

Interviewee:	<u>HILLER</u> , Josef	Date:	April 22, 1985 ¹
Interviewer:	Claire Reichlen		
Audio tapes:	1 English	Transcript:	Draft, unaudited
Restrictions:	None		1 vol. (unpaged) English

SUMMARY

Josef² Hiller, the oldest of five children, was born April 14, 1905 in Lodz, Poland. His father was a hat maker; Josef was a salesman. Josef begins his testimony recalling the German Occupation in 1939, describes immediate forced labor before the ghetto was established. He describes his flight to Grodno through Warsaw, Malkeen [phonetic], and Bialystok some of the time crawling at night and avoiding trains. Josef details his experiences first in Grodno working as a chauffeur until he was expelled as a foreigner, and then in Lenin, a small village, where he worked hauling logs until 1941. When the Germans occupy this village Josef works for the Germans as a mechanic. He tells of a German soldier who gives him extra bread and takes care of him. He details being approached by partisans who ask him to sabotage the German cars which he does. When partisans attack the Germans in the village, Josef and his wife flee with their twin boys and his nieces and go into hiding in Rajowicz from 1941–1943. Josef describes this period of hiding and being helped by local Gentiles. During their hiding, one of his twin boys freezes to death.

Josef describes his partisan activities as a member of the resistance group Kolpack, serving in a Polish section of the Soviet Army 1943–1945 in Chelm, Berlin and Warsaw and receiving medals for his service. During his service, Josef's wife and child move to Pinsk, receiving pensions from the Soviet Army. Post-war Josef and his family reunited and lived in Waldrich [phonetic] Austria, but after hearing about pogroms in Poland, they moved to Bindermichl Displaced Persons camp (in Linz). Through the help of HIAS Josef and his family emigrated to Argentina in 1947 and in 1958 they came to the United States.

¹Recorded at the 1985 American Gathering of Holocaust Survivors in Philadelphia, PA.

² Alternate spelling of first name is Joseph.