

Interviewee: STOLZMAN, Aaron
Interviewer: Jerry Rosenzweig
No. of Audiotapes: 2 English
Transcript: 1 v. (unpaged)

Date: April 21, 1985¹
No restrictions

SUMMARY

Aaron Stolzman was born in Dobrzyn, Poland December 28, 1925. His father was a grocer. He was also an officer in the Polish army. He was killed fighting the Germans. Aaron briefly talks about his life before 1939. The local Jewish community and his family took in Polish Jews who were expelled from Germany in 1938. He describes effects of German occupation. In 1939, evicted by their German neighbors whose life they saved before the war, they fled to the Mława Ghetto where they stayed for about six months. After witnessing German atrocities, Aaron joined an underground organization in the ghetto. With false papers and a new identity he left the ghetto to work for a Polish farmer and then for the German army, posing as a Pole. He connected with a resistance group that lived in underground bunkers in the forest. In September 1942, Germans destroyed their bunkers. Aaron was taken to Auschwitz where he stayed until 1945.

He describes how he and 200 young boys actually built Auschwitz. He also worked on several other *Kommandos* building ammunition factories and underground transformers. He describes living and working conditions in Auschwitz where most prisoners only survived a week or two. They knew about the gas chambers and crematoria. He vividly describes his escape attempt with the help of a Polish civilian and the terrible punishment the Germans inflicted on him, as well as why escape was impossible. He was put into *Block 11* - which few prisoners survived - where he was tortured and interrogated.

In 1945 he went on a death march from Auschwitz to Gross-Rosen with prisoners from Buna and Birkenau. He was sent to Dachau by freight train under horrible conditions. The 50% of men who survived the trip were put into a barracks with prisoners who had typhoid. He worked on a *Kommando* at Mildorf building underground hangars for the German airforce. Aaron explains how he learned to survive. The camp was evacuated by train and after the war ended the Germans tried to murder the prisoners. A *Wehrmacht* soldier, under direct orders from Heinrich Himmler to shoot them all, stalled the train until the American army arrived. Greek Jews took revenge on the German guards. Aaron describes liberation by the American 3rd Army, its effect on Jewish soldiers, the establishment of Feldaing Displaced Persons camp under orders by General Eisenhower, and post liberation conditions. He mentions attempts by the Polish government to persuade Polish Jews to return. Aaron came to the United States on December 20, 1947 to join his uncle because he had no other family left.

¹Recorded at the 1985 American Gathering of Holocaust Survivors in Philadelphia, PA.

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SUBJECT HEADINGS

Dobrzyn, Poland
Jewish ghetto (Mlawka)
Atrocities
Resistance movements
Falsification of identity
Auschwitz (death camp)
Slave labor
Torture
Escapes
Death marches
Dachau (forced labor camp)
World War, 1939-1945 - Rescues
World War, 1939 - 1945 - Liberation - United States - Army, 3rd