

Interviewee:	<u>WEISS</u> , Jack	Date:	July 1, 1985
Interviewer:	Stanley Richman		
Audio tapes:	1 English	Transcript:	1 vol. (unpaged) English
Restrictions:	None		

SUMMARY

Jack Weiss was born September 10, 1915 in a small town near Ungvár (Uzhgorod), Czechoslovakia. His parents had a grocery store. Jack gives a description of pre-war Czechoslovakia and discusses serving in the Czech army prior to 1939. He never experienced antisemitism until his village was occupied by the Hungarians who collaborated with the Germans. He mentions some kindnesses of certain Hungarian police and army, including giving tips about hiding his sister whom he rescued from Slovakia when her husband was taken away. He recalls the later deportation of his parents, sister and her children and his forced labor building streets in work camps in Czechoslovakia and in Lemberg, Poland in 1940/1941. In 1942, a Hungarian officer befriended him and 24 other Jewish boys, helping them escape to join Russian partisans where he survived for 18 months. He describes in detail their fighting in the area near Pinsk. Jack witnessed the slaughter of 200 Jews shot by Ukrainians. Jack recounts that the area where they were fighting was liberated by the Soviets in 1945 and that he and five other young, Jewish men were sent to Moscow to become factory managers. He discusses the poor treatment they received there, housed with Soviet army deserters and repeated interrogations by Soviets about their families and whether they were anti-Communist or Communists. Jack just wanted to go back to his hometown to see if anyone had survived. He worked for months in freezing temperatures on rail lines, until the end of 1945, when he was told he could go home.

Jack discusses his difficult journey home to Czechoslovakia weighing 90 pounds, due to dysentery and starvation and barely able to walk. He states that none of the 150 Jewish families remained from his home town. He was eventually reunited with some family members who survived, and he and his sister helped other young Jewish girls returning back to the area with food and housing until they found family members. He describes that about 20 Jewish young men survived of the nearly 20,000 that lived in the area of Uzhgorod having hidden in the area (he was distinguishing these numbers from survivors from the camps). He and his sisters fled to Karlsbad and eventually Prague because Jack didn't want to live under the Soviets. In 1958, he was married in Israel and then subsequently emigrated to the United States. He shares that he never lost faith in God and instilled the belief and practice of Judaism in his two children.

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Holocaust Jewish (1933-45) Personal narratives, Jewish, Male

World War (1939-1945) Personal Narratives, Jewish, Male

Aid from Hungarian soldier

Emigration to Israel

Emigration to United States

Escape from slave labor with aid from Hungarian soldier

Resistance Groups – Partisans – Russian

Partisans

Slave labor – Czechoslovakia

Slave labor – Poland, Lemberg (Lvov)

Witness to atrocities by Ukrainian soldiers