

Interviewee:	<u>WISHNICK</u> , Hyman ¹	Date:	April 21, 1985 ²
Interviewer:	Nina Albert		
Audio tapes:	1 English	Transcript:	1 vol. (unpaged) English
Restrictions:	None		

SUMMARY

Hyman Wishnick was born June 18, 1923 in the small, quiet town of Skalat, Poland. His family was poor; his father, a horse trader, sent Hyman to learn tailoring, which he disliked. Hyman shares his childhood memories of his pre-war town, episodes of antisemitism with gentile youths and also describes the changes that occurred during the Russian Occupation (confiscation of businesses). Sensing the Nazi invasion, Hyman—then a teenager—urged his family to leave Skalat for safety. When his family refused, he left with his neighbors for Russia in 1939.

While on the run, Hyman was severely injured and lost a leg. He was able to convince the Russians that he was in their army and as a result they treated him medically and gave him a place to live, believing he was a disabled Russian soldier. Hyman recuperated in the Caucasus until 1942. As German troops invaded Russia, Hyman was sent to work on a farm in Siberia. He briefly describes the conditions there.

Once the Germans were pushed out of Russia in 1944, Hyman acquired a permit to return to his hometown. He describes his difficult journey back to his hometown where he learned his family had been killed. From 1946 – 1949 he lived in a German (unnamed) Displaced Persons camp. Eventually an American uncle sponsored him to come to the United States. Hyman first lived in New Jersey where he worked on a poultry farm. Later he worked in dry goods and then had a grocery business. In 1953 he married his present wife.

¹Hyman is alternatively known as Chaim according to his personal history documents.

²This interview was recorded at the 1985 American Gathering of Holocaust Survivors in Philadelphia, PA.

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SUBJECT HEADINGS

Skalat (Poland)

Poland - History - German occupation 1939-1945

Antisemitism (Poland)

Siberia: Exile 1940-1944

Siberia: Labor camps