

Interviewee:	<u>BUCHSBAUM, David</u>	Date:	January 19, 1989
Interviewer:	Gayle Kammerman		
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SUMMARY

David Buchsbaum was born in Gorlice, Poland on April 20, 1921 to a religious family. He was one of 11 children.. He gives a brief description of pre-war Gorlice and the Jewish community which was 25% of the population, about 3,500 Jews. David's family owned a grocery store.

David describes the mood change among non-Jewish neighbors in 1938 after Germany occupied Czechoslovakia and describes how they would stand in front of Jewish stores and businesses announcing, "Do not buy from Jews".

In 1939 once the Nazis occupied Gorlice the family was warned by a non-Jewish neighbor to flee, but the family could not afford the certificate to emigrate to Palestine. David details the anti-Jewish measures 1940: Jews had to wear the Yellow star, Jewish businesses were confiscated, synagogues were closed, Jewish "quarters" were created and David's father was shot to death by a German soldier right before his eyes. David also witnessed the machine gun shooting of entire Jewish families.

In July, 1942 all males from 12-65 were arrested and marched in the streets; some were shot and David, a brother and others were sent to the Plaszow concentration camp. David describes the horrific conditions there: cold, typhus, *appells*, beatings and the electrified fence. In 1943, as the Russians advanced David and 1,000 other Jews were sent in boxcars to the slave labor camp, Skarzysko. Those who were left behind were either shot in the woods or were gassed in vans and burned. In Skarzysko they made ammunition and David was in in the harshest area, Barrack C. In 1944 David was sent to Buchenwald where all his personal possessions were confiscated, including his *tallit* and *tefillin*, which distressed his greatly because he had tried to observe tradition as best he could. As the Russians advanced he was sent to Terezin (Theresienstadt) and was liberated from there on May 8, 1945. David describes that many survivors from Terezin died from overconsumption of food immediately after liberation.

David later returned to Poland to find his relatives but left because of fierce antisemitism and the Kielce pogrom. He traveled to Prague, and was then sent to Salzburg, Austria by the Joint Distribution Committee. The Joint arranged for him to join an uncle in the United States. On June 2, 1949 David arrived in Boston. He and two brothers survived the war.

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SUBJECT HEADINGS

World War II 1939-1945 -Personal Narratives, Jewish
Gorlice, Poland
Gorlice Ghetto
Plaszow - concentration camp, Poland
Buchenwald- concentration camp, Germany
Skarzysko - slave labor camp, Poland
Theresienstadt - concentration camp, Czechoslovakia
Atrocities