

Jacob Eisenbach, born in Łódź, Poland, in 1923, describes having two younger brothers and an older sister; almost half of the population of Łódź being Jewish before the war; lots of anti-Semitism in Poland before Hitler came to power in 1933; when he was 12 in 1935, being in a park full of Jewish people, surrounded by a wrought iron fence, when a group of anti-Semitic Polish adults blocked the park gates with guards and began beating Jewish people with iron crowbars; how half of the students at his high school were Jewish, and most non-Jewish Polish students were nice and friendly, except for one student once calling him a dirty Jew; his father being a textile manufacturer with approximately 30 workers; Łódź being taken over within seven days of the German invasion of Poland; his older sister escaping from the German-occupied part of Poland and going to the city of Lwów (Lviv, Ukraine) in the Russian-occupied part of Poland shortly after the war started; his mother dying one year before the war; Germans taking businesses and belongings away from Jews in Łódź and ordering all Jews to move into a ghetto in the oldest part of the city by May 1, 1940, where many people began dying from starvation and typhus; Chaim Mordechai Rumkowski being the Jewish chief of the Łódź Ghetto and receiving orders from the Germans; his father being deported in 1942, and never seeing him again; taking his youngest brother, Henry, to a hospital in 1943, then finding out the next day Henry was taken away from the hospital in a truck and never seeing him again; he and his remaining brother, Sam, going into hiding inside the ghetto in early 1944, but eventually being found and put into freight trains in March 1944 and taken to a labor camp in Skarżysko, Poland, where they were forced to work in a munition factory; the Russians getting closer to the camp and the Germans moving the munition factory and Jewish workers to Tschenstochau (Częstochowa) in southern Poland; lots of shooting around the Tschenstochau camp in January 1945, then all German soldiers disappearing from the camp in the middle of the night; the next morning, finding many dead German and Russian soldiers outside the camp; returning to his hometown, Łódź, with his brother, Sam, and finding out that all of the Jewish people in the Lwów Ghetto were shot to death, including his older sister; leaving Łódź in April 1946 for Kielce, Poland, where Polish anti-Semites later spread an old false rumor that Jews had kidnapped a boy for his blood, then killed 40 Jews with crowbars in one day in a pogrom; meeting his wife, Irene Eisenbach (see RG-50.493.0043), while they both were in the forced labor camp in Skarżysko, Poland, and getting married in December 1945 after they were liberated; after the pogrom in Kielce, he and his wife escaping Poland by being smuggled out in the middle of the night by a Jewish organization to Prague then to Vienna then to the American-occupied part of Germany, near Frankfurt; receiving a message in 1947 that his younger brother, Sam, was murdered by a person inside his apartment in Białystok, Poland, because he was a Jew.