

## Bay Area Holocaust Oral History Project

P.O. Box 25506, San Mateo, CA 94402

**Name of interviewee:** Baum, Fred

**Date of interview:** 2/20, 3/19, 5/16, 5/22, 5/23, 11/21/1991

**Summary:** Fred Baum was born Atholium Duret Bimalgreen in Slupaianowa, Poland, on October 1, 1921. He had one younger brother, and the two boys lived with their parents, Majlech and Miriam Nhuna, until 1930 when their mother died. Fred's family was religious, and before the war he studied at a yeshiva in Otwock. He remembers returning home from school after the war started, and seeing Jews being rounded up for forced labor. He worked in various government factories, and the situation got worse and worse. Fred remembers shootings, confiscating, and liquidations. The Jews were not allowed to go to school or to religious services, and there was no electricity. He describes several events including a memory of the rabbi of his town being tied to a horse and forced to run after it until he died.

In August of 1942, he was put into Starachowice with his father and brother. Typhus was common, and Fred became ill (his father managed to keep him out of the "hospital" so he wouldn't be shot). In July 1944 they were transferred to Auschwitz-Birkenau. The Russians were approaching and the Germans were liquidating concentration camps and forcing the prisoners deeper into Germany. Fred's father died in Birkenau around January of 1945. He and his brother were sent to Buno, where they were given striped uniforms, and then to Lara Hut. In early 1945 they were moved to Mauthausen, and then to Guzin, in Austria. After about a week there, they spent 4 days without food in an open train to Hannora where they worked on an unfinished concentration camp. On the 5th of April 1945, Fred was separated from his brother and was sent to Bergen-Belsen. On the 15th he was liberated by the British.

He spent about six months in a hospital unit recuperating, and then stayed in Bergen-Belsen for five years. He met his wife, Helen Wiesel, there, and they were married in 1946. Fred never went back to Poland, but he was reunited with his brother - they were the only two to survive out of a large family. In 1950 he moved with his wife and young daughter to the United States, where the couple had two other children. His brother also emigrated and started a family in the United States.