

Interviewee:	<u>FELDMAN</u> , Margit	Date:	May 13, 1987
Interviewer:	Helen Grossman		
Audio tapes:	2 English	Transcript:	1 vol. (unpaged) English
Restrictions:	None		

SUMMARY

Margit Feldman, nee Buckhalter, was born to an orthodox family in Budapest, Hungary on June 12, 1929. Margit describes pre-war life in Tolcsva (near the Czech border), where the family lived. Her father owned the general store, sold food and clothing, and her mother helped in the store. Her mother's parents lived with them on a small farm where they grew food and had farm animals. Margit details the Jewish Christian relations in town and discriminatory practices toward Jews (in education) and remembers encountering antisemitism as a child. At age 12 Margit was sent to live with an uncle in Budapest to attend a non-Jewish high school, but only attended for one year.

Margit describes the increasing restrictions imposed on Jewish businesses, including her father's, in 1942 and the taking of men, including Margit's father and uncles, in 1943, to work in labor camps. Margit relates that her family and all the Jews in town were deported on foot to the Satoraljaújhely Ghetto by Hungarian gendarmes in April 1944 and their valuables confiscated. She relates that there were approximately 15,000 Jews, who lived in the region, gathered there. They were only there for four weeks and then moved, via days in cattle cars, to Auschwitz in May, 1944. Margit reports that this was the first time she saw a German soldier. She describes the arrival, being separated by Dr. Mengele from the rest of the women in her family who were all murdered. Her father and uncles were sent to Dachau where he died in a few months. She attributes her survival to an aunt who told her to lie about her age and say she was 18 instead of 14.

About six weeks later, Margit was sent to Krakow where she worked in a quarry. She describes the daily routine, daily killing, and horrible conditions. Margit talks about survival and what it feels like to be the sole survivor in her family. She was then moved back to Auschwitz (and received a tattoo), transferred to Grünberg, worked in an ammunition factory with civilian population, some of whom sneaked bread in for them. In January, 1945, Margit was forced on a death march to Bergen-Belsen. She relates that half of the group froze in the snow. Bergen-Belsen was then liberated by the British but, after the liberation, ammunition exploded in the camp and she was injured by shrapnel and then sent to Sweden for care. Margit extols the care she received from the Swedish people. Workers from a relief organization helped her find family in the United States and she arrived here in 1947 at age 16. Margit describes quite an unusual arrival to the United States, and events after her arrival, including hospitalization and surgeries for tuberculosis. She was married in 1953.

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SUBJECT HEADINGS

World War 1939 – 1945 Personal narratives, Jewish
World War 1939 – 1945 Hungary, Tolcsva
World War 1939 – 1945 Deportation from Hungary
Antisemitism
Satoraljaujhely Ghetto
Slave labor – Grünberg
Auschwitz
Mengele, Josef
Bergen-Belsen
Death march