

SALA GRINBLATT

RG-50.419.0005 (recorded 1988 in Columbus,
Ohio)

Sala was born close to the German border in Poland. She came from a close extended family. Her father was a businessman. She was a teenager when the war started. She and her family ran toward the woods where they stayed about a week. They dug potatoes and fished for food and swam in a river to keep clean. They had to leave and went to other parts of the woods. She was with her parents, sister and 2 brothers. Then they lived with a farmer for about a month and then back to the woods. They moved into an unoccupied house in a town nearby. Her older brother was lost in the confusion but then later found them.

Sala goes into much detail about their runs to the woods and stays in difference towns. At one point the family went back to their town and found their house burnt down but they were able to retrieve some foods from the cellar. Sala knit sweaters for some money.

The Germans eventually captured Sala and she was taken by cattle car to a small forced labor camp in Czechoslovakia where she stayed for 3 1/2 years. She worked on a machine making uniforms. She talks in details but doesn't name the many girls that were in her barracks. She still hears from some of them in the United States. She later learned that her parents had been sent to Treblinka. She said that they all only thought about food and how hungry they were.

She mentions a time in March 1944 when Dr Mengele came into her camp. All the girls were taken nude one by one in front of him, and some were selected to go to Auschwitz. At that time the girls were all given numbers and from then on were only referred to by their numbers.

The Russians liberated the camp and the girls had to hide at times so that they were not raped. One of Sala's cousins came to find her. She also found out that her older brother was alive and had survived Buchenwald. Sala went to a DP camp and at some point was married. She and her husband wanted to go to Israel but they couldn't because of the quota. She says that her life was good in the US; she had a good husband, a daughter and now 4 grandchildren. She is still orthodox. Her daughter and her children live now in New Jersey which makes Sala feel lonely.