

Interviewee: ROISMAN, Max
Interviewer: Bernice Zoslaw
No. of Audiotapes: 1 English

Date: April 22, 1985¹
No restrictions
Transcript: 1 v. (unpaged)

SUMMARY

Max Roisman was born July 25, 1913 in Warsaw, Poland. In 1939, before the German invasion of Poland, he and his wife left Warsaw to go to Russia. Stopped at the border, he remained in Slawatycze and worked with a local tailor for German SS border guards. Warned by an SS officer, who had made a deathbed promise to his Jewish grandfather never to kill a Jew, Max and his wife hid in a nearby town, then went to Wlohy posing as a Gentile. Using a sewing machine smuggled out of the Warsaw Ghetto, he worked as a tailor with a non-Jewish partner until he was ordered to work for the Germans as a tailor in Suchowola, an open labor camp.

On May 3, 1943, the camp was liquidated and workers were evacuated to Majdanek. Max, with his wife and her brother, signed up to go to Auschwitz unaware of the nature of the camp. He was sent to Buna to work as a slave laborer for I.G. Farben Industry, then on a forced march to Gleiwitz where they boarded a train to Oranienburg (a satellite camp of Sachsenhausen) to work in a brick factory. Later he worked as a tailor for the commandant of the camp, Major Heydrich and was put in charge of four other tailors. He obtained food and clothing for other inmates and himself by trading stolen supplies. In April 1945, Max was wounded during an air raid. He received excellent medical care due to the intervention of the camp commandant. He hid when the camp was evacuated and the German military ran away. The remaining survivors organized to get food and water until the Russians liberated the camp. He describes conditions at Oranienburg, help from the Russians, and how he traveled East, across the border and was separated from his wife. He was sheltered by a Polish family who had hidden him once before and was reunited with his wife.

They lived in his wife's hometown, moved to Reichenbach where he opened a shop, then briefly in Israel. He returned to Austria, worked as a tailor for USEC, and later emigrated to the United States with his wife and children in January 1956.

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

SUBJECT HEADINGS

Aid by non-Jews
Concentration camp inmates--Medical care.
Death march survivors.
Death marches.
Forced labor.
Hiding places.
Holocaust survivors.
Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)--Poland--Personal narratives.
Jewish ghettos--Poland--Suchowola.
Jewish ghettos--Poland--Warsaw.
Jews--Poland--Warsaw.
Tailors.
World War, 1939-1945--Conscript labor.
World War, 1939-1945--Deportations from Poland.
Men--Personal narratives.
World War, 1939-1945--Campaigns--Poland.

Austria.
Israel.
Oranienburg (Germany)
Reichenbach (Bavaria, Germany)
Slawatycze (Poland)
Suchowola (Poland)
United States--Emigration and immigration.
Warsaw (Poland)
Wohyń (Poland)

Auschwitz (Concentration camp)
Ernst Heinkel-Flugzeugwerke.
Gleiwitz I (Concentration camp)
Heinkel-Werke Oranienburg (Concentration camp)
Interessengemeinschaft Farbenindustrie Aktiengesellschaft.
Majdanek (Concentration camp)
Monowitz (Concentration camp)
Sachsenhausen (Concentration camp)

HOLOCAUST TESTIMONY

OF

MAX ROISMAN

Transcript of Audio Taped Interview

Interviewer: Goldie Roisman
Date: April 22, 1985
American Gathering of
Holocaust Survivors 1985

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