

Interviewee: ROTH, Anna
Interviewer: Patricia Rich

Date: July 14, 2010

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SUMMARY

Anna Roth, née Weber, was born in Stopnica, Poland on July 14, 1929 into a Hasidic family. She had five sisters and lived with her parents and extended family. Her father was a roofer. She describes her childhood before the German invasion in detail including relations with non-Jewish Poles and antisemitism.

She talks in great detail about the frightening German invasion and Occupation including men being taken from the streets, indiscriminate killings and restrictions on Jewish learning and how her mother procured Hebrew lessons for her. Anna—despite her very young age—her father and her two eldest sisters were taken to work in a munitions factory in Skarzysko for two years (1940-1942). She gives detailed descriptions of the conditions: the work, the food and the fear under which they lived. She and her sisters were able to keep contact with their father and even got themselves on the same transport when he was deported to several other labor camps: Czestochowa, another munition factory; Przedborz, where they were made to dig ditches, and Czestochowianka. Eventually they were separated when their father was sent to Buchenwald in 1944 and her two older sisters were sent to Ravensbrück.

Anna was deported to Bergen-Belsen which she described as far worse than any of the other camps and gives detailed descriptions of the conditions. She explains how the circumstances probably helped her to survive—when they ran out of striped uniforms, she was able to keep the heavy coat she was wearing during the cold winter months. She also shares a vignette about her extraordinary reunification with her sisters in Bergen-Belsen. Anna details her and her sisters' deathmarch from Turkheim to Dachau and their liberation on the morning after their arrival on May 6, 1945.

After the war they were sent to Feldafing Displaced Persons camp, and found their father in Lübeck, Germany, where they lived until 1947. Her mother and three younger sisters perished. In 1948 they went to Stuttgart, in the American zone, in order to emigrate to the United States. One sister went to Israel. Helped by HIAS, Anna, her father and a sister arrived in the United States in 1949.

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SUBJECT HEADINGS

Holocaust Jewish 1939 – 1945 – Personal narratives

Jews – Polish

Holocaust Jewish (1939 - 1945) Poland

World War, 1939 – 1945 – Concentration camps

World War, 1939 – 1945 – Prisoners

World War, 1939 – 1945 – Concentration camps - Liberation

World War 1939-1945, Personal Narratives

Czestochowa, Poland

Stopnica, Poland

Skarzysko (labor camp)

Czestochowa (labor camp)

Bergen-Belsen (concentration camp)

Dachau (concentration camp)

Slave labor

Atrocities

Death march from Turkheim