

Interviewee:	<u>BEER</u> , Margaret	Date:	January 1, 1992
Interviewer:	Self-taped Memoir		
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## SUMMARY

Margaret Beer, nee Weiss, was born January 9, 1911 in Sighet, Hungary. She details the swift transfer of all the Jews of Sighet in the first month of the German invasion, describing how S.S. troops moved into many Jewish homes, including hers during the German occupation, and how Hungarian authorities identified prominent Jews whom the S.S. forced to form a Jewish Council. The Germans then confiscated Jewish businesses and personal property. Once ghettoized, the Jews were helped by non-Jewish Hungarians who smuggled food into the ghetto. She describes the evacuation of all Jewish patients from the local hospital, the formation of a Jewish police force, the evacuation of the Jews from the ghetto and the transports to Auschwitz.

She describes in great detail life in Auschwitz including the initial selection, showers, barracks, *Appells*, work conditions, food allotment, wash barracks, and her selection by Mengele. In July 1944 she was transported to Gelsenkirchen, Germany to work in the Krupp armament industry. She describes the working conditions and Allied bombings. In September 1944 she was transferred to Sömmerda in Thuringia, Germany to work in another ammunition factory. As the Allies drew close in April 1945, the camp was evacuated; Margaret escaped during the death march and eventually found housing in a German village until liberation at the end of April 1945. She describes help from Russian POW's and later American liberators. Her skills as a dressmaker helped sustain her until May 1946 when she could join her brother who had been living in Philadelphia.

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## SUBJECT HEADINGS

World War, 1939-1945 - Sighet, Hungary

World War, 1939-1945 - Personal narratives. Jewish

Sighet Ghetto

Concentration camp - Gelskirchen, Germany

Concentration camp - Auschwitz, Poland

Labor camp – Sömmerda, Germany

Death march