

Interviewee:	<u>ZAWID</u> , Jack	Date:	August 20, 1985
Interviewer:	Natalie Packel		
Audio tapes:	2 English	Transcript:	1 vol. (unpaged) English
Restrictions:	None		

SUMMARY

Jack Zawid was born Yankel Zawidowicz on August 27, 1913 in the city of Wladimir-Wolynsk in the eastern part of Poland (what is now Ukraine). Jack came from an Orthodox family, followers of the Rosener *Khosed*. The town had fire and sanitation departments and an orchestra. One sister immigrated to Palestine in 1935. Jack's parents, wife, child and younger sister were murdered during the Holocaust.

Jack describes completing a Jewish *gymnasium* in 1935 and attending law school in Warsaw. He dropped out because of growing antisemitism and worked for an uncle in a knitting factory until 1939. After the German invasion, Jack returned to his hometown, because he found out it was under Russian Occupation. In June 1941, Jack's border town came under German Occupation. Jack describes the immediate changes, the creation of the *Judenrat*, the selection of people for forced labor. Jack was sent on a work detail for the Nazis. Jack describes the creation of two ghetto sections in 1942: one for skilled workers and the other for death. He explains that Ukrainians guarded the fences of the ghetto and that the non-working ghetto was the first section to be liquidated. Jack also discusses the difficulty in fighting back, that men had their wives and children with them so that it wasn't so easy to fight back against the Germans.

Jack gives detailed testimony about an 'action' that occurred in August 1942. Jack describes having hidden the women and children and then hiding himself and hearing the screams and hitting as the Ukrainians pulled Jews out of their hiding places. Eventually, Jack and a friend escaped the ghetto by swimming the nearby river. He survived for a week hiding on a young farmer's land, but returned to the ghetto when he found out they had stopped the killings. When he returned his wife, 14 month old child, father and siblings were all dead. Jack continued to work for the Germans but rarely slept in the ghetto. He escaped another 'action' and gives detailed testimony about being helped by several neighboring Polish peasants and farmers, often sleeping in stables and passing as a German.

In 1945 Jack returned to his hometown, then under a Polish government, but left for Warsaw where he met his second wife, a refugee from Lodz. They had a son and Jack after much difficulty got him a correct circumcision. They went to Stettin, Germany, then to the Landsberg Displaced Persons camp in Berlin. Finally the family, via the French zone, left for the United States in 1949.

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SUBJECT HEADINGS

Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945) Personal narrative, male

Holocaust, Jewish – Poland

World War II 1939 - 1945 - Poland

Holocaust survivors, Polish

Jewish Ghettos

Military occupation - German

Military occupation - Russian

Aid by Non-Jews

Hiding