

Interviewee:	<u>GREENBERG</u> , Samuel	Date:	January 10, 1984
Interviewer:	Eileen Steinberg		
Audio tapes:	2 English	Transcript:	1 vol. (unpaged) English
Restrictions:	None		

SUMMARY

Samuel Greenberg was born on June 6, 1910 in Szumk, Poland a small town near Vishnivits to a poor, orthodox family. Sam describes pre-war antisemitism and lack of love between the Ukrainians and the Poles. His family belonged to Mizrachi, a Zionist organization. Sam describes difficulties they faced in 1939 under Russian occupation: scarcity of food, nationalization of businesses and fear of being sent to Siberia for “stealing” from the government.

Sam describes the maltreatment of Jews at the hands Ukrainians and Poles after the German invasion in September 1941. He mentions that women were violated. He describes the creation of the Vishnivits Ghetto in February 1941, crowded conditions, rampant illness and frequent deaths. He was forced there with his wife, young daughter and mother and father- in-law. He details men in labor brigades being beaten and describes 500 girls between 12 and 21 having their heads shaved.

Sam describes the horror of his town’s liquidation. He hid under a bed thinking that the women and children would be safe and he could be reunited with them later. After he escaped, a Polish acquaintance hid him and told him how the entire town was shot in mass graves and covered in lye. He describes his harrowing survival during the bitter winter and spring moving from farm to farm hiding in stables, the woods and wheat fields. He received some help from Poles in the form of bread and also shelter in a haystack in exchange for a fur coat. He also met a group of Ukrainian nationalists who followed Stepan Bandera and fought for Ukrainian freedom and were accused of antisemitic acts. He begged for his life on several occasions and was shocked when they let him go.

In the summer of 1944, the Russians arrived, but when Sam was the only Jew to survive in his whole area, the Russians accused him of being a German collaborator and shipped him to Siberia. He was housed with other German collaborators who had slaughtered the Jews. The Russians asked him to spy on them, which he did, but only earned himself a ticket to the front, walking all the way from Siberia to Berlin with the Soviet army. After getting shot in the head, he was sent to a hospital near Magdeburg and begged one Jewish doctor to keep him there so he could live. Sam was discharged there by the Soviet Army in 1945. After liberation, Sam returned to Poland but heard stories of Jews’ being killed by Poles after the war so fled to the American zone in Germany. He arrived in Philadelphia in April 1948 having been sent a visa through an uncle. Sam attributes his survival to his faith in God. Sam found out after the war, that his brother had survived the war in Siberia.

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SUBJECT HEADINGS

World War II 1939-1945- Personal Narratives-Jewish
World War II 1939-1945- Poland
Szumsk, Poland
Vishinivits Ghetto
Hiding
Siberia
Aid by non-Jews