

Interviewee: EBNER, Sylvia
Interviewer: Gloria Schwartz
No. of Audio tapes: 3 English
Transcript: 1 v. (unpaged)

Date: February 14, 2001
Restrictions: Non-commercial
use only

SUMMARY

Sylvia Ebner, née Klein, was born September 10, 1929, in Bodrogkiszfalud, Hungary. She describes her education, relations with non-Jews, and learning to cope with children who stoned her on her way to school. After the German invasion in March 1944, persecution and anti-Jewish measures increased. Sylvia and her family were taken to the Satoraljaujhely Ghetto with Jews from several other towns. Their house was looted as soon as they walked out. She describes several incidents of extreme brutality by Germans.

She describes the transport to Auschwitz in cattle cars and their dehumanization. Her parents managed to observe Shabbat and her father tried to prepare Sylvia to cope with what she had to face. Sylvia describes their arrival at Auschwitz May 1944, processing and selections by Dr. Mengele. Many, including her mother and other relatives, were loaded on trucks and gassed immediately.

Sylvia was marched to Birkenau. She describes the horrible conditions, the smell from the crematorium and how they tried to survive. She worked as a slave laborer in Brzézinka also known as “Canada”, sorting belongings taken from Jews. She risked her life to smuggle food to her cousin. The starving girls were offered food on fast days such as Tisha B’ Av but refused to eat because the food was not kosher.

Sylvia got Scarlet Fever and was hospitalized in a *Revier* (sick quarters) for six weeks. She survived seven selections by Dr. Mengele, saw him operate without any anesthesia, and a Christian woman kill her newborn baby to save him from Mengele’s experiments. Germans drained large amounts of blood from girls who survived typhus or scarlet fever to make serums. After Sylvia recovered, she worked as a slave laborer. First at heavy-duty unproductive work while living in the barracks, then in a factory in Oberhohen-Elbe, Sudeten, Germany. The German woman in charge risked her life to find food for the prisoners. She was liberated by Russian troops May 1, 1945, returned to Hungary, received aid from the Joint Distribution Committee (Joint); escaped from Hungary and immigrated to Canada.

Interviewee: EBNER, Sylvia

Date: February 14, 2001

SUBJECT HEADINGS

Holocaust, Jewish (1939 – 1945) – Personal narrative, Hungarian
Hungary-History-German occupation, 1944 – 1945
Jewish ghettos – Satoraljaujhely (Hungary)
Auschwitz (Concentration camp) Arrival and processing
Brzézinka (Poland: Concentration camp)
Slave labor (Brzézinka)
Slave labor (Germany)
Atrocities
Selections
Mengele, Josef, 1911-
Religious observance
Aid by non-Jews