

Willie Lebovic Virtual Book

Willie Lebovic was born in Czechoslovakia in June, 1922.



During WWII he was drafted into the Hungarian army.



(Hungarian soldiers)

This was in 1942. For three months he trained for engineering but then the Hungarians decided Jews would not be allowed to wear Hungarian uniforms so he was sent to do forced labor on the Russian front near the Polish border. He built bunkers, anti-tank traps and planted land mines and he did this work until November 1943.

One night he was one of 16 men who escaped. Of these 16, 12 were shot and only 4 survived. It took him a few months to reach Russian partisans.



When he found them he did not tell them he was Jewish for fear of anti-Semitism. Since he was blond with blue eyes, nobody knew the truth. The partisans lived in underground bunkers.

He made his way to the Russian front but the Russians did not trust him so they put him in a prison camp. A Jewish officer in the Russian army got him out of the camp and Willie started working as a photographer. Though he was never officially a Russian soldier, he traveled with the troops and his job was to take pictures of dead soldiers to send back to families. In January 1945, his unit went to Czechoslovakia and Willie was discharged in May, 1945.