you went to the wagon, you were a dead man. Well I was having two friends that were close to death, not close to death, but were very weak. Carrying them, the smell and the vision that some place over there is something maybe you'll find a piece of bread was so great that you felt it.

You felt that even not you had eyes in your back. I realized that over there in the ditch is a piece of apple laying there. Who threw it away? I don't know. I left my two friends and I ran over get the piece of apple.

The German that were beating up all the other ones saw me running. He says to me, oh, you're running well. Oh good. Come into the wagon.

He got me to the wagon, and when I came into the wagon to a side to relieve other ones, those that were beaten to relieve them. And I was to the wagon that the guy says to me, stay here. He put his harness that you put in like on a horse because we had to.

He says, stay here. This is not so bad. And I was there for--

Another--

Another because I relieved him.

--I see.

He said, stay here. This is not so bad. Because the German that was walking alongside him maybe had a little heart, maybe his heart wasn't that bad. And I was there and pulling that wagon maybe for an hour or two.

But the two friends of mine already said goodbye to me, because they knew that you're going to the wagon, you are through. When they saw me coming back, like Messiah came, because they actually-- they were no organizers. Organizers mean somebody that can produce something, somebody can lead something.

They praised me and we were still a group. And we were walking from one place to another 'till we came to a place that we were in front of the Russians. And then digging ditches to defend the Germans.

'Till it came almost at the end. The Germans were approaching. And we remained maybe 50, maybe 100 of us on the road with the Germans, German soldiers. And they did not know what to do with us.

The artillery was knocking so much and fire was from all places. And they wanted to leave us, but they were afraid that we will attack them. We were afraid that they will attack us at the last minute because what have they've got to lose?

And some of us guys that while we were walking through on the road, many times you see water from one side to the other, and there's a little bridge. That some of us wanted to help themselves being that so it is the end of it, they wanted to run away.

And they went in through that tunnel to get from one side to hiding. And they were so, by the time of the Germans saw them going in, they went right in shoot them and many of these places. So I was afraid to run away and see what's going to be the end.

When the Germans, we were remain three of us, my friends three of us together, and maybe another 5 or 10 groups of three to four together. And they were about five Germans SS guarding us. And slowly they moved away.

While they moved away, we saw some stalls, little buildings there. So we said we'll hide there. So we went in there to hide and every time the morning gets in closer and closer. And we hear more shouting, more artillery, more this.

And then it's quiet. We walked out and you don't hear anything. We start to walk down to a town so from the mountains to a town and said let's go down. At least we'll look for some clothes because the clothes that we had, we and this.

So we got some clothes. And we went into a house, and we stayed there. And we saw the Russians coming in. Meantime, we started to get pales, so we're going to get soup.

So we started to get three of us, we got three pails of soup. While three pails? Because we were always hungry, we were afraid, who knows what's going to be later?

We ate a soup and we later on came the afternoon, we started to eat the soup is sour. Saw the Russians still there, we spilled the sour soup, we went for other soup. This what we used to do that three times a day.

Whatever we could eat up and the rest of we spilled out and we got the other one. And we decided that we'll go home. I was from near Warsaw. They were also from Northern Warsaw. We went together by train.

Hitchhiked by train maybe two, three days. We came back to Warsaw. Then--

Can you give me friends' names?

I don't remember. One friend I remember because one I missed. One friend was name, he had a number 126655. 665 or 655 his name was [? Jacob ?] Evans. I think that's what he gave me. And he told me that he has a brother in Uruguay, Montevideo.

I asked people from Uruguay, Montevideo, did they ever heard a name like that? They did not find any name like that. I

looked in their registration at the American Holocaust survivors at American gathering, I didn't find.

Maybe I think he gave me the name Evans. Maybe the name is not right. Maybe it was different, but they did not find him. A fact that one after we I got liberated, after we got liberated, I went from Warsaw from one end to Warsaw to the other because I had to take a train to go to Kaluszyn.

And Warsaw was destroyed. So I walked from one end to Warsaw to the other end to get another train to come to Kaluszyn. When I came on the road to Kaluszyn I met a guy, a Polish guy, and he looked at me.

He was scared because I looked like a dead man. And I told him who I am I asked you [CRYING] but the first [CRYING] was the first good news I heard that my brother is the [NON-ENGLISH]. Then May 15 or May 20 and I was sleeping and eating for two weeks.

And this is how I looked after two weeks gaining 15 kilos.

This [INAUDIBLE].

Pardon me?

I don't know [INAUDIBLE] all the ones that are marked you want to go into the archives?

Yes, I'll give you all those pictures that you want and you'll send them back to me?

Right, right.

This is my brother and his wife.

You went back to Kaluszyn

I went back to Kaluszyn and I found my brother. He was staying there for about a month and we had to leave because before our arrival, one Jew was killed by the National Army, National Polish army. They claimed that he was a Russian sympathizer and they had to get rid of him.

At the same time, there was a few people that were hidden in villages and forests, came back and worked at a factory that they made originally they made a sheepskin jackets. Their family name is [? Berman. ?] And because of the fact that this person was killed, they had to leave the town.

And since then, no Jews live there anymore. We left, my brother and I, we left for lodge. We're staying there for a few months and then we went back to Germany. To Landshut and from Landshut [INAUDIBLE] to America.

What year did you immigrate?

In 1947.

Now can you tell briefly what happened to the family members? They were all in the ghetto [INAUDIBLE]?

Well, they all--

Who was there and the days?

Well the other family members that were first, we were at a time when there was the liquidation, the first liquidation was in September 25 1942. It was my mother, my sister, my mother's sister, my aunt, and her mother. And some other cousins, and my father's relatives, my father's brothers and his family were all on the market.

They were all sent to Majdanek. I'm sorry, not to Majdanek, to Treblinka.

And they were all killed?

They all perished.

And your father?

My father was killed in Kaluszyn in Yom Kippur night 1942, September 21.

Was he killed, was the whole committee killed then?

No, the whole committee-- they were just sent for him before was killed, the SS sent for him to come. And when he went to see them, they told him that he's arrested. And they later on, they sent to inform the other members of the Judenrat that they should inform the family to come say hello to him because they're going to send him to Warsaw.

And when my brother and I came to the jail where he was supposed to be to call the window, called him, father, father, we are here waiting for you. We didn't hear any reply. But staying there for about 10 minutes, 15 minutes and waiting for his reply, we heard shots, which was in the square nearby. And we went over there and then we found our father dead.

It happened once before that the SS came once and arrested my father, took him to Warsaw. He was sitting at that time he was in jail in the Warsaw together with Czerniak³w, the leader of the Jewish community in Warsaw. And of course, when he came back, he told the problem what the Warsaw has. And that no matter how bad we have it, that they have it worse.

And there were many, many ways that the Judenrats in our area communicated with one another. They did help each other in many ways, but there was, they could never be ahead of the Germans what their plans were to realize what they want to do.

There were always trying to think that only would this law, only would this special thing that the Jews have to do, this will be it and no more, and no more. And everything now will be good, and good, and good.

Is there anything else that you want to say for the record?

I don't know.

You came to the United States and you met your wife.

I came to United States, my wife originally is from Poland. Her family emigrated from Poland to Costa Rica in Central America. And she was in Costa Rica by chance, she came to New York on a business trip with other people who are my relatives.

And I meet my wife at that time on a trip and I felt that she's a nice person for me to meet again. And for me that met a few times. And we decided to get married.

And then you got married [INAUDIBLE].

I got married in Costa Rica. Going to Costa Rica to marry her, it was in January 9, or is it 8? 1949.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

January 9, 1949.

And you had three--

And we have two daughters. And we came, of course, we came to live here. We lived in Brooklyn. And then we lived in Queens. And since then, I lived there.

You live in Queens?

I live in Queens.

What do you [INAUDIBLE]?

I have two [INAUDIBLE].

Are you retired?

I am now retired, I was since 1948. When I came to the first to the states, I got a job as a messenger in a shipping company. This gave me a lot of, a big break as I learned English I believe well.

I also went to night school. And about six months, I went to night school whatever it was. And then I went for about six months to a--

[INAUDIBLE]

Can you imagine you get so excited that you're missing a word? I went to high school. I believe that I learned the language well to my writing I could say is perfect, as good as any American born.

And although I believe I have an accent, I'm not ashamed of it. And then after learning working for the company, which is an export, which is a forwarding company dealing and arranging shipments for customers overseas who actually introduced me to that job because they were a client of that company who they gave business to that company to ship for them to Costa Rica merchandise. So through them, I got the job and I worked there for almost two years.

And then we started to go into business and to provide my relatives in Costa Rica who are importers with samples of textiles, and different kind of materials. And this is how I got into the export business, which was called in 1948 I went into the business, and we called [? Keschell ?] Brothers Trading Company.

Later we incorporated, became a corporations. Of course, our name was no one in New York and a lot of companies in the states we had a very good name.

So you did this with your brother?

Yeah. We had a very good name, my brother and I, and very well known in the trade of textiles, and clothing, cosmetics, and anything that my customers wanted we had. We export our merchandise to South America, to Central America, and even to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Lebanon.

I retired in 1988 after my brother got a few times heart attacks. Then we decided that business is not going to be better. And I'd rather, I said to myself that I would rather go out of business than be taken out.

And that's what I did and I'm very happy for it. After all the things that I recall and think of what happened to me, what makes me so lucky?