

Interview of Sam Pick
Melbourne Holocaust Centre
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Sam Pick was born October 27, 1924 in Pavlitze(ph), near Lodz, Poland.

Sam describes his family's Orthodox background and his father's prosperous textile business. Sam relates the persecution during the first years of the war. In 1941 he was sent to a labor camp in Zboncien(ph). When Sam arrived, the camp was used for forced labor on the German railroads under supervision of the Bahnpolizei. Sam describes the conditions in the camp as "not too bad" with sufficient food to survive. In June 1943, Sam and his fellow inmates were moved to Auschwitz. After three weeks Sam's group was recruited to work on the cleanup of the ruins of the former Warsaw ghetto. Of some 9,000 workers, Sam's group of 80 prisoners, were the only Polish speakers. Sam describes working in the blast commando and finding valuables in the rubble, which eventually helped him to survive.

After one year in Warsaw, Sam was sent to Dachau concentration camp in Germany, where he worked in underground hangars on German fighter-planes.

Towards the end of the war Sam wound up in the Tyrol where he was supposed to work on the "Nazis redoubt." He was liberated by the United States Army near the Starnberg Sea in Bavaria.

Sam had been reluctant to tell his story until now. He says his story is "everyday." He refers to Elie Wiesel's and Primo Levi's wonderful retelling.

Sam attributes his survival to the grace of God and simple luck.