

Bay Area Holocaust Oral History Project

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

Name of interviewee: Ben Haim, David

Date of interview: 7/24 & 8/21/1991

Summary: Born 10/20/1923 in Lodapovinska, Poland.

It took 10 days for the Germans to invade his town in December '39 and his family was forced to leave. They moved to Rotkoichin (sp?) and got a small apartment; meanwhile his father left for Russia to find a job. His father returned from Russia during Passover 1940 with money and food. His family then moved to Georgewillki (near Krakow) and lived under Nazi occupation, although this was not a ghetto and the Nazi police did not hassle anyone. In the spring of 1942 things began to change and he was sent to work at Plaszow when it was just being built. He decided to go home after hearing about the Krakow ghetto deportations. His family was still living in Georgewillki and he stayed with them from June until September 7, 1942. Sept. 7 was the date of the deportation of his town; he and two friends ran away and hid in the attic of a relative of one of the friends. He was caught and sent to Krakow ghetto and later Plaszow where he learned to work with metal. In 1944 he was sent to Stragesko work camp and later to Heinte (sp?) where he was tattooed and worked on German planes. In May 1944 he was transported to Otzroiten (sp?) camp in Czechoslovakia and later to Mauthausen camp in Austria to work at underground airplane factories. Was taken to Guzen II concentration camp and continued to work on machines in the underground factory there. He stayed there until the camp was liberated on May 8, 1945 by the Americans. He found his cousin after the war and the two of them made it to Palestine with the help of the Jewish Brigade. Reached Israel illegally on May 16, 1945 and was sent to a Kibbutz.