

Interviewee: TEMS, Adam
Interviewer: Marion Salkin
Audio tapes: 2 English

Date: April 1, 1983
No restrictions
Transcript 1 vol. (unpaged)

SUMMARY

Adam was born in Łódź (now Polish, then German), July 18, 1911. He describes his upbringing and education before World War II. He managed to get dual degrees in mechanical and electrical engineering even though the University of Warsaw would not admit him because he was Jewish. He was inducted into the Polish Army and had serious problems because he was Jewish. The Germans took him prisoner September 3, 1939. He escaped. In Łódź he was arrested by the *GESTAPO* and interned in a camp at Radogost (Radogoszcz).

After his release, he was reunited with his family in the Łódź Ghetto. He describes life in the ghetto, which was established in 1940, including food supplies, how the ghetto was organized, schools for the children. His only contact with the outside was listening to the BBC on the radio. He mentions an attempt by the Polish Socialist Party to start a resistance movement. Mr. Tems explains in great detail why Rumkowski, the head of the ghetto, was not an evil man. Mr. Tems was very involved in the administration of the ghetto and describes his many activities. He managed to protect many of the children until the ghetto was terminated.

Mr. Tems was deported to Auschwitz Birkenau October 27, 1944, then to Dachau, later to Freichenden, a part of the Neuengamme concentration camp system, where he worked in a maintenance crew. He also worked for Viesing Energie, and later was sent to Veldering, a part of the Ravensbrück compound in December 1944. His entire family perished in Auschwitz.

Mr. Tems relates several amazing and interesting vignettes. He explains how he managed to survive, details his liberation by the 9th Airborne Division, and why he decided not to go back to Łódź. He stayed in the American compound, then in a transient camp. He lived in Belgium for five years. He went to the United States on October 24, 1950.

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SUBJECT HEADINGS

Lódz Jewish life pre World War II
World War, 1939-1945 – Personal narratives, Jewish
World War, 1939-1945 – Forced labor
World War, 1939-1945 - Liberation
Antisemitism
Jewish ghettos Lódz, Poland
Auschwitz: (concentration camp)
Dachau: (concentration camp)
Atrocities
Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski