

Stanislaw Kron, Interviewed on December 10, 1996

Summary

Stanislaw Kron, born November 20, 1914 in Kielce, Poland (about 150 km southeast of Łódź) to Herschel** and Faygaleh** Kron, describes: his older brother, Shlomo; his birth name, Yishmael; brother Avraham and youngest brother, David; his father working as an accountant, and his mother, a homemaker; living in a religiously orthodox home; speaking Yiddish in the home; a middle class family; moving with his family to Łódź in 1918; having very little contact with Polish children; joining Hashomer Hatzair; being subjected to anti-Semitism; wanting to move to Palestine and many of his friends also wanting to emigrate; studying accountancy with Jewish and Polish students and being subjected to anti-Semitism; joining a Hagshama (society preparing to move to Palestine); becoming less religious in keeping with Hashomer's secular outlook; fulfilling a 16-month obligatory army service between 1935-1937; recognizing that things were getting bad for Jews in Germany but not being aware of details; preparing to emigrate to Palestine in July 1939 but the war beginning before he could obtain the necessary permits; walking to Warsaw with a Hashomer group amid constant German attacks and massive confusion; returning to Łódź; witnessing German roundups and executions of Jews; feeling powerless in the face of the German presence; deciding to flee to Russia with a group of Hashomer members; being overwhelmed by the chaos in Łódź; leaving by train with a group of nine people on November 11; witnessing Hassidic Jews being robbed by Germans; arriving in Lvov; feeling enormously relieved and optimistic to be in the Russian-controlled area; working for the Russian army; being rounded up with thousands of others and transported over about six weeks to Sverdlovsk; being addressed by a Russian officer and told that survival would depend on working hard; being transported by barge to a work camp of about two thousand people, both Jews and non-Jews; the camp inhabitants freed following the outbreak of war between Germany and Russia; traveling to Tashkent, then deciding to go to Samarkand, where he remained from 1941 to 1945; returning to Poland via Odessa; returning home to Łódź; finding a brother, David, alive in Łódź; finding out that his parents had died in Auschwitz and that all of his extended family had died, except for two cousins; continuing to live in Łódź; meeting a woman and marrying her in 1949; conditions for Jews improving under Russian occupation; leaving Poland in 1959 and immigrating to Australia; having children and grandchildren, and loving his life.

**As heard