

RG-50.407.0095

Oral History: Elchanan Sosnowski, August 1996

Elchanan Sosnowski, born May 1, 1914 in Sadowie*, Poland, describes: His mother, Hanna, and father, who remarried [gaps in recording], two older brothers and two older sisters; Sadowie,* his small village of about 100 and about 10 Jewish families, near Ostrowiec,* in central Poland; attending a Polish primary school; being frequently subjected to anti-Semitism; speaking Yiddish in the home; not being politically active; Pilsudski being favorable to the Jews and things deteriorating after he died; supporting Zionism; not considering emigrating; being in the army as a gunsmith when the war broke out [gaps in recording]; being captured by Jewish partisans; attempting to flee to Vilnius; hoping to emigrate; working for the Russians as a train driver; going with a girl to the Lithuanian town of Melegani* and working as a repairman; fleeing as Jews were being pursued and killed by both Germans and Lithuanians; arriving in Jetlowva,* where he was taken in by Jews to teach White Russian boys; going to Novoyel'nya*, Belarus and stealing material to make a hideout, where he was able to evade a killing spree; running away into a cornfield and being helped to find a group of Russian, Polish and Jewish partisans; making bombs to attack the Germans; being taken into the Red Army in 1944 but continuing to fight with the partisans; conducting sabotage missions against the Germans; life in a partisan camp; being wounded by shrapnel in the leg and being treated in Königsberg; being released from the army in 1945; going to Vilnius and then returning to Königsberg; going to Landsberg DP camp and then being sent to nearby Greifenberg for about two years to teach prospective kibbutzniks to manufacture machine tools; meeting his wife, Anna, in Landsberg; knowing of no surviving family in Poland but reuniting with his two brothers, one in Landsberg and another in Israel; emigrating to Melbourne, Australia in about September 1949 with his wife and an infant daughter; having a second daughter and several grandchildren.

*Transliteration as heard