

HOLOCAUST TESTIMONY

OF

BENJAMIN SUSHMAN

Transcript of Audiotaped Interview

Interviewer: Philip G. Solomon  
Date: May 12, 1989

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Melrose Park, PA 19027

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*BENJAMIN SUSHMAN [1-1-1]*

BS - Benjamin Sushman [interviewee]

PS - Philip G. Solomon [interviewer]

Date: May 11, 1989

*Tape one, side one:*

PS: Phil Solomon, interviewing Mr. Benjamin Sushman, of Willingboro, New Jersey, for the Gratz College Oral History Archive. The date is May 11th, 1989. [tape off then on] Ben, can you please tell me where in Europe and in what unit you were serving before you arrived at the site of the concentration camp?

BS: Well we were going through, traveling from Germany down to Austria and the Worm-Speyer, and we received notice about the two concentration camps that we had liberated, that had been freed. And I think this was right at the end, the close of the war.

PS: You say there had been two...

BS: There were two of them. There were actually, but it was called Gusen and the other one was Mauthausen. Gusen was the smaller one [a subcamp of Mauthausen].

PS: Oh.

BS: On a smaller scale than Mauthausen.

PS: Can you spell that?

BS: I think it was G-U-Z-E-N.

PS: Was that also in Austria?

BS: That was also in Austria.

PS: Fairly close to...

BS: Yeah it was fairly close to...

PS: Mauthausen.

BS: Mauthausen, right. Mauthausen was on a bigger scale. But I remember they had, they did have a, in the entrance there to Mauthausen there was a big sign named *Arbeit Macht Frei*.

PS: Work Makes Free.

BS: Yeah. Makes you free or something like that, to that extent. And it was a, you know, I don't think it was on the scale, I don't think that Mauthausen was on the scale of the things that I've seen on TV to Auschwitz. It wasn't a, it was...

PS: Yeah. Well probably...

BS: A death camp. There was no...

PS: Yes there were hundreds, I don't know if hundreds of thousands, but there were far too many...

BS: Right, right.

PS: Who were exterminated at Mauthausen.

BS: Right.

PS: Now Ben I forgot to ask you first...

*BENJAMIN SUSHMAN [I-I-2]*

BS: I was in the Company B in the--81st Medical Army Battalion, was part of the Eleventh Armoured Division in the Third Army of General Patton.

PS: You were a medical aid or a doctor?

BS: I, well, I was, no, I was not a, I did have a background in a medical technician, but I was at that time in charge of the casualty reports. And of course some of the people in Mauthausen, we treated in our aid station. [tape off then on] And...

PS: Ben, prior to your arrival at the concentration camp, had you seen any evidence at all of Nazi atrocities against, in the occupied countries? You went through France. Had you seen any evidence at all of German atrocities against civilians or displaced persons or prisoners of war?

BS: No, no. You know, to be honest I--hadn't seen anything like that. Of course there were plenty of, you know, dead bodies around there.

PS: So nothing on a...

BS: There was no...

PS: What you would say a planned scale, like...

BS: Right, no.

PS: Anything like you saw later.

BS: No. No.

PS: Before you arrived at the site of the two concentration camps, had you heard, in other words, when you got into Germany, when you and your unit got into Germany and were fighting in Germany, before your arrival at the concentration camps, had you heard anything at all of the mass murder of Jews and political prisoners? Had you heard anything of the existence of the extermination camps, that is gas chambers, crematoria and so forth?

BS: No, I have to plead complete ignorance of--you know, I hadn't, never heard of anything of that nature.

PS: Can you please give, if possible, the date, well you've already identified the name of the two camps.

BS: Yeah.

PS: Do you recall the date that you liberated...

BS: Well, I think it--I did write something. It was in early May. And I--at that time, right after that time, well, it was in September, that I was in--at that time called Palestine, that I wrote a piece about that for a small group, a newspaper we had. And I did find this here. It was, it told a little bit about that.

PS: Yeah, this was written two years...

BS: Yeah, right, right.

PS: After the war.

BS: Right, it was after, written two years after the war.

PS: On the 9th of September, 1946.

BS: Right.

PS: So this was a few years after. Do you want to, do you care to read this?

BS: Well, I can if you, yeah.

PS: Well suppose, first I ask you for descriptions, and for instance, to the best of your memory, can you describe the camp? The physical, say of Mauthausen, what you saw when you first entered, the physical structures.

BS: Well, you know, barracks. There were scores and scores of barracks whatever you call them. And--it didn't, at that time there wasn't, didn't seem to be any organization there. But, people were running around and in one place there we heard that--somebody screaming. And we heard inmates were beating up a *Kapo*.

PS: Yeah.

BS: Yeah, we knew it. These were people who were selected by the Nazis for...

PS: For...

BS: And you know, they were Jews themselves. For that purpose of helping to exterminate the Jews these some were, but the GIs didn't answer to anyone, you know.

PS: Let them, left them with the...

BS: Right. You know, and the...

PS: Were there any S.S.? Were there any prison guards still remaining in the camp when you arrived?

BS: No. No.

PS: Was this...

BS: By that time they were taken out.

PS: Yeah. You say early in May. Now I believe the date of the German surrender, the surrender of all German military forces...

BS: Yeah.

PS: I believe was May the 8th. Was this after, before or after the German surrender?

BS: It's not clear in my mind now actually. I think if I recollect it was, rather was right after the war, or was right before the end of the war.

PS: From my recollection I think...

BS: Yeah.

PS: It could have been a few days after.

BS: It could have been.

PS: So actually you did not, actually did not know anything...

BS: No.

PS: Until the war had ceased.

BS: Yeah.

PS: Until it, not only you didn't know when you first, when you first entered Germany, but here the war had been ended by a few days before you really knew. Then when you saw the extent of deaths at Mauthausen, did you in your wildest imagination dream that this was only one of many--and some much, much worse such as Auschwitz,

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Birkenau, and Treblinka? Did you in your wildest imagination think that there were many, many others even worse than Mauthausen?

BS: Well it didn't occur to me that...

PS: No?

BS: You know that there, you know I, that was maybe an isolated...

PS: Yeah. In other words that for you and the men with you, your buddies probably thought that this could be may be not the only one, but maybe there were just a few others and--but when you were in Germany, although you had no idea that there was a situation like this, did you realize--when I say situation like this I mean that upwards of or more than six million Jews had been exterminated and more than six million non-Jews had been exterminated--did you--this you were not aware of. But you, were you aware of the fact that millions had been rounded up and put in boxcars and shipped to various--what most thought were labor camps?

BS: No. I don't think it was...

PS: So you didn't...

BS: Public knowledge at that time.

PS: Yeah.

BS: I don't think it was publicized in the press. If something had been going on it was probably put back on page five or six.

PS: Yeah.

BS: And I don't think it was public knowledge what the, what the Nazis were up to, or what they were doing.

PS: Ben, too, as a soldier at the fighting front...

BS: Yeah.

PS: I know I as well as you, there was no communications. We didn't, there was no such thing as...

BS: That's right.

PS: You know, radio, news broadcasts, or even daily papers. Can you describe what you saw when you entered the camp as far as the personnel, the prisoners, survivors, the dead? Can you give a description of what you saw upon entry into the camp and moving around the camp?

BS: Well the people were in a wretched state, the survivors, you know. They looked like they--emaciated, you know. Some of them, you could say were walking dead. They were in a terrible state of, condition of, you know, compared to the healthy soldiers.

PS: Yeah. Pictures of Mauthausen show...

BS: Yeah.

PS: People that you know could not have lived.

BS: Yeah.

PS: They were in such bad shape that they had no digestive systems left even to digest food.

BS: Mmm hmm.

PS: Can you estimate how many, roughly how many prisoners were still living at that time?

BS: Well, I really have no, you know, accurate figures. We do know that there were stacks and stacks of dead people. And the army engineers were the, from the division, were digging with their--were digging trenches, you know.

PS: Were...

BS: For mass burials.

PS: Yeah. Were civilians--German and Austrian civilians from the area--used at all in the burial of the dead?

BS: You know, I don't recall.

PS: Yeah.

BS: I don't recall.

PS: It did happen that way in many...

BS: Yeah.

PS: Camps where...

BS: I know.

PS: Civilians were rounded up from the whole general area and made to...

BS: Yeah, and there were bull dozers that were working...

PS: Yeah.

BS: Digging those mass, trenches for mass burials.

PS: The next question I had to ask you if this particular camp was set up for Jews only or if it was a mixed camp with, you know, various nationalities and ethnic groups?

BS: I don't know. I don't know. The people that I spoke to, you know, some in Yiddish, they were Jews though. I hadn't come across anybody else.

PS: Ben, did you see any children among either the survivors, the living survivors or...

BS: No, no.

PS: The dead?

BS: I didn't see any children.

PS: No children at all. Have you, were you assigned any responsibilities in arranging for the transfer or care of prisoners?

BS: No, not at that time.

PS: Can you describe the reaction of the prisoners as you and your unit entered the camp?

BS: Well of course I--they were delighted, you know, to see the Americans there. They were, I think they were overjoyed to see Americans.

PS: You mentioned a few minutes ago that you did speak Yiddish.

BS: Yeah.

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PS: So probably you were able to...

BS: I, well...

PS: Communicate with...

BS: I don't speak Yiddish fluently. I can understand it a lot better than I speak it.

PS: Yeah. But you did have some verbal...

BS: Yeah, right, yeah.

PS: Communication...

BS: Right.

PS: With the survivors?

BS: Yeah.

PS: Did they tell you, did you learn anything? Did they tell you anything of their history of incarceration or their experiences or could you hold a, any kind of a lengthy conversation with them?

BS: Well I spoke to actually one of these *Kapos* that was, and he was justifying that he wanted to live. And that was the only thing he could do.

PS: Yeah.

BS: And he showed me through the--in fact, it hadn't been destroyed yet. They had one of those rooms where they would, that they'd gas people.

PS: Oh, a gas chamber.

BS: One of the gas chambers. And it looked like a shower. It wasn't on a scale of that they showed on Auschwitz. It was a much smaller chamber. But it looked like a shower, like...

PS: When you spoke to this *Kapo*, at that point...

BS: Yeah.

PS: Had the survivors sort of let up on their vengeance that they were taking out against the *Kapos*?

BS: I think, I don't think they were aware that this fellow was one of the helpers.

PS: Oh, oh.

BS: But [chuckling]. They would have been after him.

PS: Yeah. Did they permit them to live? Did they kill them or...

BS: Well I don't know what happened to that one guy I heard he was gettin' beaten up.

PS: Ben, did, you say there were no guards left.

BS: No.

PS: Only the *Kapos* then.

BS: Yeah.

PS: Did you and your medical unit come prepared with food and medical supplies to treat and feed these people?



BS: I don't know if they had extra supplies then. What we did have, we--helped them out, you know, as best we could. We...

PS: When you were heading toward Mauthausen...

BS: Yeah?

PS: At that point did you know that there was a concentration camp badly in need of help?

BS: No, we were...

PS: You just really stumbled...

BS: Yeah, right, just stumbled on instead of...

PS: In your advance you...

BS: I don't know if the forward units knew about it, but we had no knowledge of what we were...

PS: Yeah.

BS: Gonna come across.

PS: So you really in no way were prepared...

BS: Right. We had no...

PS: To handle...

BS: Right.

PS: A situation like this?

BS: Right.

PS: Did you...

BS: We were actually overwhelmed with the, the aid station, with helping these people.

PS: Now I guess so. Do you have any idea of, oh the survival rate? Evidently, in your, to the best of your knowledge, were any of them so far gone that they could not be helped?

BS: I have no knowledge to answer that, to tell you the truth.

PS: Did the experience of seeing the prisoners have any effect on your feeling about being a part of the war and fighting Germany?

BS: Yeah. Well, it affected me because I, because I was Jewish of course.

PS: Yes.

BS: You know, that had a lasting impression on me.

PS: Sure. It sure would. Did you--evidently, there were many, many non-Jewish boys at your side at all times. Did you hear, do you think that they were affected to any deep extent as a result of what they saw?

BS: I don't know. I don't think so. I don't know if they, if it made a lasting impression on them.

PS: Well I can see where it certainly would be a, something that would hit the, our fellow Jews right in the middle of, we knew that...

BS: Yeah.

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PS: An attempt was, had been made to actually exterminate our people. Do you recall, well I asked you if you recalled the reaction of any of the other non-Jewish men in your unit. Did you speak to any of them afterwards about the situation of...

BS: No, you see, we had been in the war and just seen so many dead people.

PS: That's exactly...

BS: They had seen so many dead people, and people who were, you know, Germans and civilians, dead, that, I don't know if they were, if that had any big impression.

PS: I think it definitely must have. Because I know I went through much the same experience and we were so, in such situations that every day we ourselves, you know, our lives were in jeopardy. And in fact I think if anything, a lot of them envied the survivors, as bad as they were, because at least they were liberated and free of extermination at that point. In your own mind, Ben, can you explain or even attempt to explain to yourself German decisions that led to the setting up of concentration camps?

BS: What was that, what?

PS: Can you justify, well not justify, but can you explain in any way to yourself German decisions that led to the setting up of concentration camps?

BS: Well I don't think there was any justification on the part of the Germans. I think it was sh--sheer madness and the end result of antisemitism.

PS: How long, Ben, did you remain in the camp after the initial liberation? How many days or...

BS: It was just one day.

PS: Yeah.

BS: Just...

PS: Did the experience linger long after you left? Has it influenced...

BS: Well, we, well of course it did. You don't remember, you don't forget [unclear]. It stays with you for the rest of your life.

PS: A sensitive question is, did it have any affect, seeing what you did see, and when you learned that this was only one of many extermination camps, and when you learned of the total figure of extermination that hit twelve or thirteen million, did that have any effect on your faith in your religion?

BS: [pause]

PS: It's a rough, maybe I'll [chuckling] [unclear].

BS: Yeah, that a r-... [chuckling].

PS: No, that's...

BS: That's a rough question.

PS: Yeah, I don't ask it of some people...

BS: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

PS: It's a thought that sometimes...

BS: Yeah, right.

PS: Unless I have a...

BS: It's a rough, that's a rough question.

PS: Yeah. I don't ask it usually. When I have a particular feeling, a person who would be...

BS: Yeah.

PS: Individual I'm interviewing, I will, it was asked of me when I was interviewed.

BS: Yeah.

PS: And I just thought I'd...

BS: Yeah.

PS: Hang one. Did you, after you left the camp, was there any official meeting of your unit to discuss...

BS: No.

PS: What you had experienced?

BS: No.

PS: Do you know if there was any regimental history that included this experience?

BS: Well, that map that I had did show the camps on the map. And I couldn't [unclear] move all this stuff out of the way.

PS: Yeah. Well was that map...

BS: Yeah.

PS: Part of your regimental history?

BS: Yeah. That was a map that was issued by the...

PS: Yeah. Later did you hear of any other servicemen who were involved in the liberation of other camps? Any other [pause]. This question is two, for a two-fold reason really.

BS: Yeah.

PS: You know, we are constantly seeking additional liberators to interview for our Holocaust records. Did, this is a, it, some liberators reported some contact with people of whom they liberated years later, whom, have you had any experience at all that...

BS: Well, strangely enough, I did have some contact with some of the people that I have met in, after the camp, who were, that had been in the camps. And, one of those persons was--see, I later served for an organization called the *Haganah*.

PS: Yeah.

BS: And we were ferrying Jews to Palestine at that time. It was not yet Israel.

PS: You were still in...

BS: No I, this was after the army. This was after I got out of the army.

PS: You were, where were you at that point?

BS: Well, I was on a ship...

PS: In what country?

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BS: On a, these were a group of Americans that, some of them had no previous experience being sailors. Well, I didn't have any previous experience as a sailor, so, but we, this was a Canadian Corvette that was purchased in Canada or, and we went to Europe, from New York on this ship. And...

PS: Oh, this unit came out...

BS: Yeah.

PS: Actually came out of the...

BS: Right, right. And the ship was refurbished in Marseilles with, they put in bunks and [unclear] so people could sleep in layers, so they could...

PS: This Corvette...

BS: That's where I met one of the, when we were taking these people to...

PS: Oh.

BS: Palestine.

PS: Oh that's...

BS: I met one of these people that I had seen in Europe.

PS: Yeah. Was there recognition on...

BS: Oh yeah!

PS: Both parts?

BS: Yeah. Yes. But...

PS: This Canadian, oh, I'm sorry.

BS: Yeah. It was a Canadian ship.

PS: Yeah.

BS: The Corvette.

PS: Was this, the Canadian ship, the Corvette, was that a naval vessel?  
Canadian...

BS: [unclear], yeah.

PS: It was an arm-, a...

BS: Yeah. It was a...

PS: Armed Canadian...

BS: Naval vessel that was refurbished and we made a trip from Marseilles. Later we made a trip to Yugoslavia.

PS: You did this on your own, joining a group of...

BS: Yeah. Yeah.

PS: Volunteers who...

BS: Right, right.

PS: Got into this. Were most of them Jewish?

BS: Oh yeah.

PS: Milit-...

BS: Well the first mate, the chief engineer was Saskatchewan. But all the others were--and there was an Israeli, too was the captain of...

PS: The others were American Jews.  
BS: Yeah, American, right. American boys.  
PS: Was there an organization that sponsored, financed and sponsored the operation?  
BS: Well, yeah, it was the *Haganah* organization.  
PS: Oh, oh, I see.  
BS: Yeah, yeah, right...  
PS: You did...  
BS: Who recruited these people and the ship was, the ship was also named the *Haganah*. I had hoped for the, that this ship came back to visit cities for fund raising acts after the war, after the Israeli war.  
PS: These...  
BS: [unclear].  
PS: People that you got into Palestine, now the State of Israel, where were they, did you get them from DP camps? Displaced persons camps?  
BS: They were from DP camps.  
PS: Yeah.  
BS: In fact our unit, after the war was stationed at one of these DP camps. We were...  
PS: Oh I see.  
BS: We were providing them with services.  
PS: In southern France was that?  
BS: No, this I think was still in Austria. But we, after the unit was disbanded we went to these what they call Cigarette Camps in...  
PS: Oh yeah.  
BS: France.  
PS: Lucky Strike.  
BS: Right, right, Lucky Strike.  
PS: Camp.  
BS: [unclear].  
PS: That was towards...  
BS: Right, right.  
PS: Was in the area of Le Havre.  
BS: That's where we were...  
PS: Yeah.  
BS: Shipped back to the States.  
PS: How long did you remain in Austria or in Europe...  
BS: I think it was for a short while.  
PS: Yeah. And you then...  
BS: In terms of months.

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PS: Went to, like Lucky Strike, or...  
BS: Right, right.  
PS: And then to Le Havre...  
BS: Right, yeah.  
PS: And shipped...  
BS: Yeah.  
PS: In your experience with the, this Canadian Corvette, the *Haganah*, did you make many successful landings with...  
BS: Yeah. See, the first town, we stopped outside of the shores of, and there was a Turkish smaller boat. And the people who got on, got off, that we--took from Marseilles, they actually went down the rope ladders to these smaller Turkish vessels, which they took them into, to Palestine.  
PS: Did you...  
BS: It was...  
PS: Run into, oh, now how many, can you, do you recall like how many trips?  
BS: There were 1100 Jews that they, and they took them to two small motor boats.  
PS: That was all in one trip?  
BS: That was the first trip we took.  
PS: Yeah, the first trip.  
BS: And the second trip was--we had more people on there. So, we went to Yugoslavia. We picked those people up, and we actually took them into Palestine. In fact with that, at that time, the ship was seized by the British. But the crew was, in the port of Haifa, they took us off and the other people went to Cyprus.  
PS: Right. Well when the British seized the ship, had you already landed the, these Jewish people onto the shores of Israel?  
BS: Yes. Well...  
PS: So the trip...  
BS: The British took the immigrants.  
PS: Oh, oh.  
BS: They took them, yeah. They, you know, they took the people over...  
PS: So...  
BS: Because the ship was seized right outside of Haifa.  
PS: They, did they permit them to enter?  
BS: I don't think so. I think they were, at that time the British policy was against...  
PS: Yeah.  
BS: Jews...  
PS: Can you estimate how many, totally, you successfully got into Palestine?

BS: Well, I know there was 1100 in the first one, and the second time there was over 2000 people. And it was really crowded.

PS: And that was the...

BS: We had people that were, had to be on the decks, because we didn't have enough room, sleeping quarters.

PS: Yeah. The length of the trip was four or five days would you say?

BS: Yeah. It was a short time.

PS: Now, the trip of 2000, is that, that's the one that was seized by the...

BS: They, right.

PS: British?

BS: Right.

PS: So there were 2000 people...

BS: Right.

PS: That probably did not...

BS: Right.

PS: Make it into...

BS: Well...

PS: What eventually became the State of Israel.

BS: Well they went to Cyprus. I think maybe eventually they did get...

PS: Yeah.

BS: They did get to, when the British released them.

PS: When you had contact with the DP camp, you say it was in Austria.

BS: Right.

PS: And you were there for, would you say a matter of weeks or months?

BS: No, no, it was a couple of months. It was a couple of months in that...

PS: Yeah, right...

BS: DP camp.

PS: During the...

BS: We provided them with medical services [unclear].

PS: Yeah.

BS: You know, first aid where you have the medi-vac.

PS: During the period that you were there, which you say it was a couple months, had official, had action gone into being officially to start distributing these displaced persons back to their homeland or where they wanted to go? Had that chain of events started at that time?

BS: I think they were just doing statistical work on, you know, the, they would, records of where these people were...

PS: Then from...

BS: Came from and...

PS: From that point...

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BS: Locations of...

PS: That DP camp in Austria, from there you went to Camp Lucky Strike and then to Le Havre and then to home.

BS: Yeah. You see, I was, well, all my life I'd been a Zionist, and I guess these fellows that they tried to recruit had former Zionist backgrounds. [chuckling] This is an old thing that I picked up when I...

PS: Oh yes.

BS: This is an identification card. At that time was Palestine. [pause] They spelled my name wrong.

PS: Ben, while we were speaking...

BS: Do you read some Hebrew?

PS: Well I can read but I don't know what I'm [chuckles]...

BS: O.K.

PS: I can read but I can't translate.

BS: This is a commendation that I...

PS: Oh, that's nice.

BS: I did get a--I couldn't find that either. I got a letter from the Israeli Consulate several years ago, and this was in it, a medal that they sent me for participating in this, in [unclear].

PS: Yeah.

BS: You know, the *aliyah*.

PS: When that second trip failed and the British seized the Canadian Corvette, was that the end of the *Haganah* actions for...

BS: Well, yeah, well, they had the ship.

PS: Yeah.

BS: Yeah, that was the end of it. But there were...

PS: Did you...

BS: There were other ships too involved.

PS: Did you remain in Palestine or...

BS: I did. I did. I went to live on this kibbutz for a while. In fact I stayed in Palestine for, until it became the State of Israel, for close to three years.

PS: Oh, oh.

BS: My first son was born in Israel. And he's, the other one out in California.

PS: Have you returned since...

BS: Oh yeah, I've been back.

PS: Since then?

BS: Yeah, I've been back. Two years ago I went to, I made a trip. My wife's been back a couple of times.

PS: Ben, while we were, while you were answering my questions, there were a few things that you handed me. One was something you had written, so, and...



*BENJAMIN SUSHMAN [1-1-15]*

BS: Oh.

PS: Is there, would you care-

*Tape one, side two:*

PS: This is continuing the interview with Mr. Benjamin Sushman. We were just speaking about some written material that he handed me as we were--during the question and answer period. Now I just asked Ben if he cared to read any parts that he thinks maybe we didn't cover during my questioning.

BS: Well, I guess I could read this. But it's a little on the soft side.

As a GI on a hot summer's day in early May, before the close of the Second World War, I visited a concentration camp called KL Mauthausen in upper Austria. That place was a citadel of mass murder. I was numbed and sickened by the sight of over thousands of human beings with souls and lives and destinies and thoughts, reduced by starvation to a naked bone of monstrosity to death. Their bodies were stacked like cord wood in an open area between the stinking quarters of the living dead. This was for me the painful memory of the appalling massacre of six million European Jews. For centuries those Jews helped build the civilization and culture of Europe. And as a reward for their efforts they were despised, hunted and murdered. And yet a labor statesman in a shameless speech asked the remnants of these persecuted people to remain and help rebuild the graveyards of Europe. It's strange that I should remember this on a happy occasion. It was in this year, the end of June that is, when as a member of a most peculiar ship's crew made up almost entirely of young American Jews, not inclined by nature or experience to the seas, but for the most of the journey seasick, going on a glorious day in June some distance from the coasts of Palestine, ferried their cargo of 1100 Jews by means of the two small motorboats to a Turkish vessel. We didn't notice there was some British warship coming to view. That was an amazing day. During basic training as a soldier, I had for days on end practiced the intricacies of climbing down rope ladders, and there were Jewish men, women and children, young, middle aged, and old, and old ones going over the side, cheerfully to our rocking boats below. Their vitality and will to live is another strong chain in the hope and the future of the *Yishuv* [the Jewish community in Palestine]. We who emancipated, the American Jews, found a new meaning self respect or dignity of our accomplishment as Jews. It was after our boats had returned from their last trip and the illegal immigrants were in the southern direction of home did I remember the death camp of another year and the summation of the strong looking Jews I had seen this year. Then, that was a moment of the most real exaltation I have ever known. Yes, that moment I knew the sheer joy of living. There was a song and a great promise on my heart but my throat was too dry to sing it.

PS: Oh, beautiful, Ben. Before we finish, is there anything at all that you would care to add to the testimony that you have given? Any thoughts that, or any pieces of information that we didn't cover, or any thoughts that would relate to your feelings or memories?

BS: Yeah, well hopefully, this should never happen again to any people.

PS: Amen. Right. Ben, I want to thank you very, very much.

*BENJAMIN SUSHMAN [1-2-17]*

BS: Yes.

PS: On behalf of the Holocaust Oral History Archives of Gratz College, this very valuable testimony will become a part of the testimony now held in the Archive for future generations. And again, on behalf of Gratz, thank you very much.

BS: My pleasure.