

1

00:00:10,720 --> 00:00:10,720

It's on?

2

00:00:10,720 --> 00:00:10,720

Yes.

3

00:00:10,720 --> 00:00:20,440

My name is Regina Zielinski I was born in Poland. My maiden name was Feldman and I was born in 1925.

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00:00:20,440 --> 00:00:30,161

I don't actually know where to begin, but the day, the month December is a very, very sad month for

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00:00:30,161 --> 00:00:39,882

me, because the 20th of December we were taking from our slave labor camp Staw to a place we didn't

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00:00:39,882 --> 00:00:49,413

even know where we were going, but when we arrived it was Sobibor. And nobody knew about Sobibor. We

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00:00:49,413 --> 00:00:59,038

never knew about Sobibor, the whole transport was on a horse driven wagon, it was about seven hundred

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00:00:59,038 --> 00:01:08,854

people of us from the slave labor camp. And when we arrived in Sobibor it was almost, it was not almost

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00:01:08,854 --> 00:01:18,766

night time, because the days also showed in winter time in Europe and eh the camp was lit like day light

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00:01:18,766 --> 00:01:28,678

and a lot of loud speakers eh, eh were playing and when we arrived we all had to get off, out the wagons.

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00:01:28,678 --> 00:01:38,589

They segregated the men and they did the sons, and they did separate and the woman and their daughters,

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00:01:38,589 --> 00:01:48,405

it was separate and then there was a podium there and a very tall SS man was standing on the podium and

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00:01:48,405 --> 00:01:57,936

he ask who can knit. And my mother pushed me out and she said 'you are a good knitter, step out'

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00:01:57,936 --> 00:02:07,466

and if you, there was about twelve of us, or thirteen of us, who stepped out that we can knit. And I

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00:02:07,466 --> 00:02:17,092

said to my sister 'how about you'? She said 'I'll stay with mum, because we might be assigned

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00:02:17,092 --> 00:02:26,908

to different work'. And they took us away to a very, very big barrack and there was only eh, eh walls

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00:02:26,908 --> 00:02:36,438

and a roof, they gave us a couple of blankets and, but you know December is the middle of winter, it

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00:02:36,438 --> 00:02:46,731

was very, very, very cold and we were huddling all together, all night, we heard a lot of machinery running,

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00:02:46,731 --> 00:02:56,642

but we didn't know what it was and in the morning they came in, a couple of SS men came in, or guards,

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00:02:56,642 --> 00:03:06,554

we don't know, but they were Germans and they took us out from that barrack to take us somewhere else,

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00:03:06,554 --> 00:03:16,465

because they came over with men and working gear and all that they were going to build the bara, barrack

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00:03:16,465 --> 00:03:26,186

up, so half of us they were sit here, banks made where we can sleep. And the other half is going to be

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00:03:26,186 --> 00:03:36,193

a knitting room. And the knitting room, later on you know they build it all up, but while they were doing

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00:03:36,193 --> 00:03:45,819

that, another German took us away to a very big barrack. And that barrack had mountains of shoes and

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00:03:45,819 --> 00:03:55,444

there was on a c, not quite on a corner a small, small heap of shoes and that eh German guard [clears

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00:03:55,444 --> 00:04:05,070

throat], excuse me, picked up shoes and for so, he wanted to show us how, how they, good they are. He

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00:04:05,070 --> 00:04:14,886

said your shoes are might be dirty or worn out and they was handing and the guard shows all of us pairs

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00:04:14,886 --> 00:04:24,417

tight together and when he gave me a pair of boots and he said 'they might fit you. My dear, that

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00:04:24,417 --> 00:04:34,614

was my sister's boots! Then I knew what Sobibor was. Because while we were on the way coming to Sobibor,

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00:04:34,614 --> 00:04:44,144

my youngest brother was still on the wagon with mum, my sister and a lot of other women, there was a

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00:04:44,144 --> 00:04:53,675

crossroad, one was going to Chelm and the other one was going to Wlodawa and when we turned to left,

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00:04:53,675 --> 00:05:03,491

to Wlodawa, it might be a half an hour later we driving through very big forests, on the each side that

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00:05:03,491 --> 00:05:12,640

the the German were on, on eh, eh riding on the horses and watching us that nobody will escape.-

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00:05:12,450 --> 00:05:20,748

And a couple of young people escaped, they stopped the transport, they went into the forest, they

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00:05:20,748 --> 00:05:29,560

shot them and brought them back and they told us that will happen to, for everybody who wants to escape

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00:05:29,560 --> 00:05:38,030

and on the way when we turned, I must go back to tell you what my brother said when he was sitting

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00:05:38,030 --> 00:05:46,671

with us. Normally the men, elder, elder, he was only eleven years old, but he survived the, the slave

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00:05:46,671 --> 00:05:55,398

labor camp in Staw and he said to us, he said actually to my mother, mum, he said, let's say goodbye

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00:05:55,398 --> 00:06:03,868

to the night, because we won't see the daylight. Where that boy heard something in the camp, what

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00:06:03,868 --> 00:06:12,166

Sobibor was, he never explained, we never knew, because he was hiding in Sobibor, because quite a

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00:06:12,166 --> 00:06:20,807

few times they were taking out the children you know who is sick and took them away. And one day when

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00:06:20,807 --> 00:06:29,192

we were even walk, going to work there were trenches open and later on we heard a lot of shooting,

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00:06:29,192 --> 00:06:37,832

a lot of people got shot and there was one ye, a boy, he was seven years old, with his mother in the,

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00:06:37,832 --> 00:06:46,217

in, in, in the camp and he, they were from Lublin from, from another city, and he, her husband was

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00:06:46,217 --> 00:06:54,772

a, a Polish soldier, a Jewish Polish soldier and I don't know if he survived or not, but when they

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00:06:54,772 --> 00:07:03,499

took out all the children and other sick people, that little boy, later on the Polish people witnessed

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00:07:03,499 --> 00:07:11,883

that, said to the Germans because he could speak, not from Lublin, from Polsenheim he could speak

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00:07:11,883 --> 00:07:20,267

German, and he was supposed to say to the Germans if you want to shoot us, I want to be the first.

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00:07:20,267 --> 00:07:28,737

Later on they will told us and the mother find out when we came back from work, that the beautiful

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00:07:28,737 --> 00:07:37,121

boy was not there anymore. And I don't have to tell you much what happened to people like that.

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00:07:37,121 --> 00:07:45,762

And then we realised, later on I realised what my mother, brother Paul said to us let's say goodbye

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00:07:45,762 --> 00:07:54,061

to the night, because we will never see all the persons, the whole of my family, left alive. When

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00:07:54,061 --> 00:08:02,360

I was handed over my sister's boots I knew that Sobibor was not a normal concentration camp, it

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00:08:02,360 --> 00:08:11,086

was a death camp. And the 20th of December 1942 I lost my whole world. I was the only one left alive.

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00:08:11,086 --> 00:08:19,727

There was somebody with me, a second cousin, she was alive too, Zelda Metz and that was from, from

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00:08:19,727 --> 00:08:28,112

the people I knew, the others were from different cities, because that transport was seven hundred

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00:08:28,112 --> 00:08:29,309

people, of us.

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00:08:29,310 --> 00:08:31,080

Where did the, Regina, where did this transport come from?

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00:08:31,080 --> 00:08:39,417

From Staw, it was from Staw, from a slave labor camp. [spells] S T A W, Staw, there's another

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00:08:39,417 --> 00:08:47,582

name to it, but it's too long, that was a very big slave labour camp. Because there were all

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00:08:47,582 --> 00:08:56,354

the, the Jewish people from the ghettos, from all around Siedliczcze from Chelm, you name it, little,

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00:08:56,354 --> 00:09:04,692

you know, places around a bigger city, there was all over is farmers and all that, all the Jewish

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00:09:04,692 --> 00:09:13,290

people were gathered in that particular camp. You know. In Staw and all of us, a lot died of hunger

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00:09:13,290 --> 00:09:21,628

and sickness and stuff. Because there wasn't enough, everything as rationed and it was so cold

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00:09:21,628 --> 00:09:29,966

and, but people do it first when we were in ghetto at home, we had to dig trenches to straighten

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00:09:29,966 --> 00:09:38,390

a river. When that was finished we were taken to Staw to do the same thing, to straighten a river

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00:09:38,390 --> 00:09:46,641

and the winter was coming on, we went to Staw the 22nd of October 1942. We were only two months

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00:09:46,641 --> 00:09:51,939

there and then the 20th of December we were taken to Sobibor.

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00:09:51,940 --> 00:09:55,010

Regina, when you talk about your family

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00:09:55,010 --> 00:09:55,870

Yes?

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00:09:56,060 --> 00:09:58,240

how large was your family?

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00:09:58,240 --> 00:10:04,391

My family, I had, my brother died before then and I had, that's another story how

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00:10:04,391 --> 00:10:10,542

my b, eldest brother died. It was when the Germans came into Siedliczcze they, they

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00:10:10,542 --> 00:10:15,730

took a lot of things away and then they burned eh first of all ghetto.

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00:10:15,730 --> 00:10:22,170

All the Jews one day, that was the 18th of May 1942 or '41, doesn't matter. We were

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00:10:22,170 --> 00:10:22,170

'41.

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00:10:22,170 --> 00:10:32,010

we, we went to work and when we were coming back from work the 18th of May, '41 I think

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00:10:32,010 --> 00:10:34,250

Yes.

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00:10:35,220 --> 00:10:42,874

and we were not allowed to go back home anymore. It was a beautiful day, so nice and warm because May

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00:10:42,874 --> 00:10:50,907

is spring and what we had owned for work, that's what we were left on, and that when they, they cornered

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00:10:50,907 --> 00:10:58,486

off a few streets and we were going to, to stay in the ghetto, we were not allowed home anymore. And

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00:10:58,486 --> 00:11:06,065

from that ghetto we were taking to Staw and that was a slave labour camp. There was already a lot of

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00:11:06,065 --> 00:11:13,643

people missing, whatever, you know that, that the thing was rationed, there is a lot, a lot of other

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00:11:13,643 --> 00:11:20,010

things happening, but it's a little bit, might be too much to drag it on, you know

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00:11:20,010 --> 00:11:21,290

No, it's not.

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00:11:21,290 --> 00:11:29,363

when, when we were in ghetto we had to, to go; our house was taken over like from, in German, were

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00:11:29,363 --> 00:11:37,763

the Wasserwirtschaftsamt, that was we were working for to straighten the rivers and our house was taken

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00:11:37,763 --> 00:11:45,755

over by the engineer and two girls. One was Irene and the other Myszka, they were the secretaries,

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00:11:45,755 --> 00:11:54,073

the Wasserwirtschaftsamt and the eh, engineer was Kiendracki. And he was such a lovely man, he wanted

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00:11:54,073 --> 00:12:02,147

to help that many people and because people get assigned in the ghetto close to our hou, not house,

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00:12:02,147 --> 00:12:10,302

but we had a very big property and eh building material property and about a, an acre of garden like

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00:12:10,302 --> 00:12:18,457

eh fruit trees and other things was growing in there, in that little cottage where a engineer lived,

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00:12:18,457 --> 00:12:26,857

we were assigned for seven people a cottage in the ghetto. And because it was so close to our property,

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00:12:26,857 --> 00:12:35,094

the, the engineer has said you can go in but make it so that nobody will look eh, like, like a hole

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00:12:35,094 --> 00:12:43,576

in the fence in, go through to your garden and pick whatever it's ripe there, even fruit or vegetable,

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00:12:43,576 --> 00:12:52,138

but it was still growing and you take it and that will help you a lot to share with other people. Because

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00:12:52,138 --> 00:13:00,212

nobody is going to pick it from that garden, they didn't need it. That what I mean that he was so

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00:13:00,212 --> 00:13:08,367

good. In another time he came over to my other sister and myself and my mother, he said that the two

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00:13:08,367 --> 00:13:16,359

ladies, the secretaries would like somebody to come and clean their place. And that was our house,

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00:13:16,359 --> 00:13:24,678

he only meant it that way that we can take a little bit clothes out of the cupboards. So we went there

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00:13:24,678 --> 00:13:33,159

to clean and every day we put on different things, so we had something in the ghetto to change ourselves

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00:13:33,159 --> 00:13:41,314

and warm, because winter was coming, warm clothes too and he was such the perfect angel for us that,

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00:13:41,314 --> 00:13:49,388

that engineer, you know? He was good for everybody else, you know, to, to work out for the woman to

104

00:13:49,388 --> 00:13:57,380

have lighter work, where there were send the soil to dig you know, sometimes he was standing knee,

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00:13:57,380 --> 00:14:05,454

knee deep in water to straighten the rivers, I told you not, and he, we managed to do it and it was

106

00:14:05,454 --> 00:14:07,329

we managed to survive.

107

00:14:07,330 --> 00:14:12,613

Can you talk a little bit about the house? Because I know

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00:14:12,613 --> 00:14:16,970

when you were talking about it now, you see it.

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00:14:16,970 --> 00:14:16,970

I see it.

110

00:14:16,970 --> 00:14:16,970

And I, I don't

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00:14:16,970 --> 00:14:16,970

It was

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00:14:16,970 --> 00:14:17,660

know the house.

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00:14:17,660 --> 00:14:26,427

it was a very big, like a ranch house and that was divided in half because my grandmother and greatgrandmother

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00:14:26,427 --> 00:14:34,476

had eh one half and we had the other half. And because there was five of us, I had three brothers and

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00:14:34,476 --> 00:14:42,606

one sister, and the grandmother and greatgrandmother gave up a quarter of their place, so we will have

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00:14:42,606 --> 00:14:50,576

bigger rooms, for five of us. And that was, the property was about an acre, it was building material

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00:14:50,576 --> 00:14:58,466

property. We needed a lot of room. And when the property was not finished, but on the end there was

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00:14:58,466 --> 00:15:06,436

a brook, and, and that was the end of our property. There was a very big, might be an acre, might be

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00:15:06,436 --> 00:15:14,247

more, we had a garden, fruit trees and vegetable garden and shrubs and all that. So we were a lot,

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00:15:14,247 --> 00:15:22,137

a lot self sufficient in the summer. Because we were growing everything and we had even a horse and

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00:15:22,137 --> 00:15:30,107

we had a cow and we had a lot of different, you know, chicken and geeses and, and, and ducks and you

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00:15:30,107 --> 00:15:34,730

name it. We had everything there. The property was so big.

123

00:15:34,730 --> 00:15:36,880

What did you do?

124

00:15:36,880 --> 00:15:42,951

My hou, my father was helping people like to build the, the farmers houses,

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00:15:42,951 --> 00:15:49,346

of farmers eh, eh what is it called to whatever keeping the hay and straw, what

126

00:15:49,346 --> 00:15:54,770

is it called, the big, big eh, help me out with that word, I forgot

127

00:15:54,770 --> 00:15:55,740

I don't know which word you are looking for.

128

00:15:57,790 --> 00:16:01,900

At, anyhow eh, sh, not shacks, what do farmers have

129

00:16:01,900 --> 00:16:05,850

where they keep the, the, the winter stuff in it?

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00:16:05,850 --> 00:16:05,850

Staples?

131

00:16:05,850 --> 00:16:13,936

It, it will come to me and it, it's not so important. And he was helping a lot of eh, in the, in the

132

00:16:13,936 --> 00:16:22,023

to build houses up for the farmers and every Thursday there was the weekly eh market day and a lot of

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00:16:22,023 --> 00:16:30,269

people were coming over with their produce and a lot of eh, eh cabinet makers and, and other people were

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00:16:30,269 --> 00:16:38,276

coming over for timber, for make doors and windows and, and garages and all that. They were coming on

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00:16:38,276 --> 00:16:46,363

Thursday, they were coming to buy that what my parents had for sale. And that, but needed a lot, a lot

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00:16:46,363 --> 00:16:54,688

of room, because that timber there, everything had to be on the roofs, it was all covered so it wasn't,

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00:16:54,688 --> 00:17:02,616

timber that was coming straight from the saw mills. That was coming into our place, because the saw

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00:17:02,616 --> 00:17:10,624

mills were not far away. Father used to go there and order it and then, and the farmers used to bring

139

00:17:10,624 --> 00:17:18,790

over the, the timber. And that was for the work, you know, the ones who, who, who, you know, the market

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00:17:18,790 --> 00:17:26,956

was always full with not just eh what they were making, but, but just, you know, cows and other things

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00:17:26,956 --> 00:17:32,110

and live stock and all that, every Thursday there was market day.

142

00:17:32,110 --> 00:17:38,560

But you were fifteen when you went, send to the ghetto. What was

143

00:17:38,560 --> 00:17:38,820

Yes.

144

00:17:38,820 --> 00:17:41,590

your, what were your daily chores, what were your doing?

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00:17:41,590 --> 00:17:42,900

In the ghetto?

146

00:17:42,900 --> 00:17:45,200

No, before, at the house.

147

00:17:45,200 --> 00:17:52,902

Before I was still at school. The war broke out when I was fourteen and I didn't, the Germans when

148

00:17:52,902 --> 00:18:00,912

they came in they saw the Jewish people were not to go back to school, because the schoolyear in Europe,

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00:18:00,912 --> 00:18:08,768

you know it too, that starts in September. In September the war started, the Jewish people, the pupils

150

00:18:08,768 --> 00:18:16,547

will have dif, special schools, we never go to special school, we had to register ourselves for work,

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00:18:16,547 --> 00:18:24,249

from fifteen years old. So mum makes us all a year older, so that I was fourteen but she made it out

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00:18:24,249 --> 00:18:31,874

that I was fifteen, so my sister was a year older and the eldest brother, so we all can fit in, the

153

00:18:31,874 --> 00:18:39,576

brother after me could fit in for work too, only the youngest couldn't, he was too young then. And

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00:18:39,576 --> 00:18:47,278

then we were all going out to work from home to straighten the rivers. You know the Mogilanka river,

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00:18:47,278 --> 00:18:51,900

yes. And when that finished, it was the ghetto. Instead from

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00:18:51,900 --> 00:18:57,320

Do you mind me to come back on my question?

157

00:18:57,320 --> 00:18:57,840

Yes?

158

00:18:57,840 --> 00:18:58,500

I want you to talk about the old house.

159

00:18:58,500 --> 00:18:58,500

Oh, the house.

160

00:18:58,500 --> 00:19:06,330

And what you did the full day, because you didn't go to school many years.

161

00:19:06,330 --> 00:19:11,680

Man, man, not many years. No, it wasn't many years. It was only one year when we

162

00:19:11,680 --> 00:19:14,620

Did you work on the land or eh

163

00:19:14,620 --> 00:19:15,130

No, I

164

00:19:15,130 --> 00:19:16,190

did you take care of the ducks

165

00:19:16,190 --> 00:19:23,423

you know, we helped out at home and eh there was always something to do, then we had to eh arrange

166

00:19:23,423 --> 00:19:31,094

for teachers, there was a teacher who was teaching us at home and the boys were being taught by somebody,

167

00:19:31,094 --> 00:19:38,328

you know, like a cheider, we couldn't go anymore to school or then, there always, you know, there

168

00:19:38,328 --> 00:19:45,415

was something to do before you know, the ghetto and we have to give up a lot of things we have to

169

00:19:45,415 --> 00:19:52,721

get, gave up, later on we had to stand in a queue with a bucket of timber or coal to that, you know,

170

00:19:52,721 --> 00:20:00,100

to get, because everything was rationed. What did we do at home I can't tell you what we were doing

171

00:20:00,100 --> 00:20:07,261

at home when the war broke out. There were that many different things, we had a lot of people from

172

00:20:07,261 --> 00:20:14,494

western Poland that was escaping from the front who were coming. We heard from, from a lot, a lot of

173

00:20:14,494 --> 00:20:21,581

big cities, you know, they were from and would go but to the, to the east to get away and a lot

174

00:20:21,581 --> 00:20:29,033

was escaping to, to, to Russia and then, and the war broke out, you know, with the Germans and Russia,

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00:20:29,033 --> 00:20:32,760

that, that was like a volcano that place, you know?

176

00:20:33,580 --> 00:20:37,810

But do you mind to come back to your house before the war?

177

00:20:37,810 --> 00:20:39,200

Before the war?

178

00:20:39,200 --> 00:20:39,870

Yes.

179

00:20:39,870 --> 00:20:41,000

I was at school.

180

00:20:41,360 --> 00:20:41,550

Yes?

181

00:20:41,550 --> 00:20:49,108

Yes. And my sister, my brother was at high school, he was learning, my sister was one

182

00:20:49,108 --> 00:20:57,022

year in Warsaw at the high school, you know, she was learning kiput , what was it called,

183

00:20:57,022 --> 00:21:03,779

eh eh, handel, handelschule, handelschule, how would that be in English, eh

184

00:21:03,790 --> 00:21:05,180

A commercial schule

185

00:21:05,180 --> 00:21:12,058

Commercial yes, yes, commercial. And my brother was in a different commercial thing, but he was next

186

00:21:12,058 --> 00:21:18,868

in Chelm, but my sister went to Warsaw and just when the war broke out she was only one year there.

187

00:21:18,868 --> 00:21:25,747

How she got back from Warsaw when the war was raging, I don't know. You know. What we did, before,

188

00:21:25,747 --> 00:21:32,626

we were all young children, you know? We were helping out what we could at home, grandmother told us

189

00:21:32,626 --> 00:21:39,368

to cook and to, and to clean and all that and, and you know, she was always there to help and, and

190

00:21:39,368 --> 00:21:46,178

greatgrandmother told us how to knit and, and, and you know, and how to, my sister was a, an artist

191

00:21:46,178 --> 00:21:51,749

of the broidery, she didn't like knitting, so I will, I was the knitter and she

192

00:21:51,750 --> 00:21:51,750

sISL You were?

193

00:21:51,750 --> 00:21:56,472

Sp I will do something else, you know? And that, for I was doing the

194

00:21:56,472 --> 00:22:01,681

knitting in the camp in Sobibor, you know? You know, that was eh, I don't

195

00:22:01,681 --> 00:22:05,710

know, saved my life, the knitting, I don't know. Anyhow.

196

00:22:05,710 --> 00:22:11,100

Was it a religious family?

197

00:22:11,100 --> 00:22:11,100

I beg you pardon?

198

00:22:11,100 --> 00:22:11,530

Was it a religious family?

199

00:22:11,530 --> 00:22:19,487

Oh, we were not fanatics. It was a little bit like liberal. But we were observing very much all the

200

00:22:19,487 --> 00:22:27,445

holidays. We girls ne, never were taught anything like the boys ant cheider but one year before the

201

00:22:27,445 --> 00:22:35,322

war, we managed a lady, she was a widow and very fair, you know, she had enough to hire a teacher,

202

00:22:35,322 --> 00:22:43,280

and she gave half her house up to teach the girls eh Hebrew and, and the other things and other, so

203

00:22:43,280 --> 00:22:51,720

one year only I had to, to learn a little bit more than tradition, because at home, what we were learning

204

00:22:51,720 --> 00:22:59,839

about Jew, Jewish it was only tradition, what it meant, that holiday what it meant or something else,

205

00:22:59,839 --> 00:23:07,957

and twice a year we used to go with mum to the synagogue. That was only at Pesach and eh three times

206

00:23:07,957 --> 00:23:15,835

a year, Rosj Hasjana and Jom Kippur, there was the girls never went to, to Sjoel from long and all

207

00:23:15,835 --> 00:23:23,632

that. And that's what we learned a year before the war and eh, and didn't know much. Later on

208

00:23:23,632 --> 00:23:31,589

you know it's so easy to forget the Hebrew. I still know the, the eh alphabet in Hebrew, that's

209

00:23:31,589 --> 00:23:39,627

what I eh I remember, that was all. But later on, in Australia I learned a little bit more about it.

210

00:23:39,627 --> 00:23:47,746

Where I lived in Sidney the synagogue was teaching us. And eh I don't know how to explain we were

211

00:23:47,746 --> 00:23:55,704

very traditional, you know, with everything because grandmother and greatgrandmother was there too.

212

00:23:55,704 --> 00:24:03,661

And they were, I don't know how to say, because eh we used to go to the synagogue, they had their

213

00:24:03,661 --> 00:24:11,458

places, their chairs in the, when the big synagogue was build, later on the Germans burnt it down

214

00:24:11,458 --> 00:24:19,416

and that's where mein, eldest brother was sitting all day, that was in September, and eh cleaning

215

00:24:19,416 --> 00:24:27,374

the, the bricks of the synagogue, that was a day before the 11th of September, before the Jewish'

216

00:24:27,374 --> 00:24:35,894

newyear and after the day was over, he came home and he felt not good. He said he doesn't want anything,

217

00:24:35,894 --> 00:24:44,093

he just wanted to lie down and he laid down in bed and by the time the evening came, there was curfew,

218

00:24:44,093 --> 00:24:52,051

we couldn't go out bef, after eight o'clock at night, we have to wait for the boy to come about

219

00:24:52,051 --> 00:24:59,928

and then when they come and they didn't come and my brother needed a doctor. We had doctors, but

220

00:24:59,928 --> 00:25:07,886

we couldn't go out to call them. And by the time the doctor, six o'clock in the morning, it was

221

00:25:07,886 --> 00:25:08,609

too late.

222

00:25:08,610 --> 00:25:18,869

He died of a m, massive hart attack. And he was only twenty two years old. And I remember the,

223

00:25:18,869 --> 00:25:29,128

the minute when he passed away. He was on, lying on the bed and my mum correct a little bit his

224

00:25:29,128 --> 00:25:40,243

pillow and I was standing on the foot of his bed and eh and I ask him would he like me to do something.

225

00:25:40,243 --> 00:25:50,288

But I could hear that he hit with his feet, he hit the bed and that was his last breath. So I

226

00:25:50,288 --> 00:26:00,548

was witnessing my brother's passing. That was the 11th of September 1942. It was the of Rosj

227

00:26:00,548 --> 00:26:10,593

Hasjana. And then he still had, my mum used to help us out a little bit, because my sister was

228

00:26:10,593 --> 00:26:20,639

very close, I was close with him too, because he was the eldest and she was very sick, and mum

229

00:26:20,639 --> 00:26:30,685

said he is going to heaven and no more Jewish burial but we don't know where we will end up.

230

00:26:30,685 --> 00:26:40,730

He still had, you know, because his still was buried on the Jewish cemetery. Later on we found

231

00:26:40,730 --> 00:26:50,883

out, we saw it anyhow, that the Germans took out all the headstones, turned them upsidedown and

232

00:26:50,883 --> 00:27:00,929

they made footpaths out of them. So that was the, the history what the Germans did I can't

233

00:27:00,929 --> 00:27:11,188

explain anything else anymore, because that was the grave of the whole family of, of everything,

234

00:27:11,188 --> 00:27:17,280

for everyone and I was left alone. That's what I know.

235

00:27:17,280 --> 00:27:25,140

Did you, Regina, did you ever expect the war to come to Siedliczcze?

236

00:27:25,140 --> 00:27:26,970

Did I

237

00:27:26,970 --> 00:27:28,880

Did you expect the war to come, did your family talk about a threat?

238

00:27:28,880 --> 00:27:37,250

Oh, we, we heard, we heard that, you know, that a lot of people were escaping from Czechoslovakia,

239

00:27:37,250 --> 00:27:45,705

from Austria, we had them all in Poland because the, eh, annexation in 1938, Austria was, you know,

240

00:27:45,705 --> 00:27:54,331

to, to Germany and they didn't like the Jews. And the one people who in Austria or German who where

241

00:27:54,331 --> 00:28:03,128

be poor and born in Poland, but they lived for that long in the country, they were send back to Poland,

242

00:28:03,128 --> 00:28:11,584

because they were Jewish and we had to put them all up, you know, and all that we heard about what,

243

00:28:11,584 --> 00:28:19,954

what is happening in the north, what they are doing and eh you see, my father registered us to go

244

00:28:19,954 --> 00:28:29,007

to, to Palestine in 1937. We were going to migrate from Poland, but there was a quote to get to Palestine.

245

00:28:29,007 --> 00:28:37,377

The English had a quote to let in from Poland that many Jews a year. And we were too far away from

246

00:28:37,377 --> 00:28:45,576

the quote, we never managed to get there. Because the war broke out two years after. So that's

247

00:28:45,576 --> 00:28:54,117

the history how we liked, would have loved to be somewhere, maybe would have, but that was not meant

248

00:28:54,117 --> 00:29:02,914

to. But the only thing I remember, and I'll never forget, Pechersky. He helped a lot with the escape.

249

00:29:02,914 --> 00:29:11,113

I don't know if you've, the date when they brought in the Russian prisoners of war, that was

250

00:29:11,113 --> 00:29:13,419

the 23rd of September 1943.

251

00:29:13,420 --> 00:29:14,600

But Regina

252

00:29:14,750 --> 00:29:14,890

Yes?

253

00:29:14,890 --> 00:29:18,160

you're going so fast, so maybe I may slow you down?

254

00:29:18,160 --> 00:29:18,350

Yes.

255

00:29:18,350 --> 00:29:23,090

Eh because we have enough time to talk about all

256

00:29:23,090 --> 00:29:23,870

Talk about, yes.

257

00:29:23,870 --> 00:29:25,750

yes and don't feel hurried please.

258

00:29:25,750 --> 00:29:28,070

No, I won't.

259

00:29:28,070 --> 00:29:31,140

Before the Germans came, I assume the Russians came?

260

00:29:31,510 --> 00:29:39,267

Oh, the Russians were one week only. I forgot, forgot about it. When the Polish

261

00:29:39,267 --> 00:29:47,122

army was gathering all across Poland to the very big river Bug because they were

262

00:29:47,122 --> 00:29:55,073

going to assemble a front for the Germans on the other side of the river, and when

263

00:29:55,073 --> 00:30:01,280

German and the Russian signed the eh what is it called Northern

264

00:30:01,280 --> 00:30:01,950

Non aggression Agreement

265

00:30:01,950 --> 00:30:11,238

The non aggression with the, with the Russians and when the Polish army got through the water, they took

266

00:30:11,238 --> 00:30:20,437

the army, the Russian, the communist, took the army away, all the, the officers were taken separate to

267

00:30:20,437 --> 00:30:29,456

an ordinary soldier. And the officer were taking to a forest who was called Katyn forest, you know,

268

00:30:29,456 --> 00:30:38,474

where twelve thousand officers were shot there and buried in the forest. We found that out after the

269

00:30:38,474 --> 00:30:47,583

war. Every officer had one bullet of the back of, of his head and the hands were tight up in the back

270

00:30:47,583 --> 00:30:57,052

and they were in the Katyn forest. And the ordinary soldier was taken to Siberia. And my future husband,

271

00:30:57,052 --> 00:31:06,161

he was an officer but he was wounded on the Rumanian border and because of his wounds he was stripped

272

00:31:06,161 --> 00:31:15,540

from his uniform, because others wanted it, the, the boots and all that and that saved his life, because

273

00:31:15,540 --> 00:31:24,739

he didn't go with the officers, he was an ordinary soldier and he was taken to, to Siberia. I later

274

00:31:24,739 --> 00:31:33,847

on, when I met him, and he, and later on the Germans when they declared war on Russia, and because he

275

00:31:33,847 --> 00:31:42,866

was born, he was born in Aus, in eh, south Prussia, that was once, have you heard of Danzig, that

276

00:31:42,866 --> 00:31:52,155

big, big city, the free city that was in Prussian, he was born not far there and they thought, because

277

00:31:52,155 --> 00:32:01,263

he was from there, he might sign the papers as a, as a German, because his father was in the Bismarck

278

00:32:01,263 --> 00:32:10,733

army before Hitler came along and they thought that he will sign, so they got all the Polish eh prisoner

279

00:32:10,733 --> 00:32:19,932

of war from Russia, they got them all out, but he didn't signed with the Germans, he was in a Polish

280

00:32:19,932 --> 00:32:29,221

prisoner of war in Germany, not far from Frankfurt. And later on I found that out, later on when I was

281

00:32:29,221 --> 00:32:33,550

in Frankfurt, that's where I met him. Yes. Now

282

00:32:34,070 --> 00:32:36,580

No, I you're going so fast again.

283

00:32:36,580 --> 00:32:37,870

So fast. Hm.

284

00:32:37,870 --> 00:32:40,920

How long was your husband in Siberia?

285

00:32:42,350 --> 00:32:48,513

I don't know when, when they took him out, I don't know how long he was, because

286

00:32:48,513 --> 00:32:54,897

it was so and the German took all the others out, with somebody with a general Sikorsky

287

00:32:54,897 --> 00:33:00,694

took all the, the Polish prisoners from Russian out, I don't know much about

288

00:33:00,694 --> 00:33:05,170

it, how long he was. But how he survived is almost a miracle.

289

00:33:05,170 --> 00:33:08,340

But for a week the Russians where in Siedliczcze

290

00:33:08,340 --> 00:33:08,610

Yes.

291

00:33:08,610 --> 00:33:11,080

have you seen them?

292

00:33:11,080 --> 00:33:12,560

Yes. Yes, yes, yes, we had before

293

00:33:12,560 --> 00:33:15,430

Can you tell me how you first met the Russian army?

294

00:33:15,430 --> 00:33:24,709

Russian army, that was, the Jewish newyear, Rosj Hasjana, and they first came in because we've had

295

00:33:24,709 --> 00:33:33,340

the big property, so the cav, cavalry, you know, not the, the the one on foot, the soldiers

296

00:33:33,340 --> 00:33:33,340

Infantry.

297

00:33:33,340 --> 00:33:41,833

infantry, and then they, the one on the horses, so the horses was stationed at our place. And

298

00:33:41,833 --> 00:33:49,870

a lot of the Polish army came in and eh there were going to, to cross the, the, the, the

299

00:33:49,870 --> 00:33:49,980

The Bug

300

00:33:49,980 --> 00:33:57,840

the, the Bug river and I remember there was somebody from eh, eh northern, northern Poland where

301

00:33:57,840 --> 00:34:05,863

my grandmother had eh relatives there and there was a Polish officer, but Jewish Polish officer and

302

00:34:05,863 --> 00:34:13,805

he, my grandmother called out, maybe somebody [...] the officer will be somebody from there and he

303

00:34:13,805 --> 00:34:21,989

was there and some other officers and they stationed there for one night, because there were all that

304

00:34:21,989 --> 00:34:30,012

many coming and coming, the infantry and I remember one officer ask my mother what would you rather

305

00:34:30,012 --> 00:34:38,278

have, the Germans or the Russian? And I still can hear her wo, words, she said, well how can you chose

306

00:34:38,278 --> 00:34:46,706

from two deadly diseases? That was her answer. And then they were, they crossed the Bug and the Russian

307

00:34:46,706 --> 00:34:54,810

took the army away. The Polish army. I think I said that before. Before that what they did to them.

308

00:34:54,810 --> 00:35:03,076

But I don't know how long that eh, later on when he became my husband I've found he was in Germany

309

00:35:03,076 --> 00:35:07,290

as a prisoner, Polish prisoner of war. In Frankfurt.

310

00:35:07,290 --> 00:35:09,390

But my question was

311

00:35:09,790 --> 00:35:10,670

Yes?

312

00:35:11,260 --> 00:35:15,210

Regina, how did you see, what was the first Russian you met? They came to Siedliczcze.

313

00:35:15,210 --> 00:35:16,850

Yes, they came in, they looked

314

00:35:16,850 --> 00:35:17,980

How did you know?

315

00:35:19,520 --> 00:35:25,093

that they looked in and we had white bread to - on the table, you know

316

00:35:25,093 --> 00:35:30,110

how Rosj Hasjana, how we had celebrating the, the, the holiday.

317

00:35:30,110 --> 00:35:33,180

So you were sitting at the Rosj Hasjana table?

318

00:35:33,180 --> 00:35:40,300

table when they came in and they looked in, we had that particular door, had, the half of it was glass,

319

00:35:40,300 --> 00:35:47,214

they looked in and we opened up some, I don't know who got up from the table to open the door, and

320

00:35:47,214 --> 00:35:54,404

some of them come in and then mein parents understood Russian because they were from the First Worldwar,

321

00:35:54,404 --> 00:36:01,525

the Russians was there, so they learned Russia and, and eh he looked at the white bread of the challah,

322

00:36:01,525 --> 00:36:08,923

and he ask us, I still remember those words, because we understood a little bit of Russia, we were supposed

323

00:36:08,923 --> 00:36:13,970

not to, and he said [says something in Russian], that means what is that?

324

00:36:14,520 --> 00:36:15,220

He didn't know?

325

00:36:15,220 --> 00:36:18,610

They didn't know what Challah was, what white bread was.

326

00:36:19,330 --> 00:36:20,800

And so then

327

00:36:20,800 --> 00:36:28,763

And we explained to it them and all that and the, all they wanted it to get and you know that they, one

328

00:36:28,763 --> 00:36:36,494

even went to a watch maker, he took an alarm clock and because that was big, and he ask him could he

329

00:36:36,494 --> 00:36:44,302

make two wrist watches out of that clock, what they ever could gather eh, eh for valuables they never

330

00:36:44,302 --> 00:36:52,188

ask how much, they just took it and all that and then when the Ru, Germans came along and the Russian

331

00:36:52,188 --> 00:37:00,151

had to leave and that didn't have anybody, we didn't have any, any soldiers from the Russians and

332

00:37:00,151 --> 00:37:08,036

we didn't have any German soldiers, like hooligans, was to inc, eh, I don't know, there is a word

333

00:37:08,036 --> 00:37:15,845

for it, you know, breaking everything and they had ammunition from the soldiers who were running away

334

00:37:15,845 --> 00:37:23,962

or something, I don't know, shooting, so a delegation went from Siedliczcze to Chelm to ask the Germans

335

00:37:23,962 --> 00:37:29,219

to come in and to straighten everything out a little bit, because we

336

00:37:29,220 --> 00:37:31,660

You mean after the Russian left

337

00:37:31,660 --> 00:37:31,660

The Russian

338

00:37:31,660 --> 00:37:32,710

there was chaos.

339

00:37:32,710 --> 00:37:36,930

Yes. It was nobody there, we didn't have any police, because the Russian

340

00:37:36,930 --> 00:37:37,510

No protection, yes.

341

00:37:37,510 --> 00:37:45,143

no, no protection, the Russian took all the Polish police away and then the Germans send over

342

00:37:45,143 --> 00:37:52,776

from western Poland, police, Polish police. But from western Poland, because Russian didn't

343

00:37:52,776 --> 00:38:00,737

give the, the people up once they took, and a lot of the people who were a little bit, you know,

344

00:38:00,737 --> 00:38:07,550

a little bit more, how, how, had the shops and had the little bit, not just or, all

345

00:38:07,550 --> 00:38:08,160

Middle class, yes.

346

00:38:08,160 --> 00:38:14,108

yes, not ordinary workers, because he was looking in the people's hands and

347

00:38:14,108 --> 00:38:19,670

if, if they didn't have callousis that meant that they were Russia, eh

348

00:38:19,670 --> 00:38:20,500

very, very rich.

349

00:38:20,500 --> 00:38:20,750

Yes.

350

00:38:20,750 --> 00:38:27,435

You know, so they don't deserve much, because that, all that, they were taken away and even they took

351

00:38:27,435 --> 00:38:33,926

the priest away and there was a deacan and they took a lot of prominent people from Siedliczcze away

352

00:38:33,926 --> 00:38:40,612

and all that and then, then, when the Germans came, they did the same, took a lot prominent people,
the

353

00:38:40,612 --> 00:38:47,232

school teachers away and they will be send back, if nothing happened to a German soldier or something,

354

00:38:47,232 --> 00:38:52,879

I never know if they ever got back or not, because we were not there anymore. You know.

355

00:38:52,880 --> 00:38:56,340

Were you scared of the Russians?

356

00:38:56,340 --> 00:39:04,911

No, we were not scared, but they, they didn't treat us normal, like, like, like eh, eh, it might

357

00:39:04,911 --> 00:39:13,396

the hierarchy was a little bit better educated, but the ordinary soldier, they, they, some of the

358

00:39:13,396 --> 00:39:21,705

soldiers had only a hole in a blanket and a rope tied around to the waist and a rifle, that was

359

00:39:21,705 --> 00:39:30,627

all that the infantry, they were not even dressed properly as soldiers. Only the hierarchy was dressed

360

00:39:30,627 --> 00:39:37,450

alright, you know. On the horses and all that. You know. But not the infantry.

361

00:39:37,450 --> 00:39:38,870

And the Germans were better organised?

362

00:39:38,870 --> 00:39:46,907

Oh yes, they were to try, they were plundering everything too, whatever they could, but, but it

363

00:39:46,907 --> 00:39:55,199

was different, that, eh how shall I say, no, oh, the, that was put, put, there wasn't anymore

364

00:39:55,199 --> 00:40:03,321

and there was eh beating and shooting and plundering like before, but they did it there own way,

365

00:40:03,321 --> 00:40:11,951

the Germans. Slowly, slowly they did it the same what the Russian did. But they were the, the masters.

366

00:40:11,951 --> 00:40:18,720

We couldn't say no to them, you know. [sighs] It was a time it wasn't easy.

367

00:40:18,720 --> 00:40:23,940

Yes, very few people who can talk about this, two armies in one

368

00:40:23,940 --> 00:40:24,850

In one place.

369

00:40:24,850 --> 00:40:27,130

Yes. So that's why I'm asking you.

370

00:40:27,130 --> 00:40:27,720

Yes.

371

00:40:27,720 --> 00:40:29,180

You are a witness

372

00:40:29,180 --> 00:40:29,890

Yes, I

373

00:40:29,890 --> 00:40:30,730

of those events.

374

00:40:30,730 --> 00:40:38,850

I was witness to that event, yes, yes, yes, yes. And a lot of the young people from Siedliczcze probably,

375

00:40:38,850 --> 00:40:45,680

not woman, but most eh young men, boys shall I call them, they went with the Russian army.

376

00:40:45,680 --> 00:40:46,820

They went east?

377

00:40:46,820 --> 00:40:54,977

They were east, yes, because they were hearing that the Germans mostly take the, the, the men

378

00:40:54,977 --> 00:41:03,222

folk away and, and we never saw them again, they did the same thing. The Germans took a lot of

379

00:41:03,222 --> 00:41:11,555

men folk away and then, once a German, that was the first winter, when a German soldier came in

380

00:41:11,555 --> 00:41:19,712

on a motor bike and the, the, the, the whole around us, everything, you know, was covered in

381

00:41:19,712 --> 00:41:27,870

snow, he couldn't see the road, or, or the, the, the, the gutter, and he got with his motor

382

00:41:27,870 --> 00:41:36,203

bike in a ditch or something and he killed himself and whatever, pardon me, he was killed. They

383

00:41:36,203 --> 00:41:44,536

took a lot of people away and they came in to Siedliczce and they took all the, the men, first

384

00:41:44,536 --> 00:41:51,290

the Jewish men had to come out, every tenth man was taken away and executed.

385

00:41:51,290 --> 00:41:58,030

But when you talk about those men who went east, wa, are you talking about the Jewish inhabi, men of

386

00:41:58,030 --> 00:41:58,970

Yes, Jew, Jewish

387

00:41:58,970 --> 00:41:59,500

The Jewish

388

00:41:59,500 --> 00:41:59,750

men.

389

00:41:59,750 --> 00:42:02,370

So there were a lot of Jews who followed the Russians

390

00:42:02,370 --> 00:42:03,750

Followed the Russian, yes, yes.

391

00:42:03,750 --> 00:42:04,940

to go east.

392

00:42:04,940 --> 00:42:11,127

to go east beause that what they, they were telling us, there were no escaped, you know, from

393

00:42:11,127 --> 00:42:17,314

western Poland, from Austria, from Czechoslovakia, when the Germans came in. You know, mostly

394

00:42:17,314 --> 00:42:22,970

they were concentrated what they doing to the men, so they escaped with the Russians.

395

00:42:22,970 --> 00:42:23,840

Hmhm.

396

00:42:25,170 --> 00:42:32,312

Yes, later on we got to know, for, eh, some eh, were somebody who was mein sister's

397

00:42:32,312 --> 00:42:39,454

friend, you know, and he found his father there and eh this father was in Canada and,

398

00:42:39,454 --> 00:42:47,101

and, and they didn't let him out from Russia, from the communist Russia and the Canadian,

399

00:42:47,101 --> 00:42:54,412

or the father wanted to get his son out from the communist, they didn't allow it, but

400

00:42:54,412 --> 00:43:00,210

they allowed the Canadian father to go to Russia to see his son. Yes.

401

00:43:00,210 --> 00:43:05,380

So, the Russians left and a lot of Jewish men left to the east?

402

00:43:05,380 --> 00:43:11,060

Not, not actually Jewish people from families, only younger, single men.

403

00:43:11,060 --> 00:43:12,930

They went with the Russians east?

404

00:43:12,930 --> 00:43:14,230

They went with the Russians, yes.

405

00:43:14,230 --> 00:43:17,960

And they expected to be better there? Or safer?

406

00:43:17,960 --> 00:43:22,263

I, I don't know. That might be, you know, but communist

407

00:43:22,263 --> 00:43:26,190

never let anybody go, so it wasn't easy. You know.

408

00:43:26,510 --> 00:43:32,060

And you, when did you meet for the first time a German in Siedliczce?

409

00:43:32,060 --> 00:43:32,930

The Germans in Siedliczce?

410

00:43:32,930 --> 00:43:37,210

Yes, when did you saw the, see the first German?

411

00:43:37,210 --> 00:43:38,030

That was still September.

412

00:43:38,120 --> 00:43:38,970

Yes?

413

00:43:38,970 --> 00:43:45,835

Yes, maybe I think it could have been maybe that eh, the third week in September. I don't

414

00:43:45,835 --> 00:43:52,850

know, I can't remember. No. I only know when the Russian came in, that was the Rosj Hasjana,

415

00:43:52,850 --> 00:43:58,000

I think it was the 18th of September. I'm not sure, but I think so.

416

00:43:58,000 --> 00:44:00,150

I'm not asking you for data

417

00:44:00,150 --> 00:44:00,680

No.

418

00:44:00,680 --> 00:44:05,800

I'm asking for you, you when did you've seen the first German soldier,
how

419

00:44:05,800 --> 00:44:05,800

In, in

420

00:44:05,800 --> 00:44:05,970

how, how

421

00:44:05,970 --> 00:44:07,430

Sep, September, in September.

422

00:44:07,430 --> 00:44:13,220

but, but how did you see him? Eh, was it in a bakery, was it in the garden?

423

00:44:13,220 --> 00:44:15,790

No, they, they just marched in.

424

00:44:15,890 --> 00:44:16,730

They marched in and you

425

00:44:16,730 --> 00:44:16,960

Marched in

426

00:44:16,960 --> 00:44:17,500

were looking?

427

00:44:17,500 --> 00:44:20,000

yes. And we were still at home

428

00:44:20,000 --> 00:44:20,750

Yes?

429

00:44:20,750 --> 00:44:28,086

you know. So they, whatever my mum could speak very well German and my father couldn't,

430

00:44:28,086 --> 00:44:35,588

but my mother could, because when my mother grew up, after First, before the First Worldwar

431

00:44:35,588 --> 00:44:42,925

in, in Russia, she could speak French and German and Russian. She learned Polish from the

432

00:44:42,925 --> 00:44:49,850

French alphabet, because the Germans had the Gothic and the Russian had the Cyrillic

433

00:44:49,850 --> 00:44:50,500

Yes.

434

00:44:50,500 --> 00:44:55,380

yes, but she learned Polish from the French alphabet.

435

00:44:55,480 --> 00:44:56,180

Uhuh.

436

00:44:56,180 --> 00:45:02,540

After the First Worldwar, so she could fluent three languages and Jiddisch [laughs].

437

00:45:02,540 --> 00:45:03,380

Not to forget.

438

00:45:03,380 --> 00:45:07,280

Yes, never forget it. Yes.

439

00:45:07,280 --> 00:45:13,066

Jiddisch, that's also a language. Eh [scrapes throat], your family, eh, can you

440

00:45:13,066 --> 00:45:18,710

talk a little bit, did you ever see non Jewish eh Poles, did you meet them, or

441

00:45:18,710 --> 00:45:18,710

Poi

442

00:45:18,710 --> 00:45:20,310

what was your relation?

443

00:45:20,310 --> 00:45:29,085

the relation we've had, my grandfather, my, from my father's family, he, they were living somewhere

444

00:45:29,085 --> 00:45:37,690

else in Siedliczycze in m, m, more like the middle of the city, mein aunty she was a very famous dress

445

00:45:37,690 --> 00:45:45,869

maker and my grandfather had somewhere like a shop with eh, where you can buy little things like

446

00:45:45,869 --> 00:45:52,770

paper and ink and pens and pencils, what you hebe, hebedeciary, do you call that?

447

00:45:52,770 --> 00:45:53,090

Yes, what

448

00:45:53,090 --> 00:46:00,986

Something like that, but that was more in the middle, like in, you know, that, that was open for the

449

00:46:00,986 --> 00:46:08,724

market place and all that and eh, what else can I mind, Zelda's parents, that was, Zelda was my

450

00:46:08,724 --> 00:46:17,015

second cousin, she, her parents had eh, me, a shop material where to buy, do you know, for, for clothing,

451

00:46:17,015 --> 00:46:24,753

you know eh, in the middle there, their surname was Metz and eh was other family, you know, a lot,

452

00:46:24,753 --> 00:46:32,886

a lot, eh, someone, the family were in different cities. I had family like in Chelm, my grandmother's

453

00:46:32,886 --> 00:46:40,546

family and I had in Tomassovluensly , that's where my grandmother's eh son and daughter lives

454

00:46:40,546 --> 00:46:48,284

there like my mother's eh brother and sister lived there. They were not all in Siedliczcze, they

455

00:46:48,284 --> 00:46:56,101

were all scattered in Poland, you know, in different cities. You know, because eh how shall I say,

456

00:46:56,101 --> 00:47:04,155

I went to school, my, my mother's eh sister used to come for the Jewish holidays over from Tomaszow

457

00:47:04,155 --> 00:47:12,051

to us and she was a very good dress maker, so we used to wait for her to make us lovely dresses. And

458

00:47:12,051 --> 00:47:19,948

even for her own wedding, when she was getting married, we, we were all having, my sister had a navy

459

00:47:19,948 --> 00:47:27,844

blue with white and I had eh something a different color, but it was like eh sai, sailor clothes and

460

00:47:27,844 --> 00:47:35,503

new shoes, eh, shiny shoes and new socks and all that. And before the wedding we were all dressed

461

00:47:35,503 --> 00:47:43,320

up and mum said don't go outside because that particular time they were digging in Siedliczce to

462

00:47:43,320 --> 00:47:51,138

put new pipes in for water, I don't know what they were digging then. We were seven or nine years

463

00:47:51,138 --> 00:47:59,271

old and mum said not to go close to there, but I wanted to have a look what's happening and I slipped

464

00:47:59,271 --> 00:48:07,167

and my sister wanted to pull me out and she fell in too and we came back for the wedding all in mud.

465

00:48:07,167 --> 00:48:14,826

And mum told us to stay in that room and never to come out. So that was the punishment because we

466

00:48:14,826 --> 00:48:16,090

didn't listen.

467

00:48:16,090 --> 00:48:23,420

Did, did you, did you have any contact with non Jewish, with the Poles?

468

00:48:23,420 --> 00:48:24,830

Oh yes! Yes, yes, yes, yes.

469

00:48:24,830 --> 00:48:24,830

That's my question.

470

00:48:24,830 --> 00:48:31,254

Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes. Oh we lived in, the end of Siedliczcze were all our

471

00:48:31,254 --> 00:48:37,426

neighbours were Polish neighbours, we never had the Jewish neighbours and

472

00:48:37,426 --> 00:48:43,090

everybody across the road was eh what was the name eh Roman eh, eh

473

00:48:43,090 --> 00:48:50,781

you know, in, in a minute the name will come, eh, they had a very beautiful eh fruit eh

474

00:48:50,781 --> 00:48:58,649

tree garden and his mother, he was a blacksmith. But this mother had a eh a flower garden

475

00:48:58,649 --> 00:49:05,279

and all, you know, when in Poland the Corpus Christi, you've heard about

476

00:49:05,280 --> 00:49:05,280

Yes.

477

00:49:05,280 --> 00:49:14,274

they had four stations of the cross and from their garden all the stations for a bit, for, those flowers

478

00:49:14,274 --> 00:49:23,009

were made up the stations of the cross. And eh Roman eh, oh, what is the second name? It will come to

479

00:49:23,009 --> 00:49:31,830

me and he had, you know, in the back, you know, very, very fruit garden, we used to and help him pick

480

00:49:31,830 --> 00:49:40,479

the apples, then we got the apples from them and even one day we saw grape fruit he had on the, the,

481

00:49:40,479 --> 00:49:49,128

the back of a very big eh sh eh garage or something, he had grapes growing and Zelda was there with

482

00:49:49,128 --> 00:49:57,690

me and because she, we, we were the same age, and she was more at our place than at home because we

483

00:49:57,690 --> 00:50:06,943

were living outside, not the middle and we picked the grapes and we brought them in and mum nearly fainted,

484

00:50:06,943 --> 00:50:15,765

the grapes were not ripe and Roman knew how many bungs of grapes he had growing, put the grapes back,

485

00:50:15,765 --> 00:50:21,559

but we were so lucky that particular day [laughs], there was a tool

486

00:50:21,690 --> 00:50:21,910

Yes.

487

00:50:21,910 --> 00:50:29,236

and the grapes that, that thing was torn of the wall and some of the grapes were lying ripe

488

00:50:29,236 --> 00:50:36,801

grapes them we picked were lying on the ground, so we were not [coughs], we were not punished.

489

00:50:36,801 --> 00:50:43,650

But mum said don't you dare go there anymore and listen what you were told [laughs].

490

00:50:44,270 --> 00:50:46,990

But you had good relations with

491

00:50:47,140 --> 00:50:55,016

Very good, no, not all, all our neighbours, we remember them and, and the school girls and all that,

492

00:50:55,016 --> 00:51:02,814

we always, they used to come over to our place on eh Pesach, they were always wanted to see what we

493

00:51:02,814 --> 00:51:10,533

eat, the matzes and all that, so we invited them. Not only that, but we never went on Saturdays to

494

00:51:10,533 --> 00:51:18,567

school and the Polish girls went to school, so we had our friends who gave us the homework, so we have

495

00:51:18,567 --> 00:51:26,758

to, have the homework made for Monday morning when we go to school. And the school was about a kilometre

496

00:51:26,758 --> 00:51:34,635

away from, from home. So in the summer we used to walk there, but in the winter my father had a sled

497

00:51:34,635 --> 00:51:42,432

and a horse, so we used to gather all the children on the way, it was about a kilometre and he used

498

00:51:42,432 --> 00:51:50,466

to take us all to school on the sled, but the horse knew the way [laughs], but he was taking us there.

499

00:51:50,466 --> 00:51:58,421

And the school was such a beautiful place, it was a castle. That castle was given to the city because

500

00:51:58,421 --> 00:52:06,298

he didn't have any heirs, so that particular castle was made up for the school. So you can imagine

501

00:52:06,298 --> 00:52:14,568

how beautiful our school was. Every class had those beautiful high ceilings and all ceiling was decorated

502

00:52:14,568 --> 00:52:22,366

and the heating was like white eh, eh what is it called eh tiles, white tiles and that was always

503

00:52:22,366 --> 00:52:30,085

done that, that heating was in two rooms and one room he used to put in the, the wood and the coal

504

00:52:30,085 --> 00:52:37,883

and it was closed after the smoke was gone, it used to closed up and that was heating for 24 hours.

505

00:52:37,883 --> 00:52:45,759

So that the school was heating that way. And we had a very big assembles eh place in the, in the ...

506

00:52:45,759 --> 00:52:53,793

all..was about a thou, thousand, in the morning there were the elderly, we had from, from se eh fifth,

507

00:52:53,793 --> 00:53:01,591

from fourth, fifth and sixth class was going in the morning and the younger children were there in

508

00:53:01,591 --> 00:53:09,625

the afternoon. We had our classes from eight to one and eh there was about a thousand children in that

509

00:53:09,625 --> 00:53:17,344

school. And the assemble hall, where every class was standing in that classes assemble, we had all

510

00:53:17,344 --> 00:53:25,299

around the walls, was hangers with our name where we put our coats on, but the, the other things were

511

00:53:25,299 --> 00:53:33,018

going in the classes and the teachers, they were Polish teachers. One I had, a Jewish teacher, but

512

00:53:33,018 --> 00:53:41,131

she was teaching Polish, she was from Chelm [swallows], such a lovely woman. I still have got a picture

513

00:53:41,131 --> 00:53:42,469

of her, you know.

514

00:53:42,470 --> 00:53:44,600

You should show me later.

515

00:53:44,600 --> 00:53:54,385

I will show it to you, you know, I've got them all, standing there. And if not I've got the albums

516

00:53:54,385 --> 00:54:03,696

and I'll show you all. She was in the, for the Underground, for the Polish Underground. Because

517

00:54:03,696 --> 00:54:13,197

her husband was a Polish officer. And she eh helped a lot with the Underground. And somebody put her

518

00:54:13,197 --> 00:54:22,792

in and she was executed. Yes, there was a lot, a lot to have to be careful to, when the Germans were

519

00:54:22,792 --> 00:54:32,388

there, quite a long time. And eh her brother [swallows] survived the war. He was as a Polish worker

520

00:54:32,388 --> 00:54:41,794

on the railways, but not an ordinary workers with the navy blue uniform, like, like I don't know

521

00:54:41,794 --> 00:54:48,540

what the work was on the, with the rail and all that. And he survived.

522

00:54:48,540 --> 00:54:48,730

Hmhm.

523

00:54:48,730 --> 00:54:56,223

And Zelda later on, I knew, knew the parents, they lived in Chelm and Zelda mar, married a man,

524

00:54:56,223 --> 00:55:03,559

late cousin, she married him and I knew him very well too, before even, eh, you know, he, he

525

00:55:03,559 --> 00:55:11,052

before the war, because he was mein eldest brother's friend, with another friend who lived in

526

00:55:11,052 --> 00:55:18,703

Siedliczcze. It was all connected, you know, with, with Polish people and with eh, my father had,

527

00:55:18,703 --> 00:55:26,039

had that many Polish friend, when the winter used to come, they used to play cards here, the,

528

00:55:26,039 --> 00:55:33,375

the chief of police sitting with other people playing cards. Because wintertime was only time

529

00:55:33,375 --> 00:55:40,789

to play cards and my mum had to, to, to bake eh certain things so they would have to eat and a

530

00:55:40,789 --> 00:55:48,520

bottle of Wodka was on the table and sometimes they used to play cards till two or three o'clock

531

00:55:48,520 --> 00:55:55,855

in the morning [laughs]. You know, so we had a lot of beautiful Polish friends. We were never

532

00:55:55,855 --> 00:56:03,428

said go home or be cold, you know, that you, you were, we never had picket standing by, but Jews

533

00:56:03,428 --> 00:56:11,158

in the big cities, we had them in Chelm and in Lublin, they were standing in front of Jewish shops

534

00:56:11,158 --> 00:56:18,572

and buy only at Jewish places, but in, in Siedliczcze we never eh, eh, you know, lived through

535

00:56:18,572 --> 00:56:22,989

that, we never had any enemies. The Polish people eh, eh

536

00:56:22,990 --> 00:56:25,010

So that started with

537

00:56:25,010 --> 00:56:27,960

and anti, antisemitism, we never knew about antisemitism in Siedliczcze.

538

00:56:27,960 --> 00:56:28,210

Till the Germans came.

539

00:56:28,210 --> 00:56:32,670

Till the Germans came. They sorted

540

00:56:32,670 --> 00:56:32,790

And then you could not

541

00:56:32,790 --> 00:56:33,430

they

542

00:56:33,430 --> 00:56:34,570

go any longer to that

543

00:56:34,570 --> 00:56:35,230

they, they sorted

544

00:56:35,230 --> 00:56:35,650

beautiful school.

545

00:56:35,650 --> 00:56:44,180

they sorted us out. And there was another thing. A lot of Polish friend might be, would have helped

546

00:56:44,180 --> 00:56:52,711

a lot because a lot of them paid with their life. In Polish, when the Germans found a Jewish person

547

00:56:52,711 --> 00:57:01,156

hiding in a Polish family, the whole Polish family was executed. You know about that. But in other

548

00:57:01,156 --> 00:57:09,514

countries, like Czechoslovakia or other countries when the German did the Polish people were send

549

00:57:09,514 --> 00:57:17,959

to concentration camp, they were not executed. Only in Poland. That's why when you, when I went

550

00:57:17,959 --> 00:57:26,489

to Israël [swallows] and I had a look at the Avenue of the Righteous the longest avenue was Polish

551

00:57:26,489 --> 00:57:35,020

people who helped Jews. Because every name had a tree. You know. You know that. You see that I'm

552

00:57:35,020 --> 00:57:40,879

just didn't make it up, you know, that. How about we have a break?

553

00:57:40,880 --> 00:57:44,610

Sure, that's what I was going to suggest.

554

00:57:44,610 --> 00:57:46,110

there, it's all

555

00:57:46,570 --> 00:57:49,390

Okay, Regina, can you go on?

556

00:57:49,390 --> 00:57:49,680

Yes.

557

00:57:49,680 --> 00:57:53,660

Where we had stayed is eh, the Germans were there

558

00:57:53,660 --> 00:57:53,660

Yes.

559

00:57:53,660 --> 00:57:56,240

and you could not go to school any longer eh

560

00:57:56,240 --> 00:57:56,240

No.

561

00:57:56,240 --> 00:58:05,160

and so one day you could not even go to your house anymore.

562

00:58:05,160 --> 00:58:13,207

That was eh when we were all assigned to work for that outside, it was about a kilometre

563

00:58:13,207 --> 00:58:21,706

or more to walk to that river where we have to, to, to to straighten it and that was, I think

564

00:58:21,706 --> 00:58:28,940

I mentioned the date, that was the 18th of May, when it started with the ghetto.

565

00:58:29,490 --> 00:58:34,050

But before that you had to work on the river, that was before the ghetto?

566

00:58:34,050 --> 00:58:39,530

That was, yes, but, people still walking home every day when we finished work,

567

00:58:39,530 --> 00:58:44,590

we were walking home, but the 18th of May we couldn't go home anymore.

568

00:58:44,590 --> 00:58:48,870

You had to go to the ghetto.

569

00:58:48,870 --> 00:58:53,410

We have straight, they have, during the day they did something,

570

00:58:53,410 --> 00:58:57,590

cornered off quite a few streets and that was the ghetto.

571

00:58:57,590 --> 00:59:06,470

Can we before go to the river? Can you describe me a day in which you worked at the river?

572

00:59:06,470 --> 00:59:13,931

Yes. We had eh to assemble, but I can't remember exactly where everybody, because there were a

573

00:59:13,931 --> 00:59:21,393

lot of people from different places, but we have to assemble at the river there, because we knew

574

00:59:21,393 --> 00:59:29,088

where we were going and I think we were counted there is every, everybody there. I can't remember

575

00:59:29,088 --> 00:59:36,628

that exactly, because sometimes, you know, I was walking with, with my parents and with my sister

576

00:59:36,628 --> 00:59:44,012

and sometimes with other people, because we were assigned over there, at the spot where we were

577

00:59:44,012 --> 00:59:51,397

working to different spots where that have to be, the engineer marked it out where it has to be

578

00:59:51,397 --> 00:59:58,858

and there was a lot of Germans watching us too, not just eh, you know, that eh other, we, we, we

579

00:59:58,858 --> 01:00:06,398

didn't have any foremens there. We didn't have anybody who would come and hurry up and do it,

580

01:00:06,398 --> 01:00:13,782

we have to do that in a day, we were marked out for instance a square metre, I have to dig and

581

01:00:13,782 --> 01:00:21,555

that I have to do today and if it's done before, then I had to go and help out others. It wasn't

582

01:00:21,555 --> 01:00:29,173

that we were told hurry up and do it, we didn't have that when we were coming from home to work.

583

01:00:29,173 --> 01:00:34,070

And everybody was fifteen and over had to, to assign for work.

584

01:00:34,070 --> 01:00:40,680

Also your mother and father?

585

01:00:40,680 --> 01:00:49,261

Yes. Yes. Only my grandmother and greatgrandmother, they were staying home. And then one day, I don't

586

01:00:49,261 --> 01:00:57,678

know how that came about [swallows] that meine grandmother and greatgrandmother and they eh neighbour,

587

01:00:57,678 --> 01:01:06,259

a very good friend of my grandmother, Mrs Carp, they, they predicted something was going to be happening

588

01:01:06,259 --> 01:01:14,511

today and they didn't want to go home, but my father has, has made a eh a double eh wall in one of

589

01:01:14,511 --> 01:01:22,762

the sheds where the material, the building material was and that was, it didn't look like it's a

590

01:01:22,762 --> 01:01:31,344

separate wall, because that was done up like the outside wall with straw because for the winter that's

591

01:01:31,344 --> 01:01:39,677

had to be protected and eh they hi, were hiding there. Because they couldn't go to work, they were

592

01:01:39,677 --> 01:01:48,672

too old for work. But normally they stayed at home and now, and n, nothing was happening, but that particular

593

01:01:48,672 --> 01:01:57,171

day, I don't know what it was, that they, they were hiding, I can't recall why. And then they, they

594

01:01:57,171 --> 01:02:05,340

c, we couldn't go back home that particular day, that was the 18th of May. And when we came back

595

01:02:05,340 --> 01:02:13,921

[sighs] it was something that is hard to describe, we were giving outside eh, it was still Siedliczcze

596

01:02:13,921 --> 01:02:22,255

but it was more outside, a little cottage where a tailor lives, and there was only two people in that

597

01:02:22,255 --> 01:02:30,672

little cottage and the tailor because he had that room to do the sowing, all our family was in there.

598

01:02:30,672 --> 01:02:33,230

And my grandmother was with us.

599

01:02:33,230 --> 01:02:36,640

She had come from the old house?

600

01:02:36,640 --> 01:02:43,317

No, from that, from the normal house, you know, because she was hiding. All the, oh,

601

01:02:43,317 --> 01:02:50,312

I forgot to tell you. The one who were not that particular day at work, were taken away.

602

01:02:50,312 --> 01:02:57,069

All the sick, all the young who couldn't work, the children, a lot of children were

603

01:02:57,069 --> 01:03:03,985

left with their grandparents and the young was going to work, they were taken away that

604

01:03:03,985 --> 01:03:09,470

day. And nobody saw them anymore. Where they were taking nobody knew.

605

01:03:10,220 --> 01:03:12,440

But your grandmother managed to escape?

606

01:03:12,440 --> 01:03:21,318

Managed to, the, my greatgrandmother she was with, with eh somebody else then, that particular day,

607

01:03:21,318 --> 01:03:29,927

but I don't know [swallows] how to explain that. Because they were different places where the,

608

01:03:29,927 --> 01:03:38,716

the people could be, oh, could be assembled and my grandmother was still with us in that cottage,

609

01:03:38,716 --> 01:03:47,505

but I don't know where greatgrandmother went. To somebody else's eh place there were more room

610

01:03:47,505 --> 01:03:56,114

maybe, but still in the ghetto. And that was something that eh was hard to describe. To leave a

611

01:03:56,114 --> 01:04:04,723

beautiful big house and to be squeezed in in a small place like that. It had, no, it was still

612

01:04:04,723 --> 01:04:13,692

summer because May just started, on the spring, and we were there till [swallows] even, till October

613

01:04:13,692 --> 01:04:19,880

the 22nd. But in the meantime my eldest brother passed away, whenever

614

01:04:19,880 --> 01:04:19,880

Yes, you told so.

615

01:04:19,880 --> 01:04:27,857

they was, and that was the, the, eh Rosj Hasjana eve. The 11th of September. And, by cleaning

616

01:04:27,857 --> 01:04:36,422

the bricks from the synagogue because they burned down the synagogue. And they were even stand against

617

01:04:36,422 --> 01:04:44,987

laughing, and the [Jews] were standing, we couldn't do anything. And they took all the jews together

618

01:04:44,987 --> 01:04:52,964

in the middle of the synagogue and lit them and they were laughing that nobody managed to, they

619

01:04:52,964 --> 01:05:01,110

said what Jews are they, yet, that you don't go to save your scrolls. They meant the Thora's.

620

01:05:01,110 --> 01:05:07,240

You know. How could anybody jump into a f, middle of a fire to save them.

621

01:05:07,240 --> 01:05:16,200

But that day you didn't have to work? Because you did see that?

622

01:05:16,200 --> 01:05:20,680

Yes, we were working. We were working during the day and that was in the evening.

623

01:05:20,680 --> 01:05:21,140

That was in the evening?

624

01:05:21,140 --> 01:05:25,370

In the evening they burned the synagogue down. Yes.

625

01:05:26,030 --> 01:05:26,240

Hmhm.

626

01:05:26,240 --> 01:05:34,080

And later on mine eldest brother was assigned to clean the bricks, that was in September.

627

01:05:34,080 --> 01:05:34,080

Hmhm.

628

01:05:34,080 --> 01:05:38,440

You know. I don't know exactly what month and when the synagogue was

629

01:05:40,040 --> 01:05:40,230

That doesn't matter.

630

01:05:40,230 --> 01:05:40,230

was, but, burned.

631

01:05:40,230 --> 01:05:40,230

Doesn't matter.

632

01:05:40,230 --> 01:05:48,029

It was between the 18th of May till September when my brother passed away, that was already

633

01:05:48,029 --> 01:05:55,660

burnt down. Because there were four of them, were cleaning the bricks from young men. And

634

01:05:55,660 --> 01:05:57,050

Was it very hard work?

635

01:05:57,050 --> 01:06:03,501

It was a very hot day and all that to sit outside in the sun and we had only something

636

01:06:03,501 --> 01:06:09,727

to eat in the morning and during the work there wasn't any break. And w, and when

637

01:06:09,727 --> 01:06:15,953

we were working with the, the river digging, it wasn't so bad because it wasn't

638

01:06:15,953 --> 01:06:22,029

that hot, but they were sitting, the men were sitting, the young men were sitting

639

01:06:22,029 --> 01:06:27,129

and cleaning bricks and a ver, it was a very hot September day. Yes.

640

01:06:28,150 --> 01:06:31,780

When you say it wasn't so bad with the water digging

641

01:06:32,200 --> 01:06:32,520

No, but

642

01:06:32,520 --> 01:06:34,780

I imagine you were fifteen years old

643

01:06:34,780 --> 01:06:35,240

Yes, yes.

644

01:06:35,240 --> 01:06:37,320

so it must have been very hard work for a small girl

645

01:06:37,320 --> 01:06:45,536

It was h, it was hard, but sometimes, you know, when you get a sandy, sandy place, it wasn't

646

01:06:45,536 --> 01:06:53,752

that hard, we didn't have to every, maybe to go that deep, it all depends, somet, my dear eh

647

01:06:53,752 --> 01:07:01,968

Selma, we were helping out one another. It wasn't that, that it was a s, not like in a camp,

648

01:07:01,968 --> 01:07:10,534

it was just coming out from home to do the work and we had to do that today and if eh was somebody

649

01:07:10,534 --> 01:07:18,925

got something harder, so the other person who had a little bit lighter went to help. So that was

650

01:07:18,925 --> 01:07:26,180

done today. Yes. And eh that was why, you know, that engineer, he was so fair. With

651

01:07:26,640 --> 01:07:27,200

He was?

652

01:07:27,200 --> 01:07:34,619

the work. He was very fair with work. You know. And it was still summertime, so we never worried,

653

01:07:34,619 --> 01:07:41,810

even if we stand in water or not. But it was different when you sit all day and clean bricks.

654

01:07:41,810 --> 01:07:42,330

Absolutely!

655

01:07:42,330 --> 01:07:44,560

Yes.

656

01:07:44,810 --> 01:07:49,000

So people helped each other and at the digging and the waterworks?

657

01:07:49,000 --> 01:07:50,120

Yes they would, yes, the, the, the

658

01:07:50,120 --> 01:07:53,440

Did you get any food during the day?

659

01:07:53,440 --> 01:07:57,240

No, we, we didn't, oh no, if you bring something from home

660

01:07:57,240 --> 01:07:57,890

Yes?

661

01:07:58,290 --> 01:08:04,105

yes, then, then we had something to eat, but we, we still had, you know,

662

01:08:04,105 --> 01:08:09,760

it wasn't rationed then, even, you know, we were not in ghetto then,

663

01:08:09,760 --> 01:08:14,930

but later on in ghetto it wasn't so easy. It wasn't so easy.

664

01:08:14,930 --> 01:08:16,170

Because you were hungry?

665

01:08:16,170 --> 01:08:22,226

[whispers] Oh yes. But my mother saw, my, I don't know how she managed, you know, after

666

01:08:22,226 --> 01:08:28,215

work she, she was crawling into the garden and picking some vegetables and something and

667

01:08:28,215 --> 01:08:34,407

all away, she not, didn't take long, you know, a pot of soup for the, even there wasn't

668

01:08:34,407 --> 01:08:40,260

much to put in, but pepper maybe and salt, but there was something to eat, you know. A

669

01:08:40,260 --> 01:08:46,180

potatoe and a carrrot and then maybe, I don't know what else, a bean, whatever it was

670

01:08:46,180 --> 01:08:50,739

growing, we all helped, you know. And there was still enough bread.

671

01:08:50,740 --> 01:08:54,190

Was it far away?

672

01:08:54,270 --> 01:08:56,640

Eh to, to work?

673

01:08:56,640 --> 01:08:56,830

Yes.

674

01:08:56,830 --> 01:09:00,135

About a kilometre. Sometimes a bit more, sometimes less.

675

01:09:00,135 --> 01:09:02,850

It all depends how the river was flowing. Yes.

676

01:09:02,850 --> 01:09:04,380

So that's okay.

677

01:09:04,380 --> 01:09:12,565

Yes, that was okay. Yes. We've used to walk. You know. But later on when it got colder

678

01:09:12,565 --> 01:09:20,842

it wasn't so easy. The worst part was in that slave labour, labour camp in Staw. Because

679

01:09:20,842 --> 01:09:28,660

we were taking away from Siedliczce the 22nd of October. And October is late autumn.

680

01:09:28,660 --> 01:09:29,180

Yes.

681

01:09:29,180 --> 01:09:38,980

That was starting to get cold. And in November sometime the eh it was freezing. That was hell!

682

01:09:38,980 --> 01:09:42,580

In Staw you wouldn't come home again? You would stay there?

683

01:09:42,580 --> 01:09:43,730

Pardon?

684

01:09:44,130 --> 01:09:49,810

When you worked in Staw. Did you enter come back home in the evening or?

685

01:09:50,280 --> 01:09:51,730

No, not home. No. To the g, ghetto.

686

01:09:51,730 --> 01:09:54,000

To the ghetto, yes.

687

01:09:54,000 --> 01:10:00,340

To the ghetto, yes. Yes, from Staw we were coming home from, from the ghe, from work to the ghetto.

688

01:10:00,340 --> 01:10:01,770

And was that further away?

689

01:10:01,770 --> 01:10:06,120

No the ghetto was outside eh of Staw, yes.

690

01:10:06,120 --> 01:10:06,950

Yes?

691

01:10:07,590 --> 01:10:16,764

No, sorry, sorry, we did come home from the ghetto. We were taking away [swallows] to Staw the 22nd

692

01:10:16,764 --> 01:10:26,031

of October and it was a camp there. That was a very old mill, was converted, they were making in that

693

01:10:26,031 --> 01:10:35,389

mill eh eh, eh banks banks and they were straw on the bank on the thing and we were getting some

694

01:10:35,389 --> 01:10:45,206

blankets, that was all. But it was already so cold and the work outside all day. But my mother was assigned

695

01:10:45,206 --> 01:10:54,564

to the kitchen. So eh you know sometimes you know, when we finished there was soup, but the soup where

696

01:10:54,564 --> 01:11:03,738

they were putting in oats in the soup, and potatoes. And mum used to say be careful when you eat the

697

01:11:03,738 --> 01:11:12,821

soup because the, the oats were not cleaned like we have now porridge from oats, the, the oats were

698

01:11:12,821 --> 01:11:22,088

just crushed and the was still on it. So she used to say be careful when you eat and if you get some

699

01:11:22,088 --> 01:11:31,629

potatoes in it, you might be even better to wash off the soup from the potatoe because if a gets stuck

700

01:11:31,629 --> 01:11:37,410

in the throat it's worse than a bone, you can't get it out.

701

01:11:37,630 --> 01:11:38,150

Yes.

702

01:11:38,150 --> 01:11:46,902

So we had to be so careful with the soup when we were having it. But that was in Staw, when we arrived

703

01:11:46,902 --> 01:11:55,569

in Staw there wasn't anymore like in the ghetto, it was the mill. And there was three or two, three

704

01:11:55,569 --> 01:12:05,180

wire fences all around and there was eh, eh Germans with dogs. We had to give up our clothes to be desinfectant,

705

01:12:05,180 --> 01:12:13,847

but we were wearing it and we were getting it back and then every day to work, with in the morning a

706

01:12:13,847 --> 01:12:22,857

slice of bread and eh as eh a of hot water. They called it coffee, it was brown water, but we were happy

707

01:12:22,857 --> 01:12:31,696

it was hot. And then when we were coming back was the soup. And that where my mother was then assigned

708

01:12:31,696 --> 01:12:40,363

to, in the kitchen. Not to go to work, but my father was still coming all of us, the family. Only not

709

01:12:40,363 --> 01:12:49,202

my eldest brother. He p, he passed away in September. I remember I had a dream about him. And, and eh,

710

01:12:49,202 --> 01:12:57,783

eh, I, I complained that much and even mum said you don't have to worry about it, we know where he

711

01:12:57,783 --> 01:13:06,536

is and that what he, he said in the dream. You never know where you are going. The certain things you

712

01:13:06,536 --> 01:13:15,460

know, I used to have dreams, I wish I had dreams now, but I don't dream now. Maybe I do, but I don't

713

01:13:15,460 --> 01:13:24,556

remember when I wake up. I had once a dream that my mother, we were in a very, very big hall and my mother

714

01:13:24,556 --> 01:13:33,137

was coming in from the rain, she had a raincoat with a hood on. And she came in, I knew she wasn't

715

01:13:33,137 --> 01:13:41,976

alive with us and I went over to her and ask her mum where ever you are, is it very hard, very bad? And

716

01:13:41,976 --> 01:13:50,557

she said my daughter, we have to earn, we have to work everywhere to earn our place. I wish I could

717

01:13:50,557 --> 01:13:59,310

say it in a bit of Jiddisch, in a bit of Polish, the way she was talking in that dream. When I talk to

718

01:13:59,310 --> 01:14:01,369

you I still can see her.

719

01:14:01,370 --> 01:14:03,500

Can you tell in Jiddish?

720

01:14:03,600 --> 01:14:04,850

Oh we used to speak a lot of Jiddish.

721

01:14:04,850 --> 01:14:06,820

No, but can you tell me now what she

722

01:14:06,820 --> 01:14:07,050

No

723

01:14:07,050 --> 01:14:07,940

said to you, in Jiddish?

724

01:14:07,940 --> 01:14:14,087

no, no, because I tried to get the Jiddish language out when I was in German, because

725

01:14:14,087 --> 01:14:20,163

I was afraid it will come up in Jiddish and they will recognise me that I'm, I'm

726

01:14:20,163 --> 01:14:26,528

Jewish, so I just wanted so quickly to learn German and now when I want to speak Jiddish

727

01:14:26,528 --> 01:14:30,940

it comes out German. But Jiddish songs I still remember. Yes.

728

01:14:30,940 --> 01:14:34,860

But when you talk about your mother ta, talking to you

729

01:14:34,860 --> 01:14:37,490

can you say it to me in German then?

730

01:14:37,490 --> 01:14:44,996

In German she said Mein Tochter, eh, eh we, we have,

731

01:14:44,996 --> 01:14:52,070

no, you see, it comes in, in English I, Ich, Ich

732

01:14:52,070 --> 01:14:52,070

Wir haben

733

01:14:52,070 --> 01:14:53,490

Wir müssen no I cannot

734

01:14:53,490 --> 01:14:55,340

Unsere Stelle verdienen onder so etwas?

735

01:14:55,340 --> 01:15:05,144

something like that, Wir, Wir müssen verdienen eh unser, unser Leben or our, our, it's something

736

01:15:05,144 --> 01:15:14,552

you know, but I still can see her when she said eh we have to earn our maybe it was different,

737

01:15:14,552 --> 01:15:21,980

because I still can see her in, in, in that grey raincoat. Anyhow [sighs].

738

01:15:21,980 --> 01:15:26,000

Your father was older and he had to work also in the waterworks?

739

01:15:26,000 --> 01:15:30,014

No, he wasn't much older, he was only three years older than

740

01:15:30,014 --> 01:15:33,900

my mother. My mother was 42 and my father was 45 when we got

741

01:15:33,900 --> 01:15:35,800

But for a man of 45

742

01:15:35,800 --> 01:15:36,050

five, yes

743

01:15:36,050 --> 01:15:37,120

to work in the water

744

01:15:37,120 --> 01:15:38,100

Yes?

745

01:15:38,100 --> 01:15:40,010

that kind of hard labour must have been

746

01:15:40,010 --> 01:15:40,480

Every, everybody

747

01:15:40,480 --> 01:15:40,820

different.

748

01:15:40,820 --> 01:15:47,160

you know. And my sister, she was only eighteen months older than I was. And the

749

01:15:47,160 --> 01:15:53,020

youngest brother he was hiding. He was hiding in, in Staw, he was hiding.

750

01:15:53,290 --> 01:15:54,570

Explain to me

751

01:15:54,570 --> 01:15:55,980

I don't know

752

01:15:55,980 --> 01:15:56,860

how could he do it?

753

01:15:56,860 --> 01:16:05,067

I d, I don't know how he did it, but he found a kettle, a, you know when you boiled water for tea

754

01:16:05,067 --> 01:16:13,275

or something and he used to fill it up behind, it was still the camp, but behind that mill he found

755

01:16:13,275 --> 01:16:21,400

a place where he could gather eh dry pieces of wood if it was cold, it wasn't always raining, it

756

01:16:21,400 --> 01:16:29,442

wasn't always snowing, it was October, and he used to lit the fire when he said mum, nobody can

757

01:16:29,442 --> 01:16:37,567

see me and he used to boil water in that kettle and he was only eleven years old and then we came

758

01:16:37,567 --> 01:16:44,200

back from work so we had some hot water, before we got that little bit of soup.

759

01:16:45,690 --> 01:16:48,010

Did you sleep with the family in Staw?

760

01:16:48,010 --> 01:16:48,720

Yes. Yes.

761

01:16:48,720 --> 01:16:50,360

You had a corner in the

762

01:16:50,360 --> 01:16:57,090

No, the men were separate from the woman, but we was on eh, we used to call it Pritze

763

01:16:57,090 --> 01:16:57,360

Yes?

764

01:16:57,360 --> 01:17:04,060

Yes, and that was so we used to huddle together so we had another blanket, because we had to cover

765

01:17:04,060 --> 01:17:10,490

the snow with one blanket, the straw, with one blanket and cover ourselves on with another one.

766

01:17:10,490 --> 01:17:10,710

Hmhm.

767

01:17:10,710 --> 01:17:19,562

You know. I had, still had my coat, my mother had a winter, winter stuff on thanks to that engineer.

768

01:17:19,562 --> 01:17:28,237

We got a lot of winter stuff out from the, from home, because we still had it in Siedliczcze where

769

01:17:28,237 --> 01:17:36,470

we were working. In ghetto. So we had a lot of winter stuff with us. And that saved us a lot.

770

01:17:37,310 --> 01:17:39,700

The engineer was Polish or German?

771

01:17:39,700 --> 01:17:50,241

Polish engineer, Polish. Kiendrcki. Yes, he was a, and the two girls, the, the, the Irene, Irene

772

01:17:50,241 --> 01:18:00,130

and Myszka, she was the daughter of a eh Polish senator. W, w, not Wisotsky eh Wasynczuk.

773

01:18:00,130 --> 01:18:00,320

Hmhm.

774

01:18:00,320 --> 01:18:09,084

You see, if I try I remember the name, Wisotsky was somebody else. Yes. Two sisters. They were

775

01:18:09,084 --> 01:18:17,290

lovely girls, that sister helped me later on a lot. When I was escaping. That will come.

776

01:18:19,040 --> 01:18:25,950

[coughs] So eh it was a rough life in Staw? It was very hard?

777

01:18:25,950 --> 01:18:28,250

Very hard because it was cold. Terribly cold.

778

01:18:28,250 --> 01:18:28,660

And you ?

779

01:18:29,550 --> 01:18:38,565

Yes. And there's another incident, but that was already wintertime. That was already in December.

780

01:18:38,565 --> 01:18:48,128

It was snowing and on Sunday we never used to go to work. Saturday sometimes only half a day. And Sundays

781

01:18:48,128 --> 01:18:57,508

not, we had to clean up the camp. And the whole world was covered in snow and it looked like a picture

782

01:18:57,508 --> 01:19:06,888

card, you know. The wintertime. And we were outside and then we saw outside one of the fences two black

783

01:19:06,888 --> 01:19:16,450

dots. And the dots were coming closer and closer [scrapes throat] and when they were very close we heard,

784

01:19:16,450 --> 01:19:25,557

we saw it was two boys. Crying and calling out for their mother. Because their mother and father was

785

01:19:25,557 --> 01:19:35,210

in the camp [coughs], oh pardon me [scrapes throat] but their grandfather was one of the highest decorated

786

01:19:35,210 --> 01:19:44,317

Polish soldier for the First Worldwar, and he, they had a very, the, the government gave him a very

787

01:19:44,317 --> 01:19:53,333

good position. He had the, the where they eh have spirits and wine to sell, because that was under

788

01:19:53,333 --> 01:20:02,531

government law, nobody can have it, that in private. And that was the grandson's twins, eight years

789

01:20:02,531 --> 01:20:11,638

old twins for that and the parents were already in Staw working. And when they were close enough, we

790

01:20:11,638 --> 01:20:20,836

recognised and the parents recognised them. And one of the SS-men or German, I don't know if he was

791

01:20:20,836 --> 01:20:29,852

SS or just a soldier, he took out the German sheperd, what you, they were circling the camp around

792

01:20:29,852 --> 01:20:38,867

and I don't have to paint you the picture what they did to the two boys. And we couldn't help.

793

01:20:38,867 --> 01:20:47,974

Oh gosh, that was something that it's hard to and describe. Mother was behind and my sister were

794

01:20:47,974 --> 01:20:57,081

behind and we looked at each other I don't know if I said it or my sister said it, if they can do

795

01:20:57,081 --> 01:21:06,188

that to two children what can we expect from them for us? The things we never get any answers for

796

01:21:06,188 --> 01:21:15,477

that. Because later on on life I had hear a professor who was teaching in Adelaide University religion

797

01:21:15,477 --> 01:21:24,584

and Jewish religion and he was a doctor, professor doctor and all that and we were very good friends

798

01:21:24,584 --> 01:21:33,782

and we used to talk a lot and one day he said, everything what happened in our life is for a purpose.

799

01:21:33,782 --> 01:21:42,980

And I said, doctor, and I forgot his name, I've got his address there, tell me, was the Holo, what

800

01:21:42,980 --> 01:21:52,087

purpose was the Holocaust? And he said I don't have an answer for that. There isn't any answer

801

01:21:52,087 --> 01:22:01,376

for that. No. The only thing was annoyed us and that much was to the rest was doing nothing. Roosevelt

802

01:22:01,376 --> 01:22:11,302

knew about it since 1942 because we after the war, in the museum, in Sydney Jewish museum we had newspapers,

803

01:22:11,302 --> 01:22:20,500

the New York Times, the Chicago, what was it, Chicago's newspaper, anyhow, you know what I mean, it

804

01:22:20,500 --> 01:22:29,607

was the heading, was 1942, what they were doing, what Hitler is doing to the Jews and Roosevelt said

805

01:22:29,607 --> 01:22:38,714

don't worry we are going to win, to win the war. And that was three more years of war when he said

806

01:22:38,714 --> 01:22:39,169

that.

807

01:22:41,560 --> 01:22:46,760

But when you were there you had no news about the war?

808

01:22:46,760 --> 01:22:46,760

No, no, no.

809

01:22:46,760 --> 01:22:48,000

Because this is after Stalingrad.

810

01:22:48,000 --> 01:22:49,490

Yes.

811

01:22:49,650 --> 01:22:50,970

So the German were losing the war already.

812

01:22:50,970 --> 01:22:50,970

Yes.

813

01:22:50,970 --> 01:22:54,440

But you didn't, you didn't know about Stalingrad?

814

01:22:54,440 --> 01:23:07,219

I didn't know. No. No. But when the eh transport of the Russian prisoners of war, Jewish prisoners

815

01:23:07,219 --> 01:23:18,210

of war, they were still in the uniform, that was the 23rd of September nineteen forty

816

01:23:18,560 --> 01:23:24,513

three. And then they were telling us that they are losing the war. And we

817

01:23:24,513 --> 01:23:30,150

can't wait any longer because we'll be all killed. Pechersky helped

818

01:23:30,150 --> 01:23:31,990

Yes, but that's later on.

819

01:23:31,990 --> 01:23:33,190

helped us. Yes.

820

01:23:33,190 --> 01:23:37,710

Let's, do you mind to go back to Staw, because it must have been unbearably cold!

821

01:23:37,960 --> 01:23:45,396

It was hard to describe. I don't know, please don't ask me, how we survived, because

822

01:23:45,396 --> 01:23:53,000

sometimes we used to say it was too much to die and not enough for living, I mean the food.

823

01:23:53,000 --> 01:24:00,772

We used to pray nothing much but the daily bread, you know, how we, we, we pray, our father,

824

01:24:00,772 --> 01:24:08,209

you know, the prayer might be in Jiddish, is not like that because we used to pray it in,

825

01:24:08,209 --> 01:24:15,646

in Hebrew and I did, didn't understand Hebrew, so I liked to pray it in, in Polish, our

826

01:24:15,646 --> 01:24:23,500

father, you know, it is exactly the same word that is in English, you know. All we were asking

827

01:24:23,500 --> 01:24:29,350

was our daily bread, nothing else. Because bread was so holy in camp.

828

01:24:29,350 --> 01:24:35,570

But it must also have been very dirty? Dirty

829

01:24:35,570 --> 01:24:35,710

Yes.

830

01:24:35,710 --> 01:24:37,580

you must have become very dirty.

831

01:24:37,580 --> 01:24:38,700

Yes.

832

01:24:38,820 --> 01:24:41,440

Did you still have your period then, or?

833

01:24:41,750 --> 01:24:47,510

No I had, didn't have the period for about eight months. It stopped.

834

01:24:50,080 --> 01:24:50,420

Hmhm.

835

01:24:50,420 --> 01:24:57,627

Yes. I don't know, and because eh that stopped so I used to get boils all over me.

836

01:24:57,627 --> 01:25:05,006

And standing in the water and that cold, cold sinc and all that, I don't know how my

837

01:25:05,006 --> 01:25:11,870

mother see how we were suffering, how she survived. My father was a strong man.

838

01:25:13,780 --> 01:25:14,340

He was?

839

01:25:14,340 --> 01:25:22,166

Yes. Even my brother after me, he, even if he was a lot younger, he was stronger than, than maybe

840

01:25:22,166 --> 01:25:30,232

I was, I don't know. I the size I'm today I think I didn't grow since I was twelve. I've got

841

01:25:30,232 --> 01:25:37,580

here in Australia a good excuse, I was born in a small country, not in a continent [laughs].

842

01:25:37,580 --> 01:25:41,580

Okay. How did you learn you had to move from Staw?

843

01:25:41,580 --> 01:25:43,800

We were told

844

01:25:43,810 --> 01:25:44,080

Yes?

845

01:25:44,080 --> 01:25:52,985

in the morning that we are not going to work and, and a lot of farmers have assembled with wagons

846

01:25:52,985 --> 01:26:01,982

and eh horsed driven wagons and they were eh women with, with a little bit, sisters are eh you know,

847

01:26:01,982 --> 01:26:10,888

daughters were sitting on a certain wagons and the men were separate on other wagons. And we were

848

01:26:10,888 --> 01:26:18,599

told that we are going to another camp. And where we were going they never told us.

849

01:26:19,220 --> 01:26:24,348

Yes, that's how you started talking this interview,

850

01:26:24,348 --> 01:26:29,380

when you said when the, you took the road to Wlodawa

851

01:26:29,380 --> 01:26:29,600

To Wlodawa, yes.

852

01:26:29,600 --> 01:26:29,600

you realised that

853

01:26:29,600 --> 01:26:30,780

Yes, not we realised the, the brother said something.

854

01:26:30,780 --> 01:26:30,780

Yes.

855

01:26:30,780 --> 01:26:38,164

Let's say goodbye to the night because we won't see the sunrise. Yes. But we,

856

01:26:38,164 --> 01:26:44,910

we never be, couldn't understand what he was saying, what it meant. Yes.

857

01:26:44,910 --> 01:26:51,400

So, since you started talking about how you elected yourself for knitting

858

01:26:51,400 --> 01:26:52,410

Yes.

859

01:26:52,410 --> 01:26:59,739

you already told that, eh you landed up at this shed in Sobibor for knitting.

860

01:26:59,739 --> 01:27:06,600

And that's where we had gone to and then, since that we have come back.

861

01:27:06,600 --> 01:27:07,430

No.

862

01:27:07,530 --> 01:27:09,390

You remember?

863

01:27:09,980 --> 01:27:11,340

Where, what is

864

01:27:11,340 --> 01:27:14,960

How the interview went? You started the interview with the knitting room.

865

01:27:14,960 --> 01:27:15,580

Knitting room, yes.

866

01:27:15,580 --> 01:27:18,800

And so, let's pick up from there again.

867

01:27:18,800 --> 01:27:26,185

Yes, from there, yes, alright, then we were knitting, we had to do, first of all they brought,

868

01:27:26,185 --> 01:27:33,492

they b, eh fixed up the, the barrack for us and a very big table and chairs and they brought,

869

01:27:33,492 --> 01:27:41,035

they gave us a potbelly little stove and they gave us one bucket of fuel, some wood to start and

870

01:27:41,035 --> 01:27:48,657

then coal and we used to keep that for the evening because that, the evening was the coldest and,

871

01:27:48,657 --> 01:27:56,042

and then we could knit a little bit from the, when they, curfew was at eight o'clock so they

872

01:27:56,042 --> 01:28:04,057

switched off the light. Sometimes it was impossible to do one sock, we had to undo beautiful cardigans

873

01:28:04,057 --> 01:28:11,521

and jumpers and they were from all over Europe, you know, and then we had to, from that wool we

874

01:28:11,521 --> 01:28:18,985

had to knit a sock a day. Some of us were doing fast the leg and some of us could do better the

875

01:28:18,985 --> 01:28:26,842

heel or the, the toes, so we used to, to, how shall I say, help ourselves out, so that we haven't,

876

01:28:26,842 --> 01:28:30,849

we had to have a half a dozen socks in the morning.

877

01:28:30,850 --> 01:28:32,870

Did you always manage

878

01:28:32,870 --> 01:28:40,940

Eh we managed, because the, the flicker of the from the fire, when the light was switched off and when

879

01:28:40,940 --> 01:28:49,011

we had that little potbelly for the eh night, so we had a little bit warm where to sleep. And there was

880

01:28:49,011 --> 01:28:57,082

another thing, there were twelve of us in all because there was a real young girl, Irene, she did a lot

881

01:28:57,082 --> 01:29:05,153

of help with her mother and her brother, they were knitting and they had to undo first, we all helped,

882

01:29:05,153 --> 01:29:13,224

we all helped each other. We just didn't think you can or you can't, we have to do it. And whatever

883

01:29:13,224 --> 01:29:21,216

it was possible to do it in a way that what we were trying to do and then [swallows] eh when the, the,

884

01:29:21,216 --> 01:29:29,130

the socks were ready in the morning, they used to count, that's another thing, there was only three

885

01:29:29,130 --> 01:29:36,966

or four of us, because it was three layers and I was assigned to the top thing in the, the, the the

886

01:29:36,966 --> 01:29:44,880

roof from the barrack, was like that. And it didn't have a ceiling. So if I have meine toes there,

887

01:29:44,880 --> 01:29:53,342

meine toes were freezing and if I had meine head there on the end, you know, there, meine head was freezing.

888

01:29:53,342 --> 01:30:01,413

So the girls made room, another three to fit in on the, on the first or the second one, so we were just

889

01:30:01,413 --> 01:30:05,409

packed in like, like eh sardines, no [laughs], no

890

01:30:05,410 --> 01:30:05,410

Yes

891

01:30:05,480 --> 01:30:11,560

hard to, yes

892

01:30:11,560 --> 01:30:11,660

Yes.

893

01:30:11,660 --> 01:30:21,970

yes, but we managed, nobody was on top, it was impossible in the winter.

894

01:30:21,970 --> 01:30:22,100

Because the roof was not really closed.

895

01:30:22,100 --> 01:30:23,658

No, that roof was closed but it wasn't a ceiling. And the, the

896

01:30:23,658 --> 01:30:25,070

roof was covered with, eh, what is that, that iron called?

897

01:30:25,070 --> 01:30:25,270

Straw?

898

01:30:25,270 --> 01:30:29,600

Co eh, eh how, cord

899

01:30:29,600 --> 01:30:29,830

Cardboard?

900

01:30:29,830 --> 01:30:33,760

you know, that, that, that roof cover, what is that eh iron, iron roof

901

01:30:33,760 --> 01:30:34,710

I understand.

902

01:30:34,710 --> 01:30:36,230

an iron roof.

903

01:30:36,230 --> 01:30:37,280

An iron roof, yes.

904

01:30:37,280 --> 01:30:45,828

Yes. Yes. And that was colder than wood or anything else. You know. In the winter. But we managed somehow

905

01:30:45,828 --> 01:30:54,050

to do it and we even managed to knit something else and, they, which I want German is not supposed to

906

01:30:54,050 --> 01:31:02,435

know from another and we ask you know to, and only once was somebody brought in maybe a slice of bread,

907

01:31:02,435 --> 01:31:10,739

was someone, one German brought in some sugarcubes, but what do you do with, so I hid mine in a little

908

01:31:10,739 --> 01:31:19,695

pocket I had there and eh anyhow, that was something, but that was from the sowing room when I was [swallos].

909

01:31:19,695 --> 01:31:28,080

And when the knitting, shall I tell when the knitting finished or shall we still do the knitting during

910

01:31:28,080 --> 01:31:36,628

the winter. And in spring the knitting was finished. We were assigned to different work. First I think

911

01:31:36,628 --> 01:31:45,013

was assigned to the forest. Because the men was cutting off branches so a horseman can ride through the

912

01:31:45,013 --> 01:31:53,236

forest and we had to take the branches away into the camp. They needed that wood for the crematorium.

913

01:31:53,236 --> 01:32:01,458

And eh then, after that we were assigned, there were little bunkers in the forest and there was only

914

01:32:01,458 --> 01:32:09,844

the roof was sticking under, were two steps to go down, or three, and there was Russian ammunition that

915

01:32:09,844 --> 01:32:18,473

they, from the Russian front, what they, the Germans eh, because in the beginning the Russians was losing,

916

01:32:18,473 --> 01:32:27,021

so they had the Russian ammunition there, we had to clean that. And then sometimes we had to unload other

917

01:32:27,021 --> 01:32:35,570

things and other things and then I was taking to the sorting eh garage. And the sorting was the clothing.

918

01:32:35,570 --> 01:32:43,955

Everything good has to be sorted out different. And that was going straight to Germany. They'd showed

919

01:32:43,955 --> 01:32:52,666

us how to, to rip up the bundles, the good stuff. And they had three or four glass containers on a separate

920

01:32:52,666 --> 01:33:00,888

table. And when you find money or goods, whatever it was hidden and we were finding it, we had to put

921

01:33:00,888 --> 01:33:09,030

it in there. If you hide it, you get shot on the way, on the, on the that's got, for the Germans.

922

01:33:09,030 --> 01:33:17,171

And then was eh, when, where I was doing that, there was a brought onto the table a bundle and I n,

923

01:33:17,171 --> 01:33:25,719

nearly froze, standing looking at it and the girls ask what's happening to you? That brown jack, jacket

924

01:33:25,719 --> 01:33:34,267

that is my mother's jacket. A winter jacket. Oh she said don't be, I said it in, in English, don't

925

01:33:34,267 --> 01:33:42,408

be your transport was in December and it's now May, it wouldn't lay here about there that long.

926

01:33:42,408 --> 01:33:50,630

I said I can prove it to you. My mother hid, there was a breast pocket on each side, she p eh hid her

927

01:33:50,630 --> 01:33:59,016

wedding ring in the lining. I said if you will watch out for me and I'm strong enough and even when

928

01:33:59,016 --> 01:34:07,483

I'm not strong enough, we always had sci, scissors lying about because we were ripping up the bundles,

929

01:34:07,483 --> 01:34:15,868

we had to cut off the strings and things like that, and I'll rip off the lining on the pocket and you

930

01:34:15,868 --> 01:34:24,253

will see there's my mother's ring there. And it was my mother's jacket. I couldn't give up that

931

01:34:24,253 --> 01:34:32,394

ring. But the floor boards were not close by, it was eh, eh a distant from one board to the other, I

932

01:34:32,394 --> 01:34:40,861

could fit meine toes into the sand because the board were lying on sand. And I fit on and I dropped that

933

01:34:40,861 --> 01:34:49,165

ring and covered it up in the sand. I didn't give it up. I couldn't hide it with me, if they would

934

01:34:49,165 --> 01:34:54,782

have found it, I would have been shot. But I couldn't give it up.-

935

01:34:54,620 --> 01:34:57,770

Did you have a phantasy to find it?

936

01:34:57,770 --> 01:35:00,440

Oh how, meine dear

937

01:35:00,440 --> 01:35:00,890

Yes.

938

01:35:00,890 --> 01:35:06,263

Selma, how, we never been back, never been back to Sobibor. And Sobibor,

939

01:35:06,263 --> 01:35:11,563

the Germans dugged everything up and they even, you know, they planted

940

01:35:11,563 --> 01:35:16,340

tr, a new forest, you know. They, it, it was imp, maybe somebody

941

01:35:16,340 --> 01:35:18,060

sp SL I know, I know.

942

01:35:18,060 --> 01:35:22,113

maybe somebody found it, but not me and not, nobody from us

943

01:35:22,113 --> 01:35:25,960

went ever back during the war when, you know, they, they

944

01:35:25,960 --> 01:35:28,450

No, but, but I'm asking when you hid the ring

945

01:35:28,450 --> 01:35:29,790

The ring, yes.

946

01:35:30,410 --> 01:35:35,690

did you then have a fantasy to be ever able to dig it up again, or?

947

01:35:36,030 --> 01:35:40,740

I never dreamed I would pick it up again, but I didn't give it up to the Germans.

948

01:35:40,740 --> 01:35:41,210

Okay.

949

01:35:41,210 --> 01:35:47,808

Whatever will find it, good luck to them. You know. But not to give it up,

950

01:35:47,808 --> 01:35:54,050

that would have gone straight with other jewelry to Germany. You know.

951

01:35:54,050 --> 01:35:54,050

Hmhm.

952

01:35:54,050 --> 01:35:58,508

I never, never dreamed about it. Anyhow. What they, they, when we escaped, what

953

01:35:58,508 --> 01:36:02,910

they did to that camp, later on I found out, I didn't know it straight away.

954

01:36:02,910 --> 01:36:08,120

It must have been a terrible confrontation suddenly with the jacket of your mother.

955

01:36:08,120 --> 01:36:08,540

Oh I knew I

956

01:36:08,540 --> 01:36:11,670

Because you must have missed her so much.

957

01:36:11,670 --> 01:36:18,989

I knew, I knew what was, I knew what happening to the family, but now I have her clothing

958

01:36:18,989 --> 01:36:26,309

in meine hand was a, a woolen, even the lable for that, the, the tailor who made it was

959

01:36:26,309 --> 01:36:33,464

Offenbach from Lublin. You know. It was a beautiful winter jacket, it was lined and in

960

01:36:33,464 --> 01:36:40,702

between the lining there was still warm stuff in there. Like our coats, the winter coats

961

01:36:40,702 --> 01:36:48,103

had inside like, like felt or something very light stuff. But in layer, before the lining,

962

01:36:48,103 --> 01:36:54,189

so it will be warm. You know, it wasn't, the winters were not like here.

963

01:36:54,190 --> 01:36:54,190

No.

964

01:36:54,190 --> 01:37:04,705

Yes. We needed the warm stuff. Anyhow, and then [swallows] just as well the 23rd of September

965

01:37:04,705 --> 01:37:15,000

did the Russian transport came in. And amongst them was a lieutenant with the name Alexander

966

01:37:15,000 --> 01:37:22,970

Pechersky and we called him Sascha. In Russia Alexander they call Sacha.

967

01:37:22,970 --> 01:37:23,370

Sascha, yes.

968

01:37:23,370 --> 01:37:32,012

Yes. Even he, but he was seeing and hearing what was going on, he said eh that he's got a three

969

01:37:32,012 --> 01:37:40,476

years old daughter in Russia [swallows], he himself was a music teacher. But in the army he was

970

01:37:40,476 --> 01:37:49,208

lieutenant. And there was a lot of other Russian soldiers with him. And we already had in the camp

971

01:37:49,208 --> 01:37:57,672

somebody with the name of eh Leon Feldhendler. And they were, he and other m, men were planning,

972

01:37:57,672 --> 01:38:06,048

because one escaped, we had to pay a very high price. If they caught that one, then or a dozen

973

01:38:06,048 --> 01:38:14,512

others were shot from the camp and the ones who were, you know, it was hard to describe, and we

974

01:38:14,512 --> 01:38:23,066

said either, ei we go all or not at all. And that was, Pechersky helped out because he had a lot

975

01:38:23,066 --> 01:38:31,441

of military experience. And then it started. It started, it started and we were always waiting

976

01:38:31,441 --> 01:38:37,500

for Wagner. I never told you about what I lived through in the camp.

977

01:38:37,500 --> 01:38:37,500

Tell me.

978

01:38:37,500 --> 01:38:45,914

[sighs] I was working in, in a, a laundry. And I wasn't well, I had a terrible headache and it

979

01:38:45,914 --> 01:38:54,503

wasn't a headache you know, it was a earache. A middle ear infection, I know now what it was, but

980

01:38:54,503 --> 01:39:02,918

then I didn't know. And maybe I was just standing and waiting for the hot water, maybe that was

981

01:39:02,918 --> 01:39:11,853

my excuse, because I needed a little bit of warm for my hands. And I wasn't eh, make myself working,

982

01:39:11,853 --> 01:39:20,615

I was standing, I don't know what happened with me then. And the German came in. One of the guards,

983

01:39:20,615 --> 01:39:29,030

I think his name was Kam [spells] K A N, A M. And he said, because I wasn't working, he took me

984

01:39:29,030 --> 01:39:37,618

out, outside and that particular day Wagner, he was the most ferocious be, no I shouldn't call him

985

01:39:37,618 --> 01:39:46,120

beast, because a beast doesn't kill for nothing, it's either they defend themselves or they are

986

01:39:46,120 --> 01:39:54,534

hungry, but he was killing people for nothing, to, took me out and Wagner had just standing there

987

01:39:54,534 --> 01:40:02,863

with his dog, and a pile of wood the men was shopping the wood, and that was about that high, a

988

01:40:02,863 --> 01:40:11,191

pile of wood and he told him that I wasn't working, he told me to bend down and then even told

989

01:40:11,191 --> 01:40:19,692

me to lift my skirt up. And they had the, the whips, about a meter long anyhow, you to, sh, cut,

990

01:40:19,692 --> 01:40:23,769

I remember where I finished, you are too tired.

991

01:40:23,770 --> 01:40:24,550

No.

992

01:40:27,490 --> 01:40:27,610

No?

993

01:40:27,610 --> 01:40:28,450

No!

994

01:40:28,450 --> 01:40:28,510

Oh.

995

01:40:28,510 --> 01:40:28,510

I'm listening. Verry attentively.

996

01:40:28,510 --> 01:40:36,518

And eh he started to hit me, but I didn't scream. And the, the boys, you know, couldn't understand,

997

01:40:36,518 --> 01:40:43,982

I don't know how many, I never counted, it could have been ten or more, but each time the whip

998

01:40:43,982 --> 01:40:51,601

came along to the front I had blisters on my stomach. And then he told to the guy, guard, take her

999

01:40:51,601 --> 01:40:59,610

back to the laundry and the girls wanted to help me and cold compresses, I couldn't sit, I couldn't

1000

01:40:59,610 --> 01:41:07,074

lie and my head was nearly bursting. And we had a nurse from Czechoslovakia, a man, if somebody

1001

01:41:07,074 --> 01:41:15,082

just had an accident at work, cut himself, not, not to be sick, because they didn't need sick people,

1002

01:41:15,082 --> 01:41:22,701

that's why I couldn't tell anybody, but that could eh Thomas, was his name, and he said we, we

1003

01:41:22,701 --> 01:41:30,321

had, and the camp we had a dentist. And he said he will talk to the dentist, maybe he'll be able

1004

01:41:30,321 --> 01:41:34,520

to help me. Because my head it was so terribly painful.

1005

01:41:34,520 --> 01:41:36,300

A middle ear infection is horrible!

1006

01:41:36,300 --> 01:41:44,352

It's worse than toothache. And, and he talked to the dentist, he said after the rollcall before eh

1007

01:41:44,352 --> 01:41:52,404

before they switched off that we have to be in the barracks and all that, he will try to have a look,

1008

01:41:52,404 --> 01:42:00,618

he might be able if he had the torch, to might be able to pierce through my ear drum. And he managed.

1009

01:42:00,618 --> 01:42:08,912

He had pieces of cotton wool, everything that had to be so discretely done, so anybody from the inmates

1010

01:42:08,912 --> 01:42:17,045

wouldn't see it because they might talk about it and somebody will hear about it. And that was such

1011

01:42:17,045 --> 01:42:25,500

a relieve. It was running and running and running, you know. But the pressure was gone. And it didn't

1012

01:42:25,500 --> 01:42:33,392

take long [swallows] I felt a lot better, but I was at the laundry and all day long in the laundry

1013

01:42:33,392 --> 01:42:41,444

with those, with the water, the steam and the, I couldn't and it happened to have a dream that my

1014

01:42:41,444 --> 01:42:49,577

ma was at home, we had a very big apple tree. And under the apple tree were seats. And like a little,

1015

01:42:49,577 --> 01:42:57,469

you know where we, we could sit in a little, my father made it all, and I was sitting there and my

1016

01:42:57,469 --> 01:43:05,763

mum came home with my two youngest brother from school, they were still in their school uniform because

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01:43:05,763 --> 01:43:09,869

the kids at Poland they were wearing knitted tops,

1018

01:43:09,870 --> 01:43:10,150

Yes.

1019

01:43:10,150 --> 01:43:19,101

uniform, you know, and I complaint that much to my mama said if I won't get any help I won't last

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01:43:19,101 --> 01:43:28,052

much longer, could you help me. She said don't worry, I'll send you my sister, she will help you.

1021

01:43:28,052 --> 01:43:37,269

I woke up, I don't know it was next morning or a morning after, I was in the laundry and Scharführer

1022

01:43:37,269 --> 01:43:46,663

Frenzel came into the landry. And he ask who can sow men shirts? I said I can only saw collars and cuffs,

1023

01:43:46,663 --> 01:43:55,615

I can't put the shirt together. That's what he need, there's somebody else in the German sewing

1024

01:43:55,615 --> 01:44:04,654

room who can sow the, put the shirt together. He says dry yourself up so you wouldn't come into the

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01:44:04,654 --> 01:44:13,694

sewing room wet or whatever he explained to me, anyhow, the next morning he came in and he took me to

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01:44:13,694 --> 01:44:19,810

the sowing room. Mein dear, dear Selma that was from hell to heaven.

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01:44:20,070 --> 01:44:20,660

Really?

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01:44:20,660 --> 01:44:28,449

Because can you imagine to sit in a dry place, near a sewing machine and do things, not just shirts,

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01:44:28,449 --> 01:44:35,927

we were doing that many different thing, because the, our, our eh lady who was doing all that,

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01:44:35,927 --> 01:44:43,405

she was an artist, she looked at something and she can cut it out and make it. We had to do that

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01:44:43,405 --> 01:44:50,961

many different things, dressing up dolls, I was doing the beginning the cuffs and the collars and

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01:44:50,961 --> 01:44:58,439

not somebody else, we were four in the sowing room, and we would, used to monogram handkerchiefs

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01:44:58,439 --> 01:45:03,969

for the, and, and all the lingery for hi, for the, for the Germans. And

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01:45:03,970 --> 01:45:07,920

You were working for the Germans

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01:45:07,920 --> 01:45:15,538

All for the German, that was in the German quarter, not in that place where we were living. That

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01:45:15,538 --> 01:45:23,076

was different. And eh after, when the rollcall came on a German was coming, take us out for the

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01:45:23,076 --> 01:45:30,694

rollcall, because we were, have to be counted. I didn't have far to go to the, to the, because

1038

01:45:30,694 --> 01:45:38,471

that was only one eh division, one fence between camp and camp. Not the outside camp, the outside

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01:45:38,471 --> 01:45:45,930

fences had three wires for the sec, the third there were mines all around. You can't escape.

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01:45:45,930 --> 01:45:54,025

And that wasn't, mines you know, in the middle. And eh that had helped me that much and I interpret

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01:45:54,025 --> 01:45:59,580

that my mother told me she's sending me help. And that was the help.

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01:45:59,580 --> 01:46:01,590

So the conditions were much, much better in the

1043

01:46:02,030 --> 01:46:03,060

Oh, the sowing

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01:46:03,060 --> 01:46:04,210

new place?

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01:46:04,210 --> 01:46:10,745

the sowing room was so beautiful! Beautiful sowing machines and the materials

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01:46:10,745 --> 01:46:17,112

what we were doing and you know sowing, it was su, can you imagine to dress

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01:46:17,112 --> 01:46:22,290

up dolls? Or to monogram hankies? And to s, do lau, lingerie?

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01:46:22,290 --> 01:46:22,290

That's for the families, yes?

1049

01:46:22,290 --> 01:46:31,610

All where they were going and leave, they used to take that home with them. Yes. And a lot of

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01:46:31,610 --> 01:46:33,230

And did you also sleep there, or did you sleep in

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01:46:33,230 --> 01:46:34,160

No, no, no, no.

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01:46:34,160 --> 01:46:34,840

you were

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01:46:34,840 --> 01:46:40,632

After work, when everybody finished the work from the other places, we used

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01:46:40,632 --> 01:46:46,425

to come in to the camp and we were sleeping, that was the rollcall, we were

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01:46:46,425 --> 01:46:51,910

counted and then let go to have our evening meal. A little bit of soup.

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01:46:51,910 --> 01:46:56,770

So that part of life was not different from the other prisoners?

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01:46:56,770 --> 01:47:04,445

No, no. No, not different, but it was lighter for me, that was something that I can't

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01:47:04,445 --> 01:47:11,680

explain. To sit all day and dry stuff and I wi, I never felt hungry there. Never.

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01:47:11,680 --> 01:47:16,310

Well, you ate the same as the eh, the other inmates.

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01:47:16,410 --> 01:47:17,020

Pardon?

1061

01:47:17,020 --> 01:47:21,760

You, you, you also used the same kitchen as the other inmates, or did you get extra?

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01:47:21,760 --> 01:47:27,941

No, no, no, like the other, after work. For instance when the bells were ringing for instance

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01:47:27,941 --> 01:47:34,057

at five o'clock, we finished in the sowing room and a German took us in where the rollcall

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01:47:34,057 --> 01:47:39,840

was and after, you know, we had to be counted, we were together with the other inmates.

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01:47:39,840 --> 01:47:43,660

But still you were not hungry?

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01:47:43,660 --> 01:47:43,910

But

1067

01:47:43,910 --> 01:47:45,850

Because the other's were hungry. That's what you always say.

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01:47:46,260 --> 01:47:50,142

Yes, ah, but when I was working with the sowing, I was never hungry.

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01:47:50,142 --> 01:47:53,740

I didn't feel the hunger. Because I wasn't working so hard.

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01:47:53,740 --> 01:47:54,520

Oh, exactly!

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01:47:54,520 --> 01:47:54,700

Yes.

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01:47:54,700 --> 01:47:56,710

So you needed less?

1073

01:47:56,710 --> 01:48:00,070

I needed that, that rest, I would not have survived in the laundry.

1074

01:48:00,070 --> 01:48:00,250

Yes.

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01:48:00,250 --> 01:48:06,826

With all that, that, in my head and all that, I was so worn out I couldn't,

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01:48:06,826 --> 01:48:12,976

couldn't survive much longer. And that was the help my mother send me.

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01:48:12,976 --> 01:48:17,930

Yes. How would you interpret it? Tell me. A different way.

1078

01:48:17,930 --> 01:48:19,500

That dream, with your mother?

1079

01:48:19,500 --> 01:48:26,750

Yes. She told me she was going to se, send my sister to help me. And that was Frenzel.

1080

01:48:26,750 --> 01:48:28,220

You never know about dreams.

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01:48:28,220 --> 01:48:28,380

No.

1082

01:48:28,380 --> 01:48:30,090

You never know

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01:48:30,090 --> 01:48:30,950

No.

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01:48:30,950 --> 01:48:33,020

where they come from.

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01:48:33,020 --> 01:48:39,980

Where they come from, what they, what they are, what they meant. And all that.

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01:48:39,980 --> 01:48:39,980

Why you dream.

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01:48:39,980 --> 01:48:39,980

Yes.

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01:48:39,980 --> 01:48:39,980

How you make an interpretation

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01:48:39,980 --> 01:48:39,980

Yes

1090

01:48:39,980 --> 01:48:40,210

you never know.

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01:48:40,210 --> 01:48:43,450

yes. Yes I, how I interpret it. Yes.

1092

01:48:44,620 --> 01:48:46,470

So I can't answer your question.

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01:48:46,470 --> 01:48:46,860

[laughs]

1094

01:48:46,860 --> 01:48:53,010

But eh you all were thinking about escaping. Did you know that Feldhendler was

1095

01:48:53,010 --> 01:49:01,235

Yes we knew, but it was all hush hush. Because us woman, we couldn't help much, it was all about

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01:49:01,235 --> 01:49:09,209

the men. And then when, when Pechersky was there and we were waiting that Wagner goes on leave,

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01:49:09,209 --> 01:49:17,267

because he would have sniffed it out, and eh the commandant was Reichleitner, Franz Rechleitner,

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01:49:17,267 --> 01:49:25,325

he was the commandant, but he didn't have much to do with very seldom used to see him, and he

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01:49:25,325 --> 01:49:33,467

was going on leave and somebody else, eh Frenzel took over and another one, that second in charge

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01:49:33,467 --> 01:49:41,441

of the commandant was Niemann, but he was always on his horse, he didn't have much, you know,

1101

01:49:41,441 --> 01:49:48,240

the others were more, you know ferocious, but nobody was like Wagner. And he, he

1102

01:49:48,240 --> 01:49:48,810

Because Wagner

1103

01:49:48,810 --> 01:49:49,750

wa, was go

1104

01:49:49,750 --> 01:49:50,210

really found out everything.

1105

01:49:50,210 --> 01:49:53,506

he would have sniffed it out straight away. You know,

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01:49:53,506 --> 01:49:56,740

we couldn't, couldn't hide anything from Wagner.

1107

01:49:56,740 --> 01:49:59,790

Did he have so many spies or?

1108

01:49:59,790 --> 01:50:06,201

I don't know what he had. Because they were Ukrainians a lot, but Ukrainians were not in

1109

01:50:06,201 --> 01:50:12,765

the camp, on eh the towers. And around the camp and all that. Whatever happened to the

1110

01:50:12,765 --> 01:50:19,176

Dutch workers we never knew, we never could find out. They were taking away, I think

1111

01:50:19,176 --> 01:50:25,130

there was a, I don't know exactly, somebody told me there was about seventy.

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01:50:26,010 --> 01:50:26,870

Dutch workers?

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01:50:26,870 --> 01:50:33,160

Dutch workers just in the camp. They were taking away and we never saw them back or the

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01:50:33,160 --> 01:50:34,810

So that they, all at the same time?

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01:50:35,090 --> 01:50:39,020

when I was there, yes. Yes.

1116

01:50:39,020 --> 01:50:39,020

Suddenly the Dutch were taken away?

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01:50:39,020 --> 01:50:46,844

Yes. Nobody knows where they were taken to another camp, nobody knew why they were taking out, later

1118

01:50:46,844 --> 01:50:54,669

on after the war maybe, the men maybe have sniffed it out where, but utch, us woman, we never had to

1119

01:50:54,669 --> 01:51:02,729

do anything with that. The only thing I'll never forget, when Pechersky, when, when they sniffed out,

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01:51:02,729 --> 01:51:10,788

you know, Frenzel first, and that something is happening in camp, when he went in, Bauer, Scharführer

1121

01:51:10,788 --> 01:51:18,770

Bauer came back from the third camp with a truck. And that truck had to be unloaded. And Frenzel was

1122

01:51:18,770 --> 01:51:26,751

outside to help and to look for wo, for workers, because that was almost finished for work and he went

1123

01:51:26,751 --> 01:51:35,437

in to the office where the telephone was. And the telephonist, that, eh what was his name, the
oberscharführer

1124

01:51:35,437 --> 01:51:40,680

oh gosh, I forgot. Never mind. He was lying under the table. Dead.

1125

01:51:40,680 --> 01:51:48,126

And there was a hand of blood on the door, on the door post. That was eh Engel and a lot

1126

01:51:48,126 --> 01:51:55,737

of other eh, they were called in to the workshops to try on a coat and they never walked out

1127

01:51:55,737 --> 01:52:03,348

alive. And they, they, they, a lot of other try on shoes, I don't know how many got killed

1128

01:52:03,348 --> 01:52:11,291

like that. Maybe ten, maybe less, maybe more. After the war I found out a lot because I wasn't

1129

01:52:11,291 --> 01:52:17,000

there, you know, I wa, I run away to Germany [laughs]. And then, then

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01:52:17,000 --> 01:52:17,000

But

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01:52:17,000 --> 01:52:17,180

when

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01:52:17,180 --> 01:52:20,500

did you, did you, were you prepared that this was going to

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01:52:20,500 --> 01:52:29,056

A night before, the men told us if you have spare clothing, put it on, but not that much that it will

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01:52:29,056 --> 01:52:37,613

be noticeable for sudden you got big. I still had my coat, I was sleeping on mein coat. And I put it

1135

01:52:37,613 --> 01:52:46,085

on, and when we, they were coming back from work, that what they have assembled to and I only had to

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01:52:46,085 --> 01:52:53,710

come in from the sewing room there, but they weren't, the, here, here was the main gate.

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01:52:53,710 --> 01:52:53,710

Hmhm.

1138

01:52:53,710 --> 01:53:02,551

We were living there. The sowing room was there. And they were coming from work to assemble there. And

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01:53:02,551 --> 01:53:11,136

I had to come in to assemble with them. But when they were assembled and that something started with

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01:53:11,136 --> 01:53:19,892

eh Frenzel found that eh dead man under the table and Bauer was, and then the alarm was risen and the

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01:53:19,892 --> 01:53:28,734

shooting started from the towers, and Frenzel was shooting and all the others were shooting and mayhem

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01:53:28,734 --> 01:53:37,318

on the camp, we didn't, didn't know where to run, but there were men who had some tools and they

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01:53:37,318 --> 01:53:45,988

made some openings in the, in the in the wire. And I didn't have to walk far to that opening and I

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01:53:45,988 --> 01:53:54,916

got out. But [swallows] they were shooting from everywhere. And I wasn't afraid anymore, if I get shot

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01:53:54,916 --> 01:54:04,101

that will be a peaceful death that I don't have to go the gaschambers. But I managed to get out. Outside.

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01:54:04,101 --> 01:54:13,286

From the camp. And there was a lot of people who were running outside like that, because, oh we couldn't

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01:54:13,286 --> 01:54:22,557

march out the main gate, the main gate didn't have any, any mines, mines only around the camp. So that's

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01:54:22,557 --> 01:54:31,399

why we couldn't walk out the main gate anymore when the shooting started. And I still can see myself

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01:54:31,399 --> 01:54:40,155

and hear myself in, on top of everything, there were trees, logs I would think, from about a kilometre

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01:54:40,155 --> 01:54:48,740

long forest, the trees were cut down and they were lying and we had to jump over them and there were

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01:54:48,740 --> 01:54:58,011

mines. Anyhow, it and Pechersky was near, not near the gate because we couldn't go near, he was standing

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01:54:58,011 --> 01:55:06,681

there when ev, everybody tried to get away. And he got everybody for themselves, but he said remember

1153

01:55:06,681 --> 01:55:15,437

if only one survived, to tell the story, our escape is going to be a success. How can you forget that,

1154

01:55:15,437 --> 01:55:17,240

tell me. You can't.

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01:55:17,240 --> 01:55:18,820

He was such a strong man huh, clearly?

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01:55:18,820 --> 01:55:27,399

We were all strong. And everybody maybe were thinking the same as I was thinking. But I managed to

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01:55:27,399 --> 01:55:36,241

get away. And I was running and running and running. But one thing I must tell you. You might believe

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01:55:36,241 --> 01:55:44,908

me or not, I stopped for a second and I get a deep breath and it was so lovely to breath free air.

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01:55:44,908 --> 01:55:52,350

Not camp air. And I said I don't care if I get shot. Really, I didn't care then.

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01:55:52,350 --> 01:55:56,580

I understand.

1161

01:55:56,580 --> 01:56:01,223

And when we got to the, the forest there were two more people there, I

1162

01:56:01,223 --> 01:56:06,063

said where is everybody? And you know who was there? My cousin Zelda. And

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01:56:06,063 --> 01:56:10,380

the man Simon Rosomovitz from Warsaw. [sighs] Now, shall we stop?

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01:56:10,380 --> 01:56:15,130

Yes. I was just suggesting.

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01:56:15,690 --> 01:56:17,270

I don't know it where I finished.

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01:56:17,270 --> 01:56:20,050

No. I want we, just discussed that we are going to, to

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01:56:20,050 --> 01:56:22,010

To the, the

1168

01:56:23,290 --> 01:56:30,950

with the question how did you escape from Sobibor and become Regina Wojciszyn.

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01:56:30,950 --> 01:56:38,270

No eh when I finished was when I just get to the, the, out to the forest.

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01:56:38,270 --> 01:56:38,880

Absolutely.

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01:56:38,880 --> 01:56:46,944

And there was Zelda there, my late cousin, second cousin and that Simon Rozomovitz from Warsaw. And

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01:56:46,944 --> 01:56:55,172

we made ourselve to walked and walked and walked and we couldn't find a way out, but we saw eh like

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01:56:55,172 --> 01:57:03,563

eh the farmers, we went there, we knocked at the door and we told him who we we, who we are and he took

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01:57:03,563 --> 01:57:12,035

us in, want to give us something to eat and we thanked him very, very much, because we can't eat much,

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01:57:12,035 --> 01:57:20,507

but his wife cooked very quickly a potatoesoup and that was alright with us. And we went into his barn,

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01:57:20,507 --> 01:57:28,816

you know, before I couldn't remember that word barn, where he had the straw and he dugged out a very

1177

01:57:28,816 --> 01:57:37,207

big hole, so three people will fit in there. And we were all wet because it was raining when we arrived

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01:57:37,207 --> 01:57:45,434

there and we took or whatever we could, and he put on top a little pipe so we can have the air coming

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01:57:45,434 --> 01:57:53,581

in. And three of us were hiding in the barn, in that big, big mountain of straw. And next morning we

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01:57:53,581 --> 01:58:02,297

heard German voices. And the Germans were coming in to look for escapees with pitchforks. But the pitchfork

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01:58:02,297 --> 01:58:10,606

didn't reach us. And we stayed there another two days and then [swallows] Zelda said I know somebody

1182

01:58:10,606 --> 01:58:18,753

in Wlodawa. We found out how far from there to Wlodawa, it wasn't too far, we had the secretary of

1183

01:58:18,753 --> 01:58:26,899

the mayor in Wlodawa was our best friend. And, and she said I'll better go because all three of us

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01:58:26,899 --> 01:58:35,208

will be too much. She will go and find out for maybe he can make us some papers. We didn't have much

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01:58:35,208 --> 01:58:43,436

money, money at all, only Rozumowicz had some Polish money and maybe he had something else, I don't

1186

01:58:43,436 --> 01:58:51,582

know what he has and what he didn't and she left the, the next morning. She went to Wlodawa and we

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01:58:51,582 --> 01:59:00,217

never saw her again. We were very worried. And I said to Simon let's go and see where Zelda disappeared.

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01:59:00,217 --> 01:59:08,282

I will leave you in the forest and I will go to Wlodawa and find out what happened. And, but we had

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01:59:08,282 --> 01:59:16,509

a little bit a incident, you know, going there, it wasn't so easy with the farmer and all that, but

1190

01:59:16,509 --> 01:59:24,656

that I would go in to, to tell about anymore. And I went, left Simon in the forest and I made a good

1191

01:59:24,656 --> 01:59:33,128

mark where he is, because it was a young, young pineforest, forest and he had to lie down, he couldn't

1192

01:59:33,128 --> 01:59:41,193

even stand up there, he couldn't stand up. And I made, made my way to Wlodawa. I went to the main

1193

01:59:41,193 --> 01:59:49,257

road from the forest and I didn't know which way to go, right or left. But a young man was coming

1194

01:59:49,257 --> 01:59:57,485

on the, it was on the road and he was he, he, eh carrying a scythe on it, because it was a farmer's

1195

01:59:57,485 --> 02:00:05,713

son or something. And I ask him would you know which way I have to go to Wlodawa? Where, which way is

1196

02:00:05,713 --> 02:00:13,940

it? He said I'm going that way and I'll show you. But when we were walking, both of us already we

1197

02:00:13,940 --> 02:00:22,168

heard from the forest Germans were there, with machine guns and one was even calling out so, so early

1198

02:00:22,168 --> 02:00:30,233

in the morning you like eh, you know, and didn't answer because I you know, didn't understand

1199

02:00:30,233 --> 02:00:38,298

or whatever, I know what they were talking. Anyhow when he, when we parted he told me that is where

1200

02:00:38,298 --> 02:00:46,851

you go to, to Wlodawa, to the city. And I walked in there and I didn't know where to turn, I couldn't

1201

02:00:46,851 --> 02:00:54,998

ask anybody where the Golebiowski's live. And I would, little children were playing hopscotch and

1202

02:00:54,998 --> 02:01:03,225

I just bent down and I said, would, could, would you know where mister and mrs Golebiowski in Polish

1203

02:01:03,225 --> 02:01:11,372

you know, the, oh he said just the second house there. There was, somebody was always in front of me

1204

02:01:11,372 --> 02:01:16,992

showing me the way. I walked in there and mrs Golebiowski was there.-

1205

02:01:16,830 --> 02:01:24,797

And she said Zelda was here and she left for his father, and his father has a very big farm outside

1206

02:01:24,797 --> 02:01:33,004

Siedliczce and we know, I knew him maybe better than the Zelda knew, knew him and [swallows] she left,

1207

02:01:33,004 --> 02:01:41,131

she went there. So she said but before you go outside, she made, gave me something to eat and she made

1208

02:01:41,131 --> 02:01:49,098

a sandwich for Simon, because he is in, in the forest and she said, you know wash yourself and brush

1209

02:01:49,098 --> 02:01:57,225

yourself a little bit so when you walk out, you would look a little bit, you know, clean up your shoes

1210

02:01:57,225 --> 02:02:05,193

and all that. And, and she was very, very kind, but she said even if you go to see my husband, he is

1211

02:02:05,193 --> 02:02:13,080

not that rich and not that with money, oh she gave me some money too, Polish money. Twenty or fifty

1212

02:02:13,080 --> 02:02:21,446

Zloty, I can't remember how much and she said, that's what I like to help you, but my husband won't

1213

02:02:21,446 --> 02:02:29,494

be able to help you much, because he couldn't help Zelda, so maybe our, that was her father-in-law,

1214

02:02:29,494 --> 02:02:37,780

but her husband's father will be able to help you. So I went in and find Simon, so he had the sandwich

1215

02:02:37,780 --> 02:02:45,827

and we start walking and walking and we couldn't find a way out. And you know what Simon said? Have

1216

02:02:45,827 --> 02:02:53,874

you got a belt? I said I haven't got, I've got one, but it's holding my skirt, why did you need

1217

02:02:53,874 --> 02:03:01,762

a belt for? Oh I'm going to hang myself, I can't see a way out. I said if you would put my belt

1218

02:03:01,762 --> 02:03:09,809

on my neck it's alright, but I can't do it myself. So he abandoned that, that and we walked and

1219

02:03:09,809 --> 02:03:18,096

walked and then of a sudden I said we can't do that anymore at nighttime. Let's walk at day, daytime

1220

02:03:18,096 --> 02:03:26,382

and ask people. If we are found out who knows. Anyhow, we walked and walked and walked and I find myself

1221

02:03:26,382 --> 02:03:34,270

out to a little village not far where we were living in Siedliczcze, I walked into that farmer and

1222

02:03:34,270 --> 02:03:42,397

I, she recognised me straight away and I knew her very well. And she told me [swallows], I saw certain

1223

02:03:42,397 --> 02:03:50,284

things from my grandmother there, when we were taking away from the ghetto to Staw, all the people,

1224

02:03:50,284 --> 02:03:58,252

she, she ca, mein grandmother went over there and tell us something is going to happen to us too, we

1225

02:03:58,252 --> 02:04:06,299

can't stay there anymore, but if you need something come and get it. And a day after we were taking

1226

02:04:06,299 --> 02:04:14,187

to, to, to Staw, the Germans came and took all the, all, all the sick and all the children out from

1227

02:04:14,187 --> 02:04:22,155

Siedliczcze ghetto. And they execute them on the in Hebrew it's , in English is the cemetery, the

1228

02:04:22,155 --> 02:04:23,429

Jewish cemetery.

1229

02:04:23,430 --> 02:04:23,640

Yes.

1230

02:04:23,640 --> 02:04:32,149

And that's where mein where the farmer gave me something and she said that I'm sure it was your

1231

02:04:32,149 --> 02:04:40,828

mother's. And she gave me my mother's nighty. And that nighty I made when I was in the sixth grade

1232

02:04:40,828 --> 02:04:49,252

at school, we learned sowing. And I had that nighty with me till I came to, to Australia and it's

1233

02:04:49,252 --> 02:04:57,676

in the museum now. The Sydney Jewish museum. It's not as, as eh it was, but it's still in one

1234

02:04:57,676 --> 02:05:06,355

piece. It was a cotton nighty with lace here and lace about there and lace on the bottom and with ties

1235

02:05:06,355 --> 02:05:14,779

and that's what the farmer gave me. And when I came back [swallows] from the Golebiowski Simon,

1236

02:05:14,779 --> 02:05:23,373

I went home to the Golebiowski's home and I left him at the farm and when I came back Simon left me

1237

02:05:23,373 --> 02:05:31,797

a note and he says I will only an eh a mill s, millstone on your neck, you won't survive with me,

1238

02:05:31,797 --> 02:05:40,477

you go your own way and I'll go my own way. And when I got to the Golebiowski's father and he said

1239

02:05:40,477 --> 02:05:48,901

Zelda was here but she left. And he put me up in the, the somewhere where there was a very big, you

1240

02:05:48,901 --> 02:05:57,580

know, he gave me even something to eat and to drink and he gave me an eh, eh light so it would be safe

1241

02:05:57,580 --> 02:06:06,259

on, on straw or hay I was laying and he gave me a book to read. I knew that book because that was made

1242

02:06:06,259 --> 02:06:14,853

out a film in Poland and that Raymond he got the Nobel price for that book. [swallows] And from there

1243

02:06:14,853 --> 02:06:23,362

on I made my way somewhere else, I went to Chelm. And on Chelm I was looking for Ireen, the one, the

1244

02:06:23,362 --> 02:06:32,042

secretary of the Waterboard in Siedliczcze. She saw me, she said don't go any further, she was with

1245

02:06:32,042 --> 02:06:40,551

another friend and that other friend was dressed up like a nurse from a hospital. And she said where

1246

02:06:40,551 --> 02:06:49,060

are you going? And she talked in Polish, oh she said that's a good friend, that's a friend of my

1247

02:06:49,060 --> 02:06:57,995

mother's friend, something like that, she found something, I said I want to go to Kanie, in the railway

1248

02:06:57,995 --> 02:07:06,419

station I haven't got a ticket, could it, oh she'll buy me a ticket, she even waited when I got

1249

02:07:06,419 --> 02:07:15,693

in the train and she waived to me and she even said don't forget to write. So everything was so camouflaged

1250

02:07:15,693 --> 02:07:24,798

you know, I'm a good, good friend of hers and eh anyhow, I went to Kanie and there was, and a gentlemen,

1251

02:07:24,798 --> 02:07:33,392

it was almost the, getting dark and eh and a gentleman was sitting on the seat and I said I know the

1252

02:07:33,392 --> 02:07:42,072

people, but I've never been there, would you know where Alexander eh Jageluk lives? Oh yes, I'll,

1253

02:07:42,072 --> 02:07:50,666

I go that way, if you walk with me I'll show you his house. And that was another angel. He showed

1254

02:07:50,666 --> 02:07:59,260

me where Jageluk lived and I walked in there, mrs Helena she almost clapped when she saw me, she said

1255

02:07:59,260 --> 02:08:07,769

we'll hide you here. You don't have to go anywhere. I said no, Alexander, no Helena you've got

1256

02:08:07,769 --> 02:08:16,959

two daughters and you never know who your enemy is. If they will find me here, you'll all will be executed.

1257

02:08:16,959 --> 02:08:25,553

If only you could get me a ticket to Lublin and I'll go there to the Arbeitsamt and I'll make my

1258

02:08:25,553 --> 02:08:31,680

way out somewhere there. I said I've got a birth, a birth certificate-

1259

02:08:31,510 --> 02:08:37,740

But how had you gotten that? How did you get that birth certificate? You haven't told yet.

1260

02:08:37,740 --> 02:08:45,347

Oh I forgot to tell you. But I, when I was oh gosh, you see, when I went home because somebody

1261

02:08:45,347 --> 02:08:53,351

was living in our place, she was eh the, the mother of, of a policeman with the children and another

1262

02:08:53,351 --> 02:09:01,513

lady came in and I didn't want to stay inside the house, but another lady came in, he, she recognised

1263

02:09:01,513 --> 02:09:09,359

me and we talked a lot. And I was going to sleep at home, but not in the house, but somewhere else.

1264

02:09:09,359 --> 02:09:17,283

There was a lot of buildings there in the back with a lot of stuff in there and eh she said you wait

1265

02:09:17,283 --> 02:09:25,049

here and I'll go and bring you something, but don't leave. She came back with her daughter's

1266

02:09:25,049 --> 02:09:32,816

birth certificate and she put it on the table and she said now read it, you know I don't have to

1267

02:09:32,816 --> 02:09:40,423

tell you who she is, but from now on forget who you were, you are a Polish Catholic girl and you

1268

02:09:40,423 --> 02:09:45,020

were born there and there on that and that street. She was

1269

02:09:45,020 --> 02:09:47,440

Where w, which place were you born?

1270

02:09:47,440 --> 02:09:48,380

Lodz

1271

02:09:48,380 --> 02:09:49,160

Okay.

1272

02:09:49,160 --> 02:09:57,426

Eastern Poland, that's where all, all the Poles were escaping from the Ukraine. And I was one

1273

02:09:57,426 --> 02:10:05,431

of them. Anyhow, I took the, the birth certificate and when I got to, to the I was already

1274

02:10:05,431 --> 02:10:14,219

having something and I told him could, could Alexander get me a train ticket. Because you couldn't

1275

02:10:14,219 --> 02:10:22,398

travel in Poland then without a pass more than thirty kilometres, but from Kanie to Lublin was

1276

02:10:22,398 --> 02:10:30,403

fiftytwo so I couldn't even buy a ticket. So Alexander went to the station, he bought me a

1277

02:10:30,403 --> 02:10:38,843

ticket to Lublin and he said: one thing, don't go into Lublin, s, step out one station before.

1278

02:10:38,843 --> 02:10:47,197

And that particular day the train didn't s, it went in right the main station to Lublin. What

1279

02:10:47,197 --> 02:10:55,463

am I going to do now? There was a lady on the pla, on the train with two little girls and a lot

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02:10:55,463 --> 02:11:03,555

of packages. And I didn't look like I'm a escapee anymore because I tidied myself up, you

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02:11:03,555 --> 02:11:08,080

know, they gave me things with me and all that and I

1282

02:11:08,080 --> 02:11:08,670

And you had eaten some ways

1283

02:11:08,670 --> 02:11:15,174

you know, it even, Hel, Helena gave me underware and I had something else and something

1284

02:11:15,174 --> 02:11:21,231

else and, and I looked a little bit better, you know, and then eh I said to that

1285

02:11:21,231 --> 02:11:26,540

woman you've got two children and that many packages, can I help you?

1286

02:11:26,540 --> 02:11:34,652

She said when we go down, you just stay with mein daughters and I will go to the main gate with my

1287

02:11:34,652 --> 02:11:42,764

papers, she's from Chelm and she's moving to Lublin. And that will be a great help for me. But

1288

02:11:42,764 --> 02:11:50,877

where I was standing with the two girls I didn't note it straight away, there was a little gate

1289

02:11:50,877 --> 02:11:58,989

and the gate wasn't locked. While she had all her papers with the the staff near the main gate,

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02:11:58,989 --> 02:12:07,350

she nod to me like that, it means everything is alright and then I noticed the gate wasn't locked,

1291

02:12:07,350 --> 02:12:15,463

so I kicked the gate open and walked through with the two girls. It was another miracle. I would

1292

02:12:15,463 --> 02:12:23,741

never got through the main gate without a pass, whe, where I was coming from. So, and I waited when

1293

02:12:23,741 --> 02:12:31,770

she came across and I told her that I'm going to Lublin to I told her the street, that was the

1294

02:12:31,770 --> 02:12:40,048

main street in Lublin, allee like in Warsaw, near a res, . And I ask where is the Arbeitsamt here?

1295

02:12:40,048 --> 02:12:48,078

And they showed me a very beautiful building. Lublin wasn't bombed. And I walked up there and I

1296

02:12:48,078 --> 02:12:56,273

was looking for the Arbeitsamt. I couldn't see, but the door was open. And I looked in and there

1297

02:12:56,273 --> 02:13:04,634

was a elderly gentleman in front of a very big desk. And he called me in. And I didn't see the sign

1298

02:13:04,634 --> 02:13:13,492

on the door what it says there. And he asked me what I want. I told him in Polish, he couldn't understand

1299

02:13:13,492 --> 02:13:21,770

me. And then the secretary came in and she was so angry with me, didn't I see the sign? I said no,

1300

02:13:21,770 --> 02:13:29,799

the door was open. And he wanted to know what I want. I said I just want to be a volunteer worker

1301

02:13:29,799 --> 02:13:38,160

to Germany. I came from Eastern Poland and I can't stay there any longer. I'm Polish and I rather

1302

02:13:38,160 --> 02:13:46,190

go to Germany as a volunteer worker. And they knew what was happening in Eastern Poland, what the

1303

02:13:46,190 --> 02:13:54,468

Ukrains were doing. Anyhow, he took a p, eh sheet of paper and he wrote something on it, put a stamp

1304

02:13:54,468 --> 02:14:02,746

there and, and signed the stamp. And the girl, and the eh the Polish girl told me go with that paper

1305

02:14:02,746 --> 02:14:11,107

to Krochmalnerstreet and they will fix up everything for your travel to Germany. So I went there with

1306

02:14:11,107 --> 02:14:19,385

that paper and there were two young men sitting there and where, they did read it, where did you get

1307

02:14:19,385 --> 02:14:28,159

that paper, how did you manage? I said hold your horses, it was just in Arbeitsamt. Who is that gentleman

1308

02:14:28,159 --> 02:14:35,775

who signed it? That was the Gau leiter and the Gauleiter, you know what the Gau leiter is?-

1309

02:14:35,610 --> 02:14:36,950

Yes, sure!

1310

02:14:36,950 --> 02:14:43,550

leiter from, from whole that whole not just city, but the whole

1311

02:14:43,550 --> 02:14:44,740

The whole district.

1312

02:14:44,740 --> 02:14:49,913

the whole district of Lublin. Anyhow, do I like to have a cup of tea, do

1313

02:14:49,913 --> 02:14:55,231

I like that, I said no, I just like to sign myself in for a couple of days

1314

02:14:55,231 --> 02:14:59,830

and they will fix up the papers, because I'm going to Germany.

1315

02:15:01,050 --> 02:15:04,900

Did you know anybody in Germany?

1316

02:15:04,900 --> 02:15:12,203

Oh yes, yes I knew, you see, I forgot. When I was at Alexander's place [swallows] Helena

1317

02:15:12,203 --> 02:15:19,344

guide me, she said my niece is already in Frankfurt in Germany, she gave me the address.

1318

02:15:19,344 --> 02:15:26,486

And when I was at the, Lublin at the Arbeitsamt, I showed them the address and that's

1319

02:15:26,486 --> 02:15:33,870

why he wrote out the paper for, for Frankfurt. Allright, I waited eh two days, they brought

1320

02:15:33,870 --> 02:15:41,417

over with a very big ticket and gave me something on the way to eat and that particular eight

1321

02:15:41,417 --> 02:15:48,721

o'clock at night, that was the second of November, I'll board the train to Germany. So

1322

02:15:48,721 --> 02:15:56,025

I had to get first to Warsaw, had to stay I don't know how many hours in the Warsaw, the

1323

02:15:56,025 --> 02:16:01,300

station was so beautiful before the war, but it was all, you know

1324

02:16:01,300 --> 02:16:09,033

broke, bomb, broken up, but the train was still running. From Warsaw I had to catch

1325

02:16:09,033 --> 02:16:16,486

a train to Poznan and from Poznan that was eh eh what is the place there where

1326

02:16:16,486 --> 02:16:23,940

the border was, in a minute it will come to me, and at the border they will tell

1327

02:16:23,940 --> 02:16:30,089

you what train to catch to German, to Germany. Berlin in German a

1328

02:16:30,090 --> 02:16:39,339

So I got from Poznan /Polzenheim to Berlin and at Berlin I was getting the train to Germany. And

1329

02:16:39,339 --> 02:16:48,685

when I was already on the train they told me where to sit and eh I had the ticket and I had some,

1330

02:16:48,685 --> 02:16:58,224

whatever they gave me, a bread and jam or something on the way to eat and eh we got to Berlin. And

1331

02:16:58,224 --> 02:17:07,570

there was a terrible air raid. We had to get out the train to go to a bunker. And when I got out

1332

02:17:07,570 --> 02:17:17,012

from the bunker instead to go to the train, to go to I went to a train who was going and I forgot

1333

02:17:17,012 --> 02:17:25,010

this name of the other station, instead to go across to Frankfurt I went like that.

1334

02:17:25,010 --> 02:17:25,010

Hmhm.

1335

02:17:25,010 --> 02:17:33,705

So when I went to that station it stopped, because it was bombed, it was still burning. And how do I

1336

02:17:33,705 --> 02:17:42,661

get to Frankfurt? I couldn't see anybody where I could ask. But there was a young man with a P on his

1337

02:17:42,661 --> 02:17:51,530

arm, he sto, he was standing and talking to a uniformed man and I went over to him to speak in Polish,

1338

02:17:51,530 --> 02:18:00,486

all I have to go to Frankfurt, how, when can I catch a train here? I know I am on the wrong station and

1339

02:18:00,486 --> 02:18:09,441

all that, told him what happened and that uniformed man told him I could understand him, but I didn't

1340

02:18:09,441 --> 02:18:18,137

want to let on and he told him two o'clock at, in the morning a train is, a fast train is going to

1341

02:18:18,137 --> 02:18:27,266

Frankfurt. But when I get into that train not to talk to anybody because that train is nur für Deutsche.

1342

02:18:27,266 --> 02:18:35,962

They couldn't find out that I'm a Ausländer. So but he told me if you sit near a window and all

1343

02:18:35,962 --> 02:18:44,657

the windows are camouflaged and pretend that you are tired and asleep and don't talk to anybody. I

1344

02:18:44,657 --> 02:18:54,047

did that. And a lady opposite me, an elderly lady asked me would I like to have coffee she had in a thermos.

1345

02:18:54,047 --> 02:19:02,829

I could say Dankeschön and I pretend I'm sleeping. And there were eh, they told me there were four

1346

02:19:02,829 --> 02:19:11,524

stations to, to Frankfurt and if they discover who I am, they will only take you off and put you on

1347

02:19:11,524 --> 02:19:20,307

another train. Not to worry. But I managed to get through right to Frankfurt. I arrived in Frankfurt

1348

02:19:20,307 --> 02:19:29,176

eleven o'clock, mid day and all the offices are open till twelve. I managed to say in German how can

1349

02:19:29,176 --> 02:19:37,958

I get to the employment office. And they told me on a station, it was a tram station, that number one

1350

02:19:37,958 --> 02:19:46,653

tram will take me to the employment office. I got to the employment officem was about ten minutes to

1351

02:19:46,653 --> 02:19:55,435

twelve, they were closing. Who speaks Polish and, and, and a German, and a German tra, tram station!

1352

02:19:55,435 --> 02:20:04,304

Oh yes, there was a veteran from the First Worldwar who was from Poland. A German who was from Poland.

1353

02:20:04,304 --> 02:20:13,086

And he said he's going to take me home and his wife will be very happy to see a young person in the

1354

02:20:13,086 --> 02:20:21,868

house because his two sons are at the Eastern front and tomorrow morning he will take me where I have

1355

02:20:21,868 --> 02:20:30,650

the address to that and that place in Frankfurt. But in the meantime he found out that that place was

1356

02:20:30,650 --> 02:20:39,432

bombed and all the workers there was transferred to castle. So he's taking me home, but while I was

1357

02:20:39,432 --> 02:20:48,214

waiting with him, whatever he went to see a friend, he came back with that friend and that friend was

1358

02:20:48,214 --> 02:20:56,996

asking me in, in Polish to me, that other one, could I stay there till Monday? I said I can't speak

1359

02:20:56,996 --> 02:21:05,778

German. Why. There's a four years old boy and there's nobody, they had somebody from the army and

1360

02:21:05,778 --> 02:21:14,473

she has to go back today and they haven't got anybody who will look after the boy. And that people

1361

02:21:14,473 --> 02:21:17,429

had a very big transport business.

1362

02:21:17,430 --> 02:21:24,816

And the wife was the, the, the, the keeper of the office. Nobody had got time to look after that

1363

02:21:24,816 --> 02:21:32,819

little boy. And that little boy come running down the, the steps and grabbed me by the hand, he didn't

1364

02:21:32,819 --> 02:21:40,282

wait for anything, he pulled me up. And they told me his name is Hans Peter, but he said call me

1365

02:21:40,282 --> 02:21:48,131

Peter. I can't speak German. There was a lot of Polish workers downstairs because he had a transport

1366

02:21:48,131 --> 02:21:56,210

business and they will help me out. And that little boy, because I couldn't speak much and I couldn't

1367

02:21:56,210 --> 02:22:03,597

understand him much, but he was going to teach me German. So he came down to the kitchen and put

1368

02:22:03,597 --> 02:22:10,983

all the utensils he can reach and he told me that's a cup and that's a, that and that is an

1369

02:22:10,983 --> 02:22:18,524

a ma, eh Messer, that is a knife and that's that and that, all the table had the things from the

1370

02:22:18,524 --> 02:22:26,142

kitchen. And then he took me back and I have to remember every one. And if I forget something I had

1371

02:22:26,142 --> 02:22:33,990

to start from the beginning. And you will be surprised, in six weeks I could read, read him his German

1372

02:22:33,990 --> 02:22:41,608

books, children's books. And he taught me German, he was always with me. Hans Peter was all the,

1373

02:22:41,608 --> 02:22:49,148

mother couldn't even give him a bath and I had to kneel down and teach him in Polish Our Father,

1374

02:22:49,148 --> 02:22:56,535

because I d, I didn't know the German 'Our Father' I didn't know it then, so he learned

1375

02:22:56,535 --> 02:23:03,999

so quickly the Polish prayers. I had a Polish prayer book, so we used to pray together in Polish.

1376

02:23:03,999 --> 02:23:11,616

He learned [laughs] in Polish a lot of things quicker than I learned it in German. And then we were

1377

02:23:11,616 --> 02:23:19,080

friends forever. That little boy was something, I think every mother would have wished to have a

1378

02:23:19,080 --> 02:23:26,467

son like that. He was jewel. He was so clever with everything. He only, even when his mother was

1379

02:23:26,467 --> 02:23:34,546

going somewhere and she didn't remember the address, and Peter was with us the first time he remembered

1380

02:23:34,546 --> 02:23:35,470

where to go.

1381

02:23:35,470 --> 02:23:35,470

You loved him?

1382

02:23:35,470 --> 02:23:38,530

I loved him. Very much.

1383

02:23:40,680 --> 02:23:44,870

Is he still alive? [louder] Is he still alive?

1384

02:23:44,870 --> 02:23:53,537

Oh, I don't know now, but three years ago he stopped writing. I used to write to him. I even went

1385

02:23:53,537 --> 02:24:02,117

to visit, to visit him after the war, because there was another incident with eh the people I was

1386

02:24:02,117 --> 02:24:10,697

working for. And that man, he was a very, very good eh, eh German, he belonged to the Nazi, but he

1387

02:24:10,697 --> 02:24:19,627

wasn't a Nazi. And when the air raids were over, he builded a, a bunker under the house, a cellar,

1388

02:24:19,627 --> 02:24:28,208

but it was so secure. One day I was running to another, to the Ostbahnhof bunker and I fell, they

1389

02:24:28,208 --> 02:24:36,875

gave me a bicycle and I was going with that bicycle to the bunker and I went into the rail eh, what

1390

02:24:36,875 --> 02:24:44,230

is it called from the the r, r, from the on the, on the road, the railing for the

1391

02:24:44,230 --> 02:24:44,680

Yes.

1392

02:24:44,680 --> 02:24:51,892

you know, and I fell and people were running over me and I said I'm not going to do that

1393

02:24:51,892 --> 02:24:59,185

anymore, I'm going back home and if that bunker is not strong enough it doesn't matter.

1394

02:24:59,185 --> 02:25:06,317

But I could, take down the radio and I put it on the short waves and we had there Ukrainians

1395

02:25:06,317 --> 02:25:13,450

and two Russians and the Frenchmen and two Polish workers, we had plenty and we all could

1396

02:25:13,450 --> 02:25:18,979

listen to different languages, even the German language from the BBC.

1397

02:25:18,990 --> 02:25:19,860

Yes.

1398

02:25:19,860 --> 02:25:26,403

B, but when that was over we had to turn it back to the normal radio and the normal radio

1399

02:25:26,403 --> 02:25:32,874

was always ticking like a clock, that means that the air was free, no air raids and, but

1400

02:25:32,874 --> 02:25:39,344

when air raids were coming they, they were telling where it was coming from. The English

1401

02:25:39,344 --> 02:25:46,035

were bombing at night time and the American at day time. And I was so glad that the people

1402

02:25:46,035 --> 02:25:52,284

couldn't come down to the cellar, you know, because they wouldn't like that, that

1403

02:25:52,284 --> 02:25:56,770

we put the radio on to listen what was going on in the world.

1404

02:25:56,770 --> 02:26:03,767

But one S, Sunday, the air raid was so quick that we didn't manage to escape, they didn't manage

1405

02:26:03,767 --> 02:26:10,835

to go anywhere and then not far away was a very big brewery on the, there was under a, a little hill,

1406

02:26:10,835 --> 02:26:18,043

a mountain. On top of that mountain was a castle but there were two Frenchmen who were allowed to stay

1407

02:26:18,043 --> 02:26:25,251

there in that bunker and eh elderly people had eh, eh little eh rooms there, the one who couldn't run

1408

02:26:25,251 --> 02:26:31,199

to a bunker, they were almost living there, because the air raids were day and night.

1409

02:26:31,200 --> 02:26:40,625

And, and that was lunch time, and, and, and you know, they were going to, on the bicycles to that bunker

1410

02:26:40,625 --> 02:26:49,688

and because I wasn't going, Hans Peter didn't want to go. He hung onto my leg if I'm not going

1411

02:26:49,688 --> 02:26:58,751

he's staying at home. Alright, and then it wasn't anymore time to go anywhere. They had to come

1412

02:26:58,751 --> 02:27:07,632

down with all the workers to the, to the home bunker. And that particular Sunday, there was a full

1413

02:27:07,632 --> 02:27:16,786

proof bomb over that brewery. Twohundred were killed and the two Frenchmen too. If that boy didn't

1414

02:27:16,786 --> 02:27:25,849

hang on to my leg, they would have been killed too. What did, what, what do you say? Peshehed yes.

1415

02:27:25,849 --> 02:27:35,003

Anyhow, and from then on they didn't go anywhere. I was only sorry that we couldn't listen to the

1416

02:27:35,003 --> 02:27:44,428

radio. And I was always six o'clock in the morning, I was always going downstairs to clean the office.

1417

02:27:44,428 --> 02:27:53,672

But the first thing was always to switch on the radio. When I was down there six o'clock, I switched

1418

02:27:53,672 --> 02:28:02,554

the radio on and God forbid, it was on the short wave BBC London. I switched off very quickly and

1419

02:28:02,554 --> 02:28:11,798

then when mister Hillmann, when he came down I closed the door and talked to him that is only between

1420

02:28:11,798 --> 02:28:20,680

us, I know what you were listening to, but please don't forget to switch it over. Because nobody

1421

02:28:20,680 --> 02:28:29,561

will believe me and I'll get a bullet in my head for that. And that was between us. Nobody else

1422

02:28:29,561 --> 02:28:38,624

knew about it. And he never forget to switch it over because he was always the last at night time to

1423

02:28:38,624 --> 02:28:42,250

come out from the office. Shall we stop?

1424

02:28:42,250 --> 02:28:45,520

Eh, no I wanted

1425

02:28:45,520 --> 02:28:46,630

No, shall I finish?

1426

02:28:46,630 --> 02:28:48,510

I wanted to ask you one more question.

1427

02:28:48,510 --> 02:28:48,510

Yes?

1428

02:28:48,510 --> 02:28:51,230

But you, you didn't trust him that much that you told him who you were?

1429

02:28:52,370 --> 02:28:55,260

I did who? Eh, in Germany?

1430

02:28:55,260 --> 02:28:56,230

Yes.

1431

02:28:56,230 --> 02:28:59,356

Even the, the, the man who were working there didn't

1432

02:28:59,356 --> 02:29:02,310

know that I'm not Polish, a Polish Catholic girl.

1433

02:29:02,310 --> 02:29:04,840

You had this secret about the BBC

1434

02:29:05,030 --> 02:29:10,968

Oh no, no, nobody did, the bo, nobody knew, but later on after

1435

02:29:10,968 --> 02:29:15,870

the war I'll tell you, if you want to hear it now?

1436

02:29:15,870 --> 02:29:16,440

No, I just

1437

02:29:16,440 --> 02:29:17,510

Have you got time?

1438

02:29:17,510 --> 02:29:19,660

we have time, if you have time it's okay.

1439

02:29:19,660 --> 02:29:29,728

Yes. I've got time. And then [swallows] eh one day we were all there in the bunker and eh

1440

02:29:29,728 --> 02:29:39,907

Frankfurt was bombed. And that place was eh burned down. And they were told they threw down

1441

02:29:39,907 --> 02:29:48,980

leaflets. And they were telling the Frankfurt population to get out from the city.

1442

02:29:48,980 --> 02:29:49,900

Hmhm.

1443

02:29:49,900 --> 02:29:58,366

And nobody was listening. And they, they, you know, ignored it. And there was, I think the

1444

02:29:58,366 --> 02:30:06,740

19th of March and the 20th of March and the 21st of March they were bombing Frankfurt. And

1445

02:30:06,740 --> 02:30:09,030

It's okay.

1446

02:30:09,030 --> 02:30:16,059

and, and that place, it wasn't bombed, but a phosphor bomb was thrown, was thrown on the house and

1447

02:30:16,059 --> 02:30:22,877

the house burned down while we were downstairs in that bunker. And when we were opening the door,

1448

02:30:22,877 --> 02:30:29,836

the flames were coming down. We couldn't get out for a little while. And all the, the, the, the,

1449

02:30:29,836 --> 02:30:37,005

the trucks who were in the garages with a lot, it was a weekend, there were a lot with somebody wanted

1450

02:30:37,005 --> 02:30:43,894

to get out from the city, somebody's furniture or somebody other goods and they always organised

1451

02:30:43,894 --> 02:30:50,923

that the, that the, the, the Polish or the Russian or the, or the, the Dutch driver will drive those

1452

02:30:50,923 --> 02:30:58,093

things out to the country because they used to, to, to give them, move because everything was rationed

1453

02:30:58,093 --> 02:31:05,403

so the, the workers used to get a little bit more food, because there was always arranged if it wasn't

1454

02:31:05,403 --> 02:31:12,292

a baker, it was maybe, you know a eh butcher or something like that and then get a lot more food

1455

02:31:12,292 --> 02:31:16,580

from them instead of money. And eh everything was burned up.

1456

02:31:16,580 --> 02:31:27,190

And the, he, he had horses but the horses managed to get out from the barns. And later on they built

1457

02:31:27,190 --> 02:31:38,225

the house back up again and eh, eh was still staying downstairs. But while they were building the house,

1458

02:31:38,225 --> 02:31:48,942

I got and with the boy away to the country because he'll, when he had a sister with a very big farm

1459

02:31:48,942 --> 02:31:59,340

and I was looking for the boy in the, in the country, from time to time they used to bring me over

1460

02:31:59,340 --> 02:32:10,057

to Frankfurt to clean something up and all that, but most of the time I stayed when all that was you

1461

02:32:10,057 --> 02:32:20,773

know, eh wasn't so bad to be in the country. And then we could hear that the front is coming closer

1462

02:32:20,773 --> 02:32:31,172

and closer. The rumbling was almost like, like v, aeroplanes over us, but that was artillery from

1463

02:32:31,172 --> 02:32:41,994

far, far away. And everybody was hiding in the cellars because we never knew where it was coming from.

1464

02:32:41,994 --> 02:32:52,605

And one morning everything was so still. We didn't hear any rumbling anymore. And we got out from

1465

02:32:52,605 --> 02:33:03,109

the cellars and we couldn't see anything, you couldn't hear any, and everybody was standing in

1466

02:33:03,109 --> 02:33:13,826

the fences of the, the places. And of a sudden we saw a jeep coming and three soldiers on a jeep the

1467

02:33:13,826 --> 02:33:24,436

one with a machinegun and that was the American army. That was the 27th of April 1945. I first saw

1468

02:33:24,436 --> 02:33:29,530

the Americans coming in. The was signed the 8th

1469

02:33:29,530 --> 02:33:29,960

I know.

1470

02:33:29,960 --> 02:33:32,680

but I saw them first.

1471

02:33:32,680 --> 02:33:35,300

What did you feel?

1472

02:33:36,000 --> 02:33:42,024

I felt I don't know there's something else and the American, the soldiers were

1473

02:33:42,024 --> 02:33:47,901

coming out from the jeeps and from other vehicles and giving, there was a lot of

1474

02:33:47,901 --> 02:33:53,851

children and they were giving them chocolates, they were giving them biscuits and

1475

02:33:53,851 --> 02:33:58,480

the children was told never to re, receive anything from the eh

1476

02:33:58,480 --> 02:34:00,200

From Americans.

1477

02:34:00,200 --> 02:34:05,800

from, not Americans, from the other side, it's got a name, but now I can't think of it.

1478

02:34:05,800 --> 02:34:05,800

Enemy.

1479

02:34:05,800 --> 02:34:13,943

Enemy, yes, thank you. And I had to taste the chocolates and give it to the children and taste. And

1480

02:34:13,943 --> 02:34:21,841

I found somebody from the American soldiers could speak German or Polish, so we could understand

1481

02:34:21,841 --> 02:34:30,067

each other what it was and then, you know, when that happened two or three days later, he came over,

1482

02:34:30,067 --> 02:34:38,046

the father came, mister Hildmann came over to the country and took me and took eh Hans Peter with

1483

02:34:38,046 --> 02:34:44,710

him. And then the Americans were gathering all the displaced persons into a camp.

1484

02:34:45,270 --> 02:34:49,710

But then you told the father that you were who you were?

1485

02:34:49,710 --> 02:34:50,350

Then, when that

1486

02:34:50,350 --> 02:34:51,910

How did you tell? What happened?

1487

02:34:51,910 --> 02:34:58,497

He, I told him who I am and how I am, but, and all that. He said he knew what

1488

02:34:58,497 --> 02:35:04,913

was happening in concentration camps, but he actually was a paying Nazi. He

1489

02:35:04,913 --> 02:35:10,560

knew it was wrong, but what could he, but what could he have done?

1490

02:35:10,560 --> 02:35:10,740

Hmhm.

1491

02:35:10,740 --> 02:35:18,820

Tell me. But he was so good for the workers. I don't think s, you could find, but then after

1492

02:35:18,820 --> 02:35:27,072

the war, when I was already living in the, in displaced persons camp, I got a call from American

1493

02:35:27,072 --> 02:35:34,981

to come to Frankfurt. So I hopped on the train and got to Frankfurt. Frankfurt had eh one eh

1494

02:35:34,981 --> 02:35:42,803

suburb. It was called the Anlage. Three tall buildings only, but they were, the walls were

1495

02:35:42,803 --> 02:35:50,626

camouflaged, painted trees, the Americans didn't bomb, bomb that, because it was a little

1496

02:35:50,626 --> 02:35:58,363

forest. But that was the American headquarters in Frankfurt. And mister Hildmann was called

1497

02:35:58,363 --> 02:36:06,443

to the Americans and all the other workers was called over to tell how mister Hillmann behaved

1498

02:36:06,443 --> 02:36:14,523

during the war. And I only could tell everything good and I told them the way he was listening

1499

02:36:14,523 --> 02:36:19,079

to the ABC and only two of us knew about it. [laughs]

1500

02:36:19,080 --> 02:36:20,200

Listen, I think we have to stop

1501

02:36:20,200 --> 02:36:20,200

Yes.

1502

02:36:20,200 --> 02:36:20,400

because you are, your story is deteriorating, so I think

1503

02:36:20,400 --> 02:36:25,590

And then I was taken back to Frankfurt.

1504

02:36:27,490 --> 02:36:28,980

We ended with you

1505

02:36:28,980 --> 02:36:30,690

But I skipped something.

1506

02:36:30,690 --> 02:36:31,420

What did you skip?

1507

02:36:31,420 --> 02:36:34,900

Before that.

1508

02:36:34,900 --> 02:36:34,900

Yes?

1509

02:36:34,900 --> 02:36:34,900

When I met my husband

1510

02:36:34,900 --> 02:36:34,900

Yes.

1511

02:36:34,900 --> 02:36:35,650

during the war.

1512

02:36:35,650 --> 02:36:36,180

Yes?

1513

02:36:36,180 --> 02:36:37,900

Can I go back for then?

1514

02:36:37,900 --> 02:36:39,090

Yes. Please.

1515

02:36:39,090 --> 02:36:43,300

That was in, in summer '44.

1516

02:36:43,300 --> 02:36:43,300

Yes?

1517

02:36:43,300 --> 02:36:51,043

Or was it, yes I think it was still summer then. And eh I was working upstairs in, in the rooms

1518

02:36:51,043 --> 02:36:58,867

and of a sudden when I looked out the window there were two Polish soldiers. On, on, downstairs,

1519

02:36:58,867 --> 02:37:06,448

talking with a German soldier and talking to Mr. Hildmann and they were from the prisoners of

1520

02:37:06,448 --> 02:37:14,272

war outside Frankfurt, they were a lot, there's an that was an officers prisoners of war from

1521

02:37:14,272 --> 02:37:22,097

Poland. And I run down because I've never seen a Polish soldier in Germany and I start talking

1522

02:37:22,097 --> 02:37:30,330

to them in Polish and they were just, you know, my husband could, spoke very well German, it wasn't

1523

02:37:30,330 --> 02:37:37,991

my husband then, but that soldier could speak very well German and they intro, they introduced

1524

02:37:37,991 --> 02:37:45,816

themselves to me. And, and eh I was so amazed, you know, I was so happy when I saw them and then

1525

02:37:45,816 --> 02:37:50,870

they was taking from there for the camp, eh cole and potatoes.

1526

02:37:50,870 --> 02:37:51,980

Yes?

1527

02:37:51,980 --> 02:37:59,232

And the German soldier took them back outside where that all was and I didn't see

1528

02:37:59,232 --> 02:38:06,397

them anymore. And then when the, after the war, when the Americans were collecting

1529

02:38:06,397 --> 02:38:13,912

all the displaced person in Frankfurt and we were put in, there was a a street, there

1530

02:38:13,912 --> 02:38:21,339

were nothing but little, not cottages but it was connected a lot of little eh house,

1531

02:38:21,339 --> 02:38:26,670

hou, not houses, but like we have here, what is it called, eh

1532

02:38:26,670 --> 02:38:27,250

Bungalows?

1533

02:38:27,250 --> 02:38:36,361

yes, and, and and we were up to, the women, single women and the women with children were on those places

1534

02:38:36,361 --> 02:38:45,043

upstairs and I was upstairs with them and the others were somewhere downstairs and when I looked down

1535

02:38:45,043 --> 02:38:52,780

on, and downstairs at the, the yard down there, there were the two Polish soldiers there.

1536

02:38:52,780 --> 02:38:52,960

Again?

1537

02:38:52,960 --> 02:39:00,651

Again. And there were more Polish soldiers there because they took all the displaced

1538

02:39:00,651 --> 02:39:08,892

persons, even if they were displaced, or displaced persons, you know, eh, as, as militaire

1539

02:39:08,892 --> 02:39:16,674

there, there were all taking away and they were put in those places where we were and

1540

02:39:16,674 --> 02:39:24,732

we didn't stay very long in there, and they took us away to a very, very big a German

1541

02:39:24,732 --> 02:39:29,860

eh Luftwaffekazerne, that would be in English eh, eh Luf

1542

02:39:29,860 --> 02:39:30,520

Air, airforce kazerne.

1543

02:39:30,520 --> 02:39:39,087

air, airforce, they were very, very big places, three, three story high places and that was in Wetzlar,

1544

02:39:39,087 --> 02:39:47,072

it wasn't in Frankfurt, it was a little bit away from, and that's where we were allocated in

1545

02:39:47,072 --> 02:39:55,556

there. And then there were the the s, the, the displaced persons, per, person and even the prisoners

1546

02:39:55,556 --> 02:40:03,542

of war were there too. There, I don't know how many thousand of people they situated there, it

1547

02:40:03,542 --> 02:40:10,030

was not only from Polish people or whatever, were all in that camp in Wetzlar.

1548

02:40:10,030 --> 02:40:12,040

How were conditions there?

1549

02:40:12,040 --> 02:40:19,753

The conditions was allright, because the American was feeding us, where the food was coming

1550

02:40:19,753 --> 02:40:27,552

from, they were clothing us, there were very big ships were coming from everywhere and there

1551

02:40:27,552 --> 02:40:35,519

was eh so organised that, that they took from the camp people who wanted to work. And eh, you

1552

02:40:35,519 --> 02:40:43,403

know, then I went, wanted to work there, so they put me in the clothing eh magazine and I was

1553

02:40:43,403 --> 02:40:51,710

helping out people with, with whatever they needed clothes. And one day eh somebody in an uniform,

1554

02:40:51,710 --> 02:40:59,677

a Polish uniform, come in, came in and he was looking for socks and a football. And we looked

1555

02:40:59,677 --> 02:41:07,815

at him, there were other people, but we had our people who was organising that was from Holland,

1556

02:41:07,815 --> 02:41:15,529

that was Mary van Wessum, she was a militair eh, eh I don't remember the ranks, but they

1557

02:41:15,529 --> 02:41:23,666

were all, all from the mil, militair. And we had the, the the, mein person who was loo, looking

1558

02:41:23,666 --> 02:41:27,819

after that big, big camp, was an English general.

1559

02:41:27,820 --> 02:41:35,888

And his name was Watkins. But he had other militair under him, not English for, but Dutch people. A

1560

02:41:35,888 --> 02:41:44,445

lot of Dut, and, but all in uniforms. And they were looking for the people in camps, they were organising

1561

02:41:44,445 --> 02:41:52,432

straight away with different countries, for different, you know that, they, they were not lost, we

1562

02:41:52,432 --> 02:42:00,582

had all the Polish, Polish and, and a lot of them, you know, with the Polish people they could speak

1563

02:42:00,582 --> 02:42:08,568

English to them and they were organising us, I remember the one who was looking after the food for

1564

02:42:08,568 --> 02:42:16,555

us was from Danzigand as soon I was a, a Gdansk, or Danzig, Danzig was the name and, and a lot, a

1565

02:42:16,555 --> 02:42:25,031

lot of people, you know, and I just, like I said, I volunteer for work and I was taking to that magazine

1566

02:42:25,031 --> 02:42:33,262

where the clothing were and I have even got in then the book, there is a, a picture, where I was, you

1567

02:42:33,262 --> 02:42:41,249

know, working. And that particular person, we've tried to find for him socks and a ball and then

1568

02:42:41,249 --> 02:42:49,643

he found some shirts and he [swallows] had a Polish polonja, he put a Polish, eh soccer team together.

1569

02:42:49,643 --> 02:42:58,119

And then the soc, the Polish people were taking away to another camp and we, there were people coming

1570

02:42:58,119 --> 02:43:06,187

from Russia and from allover other places and they were Jewish people. And I was amongst them. But

1571

02:43:06,187 --> 02:43:14,581

now I have to go back, if you would be so kind to switch it off for a little, I have to organise myself

1572

02:43:14,581 --> 02:43:22,813

how to start talking about it. Because in the, just now I've got a little bit a mixture in my head.

1573

02:43:22,813 --> 02:43:25,910

I don't know what comes first. Can I

1574

02:43:25,910 --> 02:43:27,730

Okay, but

1575

02:43:27,730 --> 02:43:28,790

can I, can I

1576

02:43:28,790 --> 02:43:31,660

you can, you can just start and I'll try to help you.

1577

02:43:31,660 --> 02:43:39,437

Yes. I, I eh met that eh man again who organised the polonja first and he was starting, you

1578

02:43:39,437 --> 02:43:47,556

know, want to know where I'm from, because I helped him out a lot from that clothing magazine

1579

02:43:47,556 --> 02:43:54,650

for, for the, the, the football, eh, you know and my husband, he was the coach. And

1580

02:43:54,650 --> 02:43:58,000

And it was the same man as you had seen before?

1581

02:43:58,000 --> 02:44:01,430

yes, with that, what I met in, in Frankfurt during the war.

1582

02:44:02,800 --> 02:44:03,230

Yes.

1583

02:44:03,230 --> 02:44:10,660

And I met him later on and he came in to get the football stuff that was always the same man. Even one

1584

02:44:10,660 --> 02:44:18,237

day I thought that he was stealing something, he found eh, eh ball or a football and he put it un, under

1585

02:44:18,237 --> 02:44:26,032

his jacket and I asked what have you got something here, what are you taking? And he said I'm not taking,

1586

02:44:26,032 --> 02:44:33,318

I was just keeping so it wouldn't get lost, something like that. And it was so lovely, we spoke in

1587

02:44:33,318 --> 02:44:40,748

Polish and I asked where he was from and he wanted to know where I was from and on the beginning I was

1588

02:44:40,748 --> 02:44:48,252

a Polish Catholic girl and he was a Catholic man who was born in, in south, in eh Ost Pruisen, that was

1589

02:44:48,252 --> 02:44:55,683

not far from Danzig and he was working in Gdansk, in Danzig, and all that. And I found out that he was

1590

02:44:55,683 --> 02:45:03,333

a eh journalist. You know, and all that. And then that went on a little bit further and further, he never

1591

02:45:03,333 --> 02:45:10,764

left me alone and I don't left him alone. And of a sudden he proposed would I like to marry him. And

1592

02:45:10,764 --> 02:45:18,049

it was a little bit, you know, I was only twenty then, I though I am a little bit too young and, you

1593

02:45:18,049 --> 02:45:25,625

know, but he was a lot older than I was. And I, I thought myself, I saw him more as a father person than

1594

02:45:25,625 --> 02:45:29,560

a husband. Not that old, but he, for his age he looked

1595

02:45:29,560 --> 02:45:30,430

Much older.

1596

02:45:30,430 --> 02:45:37,093

ve, very yo, young and mature and all that and maybe that uniform attracted me that much, but in

1597

02:45:37,093 --> 02:45:43,687

the meantime, when all that was happening the Polish people were take, there was something else

1598

02:45:43,687 --> 02:45:50,629

in that Wetzlar camp, there was a lot of Russian peo, people who didn't want to go back to Russia.

1599

02:45:50,629 --> 02:45:57,223

But the Russians were then, you know, with the American and they were allies and they could do

1600

02:45:57,223 --> 02:46:03,817

whatever they want, so they collect all the people who were from Russia, but the woman tried to

1601

02:46:03,817 --> 02:46:10,620

escape, you wouldn't believe what they did to their own women. They shaved their heads. So they

1602

02:46:10,620 --> 02:46:15,410

couldn't escape from that part of Wetzlar camp, where the Russians

1603

02:46:15,410 --> 02:46:16,160

You to the women?

1604

02:46:16,160 --> 02:46:21,062

Yes, the Russian, the communist, the regime, the communist regime did that

1605

02:46:21,062 --> 02:46:26,164

to them, because they didn't want to go back to Russia. They wanted to stay

1606

02:46:26,164 --> 02:46:30,670

in German or go somewhere else or meet other people. And eh later on

1607

02:46:30,670 --> 02:46:32,400

Were those Jewish women?

1608

02:46:32,400 --> 02:46:36,370

Not yet, not yet, maybe they were but we didn't hear about it.

1609

02:46:36,370 --> 02:46:36,600

Yes.

1610

02:46:36,600 --> 02:46:44,564

But then there was a lot of that was transferred somewhere else and a lot of Jewish people were

1611

02:46:44,564 --> 02:46:52,361

starting to come from all over. Mostly from Russia. I didn't know if they were all Jewish,

1612

02:46:52,361 --> 02:47:00,326

but a lot, a lot of people, you know we had eh, eh I don't know how to, to explain. From all

1613

02:47:00,326 --> 02:47:08,206

nominations, but it was so hard for me to accept the Russian Jews. Because we never, I don't

1614

02:47:08,206 --> 02:47:16,087

know, because they were so hungry of things, they w, once there even said, maybe I shouldn't

1615

02:47:16,087 --> 02:47:22,039

say that, they would have stepped over corpses to get what they wanted.

1616

02:47:22,040 --> 02:47:22,040

They had suffered so much.

1617

02:47:22,040 --> 02:47:22,040

Pardon?

1618

02:47:22,040 --> 02:47:22,390

They had suffered so much?

1619

02:47:22,390 --> 02:47:30,658

The, the camp had everything but it was never enough. And they were, they let them in because they

1620

02:47:30,658 --> 02:47:38,588

promised they will go to Palestine. And they never did. They were going, running away whatever

1621

02:47:38,588 --> 02:47:46,941

they could, but they tried to get everything they could, even sometimes the Germans was complaining

1622

02:47:46,941 --> 02:47:55,040

that they had got somebody was stealing the, the, the, eh chicken or stealing eh whatever, you

1623

02:47:55,040 --> 02:48:02,971

know and the Americans had enough for us to feed us and give us, they didn't have to do it.

1624

02:48:02,971 --> 02:48:10,986

But for the Russian migrants it was never enough. And that's what I, even, I shouldn't say,

1625

02:48:10,986 --> 02:48:19,001

because we are all migrants there, but eh I didn't like them, what, whatever they were doing,

1626

02:48:19,001 --> 02:48:27,269

you know. But for me it was something like a family came back from Russia. And I recognised them.

1627

02:48:27,269 --> 02:48:32,499

And they were eh, they had the oil, oil factory in Siedliczcze

1628

02:48:32,500 --> 02:48:32,830

Hmhm.

1629

02:48:32,830 --> 02:48:37,520

and one of the daughters was in the same class as my sister

1630

02:48:37,520 --> 02:48:38,190

Hmhm.

1631

02:48:38,190 --> 02:48:45,203

and we started to talk and she even brought out a album, even from the school and

1632

02:48:45,203 --> 02:48:52,216

from a school photo where my sister was only seven then, just started school, she

1633

02:48:52,216 --> 02:48:59,316

cut out [scrapes throat], pardon me, [scrapes throat] my sister's photo and that

1634

02:48:59,316 --> 02:49:05,810

was the only photo I've got from home when my sister was seven years old.

1635

02:49:05,810 --> 02:49:06,500

It's in the book, yes.

1636

02:49:06,500 --> 02:49:14,947

It's in the book. And I was really, really happy about it. I, I enlarged it, you know, later on, I

1637

02:49:14,947 --> 02:49:23,648

got somebody who did it for me and it's a normal picture. And there was a lot, a lot of Jewish people

1638

02:49:23,648 --> 02:49:32,095

in that camp then and there was trying a lot, a lot, was registered to go to Palestine, a lot to the

1639

02:49:32,095 --> 02:49:40,965

United States and to you name it. And I didn't know where I belong to, I was almost ready, but before,

1640

02:49:40,965 --> 02:49:49,497

because I was working I was allowed to live outside the camp. So I was living privately. And everyday

1641

02:49:49,497 --> 02:49:57,945

I was going into the camp for work and while I was getting ready to go to Poland, because there were

1642

02:49:57,945 --> 02:50:06,392

a lot of people were registered to go back to their own countries, like to, to, to, to, you name it,

1643

02:50:06,392 --> 02:50:14,839

even a lot to Poland and I wanted to go back to Poland. And that was a Saturday and somebody knocked

1644

02:50:14,839 --> 02:50:23,371

at mein door and Henrich Kupper, Kuperscki came along, but that was Zelda's cousin, he was a little

1645

02:50:23,371 --> 02:50:31,819

bit connected, but far away, I couldn't call him that he was my cousin, but I recognised him, even

1646

02:50:31,819 --> 02:50:40,351

he was only about fifteen when I saw him and of a sudden he was nineteen, but he had a string of grey

1647

02:50:40,351 --> 02:50:48,967

hair on his head and I said what happened to, you know, he started to explain where he was working and

1648

02:50:48,967 --> 02:50:58,175

he, he survived and all that. And he said that he had got greetings from Zelda. Zelda eh is in eh Stuttgart.

1649

02:50:58,175 --> 02:51:06,707

And she eh found her, her uncles in America and she was going to the United States. And then she was

1650

02:51:06,707 --> 02:51:15,492

outside and then slowly he told me that I brought back Zelda with me so she came in. Because he didn't

1651

02:51:15,492 --> 02:51:24,447

want to shock me that she's alive. And from there on she wanted me to go back with her to, to Stuttgart,

1652

02:51:24,447 --> 02:51:33,063

eh but my husband was a little bit, not to agree, but he said once I leave I'll never come back. But

1653

02:51:33,063 --> 02:51:41,510

I couldn't go to the United States because I had to wait for somebody who will sponsor us and she

1654

02:51:41,510 --> 02:51:50,127

had somebody, she, she had uncles then in the United State, and one of the uncles adopted her. Because

1655

02:51:50,127 --> 02:51:51,310

the same Metz.

1656

02:51:51,310 --> 02:51:52,010

Hmhm.

1657

02:51:52,010 --> 02:51:58,479

And the same surname. Anyhow, she left. And v, eh I think it was

1658

02:51:58,479 --> 02:52:04,750

May or, or June '46, she left to the United States. And, and

1659

02:52:04,750 --> 02:52:04,910

Were you already married?

1660

02:52:04,910 --> 02:52:04,910

I was ma, oh yes, I was married, oh

1661

02:52:04,910 --> 02:52:04,910

When did you marry?

1662

02:52:04,910 --> 02:52:06,380

I forgot to tell. I

1663

02:52:06,380 --> 02:52:08,360

Yes, that's, I promised you to help you.

1664

02:52:08,360 --> 02:52:11,990

married the 24th of December 1945, Christmas

1665

02:52:11,990 --> 02:52:12,710

So you said

1666

02:52:12,710 --> 02:52:12,880

eve.

1667

02:52:12,880 --> 02:52:15,760

you had said yes when he proposed.

1668

02:52:15,760 --> 02:52:16,950

When he proposed, yes.

1669

02:52:16,950 --> 02:52:20,010

Because you liked him?

1670

02:52:20,990 --> 02:52:28,876

I liked him, yes, very much, yes. I loved him very much, he loved me. Oh he was, not, not just loved

1671

02:52:28,876 --> 02:52:36,605

me, that, but he was jealous of ev, every [laughs] person who came along and one day even there was

1672

02:52:36,605 --> 02:52:44,412

a ball and then a Polish officer, he was twice as tall as I am, he came along to ask me for a dance

1673

02:52:44,412 --> 02:52:52,220

and I remember that my nose was just on his eh buckle of his, of his belt [laughs] from the uniform

1674

02:52:52,220 --> 02:53:00,186

and all that. [laughs] Anyhow, we had to wait, we were registered to go to the United States, because

1675

02:53:00,186 --> 02:53:07,835

other friends went along to the United States and they promised they will help us to get out from

1676

02:53:07,835 --> 02:53:15,407

Germany. But it took a little bit too long to find an America sponsor to get a couple out and in

1677

02:53:15,407 --> 02:53:23,372

the meantime Andrew was born, the, the, the 4th of February '47 and not long after, a year after,

1678

02:53:23,372 --> 02:53:27,710

you know, I was so very sick. The operation started too

1679

02:53:27,710 --> 02:53:29,960

Wait, wait, you're going too fast now.

1680

02:53:29,960 --> 02:53:38,588

I'm going too fast again. Anyhow, we, we couldn't, we stayed there privately where we were living

1681

02:53:38,588 --> 02:53:47,643

and eh my husband was with the Jewish community in the camp, he was with the Andra, the united restitution

1682

02:53:47,643 --> 02:53:56,271

organisation, you know, and he was eh with other people, in the meantime my husband found his brother

1683

02:53:56,271 --> 02:54:04,558

and his brother was in the English zone, because the, that was where the English was fighting the

1684

02:54:04,558 --> 02:54:13,357

German and he was with the Polish army there. So he came over and he had, had already married a Russian

1685

02:54:13,357 --> 02:54:21,729

woman, but she had pe, papers made out that she's Polish, she spoke very well Polish and she was

1686

02:54:21,729 --> 02:54:30,015

a midwife. She had documents as a doctor from Russia and eh the brother came over and he settled

1687

02:54:30,015 --> 02:54:38,387

a little while with us, but he wanted very badly to go back to Poland. So in about a year's time

1688

02:54:38,387 --> 02:54:46,588

they already had a lit, a girl and we helped him a lot out, you know, from the Russian zone, not

1689

02:54:46,588 --> 02:54:55,046

Rus, the American zone, we had everything to help them while we were working and all that, and then

1690

02:54:55,046 --> 02:55:03,418

my husband found his eh, a general was looking for the Polish prisoners of war who was in there in

1691

02:55:03,418 --> 02:55:11,704

that [and he found mein husband and he belonged to that eh, that he could ask for restitution, so

1692

02:55:11,704 --> 02:55:19,991

we got quite a lot of dollars, we got dollars paid out. I can't remember how much, six hundred

1693

02:55:19,991 --> 02:55:28,790

or a thousand dollars and that was like money from heaven. But on top of that Zelda was sending parcels

1694

02:55:28,790 --> 02:55:37,162

to Germany through Caritas and that was something, you know, it was hard to, to, to, to explain,

1695

02:55:37,162 --> 02:55:45,363

and those parcels had everything. When I was short of money there was coffee and even there was,

1696

02:55:45,363 --> 02:55:47,669

and I could sell the coffee

1697

02:55:47,670 --> 02:55:48,090

Sure!

1698

02:55:48,090 --> 02:55:58,491

you know, and all that to Ge, the Germans were so for coffee, they would have given you anything

1699

02:55:58,491 --> 02:56:08,242

for it and [swallows] anyhow, I wasn't so, not that I wasn't well, but eh I had to go

1700

02:56:08,242 --> 02:56:16,260

to Ho, eh bef, and in 1948 I was diagnosed, the kidney wasn't working.

1701

02:56:16,260 --> 02:56:17,190

But let's, let's go back.

1702

02:56:17,190 --> 02:56:17,870

Go back.

1703

02:56:17,870 --> 02:56:23,590

How did Zelda find you?

1704

02:56:24,230 --> 02:56:24,490

Oh

1705

02:56:24,490 --> 02:56:25,580

I'll help you [laughs]

1706

02:56:25,580 --> 02:56:33,256

Oh, you are a marvel [laughs], Zelda was hiding in Lvov in Lemberg in Poland. And after the war

1707

02:56:33,256 --> 02:56:40,933

she came home, I don't know when, but when she came home and when she was in Siedliczcze, she

1708

02:56:40,933 --> 02:56:48,691

passed our, I still call our house, that was on, on the street, you know, it was still standing,

1709

02:56:48,691 --> 02:56:56,448

it didn't burn down, and there was a beautiful acacia tree, was already blooming and there was

1710

02:56:56,448 --> 02:57:04,287

a lady standing and watching those and she was so very badly treated, Zelda told me, to get some

1711

02:57:04,287 --> 02:57:11,883

flowers of the tree and she asked that woman what are you, why are you standing there and, and

1712

02:57:11,883 --> 02:57:19,721

watching the tree? She said I knew that family, I get goosebump when I talk about it, I knew that

1713

02:57:19,721 --> 02:57:27,236

family and one of the daughters [scrapes throat] has survived and one of the daughters are in

1714

02:57:27,236 --> 02:57:34,832

Germany. And she told her who I am and she said that Zelda nearly fainted, she had to hold on

1715

02:57:34,832 --> 02:57:42,671

to her. She gave Zelda the address of Frankfurt, because in the meantime the American were taking

1716

02:57:42,671 --> 02:57:50,267

out all the displaced person from Frankfurt to Wetzlar and Zelda managed to get away from the

1717

02:57:50,267 --> 02:57:54,549

communist Poland. How she got out from Poland she was

1718

02:57:54,550 --> 02:57:55,220

You really don't know?

1719

02:57:55,220 --> 02:58:02,992

telling, yes, she was acting as a, not as a Polish person, as a, eh Turkish or, or Greek,

1720

02:58:02,992 --> 02:58:10,420

a Greek girl, she couldn't speak Polish and she had a rucksack, how do you call it eh

1721

02:58:10,420 --> 02:58:11,220

A rucksack, yes.

1722

02:58:11,220 --> 02:58:12,990

yes, yes, and she had a little

1723

02:58:12,990 --> 02:58:13,130

Backpack.

1724

02:58:13,130 --> 02:58:20,560

bit of, backpack, clothing and the, the train was so packed that the poor thing didn't know that,

1725

02:58:20,560 --> 02:58:27,990

that somebody cut her ru, her backpack and took all her clothes out. And when she got to Frankfurt,

1726

02:58:27,990 --> 02:58:35,871

there was nothing in her, in her backpack. Anyhow, she had the address, so she had find the Hildmann's]

1727

02:58:35,871 --> 02:58:43,151

and she went to look for me. But I wasn't there anymore, I was in Wetzlar and the Hildmann's

1728

02:58:43,151 --> 02:58:50,506

told her where I was, so she came to, to Wetzlar to the camp, the displaced persons camp. And that

1729

02:58:50,506 --> 02:58:57,786

was on a Saturday. And she came to the headoffice. And the headoffice didn't know where to look

1730

02:58:57,786 --> 02:59:04,916

for, but I was registrered in that office, with the Americans, because just exactly the same as

1731

02:59:04,916 --> 02:59:09,119

mein eh Arbeitsbuch for the Germans, the, the other name

1732

02:59:09,120 --> 02:59:10,280

The other name, yes.

1733

02:59:10,280 --> 02:59:18,081

other name, but my mother's name they wanted, the Germans wanted to know, but they told me in

1734

02:59:18,081 --> 02:59:25,964

the camp when we were being registered, don't say that your mother's maiden name is Richter,

1735

02:59:25,964 --> 02:59:34,012

because the, the chef in the, in the casino, his name was Richter, can't you find another name.

1736

02:59:34,012 --> 02:59:40,500

So I gave mein grandmother's name for my mother. I put it down as Ordinatsky.

1737

02:59:40,500 --> 02:59:41,130

Aha.

1738

02:59:41,130 --> 02:59:49,129

Yes. And Zelda found, because she remembers Ordynacki name, because that was a grandfa, great grandfather

1739

02:59:49,129 --> 02:59:56,525

and that's how she found me in, in Wetzlar in the camp. The Americans looked up, you know, the,

1740

02:59:56,525 --> 03:00:04,374

the Woitchiczyn because of the Ordynacki she said that's, that's her. And they gave her, her private

1741

03:00:04,374 --> 03:00:11,845

address in Wetzlar. And then, you know, that's how she found me. And I was ready for Monday to go

1742

03:00:11,845 --> 03:00:17,430

back to Poland. She said go, don't back, you won't find anybody alive.

1743

03:00:17,430 --> 03:00:18,240

She told you?

1744

03:00:18,240 --> 03:00:24,576

Yes, from your family or for my family, there's nobody alive, don't go back to Poland,

1745

03:00:24,576 --> 03:00:30,280

stay where you are. And she stayed with me a little while. I was already married.

1746

03:00:30,530 --> 03:00:33,550

Was it a shock to you, to hear there was nobody there?

1747

03:00:34,050 --> 03:00:40,850

Yes. I thought I would find somebody. You see, my youngest brother, if he would have stayed with

1748

03:00:40,850 --> 03:00:48,147

the people that my mother want to leave him, he was a very blond boy and he was only eleven, I remember

1749

03:00:48,147 --> 03:00:55,019

when he was going to school, the boys were last eh, laughed about him because he was so blond and

1750

03:00:55,019 --> 03:01:01,820

they used to call him a [says something in Polish?] that means the pigs head. And one day he was

1751

03:01:01,820 --> 03:01:08,833

going home from school and he went to his father's eh barber, who used to shave him and all that,

1752

03:01:08,833 --> 03:01:15,563

he said my father told me to cut my hair off, completely shave his head. And he came home, that

1753

03:01:15,563 --> 03:01:22,435

was just a school holidays in Ju, June, it was very hot and my mother nearly fainted. He didn't

1754

03:01:22,435 --> 03:01:29,306

have his hair. Why did you do it, because they called me pigs head and, and everybody said if you

1755

03:01:29,306 --> 03:01:33,770

shave the head off, the other hair will be a little bit darker.

1756

03:01:33,770 --> 03:01:34,290

[laughs] Poor boy.

1757

03:01:34,290 --> 03:01:42,487

And that little, that boy, my mother, somebody want to keep him. My brother's very

1758

03:01:42,487 --> 03:01:50,685

bit, b, best friend from school, a family who was called Sadowsky, he said leave him

1759

03:01:50,685 --> 03:01:58,785

with us, he, I can tell that we've got, you know, a grandson from western Poland,

1760

03:01:58,785 --> 03:02:07,374

from Posnan or from there, nobody will question him. But he didn't want to stay there,

1761

03:02:07,374 --> 03:02:13,619

as soon mum left the Sadowsky family, he come running after her.

1762

03:02:13,640 --> 03:02:14,610

He wanted his mother.

1763

03:02:14,610 --> 03:02:15,120

Want his mother.

1764

03:02:15,120 --> 03:02:17,760

But did you know that?

1765

03:02:17,760 --> 03:02:19,280

Oh yes, I was there when

1766

03:02:19,280 --> 03:02:19,460

Yes.

1767

03:02:19,460 --> 03:02:21,590

that, that happened, yes, of course I know that.

1768

03:02:21,590 --> 03:02:24,040

But you still expected to find him?

1769

03:02:24,040 --> 03:02:24,040

spl

1770

03:02:24,040 --> 03:02:27,330

I, I asked you in the beginning

1771

03:02:27,330 --> 03:02:34,680

Yes, yes, I, but I expect to find somebody. Maybe, you know, a, a relative from another place, not,

1772

03:02:34,680 --> 03:02:42,252

not from Siedliczce, maybe somebody who came back even from Russia or something, I'll find somebody

1773

03:02:42,252 --> 03:02:49,602

there in Siedliczce, I wanted to go back. And even later on from the United States I got, not from

1774

03:02:49,602 --> 03:02:56,804

the United States, we had friends in Barbados and I was looking through the, the Red Cross, after

1775

03:02:56,804 --> 03:03:03,857

the war, and the English helped a lot with the Red Cross and I, I wrote to Barbados, I didn't

1776

03:03:03,857 --> 03:03:11,133

have the Katz family, but my mother's best friend lived in Barbados. And they helped me to write

1777

03:03:11,133 --> 03:03:18,260

there, because I knew her maiden name and one of the brothers, David Katz, was with her and they

1778

03:03:18,260 --> 03:03:25,387

found him and I got, I've got that letter from Barbados in 1947. I still have got it. And they

1779

03:03:25,387 --> 03:03:32,737

found somebody in the United States, the Red Cross, with the name of Jozef Feldman, and she thought

1780

03:03:32,737 --> 03:03:40,087

that that could be my father. But it wasn't. Because it was somebody else from Siedliczcze, there

1781

03:03:40,087 --> 03:03:47,437

were three families with the same name, with Feldman, so it wasn't my father. And that, you know,

1782

03:03:47,437 --> 03:03:50,630

I was trying so very hard to find somebody.

1783

03:03:50,630 --> 03:03:52,790

That's why you wanted to go back and

1784

03:03:52,790 --> 03:03:53,830

To go back to Poland, yes.

1785

03:03:53,830 --> 03:03:54,870

and then Zelda said

1786

03:03:54,870 --> 03:03:57,810

Zelda said don't, because you'll never get out, there was nobody there left from our family.

1787

03:03:57,810 --> 03:04:02,170

Did it make you depressed?

1788

03:04:02,170 --> 03:04:09,258

I was more than de, depressed, you know, I said how is it possible to

1789

03:04:09,258 --> 03:04:15,840

survive alone in the world? To be young. And, and, and, anyhow.

1790

03:04:16,360 --> 03:04:21,693

Because what you forgot to tell yesterday, is that after liberation

1791

03:04:21,693 --> 03:04:26,310

you had this psychological collapse or nervous breakdown.

1792

03:04:26,310 --> 03:04:29,210

I had, yes, I had the, the, where I was working

1793

03:04:29,210 --> 03:04:29,210

Yes.

1794

03:04:29,210 --> 03:04:37,163

I had that, that night, when tomorrow, I was, had to get ready to go with the Americans to the

1795

03:04:37,163 --> 03:04:45,117

displaced person and I started to cry and I told mister Hildmann who I am, that I and he told

1796

03:04:45,117 --> 03:04:52,986

me that he knew what was happening to the Jews and I said that I haven't got anybody in the

1797

03:04:52,986 --> 03:05:01,024

world, where shall I turn, I haven't got a name, I haven't got anybody. And I didn't want

1798

03:05:01,024 --> 03:05:08,977

and I, I, I got hys, hys, I don't know, hysterical, but while I was lying in bed and crying,

1799

03:05:08,977 --> 03:05:15,070

that beautiful dog of mine, Lümpy, came along and he was crying with me

1800

03:05:15,190 --> 03:05:15,920

Really?

1801

03:05:16,310 --> 03:05:24,257

and, and the workers at eh, downstairs thought that somebody did, did harm me and the Hillmann

1802

03:05:24,257 --> 03:05:32,204

called a doctor and the doctor gave me a pill, something to calm me down, because I was afraid

1803

03:05:32,204 --> 03:05:38,630

to go out in the free world, not to have anybody to look for. You know? And

1804

03:05:38,630 --> 03:05:43,210

Did you calm down

1805

03:05:43,210 --> 03:05:43,620

Yes.

1806

03:05:43,620 --> 03:05:43,970

that, that

1807

03:05:43,970 --> 03:05:44,470

The, the pill

1808

03:05:44,470 --> 03:05:44,560

anxiety?

1809

03:05:44,560 --> 03:05:48,030

yes, and next day, you know, the Americans, they came in, collect everybody, you know, to a camp.

1810

03:05:48,030 --> 03:05:57,110

But, but I'm talking about you, did you calm down or were you still anxious when

1811

03:05:57,110 --> 03:06:05,764

You know, I calmed down because I stopped crying and, and hysterical, hysterical cry, you know,

1812

03:06:05,764 --> 03:06:14,149

I couldn't, Hillmann couldn't calm me down, but the doctor did. And next day I was ready,

1813

03:06:14,149 --> 03:06:22,714

ready to leave. And even they gave me, he was very good, she didn't want to give me a blanket

1814

03:06:22,714 --> 03:06:31,278

and a pillow and my clothes and he even gave me some money. He was the best German person under

1815

03:06:31,278 --> 03:06:37,770

the sun, not just for me, for all his, this, workers, they were Dutchmen

1816

03:06:37,770 --> 03:06:45,590

Frenchmen, Polish, Ukrain, all of them, he looked all a, after them, you know, as much as he could.

1817

03:06:45,590 --> 03:06:49,040

But what I'm trying to discuss with you, or to

1818

03:06:49,700 --> 03:06:49,880

Yes?

1819

03:06:49,880 --> 03:06:58,010

ask you about

1820

03:06:58,010 --> 03:06:59,230

Yes, please.

1821

03:06:59,230 --> 03:07:01,560

is, is how you were eh, because you had this very serious breakdown

1822

03:07:01,560 --> 03:07:01,560

Yes.

1823

03:07:01,560 --> 03:07:01,660

you married?

1824

03:07:01,660 --> 03:07:01,660

I wasn't married then.

1825

03:07:01,660 --> 03:07:02,650

No, but later you married.

1826

03:07:02,650 --> 03:07:08,350

Later I married, you know. And he helped me a lot. I was

1827

03:07:08,350 --> 03:07:09,320

Can you talk a little bit about

1828

03:07:09,320 --> 03:07:10,130

I was

1829

03:07:10,130 --> 03:07:10,290

how you felt in those

1830

03:07:10,290 --> 03:07:10,290

I, I wasn't alone

1831

03:07:10,290 --> 03:07:11,130

first mo

1832

03:07:11,130 --> 03:07:17,553

because my husband had that many other friends. And you know, I got to know them,

1833

03:07:17,553 --> 03:07:24,214

they got to know me and, you know, really not just, you know, high ranking friends,

1834

03:07:24,214 --> 03:07:30,637

they were all, if it wasn't an engineer, it was something li, like not eh, even

1835

03:07:30,637 --> 03:07:37,536

doctor, doctor Brondi, he was a doctor from, from Poland and he had another do, doctor,

1836

03:07:37,536 --> 03:07:42,769

doctorate in Germany and I had a growth here on, on mein eh, it eh

1837

03:07:42,770 --> 03:07:43,090

Chin?

1838

03:07:43,090 --> 03:07:50,180

chin, you know and, and even when I was in Germany, little Hans-Peter, when I used to my face,

1839

03:07:50,180 --> 03:07:57,569

it used to swell up and he used a little, the boy used to come along and said when I grew up I'll

1840

03:07:57,569 --> 03:08:04,660

going to be a doctor and I'll help you. And then after the war, doctor Brondi, he said I'll

1841

03:08:04,660 --> 03:08:12,049

help you with that growth. I was something inside, like a wart, but inside and he cut it out. Later

1842

03:08:12,049 --> 03:08:19,737

on I found out that it was the first thing he did [laughs], practed, was on me. So they had a daughter

1843

03:08:19,737 --> 03:08:26,902

who was born the same week as Andrew was born and they went away to the United States and he, it

1844

03:08:26,902 --> 03:08:33,993

wasn't easy, easy in the United State to be a doctor, because he was only in a hospital as a,

1845

03:08:33,993 --> 03:08:41,084

as a, a nurse, in a, you know, and she had to live somewhere else, not in hospital. But we kept

1846

03:08:41,084 --> 03:08:48,324

all the time, you know, and they wanted so very badly for us to go over to the United States too.

1847

03:08:48,324 --> 03:08:55,489

They tried and then was another eh family, Janosz, Janosz and Maria, not Szikorsky, eh, a little

1848

03:08:55,489 --> 03:09:02,654

bit, another name, and he was an engineer, he got to the United States and they had one boy, the

1849

03:09:02,654 --> 03:09:10,118

s, you know, the age of Andrew and they wanted so the, the, the [...] and the Szikorsky's wanted

1850

03:09:10,118 --> 03:09:17,284

so very badly for us to come over, but they didn't have it in time. In the meantime, I don't

1851

03:09:17,284 --> 03:09:21,240

know if I could start [phone ringing] talk about that

1852

03:09:21,240 --> 03:09:21,240

[...]

1853

03:09:21,240 --> 03:09:21,970

There it is.

1854

03:09:21,970 --> 03:09:22,460

Continue.

1855

03:09:22,460 --> 03:09:31,383

While we were waiting that somebody from the United States will be able to get us out from Germany,

1856

03:09:31,383 --> 03:09:40,667

in the meantime they were registration for different countries to go. And South America I didn't want

1857

03:09:40,667 --> 03:09:49,590

to go there, I don't know, we tried but, but we, we didn't want and then somebody, they told us

1858

03:09:49,590 --> 03:09:58,513

from the, Australia. They were from the Australian government looking for mi, migrants if they will

1859

03:09:58,513 --> 03:10:07,707

be good enough to come over to Australia. So we registrate to go to Australia. But we had to go there

1860

03:10:07,707 --> 03:10:16,811

was a doctor from Australia and somebody else from the government and they had to find out if we are,

1861

03:10:16,811 --> 03:10:25,824

if I am healthy enough, because they know my medical condition, that I had, have got only one kidney

1862

03:10:25,824 --> 03:10:34,837

and I've only got one ear and everything else we had to tell and the doctor from Australia send me

1863

03:10:34,837 --> 03:10:43,941

over to a hospital not far from Wetzlar to Giessen and they will see if I am healthy or strong enough

1864

03:10:43,941 --> 03:10:53,315

to migrate to Australia. And I went to that hospital for forty eight hours, they didn't feed me much,

1865

03:10:53,315 --> 03:11:02,328

only a piece of toast, in twelve hours or less, but they used to give eh jugs of liters to drink and

1866

03:11:02,328 --> 03:11:11,252

every lit, everything what I was drinking was measured and every drip of water, what I don't know

1867

03:11:11,252 --> 03:11:16,479

how to say it in English, eh what I, I has, was measured.

1868

03:11:16,480 --> 03:11:16,670

Yes

1869

03:11:16,670 --> 03:11:16,830

Yes.

1870

03:11:16,830 --> 03:11:17,500

I understand.

1871

03:11:17,500 --> 03:11:17,840

You understand that.

1872

03:11:17,840 --> 03:11:17,980

Yes.

1873

03:11:17,980 --> 03:11:26,809

When it, that, and I was there for forty eight hours and they discharged me and when I got back to

1874

03:11:26,809 --> 03:11:35,818

Giessen nobody came with me, or they gave me something, another slice of toast and something, but eh

1875

03:11:35,818 --> 03:11:45,187

I was anxious to go back and I had to go to the station there and from Giessen to go to Wetzlar because

1876

03:11:45,187 --> 03:11:54,197

it's a train station and when I arrived to the camp, to where we were living and I opened the door

1877

03:11:54,197 --> 03:12:03,296

and I fainted. And I fainted because for hunger, that was the first time in my life, I never fainted

1878

03:12:03,296 --> 03:12:12,305

in, in, in Sobibor, but I fainted there. And Andrew was standing on the bed and crying what happened

1879

03:12:12,305 --> 03:12:21,404

to me, because I fell on the floor and then they had this first to revived me, the doctor came along

1880

03:12:21,404 --> 03:12:30,684

and helped me and they gave me, you know, really, really good food, because while I was on the American

1881

03:12:30,684 --> 03:12:36,180

zone in Wetzlar, because of my condition I used to get double

1882

03:12:37,650 --> 03:12:38,020

Food.

1883

03:12:38,020 --> 03:12:45,687

double food, everything double. Not that I could it all eat, but I used to get it. And that was really,

1884

03:12:45,687 --> 03:12:53,208

really something, they were so good for us, the American people. It's hard to describe. And then all

1885

03:12:53,208 --> 03:12:59,770

our friends were already gone to Australia and we were still in Wetzlar and what has hap

1886

03:12:59,770 --> 03:13:01,400

You were waiting for the results?

1887

03:13:01,400 --> 03:13:04,280

for the, for the vi, vi, visa that we will be

1888

03:13:05,210 --> 03:13:06,480

They approved of you?

1889

03:13:06,480 --> 03:13:13,842

Yes, they a, we were waiting for the approval and all the papers that we can go there and then

1890

03:13:13,842 --> 03:13:21,204

we had to have some pictures taken and we had the pictures taken and the pictures got lost and

1891

03:13:21,204 --> 03:13:28,566

we had to get some more pictures taken and we didn't have money to pay for, for the pictures

1892

03:13:28,566 --> 03:13:36,320

and I just eh, eh, a, a package from the United State arrived and, and there was some coffee there,

1893

03:13:36,320 --> 03:13:43,761

so I sold quickly the coffee so I can pay for the, for the pictures, because that was so b, you

1894

03:13:43,761 --> 03:13:51,045

know, very necessary for the Australian government to have our pictures. And And, And, Andrew

1895

03:13:51,045 --> 03:13:58,564

was on the same migration paper with a picture, you can see in there, or, as me and all that and

1896

03:13:58,564 --> 03:14:06,239

then we were assigned to go from Germany to, via Austria, to Italy. It took quite a while because

1897

03:14:06,239 --> 03:14:13,602

we were accepted, we were so happy, but happy in one way, but another that we couldn't go to

1898

03:14:13,602 --> 03:14:21,355

the United State because all our friends were already there. And here to Australia, all the friends

1899

03:14:21,355 --> 03:14:28,874

later on were already gone to Australia and we were all alone because of me. And somehow we got

1900

03:14:28,874 --> 03:14:36,550

to Italy and we were one week in a camp there, in Kapua and from Kapua to Sydney and from Senegali

1901

03:14:36,550 --> 03:14:39,839

to, what is that big port in, in Italy? Eh

1902

03:14:39,840 --> 03:14:43,120

Venice? Genova?

1903

03:14:43,120 --> 03:14:47,070

Ge, eh, Ge, not Geneva, no, no, Venice, like, not Venice, eh, anyhow it will come.

1904

03:14:47,070 --> 03:14:47,890

Genova?

1905

03:14:47,890 --> 03:14:57,988

Yes, it must have been there, anyhow. And on that ship, the ship was called Casablanca and that was

1906

03:14:57,988 --> 03:15:08,597

a prefabricated ship, militair ship. And it was about seven hundred of us on that ship and we were going

1907

03:15:08,597 --> 03:15:18,696

to Australia. While we were going up the steps to the ship, a very loud person called out our name.

1908

03:15:18,696 --> 03:15:29,407

And he was he, holding a very big telegram, you are accepted to go to the United States. One week earlier

1909

03:15:29,407 --> 03:15:37,670

and we would have not come to Australia. We would have gone to the United States.

1910

03:15:37,670 --> 03:15:39,390

Because that was your first choice?

1911

03:15:39,390 --> 03:15:39,440

Yes.

1912

03:15:39,440 --> 03:15:40,540

But Regina

1913

03:15:40,540 --> 03:15:40,790

Yes?

1914

03:15:40,790 --> 03:15:42,870

when did your physical problems start?

1915

03:15:44,000 --> 03:15:45,000

In Australia

1916

03:15:47,380 --> 03:15:50,620

No, in, in Germany? I understand it started already in Germany?

1917

03:15:50,620 --> 03:15:58,170

Already in Germany, because I couldn't keep a drop of water in me and it was hurting all the time.

1918

03:15:58,170 --> 03:15:58,950

What was this?

1919

03:15:58,950 --> 03:16:00,500

That was in '47

1920

03:16:00,500 --> 03:16:00,850

Yes?

1921

03:16:00,850 --> 03:16:06,120

because the operation was in '48, the 28th of

1922

03:16:06,120 --> 03:16:08,720

You became ill

1923

03:16:08,720 --> 03:16:09,240

in April.

1924

03:16:09,240 --> 03:16:09,580

suddenly?

1925

03:16:09,580 --> 03:16:18,233

Yes I wa, was ill, not suddenly, slowly I got, and then they discovered with the X-rays, have you ever

1926

03:16:18,233 --> 03:16:27,140

heard how they X-ray the kidney? You know, I was lying on a blen, on a table and, and there was, injected

1927

03:16:27,140 --> 03:16:35,539

me with some dye in my blood and then the X-rays were taking and see if the kidneys are eh working.

1928

03:16:35,539 --> 03:16:42,920

One was working and the other didn't. And they decided that damaged kidney has to go.

1929

03:16:42,920 --> 03:16:42,920

Hmhm.

1930

03:16:43,560 --> 03:16:50,397

And then I was assigned to the hospital about a, a week before, but I can't remember

1931

03:16:50,397 --> 03:16:56,916

the day. I was in hospital a few days and eh, and I was looked after from the oma,

1932

03:16:56,916 --> 03:17:04,230

oma Klepp and my husband and somebody else and I was, while I was waiting for the operation,

1933

03:17:04,230 --> 03:17:10,909

they told me I can go and see a movie. And eh, and where I was staying in hospital,

1934

03:17:10,909 --> 03:17:15,600

I forgot the name of the place at the hospital, in Giessen.

1935

03:17:15,620 --> 03:17:16,400

Yes.

1936

03:17:16,400 --> 03:17:27,160

And I can go and see a movie and I found a movie where eh it was eh the Decision eh, eh oh

1937

03:17:27,460 --> 03:17:28,940

You can say things in

1938

03:17:28,940 --> 03:17:38,433

my, my, f, no, that was an English movie, but with German subtitles, an American movie, that was Gregory

1939

03:17:38,433 --> 03:17:47,926

Peck and he was my favorite. And that was called The Decision. And on I went to see the movie and after

1940

03:17:47,926 --> 03:17:57,236

that, you know, they decided the 28th of April I will have the operation. And the kidney was removed.

1941

03:17:57,236 --> 03:18:06,821

And about a week after I had a terrible infection. And the infection couldn't be helped in the clinic,

1942

03:18:06,821 --> 03:18:16,040

it was a private clinic. Doc, professor Bernhard was doing it. And they had to cut near the cut where

1943

03:18:16,040 --> 03:18:25,351

the kidney was removed, they had to do another cut to release the swelling. I don't know what it was

1944

03:18:25,351 --> 03:18:34,661

for, but without anesthetic. So you can imagine. They gave me a, a handky amongs, amongst my teeth so

1945

03:18:34,661 --> 03:18:44,337

I wouldn't bite my tongue and they cut it and that didn't help much, but because I was in the American

1946

03:18:44,337 --> 03:18:53,465

section, they applied to the American army for penicillin. The infection can only get through better

1947

03:18:53,465 --> 03:19:02,776

penicillin or something else, another name. And the American army got through to Geneva and I got from

1948

03:19:02,776 --> 03:19:11,995

Switzerland streptomycin. Because eh the no, no, no it was penicillin, streptomycin was later, I got

1949

03:19:11,995 --> 03:19:21,123

the penicillin two o'clock in the afternoon, they told me when I had the first injection because I

1950

03:19:21,123 --> 03:19:25,870

didn't know where I was, I didn't know what they

1951

03:19:25,870 --> 03:19:26,040

You were very ill.

1952

03:19:26,040 --> 03:19:34,053

were doing, because the temperature was so high up. And the only thing I cried, I screamed

1953

03:19:34,053 --> 03:19:42,419

once and the matron come running, and she asked me why am I sc, sc, screaming. And I said I'm

1954

03:19:42,419 --> 03:19:50,609

lying on a plank of wood on water and I know I can't swing and I can't run because I've

1955

03:19:50,609 --> 03:19:57,390

got a small boy at home. I remember all that, even with the high temperature.

1956

03:19:58,180 --> 03:20:05,911

And that was two o'clock in the afternoon and by eh s four hours later they

1957

03:20:05,911 --> 03:20:13,742

told me it's already starting to work, because the injections were every four

1958

03:20:13,742 --> 03:20:20,780

hours. After the second injection it opened up and I had eh a little eh

1959

03:20:20,780 --> 03:20:20,960

Drain?

1960

03:20:20,960 --> 03:20:27,814

you know dripper into a you know, bowl and it's already started

1961

03:20:27,814 --> 03:20:33,850

to, to clean the infection from inside. And eh it subsided

1962

03:20:33,850 --> 03:20:37,120

Why didn't they give you any anesthetic? Because they had anesthetic and

1963

03:20:37,300 --> 03:20:40,697

Yes, but that was, I wasn't strong enough on a second

1964

03:20:40,697 --> 03:20:43,600

anesthetic, that was after the first operation.

1965

03:20:43,600 --> 03:20:44,810

Oh, that's the reason?

1966

03:20:44,810 --> 03:20:46,570

Yes, the infection was, if you

1967

03:20:46,570 --> 03:20:47,970

Because they had morfine, they had opium, they had everything.

1968

03:20:48,710 --> 03:20:53,830

They had everything, but I, they couldn't do me, because I wasn't strong enough.

1969

03:20:53,830 --> 03:20:57,910

Do you really want this on the

1970

03:20:57,910 --> 03:20:59,920

No, no, you want to see the cut.

1971

03:20:59,920 --> 03:21:01,100

Okay, yes I see it, yes.

1972

03:21:01,100 --> 03:21:01,280

You see it.

1973

03:21:01,280 --> 03:21:01,720

Yes.

1974

03:21:03,500 --> 03:21:06,580

And there was another cut there, that was the other cut.

1975

03:21:06,580 --> 03:21:07,690

Okay.

1976

03:21:07,690 --> 03:21:08,630

Yes.

1977

03:21:08,630 --> 03:21:10,590

Because it's on film now, you want me to take it off?

1978

03:21:10,590 --> 03:21:14,274

Oh, it doesn't matter, whatever you like, you can cut it out when we get

1979

03:21:14,274 --> 03:21:17,560

home. If you think it's not right, you can do whatever you like.

1980

03:21:17,560 --> 03:21:18,060

No, don't, it's just what you want.

1981

03:21:18,060 --> 03:21:25,553

No, no, I, eh it doesn't matter because, I'll tell you the truth, that is what I went through

1982

03:21:25,553 --> 03:21:32,661

and later on they tried everything, you know, in that clinic to help me out. They were very,

1983

03:21:32,661 --> 03:21:40,231

very good. And I, I started to recover. But of a sudden they ask, I haven't got mein everything

1984

03:21:40,231 --> 03:21:47,416

I had in the drawer it's gone, why don't I have any mirror? Where is my little mirror for

1985

03:21:47,416 --> 03:21:54,446

the drawer, oh the cleaner must have put it somewhere else, after three months they took me

1986

03:21:54,446 --> 03:22:01,476

to the sh, have a shower. And when I was under the shower with the nurse, and I ask her for

1987

03:22:01,476 --> 03:22:06,730

something, maybe the eh now how is a mirror in Germany? I forgot.

1988

03:22:06,730 --> 03:22:06,730

Spiegel.

1989

03:22:06,730 --> 03:22:18,720

Was haben Sie mit den Spiegel getan? Was haben Sie getan mit die Spiegel in den Badhaus? Oh

1990

03:22:18,720 --> 03:22:30,190

they were cleaning and it br, broke. You know why they did it? I weighed only 74 pound.

1991

03:22:30,190 --> 03:22:31,290

That's not enough.

1992

03:22:31,290 --> 03:22:34,260

And I was so thin, they didn't

1993

03:22:34,260 --> 03:22:34,640

That's not beautiful, yes.

1994

03:22:34,640 --> 03:22:38,250

they, they didn't want me to see myself.

1995

03:22:38,250 --> 03:22:38,440

Aha.

1996

03:22:38,440 --> 03:22:48,470

That's why they didn't have a mirror in the bathroom. But slowly, slowly with injections

1997

03:22:48,830 --> 03:22:55,833

But it's amazing that you got a healthy child while you were

1998

03:22:55,833 --> 03:23:01,820

already having only one kidney. When Andrew was born.

1999

03:23:01,820 --> 03:23:03,260

When Marie was born

2000

03:23:03,260 --> 03:23:03,610

Yes.

2001

03:23:03,610 --> 03:23:05,890

when Andrew was born I had both kidneys.

2002

03:23:05,890 --> 03:23:06,570

Yes, but you were not very healthy I guess.

2003

03:23:06,570 --> 03:23:10,279

Not very well, I wasn't very well. But first they saw that

2004

03:23:10,279 --> 03:23:13,370

I am, I've got eh, eh Blinddarm in Germany, the

2005

03:23:13,370 --> 03:23:15,430

Yes, ein appendicitis

2006

03:23:15,430 --> 03:23:23,195

Appendice, so they, they removed the appendix and then the doctor found out that I'm two months

2007

03:23:23,195 --> 03:23:30,720

pregnant, I didn't even know I was pregnant, you know. Anyhow, I just had my period no more.

2008

03:23:30,720 --> 03:23:33,440

That came back immediately after the war?

2009

03:23:33,440 --> 03:23:40,098

Half to the half time I got eh and then they send me over because of that, they send

2010

03:23:40,098 --> 03:23:46,836

me over to a big hospital, not then, eh because the, the wound didn't heal. So I was

2011

03:23:46,836 --> 03:23:52,790

five months in hospital and after five months they send me home. I got home.

2012

03:23:52,790 --> 03:23:56,190

When was this?

2013

03:23:56,190 --> 03:23:57,210

In, in, in Germany.

2014

03:23:57,210 --> 03:23:58,090

Okay.

2015

03:23:58,640 --> 03:24:07,310

They send, you know, I went there in April and I got home in December. For Christmas.

2016

03:24:07,310 --> 03:24:10,640

Which home? You really got

2017

03:24:10,640 --> 03:24:13,240

Where I was v, living privately, where

2018

03:24:13,240 --> 03:24:13,240

Okay.

2019

03:24:13,240 --> 03:24:17,050

Andrew was, where my husband was and oma was there looking after Andrew. That,

2020

03:24:17,050 --> 03:24:20,470

but he didn't recognise me that I, I am his mother. You know. Anyhow

2021

03:24:20,470 --> 03:24:22,630

So that was the first time you got ill?

2022

03:24:22,630 --> 03:24:31,239

Yes, that was the first time they released me from hospital, but still I had to go [swallows] to

2023

03:24:31,239 --> 03:24:39,938

the eh the camp hospital every week, every second, it wasn't too far where Andrew was born, to

2024

03:24:39,938 --> 03:24:48,816

chang the dressing because the, the wound wasn't healed completely. And slowly, slowly it healed

2025

03:24:48,816 --> 03:24:57,335

and, and eh I got double food from the Americans and I was eating very well and everything got,

2026

03:24:57,335 --> 03:25:04,510

got better and better and better and then I was ac, then we, we were accepted in

2027

03:25:04,510 --> 03:25:05,760

I see.

2028

03:25:06,520 --> 03:25:13,851

I didn't tell you when I got married, how it was. I better go back and tell you. My husband said we

2029

03:25:13,851 --> 03:25:21,255

are going to get married in a private, not a private, in a register office. I said alright, but when?

2030

03:25:21,255 --> 03:25:28,587

The 24th of December, Christmas Eve. I said why, can't we wait another day? No, because our friends

2031

03:25:28,587 --> 03:25:36,136

are coming over, but I didn't tell him that that's for after our wedding, only they are coming over,

2032

03:25:36,136 --> 03:25:43,612

come for a Christmas dinner. I said thank you very much, why do you have to keep it a secret? No, they,

2033

03:25:43,612 --> 03:25:51,016

he decided that way. And then at the dinner, it came out that that was a wedding dinner. And they were

2034

03:25:51,016 --> 03:25:58,421

so angry with him, because they didn't bring me any presents and I told him you see how much we lost

2035

03:25:58,421 --> 03:26:03,720

[laughs], he never got eh any presents, but that didn't matter anymore.

2036

03:26:03,720 --> 03:26:04,120

Regina?

2037

03:26:04,120 --> 03:26:04,390

Yes?

2038

03:26:04,390 --> 03:26:07,910

Before we go to the travel to Australia

2039

03:26:07,910 --> 03:26:08,570

Yes?

2040

03:26:09,100 --> 03:26:18,110

you didn't talk about missing your family.

2041

03:26:18,110 --> 03:26:27,901

My dear there wasn't a day where I wasn't thinking about them. My mother, the grandparents

2042

03:26:27,901 --> 03:26:37,087

and my sister and they, even now, all my evening prayers and my morning prayers, after I

2043

03:26:37,087 --> 03:26:46,575

pray to God, I pray to them. Telling them that I haven't forgotten you all. They're still

2044

03:26:46,575 --> 03:26:56,165

with me. You know? You are always, will be with me. Yes. Specially my, my mother and father.

2045

03:26:56,165 --> 03:27:05,250

Father was a very good father, but he, he was looking after us, we never got for him, but

2046

03:27:05,250 --> 03:27:14,738

that wasn't that, that thing that he would come and hug us, like certain fathers were doing.

2047

03:27:14,738 --> 03:27:24,025

You know, he was looking after us very nicely, but that, that, eh personal touch, he was, we

2048

03:27:24,025 --> 03:27:33,816

used to call him, he was a [says something in Polish] , that means the ev, eh, eh [says something

2049

03:27:33,816 --> 03:27:38,460

in Polish , that, that is bachelors in English

2050

03:27:38,460 --> 03:27:38,460

Everlasting bachelor, bachelor.

2051

03:27:38,460 --> 03:27:39,390

yes, yes, yes.

2052

03:27:39,390 --> 03:27:40,070

Eternal bachelor.

2053

03:27:40,070 --> 03:27:48,391

yes, that, yes, that, that what he was, but my mum was different. She was our friend, she was our

2054

03:27:48,391 --> 03:27:56,799

mother, she was our you name it. If you want to be a m, have a mother like that, that's what she

2055

03:27:56,799 --> 03:28:05,207

was. You know. And my grandmother, she used to come in every Sunday morning and me and my sister,

2056

03:28:05,207 --> 03:28:13,615

because we had to wash the dishes from Saturday on Sunday morning and she said to my mum, and then

2057

03:28:13,615 --> 03:28:22,451

my mother was very angry with her, let the b girls go, they have to have a little bit of freedom Sunday

2058

03:28:22,451 --> 03:28:30,773

morning. I'll do the dishes. [laughs] And later on I grandmother said mum wasn't very happy

2059

03:28:30,773 --> 03:28:39,524

that I do that, but you are coming every Sunday, you are going to do your own thing. You are too young

2060

03:28:39,524 --> 03:28:48,018

to worry about it. [laughs] And things like that. Anyhow, it, it was a very, very closeknit family.

2061

03:28:48,018 --> 03:28:56,597

I can't explain. And to loose all that and to left, to be left alone it wasn't easy, but then

2062

03:28:56,597 --> 03:29:05,262

when Andrew was born slowly I got a little bit back, I've got a son. And then eleven years later

2063

03:29:05,262 --> 03:29:10,410

in Australia my daughter was born. It's hard to describe.

2064

03:29:10,410 --> 03:29:10,410

Now, before we end this part

2065

03:29:10,410 --> 03:29:10,410

Yes?

2066

03:29:10,410 --> 03:29:13,255

of the interview, there's another thing you forgot to tell.

2067

03:29:13,255 --> 03:29:16,010

I said you told it me several times, I want you to repeat it

2068

03:29:16,010 --> 03:29:17,060

What was it?

2069

03:29:20,370 --> 03:29:28,790

at the s, the, when you with

2070

03:29:28,790 --> 03:29:29,700

the escape

2071

03:29:29,700 --> 03:29:30,890

Yes.

2072

03:29:30,890 --> 03:29:38,670

eh you got a goal in your life, thinking of Pechersky .

2073

03:29:38,670 --> 03:29:38,890

Yes.

2074

03:29:38,890 --> 03:29:40,450

Can you, can you tell?

2075

03:29:41,560 --> 03:29:50,421

I had a goal, because I was asking myself more than once, even later on, I heard from people,

2076

03:29:50,421 --> 03:29:59,568

but I knew it, I didn't have to ask them because Pechersky words was always with me. There's

2077

03:29:59,568 --> 03:30:08,429

a purpose of your survival. And that purpose is to do something about it. Because Pechersky

2078

03:30:08,429 --> 03:30:17,005

said if only one of us survived, the escape is going to be a success. And I knew I'm not

2079

03:30:17,005 --> 03:30:25,771

the only one who survive, but I have to do my bit. And that was the purpose of my survival,

2080

03:30:25,771 --> 03:30:34,537

to tell the world what they were doing. And what happened there in Sobibor. You know? People

2081

03:30:34,537 --> 03:30:43,208

in other camps had, you know, they were maybe a lot harder than go straighten that, because

2082

03:30:43,208 --> 03:30:51,783

they suffer a lot, but certain people survived the concentration camps. But in that camps

2083

03:30:51,783 --> 03:30:57,310

when transports were coming very seldom somebody survived.

2084

03:30:57,310 --> 03:30:58,640

But you did.

2085

03:30:59,240 --> 03:31:10,760

But I survived. Then I had to do what I promised. And what Pechersky told us.

2086

03:31:10,760 --> 03:31:13,840

We have a break.

2087

03:31:14,550 --> 03:31:14,860

Yes.

2088

03:31:14,860 --> 03:31:15,370

And then we do the last bit, which is Australia.

2089

03:31:15,370 --> 03:31:15,870

Yes.

2090

03:31:15,870 --> 03:31:19,060

And we'll have a very good friend of you.

2091

03:31:20,510 --> 03:31:22,520

Do whatever you, you please

2092

03:31:22,520 --> 03:31:24,890

I really try to, to help you as much

2093

03:31:24,890 --> 03:31:24,890

Yes.

2094

03:31:24,890 --> 03:31:25,850

as I can.

2095

03:31:25,850 --> 03:31:26,420

Yes.

2096

03:31:26,420 --> 03:31:27,740

I hope you feel that.

2097

03:31:27,740 --> 03:31:34,490

I, it's very, very rewarding what you are trying to do and what, with how you

2098

03:31:34,490 --> 03:31:40,900

help me. It's very rewarding because I'm not holding anything back, you

2099

03:31:40,900 --> 03:31:40,900

It's on.

2100

03:31:40,900 --> 03:31:40,900

Yes.

2101

03:31:40,900 --> 03:31:48,371

We were starting to talk that you heard somebody shouting your name, be careful with

2102

03:31:48,371 --> 03:31:55,580

this cord, so you heard somebody shouting your name that you could go to America.

2103

03:31:55,600 --> 03:31:55,990

Yes.

2104

03:31:55,990 --> 03:31:57,770

But you went to Australia.

2105

03:31:57,770 --> 03:32:06,780

Yes, we were on the eh plank, I don't know what you call it, the steps to go onto the ship to

2106

03:32:06,780 --> 03:32:15,882

go to the eh, to Australia. And somebody had, had the for us that we can go to the United States.

2107

03:32:15,882 --> 03:32:25,636

It was too late. My cousin Zelda and some other Polish friends, they arranged it and they got together

2108

03:32:25,636 --> 03:32:34,924

and they made it for us and it was too late. I don't know to be sorry or not, but we were so far

2109

03:32:34,924 --> 03:32:44,120

away here in Australia from Europe for the whole other world, it was so difficult and different and

2110

03:32:44,120 --> 03:32:53,316

there was another thing: we were supposed to go to Melbourne and we have already friends waiting us

2111

03:32:53,316 --> 03:33:02,698

for us in Melbourne. And when the ship arrived to Freemantle, before we were going to Melbourne, they

2112

03:33:02,698 --> 03:33:12,637

were, to go to Sydney, because a ship before us broke down in Melbourne and they would not, in Freemantle,

2113

03:33:12,637 --> 03:33:21,647

they would not have made it to Sydney, so they stayed in Melbourne and we were going to go to

2114

03:33:21,647 --> 03:33:30,657

Sydney. And that was so bad for us, because we never knew anybody in Sydney. People, the friends

2115

03:33:30,657 --> 03:33:39,852

were waiting at the, the warff in Melbourne to greet us and couldn't even step down the ship, we

2116

03:33:39,852 --> 03:33:48,955

were devastated but we couldn't do anything else but to, to go to Sydney. And when we arrived in

2117

03:33:48,955 --> 03:33:57,965

Sydney, oh by the way, it was a very, very terrible voyage from Melbourne to Sydney. I think they

2118

03:33:57,965 --> 03:34:07,254

call it the bushtrade that is the most eh dangerous for ships, we couldn't even step down our, our

2119

03:34:07,254 --> 03:34:16,357

banks. The ship was rolling, everybody was seasick, even in the, in the dining room and the casino

2120

03:34:16,357 --> 03:34:25,553

all the chairs were bolting down and it was such a terrible voyage from Melbourne to Sydney. But we

2121

03:34:25,553 --> 03:34:28,340

arrived in one piece [laughs].

2122

03:34:28,550 --> 03:34:32,810

But before you were there, that was a long, long journey already no doubt.

2123

03:34:32,810 --> 03:34:41,600

It was a long journey, it took, it took exactly with everything, took exactly 28 days, leaving Italy

2124

03:34:41,600 --> 03:34:50,303

and arriving to Sydney. At the 3rd of August 1949, four o'clock in the afternoon we were supposed

2125

03:34:50,303 --> 03:34:59,182

to get down the ship. And we walked down the ship the first thing I did, I didn't even wait for my

2126

03:34:59,182 --> 03:35:08,061

husband and, and Andrew to come down, I kneeled down and I kissed the ground. Because I was in a free

2127

03:35:08,061 --> 03:35:16,852

country. And we are so far away from Germany and Europe. I was really, really happy. And from there

2128

03:35:16,852 --> 03:35:25,906

on we were packed up on a night train to go to a place, it was called Bathurst that was on the bottom

2129

03:35:25,906 --> 03:35:35,400

of the Blue Mountains. And it was a very cold night journey, August is already like winter time in Australia

2130

03:35:35,400 --> 03:35:44,718

and we arrived on, on the, on the, the train, it was so cold, but I don't know how lucky I was, somebody

2131

03:35:44,718 --> 03:35:53,597

from the American army, he gave me a militair woolen blanket. So I could wrap up Andrew in it. He was

2132

03:35:53,597 --> 03:36:02,300

only two and a half. Because on the ship, before we were boarding Sydney, that was the ch, a lot of

2133

03:36:02,300 --> 03:36:11,091

children had measles and they were taken off the ship to a Sydney hospital, but Andrew wasn't sick

2134

03:36:11,091 --> 03:36:19,882

then. But w, on the way he got sick because it was so cold on the train and I couldn't wait to get

2135

03:36:19,882 --> 03:36:28,585

to Bathurst to, we arrived, all night we were travelling, we arrived at eight o'clock in Bathurst

2136

03:36:28,585 --> 03:36:37,727

eh we were getting off and then the first thing was I had to run and it was too late, because over there

2137

03:36:37,727 --> 03:36:46,782

they were only giving till eight o'clock breakfast and that was after eight. We didn't get anything

2138

03:36:46,782 --> 03:36:55,660

when we arrived there. And, and it wasn't actually the city Br, Bathurst it was a, another camp, it

2139

03:36:55,660 --> 03:37:05,155

was Greater And the Greater was where the colemine was and there was a very big American militair barracks.

2140

03:37:05,155 --> 03:37:14,649

We were going to stay there. But Andrew was so sick, so I went into the kitchen and asked them to telephone,

2141

03:37:14,649 --> 03:37:23,791

as much as I could speak in English, telephone because mein son was sick, to call a doctor. And a doctor

2142

03:37:23,791 --> 03:37:32,494

came from the hospital and when he saw Andrew he didn't wait anymore for an ambulance, he wrapped

2143

03:37:32,494 --> 03:37:41,373

him up and took him to the hospital. In hospital they just, it was so nice and warm, they dressed him

2144

03:37:41,373 --> 03:37:50,252

in a hospital eh pyjamas because I didn't have anything like that. Our luggage was still eh on the

2145

03:37:50,252 --> 03:37:58,954

ship or taken off, it was on a box that arrived about three or four days later. And then Andrew was

2146

03:37:58,954 --> 03:38:07,657

in hospital. That same day they discovered that he got measles. And the measles turn out to be with

2147

03:38:07,657 --> 03:38:16,712

something else, with pneumonia and gastro-enteritis. They didn't test him but they were going to give

2148

03:38:16,712 --> 03:38:24,975

him penicilline, they didn't test him if he was allergic and he was allergic to peniceline.-

2149

03:38:24,800 --> 03:38:25,370

Oh my God.

2150

03:38:25,370 --> 03:38:34,029

So you can imagine, he had, his mouth, was nothing but ulcers in his mouth, he couldn't drink, he couldn't

2151

03:38:34,029 --> 03:38:42,059

swallow, only through a straw. And, anyhow, it took I don't know how many days, they didn't allow

2152

03:38:42,059 --> 03:38:50,088

any mother into hospital, all I used to see him is through a window, but so that Andrew wouldn't see

2153

03:38:50,088 --> 03:38:58,118

me. Because they said the mothers upset the children [laughs]. Anyhow, it took quite a few days and he

2154

03:38:58,118 --> 03:39:06,463

slowly, slowly recovered. Not, it wasn't actual a recovering, but it took, he was six weeks in hospital.

2155

03:39:06,463 --> 03:39:14,571

There's another thing I forgot to tell on the beginning. When we were signed up to come to Australia,

2156

03:39:14,571 --> 03:39:22,443

every man had to signed up for the Australian government for two weeks for work, whatever they were

2157

03:39:22,443 --> 03:39:30,473

put, they had to w, go to work. Nobody was asked the profession, whatever in Australia they were short

2158

03:39:30,473 --> 03:39:38,503

off workers, the migrants were taken there. So my husband was taken to Richmond airf, Australian Royal

2159

03:39:38,503 --> 03:39:46,454

Airforce as a laborer to work there with a lot of other migrants. There were some Polish migrants too

2160

03:39:46,454 --> 03:39:54,798

with him and all that. But that was about a night trip by train from Richmond to Greater to see us, Andrew

2161

03:39:54,798 --> 03:40:03,458

and myself. Anyhow, after that hospital thing I took him to, we were giving quarters where to live [swallows]

2162

03:40:03,458 --> 03:40:11,330

and it wasn't straight away that my husband was taken away. First they had to, when we arrived to,

2163

03:40:11,330 --> 03:40:19,202

to Greater the whole world was covered in snow. It was so cold and we were coming to a semi tropical

2164

03:40:19,202 --> 03:40:27,626

country, so we had to find out that they didn't mix up the ships, they took us to another place. Because

2165

03:40:27,626 --> 03:40:36,049

it couldn't be Australia with snow! And you have heard of the snow mountains, [says something in Polish],

2166

03:40:36,049 --> 03:40:44,000

we were just a few steps from it. Anyhow, we were given a, a barrack eh, room and because our name is

2167

03:40:44,000 --> 03:40:52,187

the last letter, Zielinski, so we were giving the last barrack. And that last barrack didn't even have

2168

03:40:52,187 --> 03:41:00,217

a glass in the windows. But we were giving blankets and so my husband had to put on the cover that the

2169

03:41:00,217 --> 03:41:08,325

windows with the blankets, so he asked for a few nails somewhere, I don't know with other men and all

2170

03:41:08,325 --> 03:41:16,276

that and then with other men they tried to make up something to have it a bit warm and they made up a

2171

03:41:16,276 --> 03:41:24,463

potbelly stove. There was enough fuel and that was heating a little bit. And later they came in, workers

2172

03:41:24,463 --> 03:41:32,650

came and fixed it up a little bit. But Andrew was in hospital. I think it took about two weeks that they

2173

03:41:32,650 --> 03:41:41,074

took my husband away for work. I'm not so sure, it could have been less or more. And then every fortnight

2174

03:41:41,074 --> 03:41:49,339

he used to come to greet and to visit us. When he used to leave Richmond Fridaynight, he arrived Saturday

2175

03:41:49,339 --> 03:41:57,527

morning in Greater. And when he was leaving for work back again, he had to leave Saturday night by train

2176

03:41:57,527 --> 03:42:05,556

and he arrived in Richmond Monday morning. That's how the journeys were there. And now when migrants

2177

03:42:05,556 --> 03:42:13,743

came, they have got it so good, they were never separated, we never complained, we were not running away

2178

03:42:13,743 --> 03:42:21,616

you know, what do they call them now? Not migrants, they call them eh what do they call the people

2179

03:42:21,616 --> 03:42:25,237

coming now from, from the boats and all that?-

2180

03:42:25,080 --> 03:42:28,820

I don't know how they call it in Australia.

2181

03:42:28,820 --> 03:42:36,956

Allright, and eh that word will come to me, but we were not the same. We were chosen migrants and we

2182

03:42:36,956 --> 03:42:45,174

he had to settle down here. For the first two years it wasn't easy. And then after the two years you

2183

03:42:45,174 --> 03:42:53,149

could have found himself another job, but not knowing very well English, he couldn't have his own

2184

03:42:53,149 --> 03:43:01,447

profession. He was a journalist, but he knew French and he knew German and Polish, but he didn't know

2185

03:43:01,447 --> 03:43:09,423

English [laughs]. And that was the biggest joke ever. I couldn't speak much English. Anyhow, I in

2186

03:43:09,423 --> 03:43:17,560

the camp at Greater I find my fel, self a job, Andrew was going to a kindergarten, he was three years

2187

03:43:17,560 --> 03:43:25,938

old then, and there was a lot from other countries in that kindergarten. Sometimes he used to come home,

2188

03:43:25,938 --> 03:43:34,075

that where we were living, he, he I didn't know sometimes what he was talking to me, he learned it

2189

03:43:34,075 --> 03:43:42,292

from other le, children for other languages. And one day he came home, he said a woman was hanging out

2190

03:43:42,292 --> 03:43:50,671

the washing and she was speaking so loud, he, she said something like that and that was a Russian woman,

2191

03:43:50,671 --> 03:43:58,969

she was swearing and I couldn't tell him what she was saying. I said I didn't understand, I don't

2192

03:43:58,969 --> 03:44:07,186

know Russian [laughs]. And that how it was the beginning. But we were happy and I was working the, the

2193

03:44:07,186 --> 03:44:15,645

hours that Andrew was in the kindergarten, I was helping out the, the local doctor, doctor Lewis, because

2194

03:44:15,645 --> 03:44:23,701

his wife wasn't a very well person. I was really happy she taught me a little bit more English and

2195

03:44:23,701 --> 03:44:31,677

we could learn a little bit of English in the camp. And, and the children were being taught English

2196

03:44:31,677 --> 03:44:40,136

a little bit, but slowly, slowly. But I stayed in that camp for two years. And there was like two camps.

2197

03:44:40,136 --> 03:44:48,756

One was called the Silver City and one was called the Chocolate City. The Chocolate City had brown barracks

2198

03:44:48,756 --> 03:44:57,054

and we had silver barracks. The Chocolate City had all the administration for all the migrants who were

2199

03:44:57,054 --> 03:45:05,191

coming there. And somehow we managed to survive. But we arrived in August, in December I contracted

2200

03:45:05,191 --> 03:45:13,650

a mosquito bite in my chest there, don't know what to call it chest. And that mosquito bite was growing

2201

03:45:13,650 --> 03:45:21,625

and didn't go away. It didn't hurt much, but it was like a little as big as a pigeon egg so I

2202

03:45:21,625 --> 03:45:29,601

went to doctor and to hospital. The hospital they tried to find out what it was. First of all I had

2203

03:45:29,601 --> 03:45:37,738

to go through an operation to, to get rid of it. And I had to be in hospital. And nobody was there to

2204

03:45:37,738 --> 03:45:45,875

look after Andrew and Andrew, because the father was so far away and who knows when he will be coming

2205

03:45:45,875 --> 03:45:54,575

and he had to go to a orphanage. Anyhow, it was arranged, everything and the, I wasn't long in hospital,

2206

03:45:54,575 --> 03:46:02,793

only three days, I came back and that wound didn't heal. They tried everything under the sun. They

2207

03:46:02,793 --> 03:46:10,768

burned it, they cut it again, stitched it up again and the, the stitches came apart, it was getting

2208

03:46:10,768 --> 03:46:18,824

bigger and bigger and the wound didn't heal. They took me with antibiotics, that didn't help and

2209

03:46:18,824 --> 03:46:27,203

then one of the doctors there said we will try a on streptomycin or something, but then in the meantime

2210

03:46:27,203 --> 03:46:35,340

I got better and we had to leave. My husband found a place where to live. It was after the two years.

2211

03:46:35,340 --> 03:46:39,771

And I had a place where to live in a suburb of Sydney.-

2212

03:46:39,610 --> 03:46:47,551

It was called Right, Topright. I had a room, a very beautiful big room and I share with the

2213

03:46:47,551 --> 03:46:55,579

people who rented out that room the kitchen and the laundry and the bathroom. It was lovely.

2214

03:46:55,579 --> 03:47:03,608

And my husband find himself another job. And I just had to go everyday to Sydney to get an

2215

03:47:03,608 --> 03:47:11,636

injection. And it was a very big hospital, Crown Street Women's hospital, that was I know

2216

03:47:11,636 --> 03:47:19,665

the biggest there in Sydney and they found out that I have to have every day an injection of

2217

03:47:19,665 --> 03:47:27,606

streptomycin. Till that wound heals. Because whatever they were doing, it didn't heal. In

2218

03:47:27,606 --> 03:47:35,722

the meantime there was a little hole getting there and the doctor said, doctor Lewis, he said

2219

03:47:35,722 --> 03:47:43,663

you have to be very eh, you know, patient with it because you have to take the streptomycin

2220

03:47:43,663 --> 03:47:48,900

every day, but not interrupt. If you interrupt even two days

2221

03:47:48,900 --> 03:47:50,340

You have to start again.

2222

03:47:50,340 --> 03:48:00,091

it's lost, you have to start again. So I got on that, so the first two years was every day, on the

2223

03:48:00,091 --> 03:48:09,940

weekend a nurse used to come home to give me the injection. And I found myself a job, sowing, Andrew

2224

03:48:09,940 --> 03:48:19,886

was going already to eh five years he was old too, to start at school, and I found myself a li, a job

2225

03:48:19,886 --> 03:48:30,320

on the school hours, so I took him to the school and with the bus to work. I was doing sowing, children's

2226

03:48:30,320 --> 03:48:40,559

work, Gayworth in Gladesville. And the nurse used to come to the working place to give me injection every

2227

03:48:40,559 --> 03:48:47,970

day. And I was on those injections home and work for three and a half years.

2228

03:48:47,970 --> 03:48:48,410

Gee!

2229

03:48:48,410 --> 03:48:53,955

Till it healed. And it healed up, it was a very big hole there. And after I was

2230

03:48:53,955 --> 03:48:59,571

once in hospital where I lived, the doctor said talk to that doctor Lewis because

2231

03:48:59,571 --> 03:49:04,840

he's an English, what do you call the doctors that the skin, skin jobs? Eh

2232

03:49:04,840 --> 03:49:04,840

Dermatologists.

2233

03:49:04,840 --> 03:49:04,840

De eh

2234

03:49:04,840 --> 03:49:04,840

Dermatologists.

2235

03:49:04,840 --> 03:49:13,671

dermatologist, talk to him and he may help you out with

2236

03:49:13,671 --> 03:49:21,540

that hole. Not the dermatologist, no, because the

2237

03:49:21,540 --> 03:49:21,540

Plastic surgeon?

2238

03:49:21,540 --> 03:49:28,380

plastic surgeon, thank you, then the plastic surgeon, the doctor Lewis was an Englishman with

2239

03:49:28,380 --> 03:49:35,294

red hair and he was the best person ever you could talk, he was like a brother, like a father,

2240

03:49:35,294 --> 03:49:42,134

he was such a nice doctor. And he said I'll, I'll fix it up. So he just did two stitches,

2241

03:49:42,134 --> 03:49:49,048

one stitch there and one there and he tied it in a knob, put a piece of, not even as wide as a

2242

03:49:49,048 --> 03:49:56,109

finger, a plastic, clear plastic and he said that will be taken off in ten days and I'll pull

2243

03:49:56,109 --> 03:50:02,950

the stitches out. And he put the skin together and he covered the hole. You can, and I'll

2244

03:50:02,950 --> 03:50:08,540

show it to you later. It's not important now. But you see, that has grown

2245

03:50:08,540 --> 03:50:15,028

on that side, it's ho, higher than there, but that caused it. And it had a name. It

2246

03:50:15,028 --> 03:50:22,052

was similar like but it wasn't. It wasn't, it had another name. But to remember medical

2247

03:50:22,052 --> 03:50:28,617

names is not so easy. But it healed up and everything was allright. I didn't have to

2248

03:50:28,617 --> 03:50:35,182

wear blouses and whatever, everything buttoned up here not to show the hole. And eh I

2249

03:50:35,182 --> 03:50:41,976

was maybe right for a moment. And then there wasn't a lot, a lot of things after that.

2250

03:50:41,976 --> 03:50:46,710

Can we have a little, a little stop? I have to remind myself.

2251

03:50:46,710 --> 03:50:46,710

Okay, it's on.

2252

03:50:48,110 --> 03:50:55,946

We got to know a lot of people, migrants, not even migrants, Australian peop, the Australian people

2253

03:50:55,946 --> 03:51:03,782

so, were so very good to us and we never heard a word go back where you come from, they helped even

2254

03:51:03,782 --> 03:51:12,014

with the telephone if I needed a doctor. Mrs. Brian always called the doctor, because I couldn't speak

2255

03:51:12,014 --> 03:51:20,167

very well English. Or once even had the eh that I couldn't speak, what is it called, eh that I lost

2256

03:51:20,167 --> 03:51:28,241

my voice [laughs], laryngitis , she used to do all the things and she used to help me out where I used

2257

03:51:28,241 --> 03:51:36,315

to go shopping, to look up the things in the dictionary. I had a Polish-English dictionary to look up,

2258

03:51:36,315 --> 03:51:44,231

because my pronunciation fo, from Polish to English was phonetic and the grocer doesn't understand

2259

03:51:44,231 --> 03:51:52,304

what I was talking to [laughs]. It wasn't very easy. But mine job was to learn English, forget about

2260

03:51:52,304 --> 03:52:00,141

writing, forget about to read the newspapers every day, to listen to the radio every. And I'll eh

2261

03:52:00,141 --> 03:52:08,294

try so hard and I learned it slowly, slowly. I couldn't go to night school because Andrew was little.

2262

03:52:08,294 --> 03:52:16,209

And my husband, after the eh the, the, it was finished, the two years, he found himself a, a job,

2263

03:52:16,209 --> 03:52:20,880

but that was a three, eh he had morning shift, shift work.

2264

03:52:20,880 --> 03:52:20,880

Yes.

2265

03:52:20,880 --> 03:52:29,633

He had three shift and a, and twenty four hours, so I couldn't go anywhere. And all the school who

2266

03:52:29,633 --> 03:52:38,213

were learning evening classes English was in the city. And that I had to go by, by train or by bus,

2267

03:52:38,213 --> 03:52:47,486

I couldn't do it. And it was something, you know, it was hard to describe. But I we, I missed something.

2268

03:52:47,486 --> 03:52:54,420

When the doctor re, recognised what it was that I have to have a injection every

2269

03:52:55,090 --> 03:52:55,240

Day.

2270

03:52:55,240 --> 03:53:03,659

every day and he assigned me to, I knew a doctor, Polish doctor, eh, eh how could I forget that?

2271

03:53:03,659 --> 03:53:12,248

Eh in a minute it will come. And he told me that I have to come after work from where I was working,

2272

03:53:12,248 --> 03:53:21,007

to the city to him and he was in, in a street, where all the specialists were, for an injection. Later

2273

03:53:21,007 --> 03:53:29,937

on I got the injections from a nurse, because that was assigned differently, I couldn't make it anymore

2274

03:53:29,937 --> 03:53:38,526

to run after work to, to the city. And eh somehow, you know, I got better. And that was already done

2275

03:53:38,526 --> 03:53:47,115

up, but the other things came along. Different things. Complications with the ear. The infections in

2276

03:53:47,115 --> 03:53:55,619

the ear. There was a doctor who wanted to heal mine ear. He wanted implant a different dr, drum so I

2277

03:53:55,619 --> 03:54:04,038

could hear, it didn't work. And then it took quite, I don't know how many years before that ear

2278

03:54:04,038 --> 03:54:12,543

was fixed up. I can't hear. On a, that was still, you know, to carry all the things from the camp.

2279

03:54:12,543 --> 03:54:21,132

And there were other things [swallows] beside that and I contracted because of that ear and the noise

2280

03:54:21,132 --> 03:54:26,489

during the war and everything, tinnitus, you know what that is?

2281

03:54:26,490 --> 03:54:27,210

Hmhm.

2282

03:54:27,330 --> 03:54:35,738

And the noise is still with me. Day and night. Sometimes it's louder, sometimes it goes down a little

2283

03:54:35,738 --> 03:54:43,901

bit. But it's always there. And even if it goes away for a second I wouldn't even know, because

2284

03:54:43,901 --> 03:54:52,064

it never, never leaves me. And that is sometimes, the ear specialist, they couldn't do anything to

2285

03:54:52,064 --> 03:55:00,799

tinnitus. And sometimes you, the doctor when he goes to Eu, to Eu, to other, eh Europe to, to conferences,

2286

03:55:00,799 --> 03:55:08,799

and I used to ask him have they found out something for tinnitus, he said if we find out something

2287

03:55:08,799 --> 03:55:16,799

for it, I'll be the first to know and he'll be the first to help me. Because it's not a easy

2288

03:55:16,799 --> 03:55:25,288

thing to live with all those things. But I just had to bear with this and all other things, they can't

2289

03:55:25,288 --> 03:55:33,697

do anything. Then where I was working, not with baby stuff, and they were very good for me, the people

2290

03:55:33,697 --> 03:55:41,860

there. And I got pregnant. But before that I had two miscarriages. But that one somehow stayed and,

2291

03:55:41,860 --> 03:55:50,105

you know, and I said nothing is going to happen to that, I tried so very hard to, to, to be calm, not

2292

03:55:50,105 --> 03:55:58,105

be calm to, but not do things what I shouldn't do. I didn't even know like with the first one,

2293

03:55:58,105 --> 03:56:02,350

like with Andrew the first half that I was pregnant.

2294

03:56:02,350 --> 03:56:02,350

Yes, you told so.

2295

03:56:02,350 --> 03:56:10,290

But I got to know later. And they thought, you know, when I was in hospital, in Hospital, that eh,

2296

03:56:10,290 --> 03:56:18,632

eh they, they were trying to X-ray my other kidney [swallows] and they put something on mine eh stomach,

2297

03:56:18,632 --> 03:56:26,493

a piece of lead, and I said what are you putting there? Oh, she said, to protect your baby. I said

2298

03:56:26,493 --> 03:56:34,434

what baby? Don't you know that you are pregnant? I said I'm not pregnant. And they thought what

2299

03:56:34,434 --> 03:56:42,295

would the we used to be called new Australians, what would Australia know she doesn't even know

2300

03:56:42,295 --> 03:56:50,075

that she's pregnant. But while I was in hospital to check my heart and lungs, not the kidney, I

2301

03:56:50,075 --> 03:56:57,856

had mine periods. And the matron came along and I didn't bring anything with me and I told her

2302

03:56:57,856 --> 03:57:05,877

I would like to pay from the hospital canteen or whatever they call it, and I told her you see they,

2303

03:57:05,877 --> 03:57:13,898

they found out that I'm almost four months pregnant. And I didn't even know! And now I can prove

2304

03:57:13,898 --> 03:57:21,839

it to you that I didn't know. I wasn't sick, I wasn't vomiting, I was oh, it was no for me.

2305

03:57:21,839 --> 03:57:29,780

And then it was the, the 4th, anyhow [laughs] it was funny, we had visitors from another place and

2306

03:57:29,780 --> 03:57:37,881

I went with them to see a movie. And I, I was on Monday to see the doctor [loud noises of cars going

2307

03:57:37,881 --> 03:57:45,742

by], the gynaecologist in hospital, in that Hospital, and he said I see you next Monday. And when

2308

03:57:45,742 --> 03:57:53,763

I came home it was alright I went to see a movie, my husband was then on afternoon shift so he will

2309

03:57:53,763 --> 03:58:02,105

be home at twelve, and we'll come home before twelve, so I wou, wouldn't be late and that particular

2310

03:58:02,105 --> 03:58:03,709

night [loud noises]

2311

03:58:03,710 --> 03:58:11,050

somebody stopping here, I think I'm getting a parc, I don't

2312

03:58:11,050 --> 03:58:12,540

Okay, the gynaecologist, your appointment with

2313

03:58:13,790 --> 03:58:21,901

A, appointment with him and I said I'm also, see you next Monday because it was only the last month

2314

03:58:21,901 --> 03:58:30,012

of the pregnancy, for the pain, you know, every week. And when I got home from the pictures at night

2315

03:58:30,012 --> 03:58:38,204

time, I saw him the day time, and I was that long in hospital from morning till the afternoon, because

2316

03:58:38,204 --> 03:58:46,154

there were emergencies in between, and I couldn't sleep. I fell out of bed, our bed was very low,

2317

03:58:46,154 --> 03:58:54,025

with the pillow and I said to my husband I had all, everything ready in a suitcase and I said oh I

2318

03:58:54,025 --> 03:59:02,216

can't sleep, mein back is so aching, I can't even sit or stand. And he said go back to bed, doctor

2319

03:59:02,216 --> 03:59:10,809

Lewis told you to come back next eh, next Monday and all that. I said I, I can't and about six o'clock

2320

03:59:10,809 --> 03:59:19,161

in the morning I made it, go to the neighbour and to call an ambulance. And that was about six o'clock

2321

03:59:19,161 --> 03:59:27,514

in the morning and he said, you know, my husband said I'm not coming with you in the ambulance because

2322

03:59:27,514 --> 03:59:35,384

you're not going to have the child today. But on the way I got really, really in labour, labour

2323

03:59:35,384 --> 03:59:43,254

pain. And the, the driver in the ambulance said put something between your teeth or scream as loud

2324

03:59:43,254 --> 03:59:51,446

as you can. It took twenty minutes from where we were living to Hospital. When I got to the hospital

2325

03:59:51,446 --> 03:59:59,396

they took me out and when I was in the lift, because the delivery room was on the third floor, when

2326

03:59:59,396 --> 04:00:07,427

I was in the lift my water brea, broke. I came to the hospital seven o'clock and you know, when my

2327

04:00:07,427 --> 04:00:10,560

daughter was born a quarter past seven.

2328

04:00:10,700 --> 04:00:11,970

That's a fast delivery!

2329

04:00:11,970 --> 04:00:20,081

It was so fast and the doctor told me [laughs], we'll you've a dau, you've got a girl or a

2330

04:00:20,081 --> 04:00:28,277

daughter, I can't, and you know, and they gave me an injection, something, you know, I was like

2331

04:00:28,277 --> 04:00:36,389

in a cloud and all that. And I, I remember what I said to the doctor are you sure it's a girl?

2332

04:00:36,389 --> 04:00:44,585

[laughs] And she was really, really, she was not a premature one, she was, you know, really good,

2333

04:00:44,585 --> 04:00:53,288

but she had long hair. And, and really a good looking baby. And after a week, I had to stay in hospital

2334

04:00:53,288 --> 04:01:01,484

a week, I got home and we were already now, own home, but the home, the place wasn't finished.

2335

04:01:01,484 --> 04:01:09,596

We had to finish it up, we didn't have any carpets in it yet. Anyhow, because it was from week

2336

04:01:09,596 --> 04:01:17,792

to week, the earning, to spend the money, but it was our own place. And Marie was born the 4th of

2337

04:01:17,792 --> 04:01:24,129

April 1958 and that was eleven years after Andrew. So she's eleven years

2338

04:01:24,130 --> 04:01:24,690

Younger.

2339

04:01:24,690 --> 04:01:34,967

younger. And now she's not even living closeby. They live in Central Coast, not far from Sydney,

2340

04:01:34,967 --> 04:01:44,830

about eh hour, an hour drive from Sydney. And what else can I tell you from, about Australia?

2341

04:01:44,920 --> 04:01:47,580

It's not about Australia, we talk, we can

2342

04:01:47,580 --> 04:01:49,370

We , about my life.

2343

04:01:49,370 --> 04:01:54,170

Yes, well, the trial in Hagen I think, how were you approached?

2344

04:01:54,180 --> 04:02:03,053

How we have, we approached it very well, we build another place, that one wasn't big enough and then

2345

04:02:03,053 --> 04:02:11,926

after a while, you know, I got myself, and Marie was bigger, I got myself a job at home. I was working

2346

04:02:11,926 --> 04:02:20,626

because I stopped doing baby stuff so I got the same baby stuff, the people, the Mr. Jones got me an

2347

04:02:20,626 --> 04:02:29,412

overlock as I used to do the same job at the work, but I was doing it work, piece work, for baby's,

2348

04:02:29,412 --> 04:02:38,025

baby's clothing, used to do, I'll show you when we finish I showed you what I was doing. And eh

2349

04:02:38,025 --> 04:02:46,724

it was really, really good, till Marie got bigger. She went to school and that place closed down and

2350

04:02:46,724 --> 04:02:56,120

I found myself another place where to work. And that was Rolston Dressing Gowns. Beautiful place, beautiful

2351

04:02:56,120 --> 04:03:04,906

place. And they gave me school hour work. So when school holidays were on, I used to take work home,

2352

04:03:04,906 --> 04:03:13,693

because I had a, a sowing machine who could do appliqué, so I used to do for, for the work I used to

2353

04:03:13,693 --> 04:03:18,999

do, there I used to do the applicate work on school holidays.

2354

04:03:19,000 --> 04:03:27,949

And sometime we used to have a strike at the warff and they couldn't deliver the material, then

2355

04:03:27,949 --> 04:03:36,806

I used to help them out at home, because we were not allowed to work when the strike was on. But

2356

04:03:36,806 --> 04:03:45,755

I used to help out at work and somehow, you know, we, we got it and it was an, a year before the

2357

04:03:45,755 --> 04:03:54,889

money was changed, we managed to have a little bit of money and we bought ourselves a car! And that

2358

04:03:54,889 --> 04:04:02,270

was, the money was changed here in eighty six or '84 from pounds to dollars.

2359

04:04:02,270 --> 04:04:02,660

Yes.

2360

04:04:02,660 --> 04:04:10,647

So we bought that an English automatic car. And that was still for the pounds. And it was lovely.

2361

04:04:10,647 --> 04:04:18,635

First my husband got his drivers license, then Andrew got his drivers license and I got my drivers

2362

04:04:18,635 --> 04:04:26,459

license. And we were all th, three of us driving the same car. And then, when my husband retired

2363

04:04:26,459 --> 04:04:34,202

he couldn't drive anymore, he couldn't work because he had cataracts, he had to leave work,

2364

04:04:34,202 --> 04:04:42,434

but I was still working and Marie got herself a job. And, by the way, Andrew got a very good scholar,

2365

04:04:42,434 --> 04:04:50,585

he got a scholarship to the university. Eh, but he wasn't so good the first , second year I think,

2366

04:04:50,585 --> 04:04:58,409

he flunked at something, he had to repeat it and he, anyhow, there was a lot, a lot of things in

2367

04:04:58,409 --> 04:05:06,234

between where he was working eh, eh at school, school holidays he used to try to work. And Marie

2368

04:05:06,234 --> 04:05:14,058

wanted to be very, very much a pathologist. I think it's called a pathologist, you test blood

2369

04:05:14,058 --> 04:05:21,883

in a hospital. But she couldn't get in, so she went back to the eh college and she got herself

2370

04:05:21,883 --> 04:05:26,039

a diploma for pharmaceutical eh, what is it called?

2371

04:05:26,960 --> 04:05:27,580

Assistant?

2372

04:05:27,580 --> 04:05:29,220

Pharma, eh, but she could have

2373

04:05:30,340 --> 04:05:30,430

Pharmacist?

2374

04:05:30,430 --> 04:05:38,727

Pharmacist yes, but not only for eh, even for, for eh farmers, to test things for the, the farmers

2375

04:05:38,727 --> 04:05:46,776

and all that. It wasn't just eh, eh for the pharmacy in the city, she had double, double things

2376

04:05:46,776 --> 04:05:54,742

and, if me move somewhere, like when she moved to Tasmania, she could work there for the farmers

2377

04:05:54,742 --> 04:06:03,040

and she could work in any pharmacy shop. And she still s, now she gave up the pharmaceutical because

2378

04:06:03,040 --> 04:06:11,587

she couldn't and then twelve years ago [laughs], I thought I will never, never get, be a grandmother

2379

04:06:11,587 --> 04:06:19,553

and one day Marie came over on Mother's day, they were living in Tasmania then, she came over

2380

04:06:19,553 --> 04:06:27,768

for Mother's day and Andrew was living with his partner and she put on her plate a little present

2381

04:06:27,768 --> 04:06:35,899

for Mother's day and she said, mum aren't you go to unwrap it? I said oh you have got a little

2382

04:06:35,899 --> 04:06:44,363

bit of time, but I didn't noticed that she looked any different and when the presents for Mother's

2383

04:06:44,363 --> 04:06:52,412

day was unwrapped and she had beautiful cotton blue and white cotton booties, the, baby's first

2384

04:06:52,412 --> 04:07:00,544

booties. And it didn't register straight away, but Robin, Andrew's partner, screamed. And then

2385

04:07:00,544 --> 04:07:08,925

I knew what was happening. My daughter was pregnant. I couldn't believe that that will ever happen!

2386

04:07:08,925 --> 04:07:17,223

Because she was already married for quite a while and she was , I figure almost forty when Nicholas

2387

04:07:17,223 --> 04:07:17,970

was born.

2388

04:07:18,560 --> 04:07:26,430

So when were you in touch again with Germany and Sobibor? How did that happen?

2389

04:07:26,430 --> 04:07:34,201

Oh that happened, oh in nine eighty three, 1983, but before that they called me to the German

2390

04:07:34,201 --> 04:07:41,973

consulate in, in Sydney. And they had a b, some lawyers and some, I don't know, but five men

2391

04:07:41,973 --> 04:07:49,662

came over from Germany and one defendant, that was for me, he was defendant me, and they were

2392

04:07:49,662 --> 04:07:57,681

asking questions. And they had a very, because I was telling them what I remembered and all that,

2393

04:07:57,681 --> 04:08:05,370

but that was not in '83, that could have been '82 or 1980, in Sydney. And my daughter was

2394

04:08:05,370 --> 04:08:12,150

with me. Because Andrew was already eh somewhere else, he couldn't come with me.

2395

04:08:12,150 --> 04:08:20,787

And they wouldn't, he would not have helped anyhow and eh then they was asking a lot about Sobibor.

2396

04:08:20,787 --> 04:08:29,082

And then I was telling them what I could and about Gomersky about other Scharführers, Wagner and

2397

04:08:29,082 --> 04:08:37,804

what Wagner did to me and all that. Could I recognise, what Wagner, everybody know what, what happened

2398

04:08:37,804 --> 04:08:46,099

to Wagner, but Gomersky could I recognise him? I said if I saw maybe I could, but I wasn't sure

2399

04:08:46,099 --> 04:08:54,565

what they were planning to do. They brought over a very big album. With SS-men. And normal soldiers

2400

04:08:54,565 --> 04:09:03,544

and private eh Nazi people. Not in the uniforms anymore, but in, in civil clothing and I should recognise

2401

04:09:03,544 --> 04:09:09,360

Gomersky. If I would recognise him, then they knew that I was in, in

2402

04:09:09,360 --> 04:09:09,360

Sobibor.

2403

04:09:09,360 --> 04:09:09,800

Sobibor. And I looked

2404

04:09:09,800 --> 04:09:12,900

Had they found you or, or ?

2405

04:09:13,430 --> 04:09:20,481

eh, I don't know how they found me, that I live in, maybe through the United States,

2406

04:09:20,481 --> 04:09:27,532

because I've put in a claim for restitution. And that's how they found me. I still

2407

04:09:27,532 --> 04:09:35,076

had that German Arbeitsbuch where I was and I had witnesses, Zelda, was in the United States

2408

04:09:35,076 --> 04:09:41,390

a witness I was in Sobibor, Esther Raab was there and there was Samuel Lerer

2409

04:09:41,390 --> 04:09:41,880

Hmhm.

2410

04:09:41,910 --> 04:09:44,300

I knew he lives in the United States.

2411

04:09:44,300 --> 04:09:44,460

You had contact with them?

2412

04:09:44,460 --> 04:09:53,115

I had contact with them. Someday needed me as a witness and I needed them for witness and I was called

2413

04:09:53,115 --> 04:10:01,517

to Sydney. And then not straight away to Germany, and then they wanted me to recognise Gomersky and

2414

04:10:01,517 --> 04:10:10,173

eh I looked over that album, I looked as much as I could and I couldn't see them and they, you know,

2415

04:10:10,173 --> 04:10:18,744

gave up at me. But they had a break for lunch, but I didn't go with them for lunch, I stayed at the

2416

04:10:18,744 --> 04:10:27,400

at, at, the, the room there, the, the German consulate and I asked the lady who was eh a little help

2417

04:10:27,400 --> 04:10:36,140

me out with, I knew very perfect in German, help me out with everything, and English, and to leave that

2418

04:10:36,140 --> 04:10:44,711

album with me. I want slowly to go over. And I must find, because I still remember Gomersky's face.

2419

04:10:44,711 --> 04:10:53,282

And you wouldn't believe it that I found him. You know they had every photograph, just numbers, but

2420

04:10:53,282 --> 04:11:01,769

they had another catalogue, the number points to Gomersky was number twelve, and later on in the sa,

2421

04:11:01,769 --> 04:11:10,340

I said that is Gomersky and that lady, that, that secretary went to that other book and she looked up

2422

04:11:10,340 --> 04:11:18,996

number twelve and that was Gomersky. So she even clapped that I found him. And, anyhow, they accepted

2423

04:11:18,996 --> 04:11:27,736

it and after that I was called to Germany in '83. As a witness for Frenzel. They told me when to come

2424

04:11:27,736 --> 04:11:36,647

and doc, eh, eh, judge Kremer rang me up at Sydney, explained everything and would I need a, interpreter.

2425

04:11:36,647 --> 04:11:45,472

I said eh an English interpreter, but you know what they did? They gave me a Polish interpreter, because

2426

04:11:45,472 --> 04:11:54,638

I come from Poland. It didn't matter, you know? And I could still speak to them in German, if I couldn't

2427

04:11:54,638 --> 04:12:03,124

get it, if I, I know that the eh interpreter didn't said it right, I could correct it in German to

2428

04:12:03,124 --> 04:12:11,949

them. And [swallows] Andrew came with me. I said I'm not coming alone to Germany and when my daughter

2429

04:12:11,949 --> 04:12:20,775

was still living, I think she was already in Tasmania living, in '83 or maybe she was still studying,

2430

04:12:20,775 --> 04:12:29,431

my dear , the, the, dates, the, the, the year and the dates aren't sometimes, not hazy but I can't

2431

04:12:29,431 --> 04:12:30,280

place that

2432

04:12:30,280 --> 04:12:30,630

It doesn't matter.

2433

04:12:30,630 --> 04:12:39,762

that doesn't matter, and then, when I got to Germany with Andrew, we got to Frankfurt and eh

2434

04:12:39,762 --> 04:12:48,895

when we were, from Frankfurt we board eh a train to Hagen and when we arrived at Hagen we were

2435

04:12:48,895 --> 04:12:58,027

taken to the hotel, to, everything was so beautifully arranged, everything! And first of all it

2436

04:12:58,027 --> 04:13:06,679

was from Sydney eh, eh, is not eh, not first class but eh, what is the other class called?

2437

04:13:07,470 --> 04:13:07,900

Business class.

2438

04:13:07,900 --> 04:13:12,738

Business class, that was very nice, Lufthansa, , you know,

2439

04:13:12,738 --> 04:13:16,910

flight and that was straight to, to, to Frankfurt.

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04:13:17,250 --> 04:13:17,970

And, and

2441

04:13:17,970 --> 04:13:17,970

Just go on.

2442

04:13:17,970 --> 04:13:20,170

yes, I can go on

2443

04:13:20,170 --> 04:13:20,680

Yes, sure.

2444

04:13:20,680 --> 04:13:31,696

and that, when we arrived in Hagen every, everything was really, really good. When

2445

04:13:31,696 --> 04:13:42,581

we were in the hotel, we had two visitors. A gentleman and a lady came to visit is

2446

04:13:42,581 --> 04:13:52,680

with flowers. That was Jules Schelvis, two Dutch people and Dunya Brouwer?

2447

04:13:52,680 --> 04:13:53,750

Breur, yes.

2448

04:13:53,750 --> 04:13:56,370

Yes, how they pronounce it?

2449

04:13:56,370 --> 04:13:56,960

Breur.

2450

04:13:56,960 --> 04:14:05,643

Breur, Breur. And eh they were all time there, when everything was going on. It was about five days.

2451

04:14:05,643 --> 04:14:13,893

But then we had an interruption for Easter I think. And we had to come back, we had a few days

2452

04:14:13,893 --> 04:14:22,577

off and while I was off, I went with Dunya and with Schelvis to Holland, because it was Easter time,

2453

04:14:22,577 --> 04:14:31,174

Pesach. And Andrew went with his partner to eh, England, something not actually London, but other

2454

04:14:31,174 --> 04:14:39,684

places. My tinnitis just came on so loud! Eh, come on. And we got allright, then we got back and

2455

04:14:39,684 --> 04:14:48,281

everything was allright and whatever happened in Hagen I don't have to tell you, I think you know

2456

04:14:48,281 --> 04:14:54,100

all about it. While I was asked what to do and what to say and what

2457

04:14:54,100 --> 04:14:59,730

I want you to, for the, for the video to tell the story of the map.

2458

04:14:59,940 --> 04:15:08,472

Of the map, yes I will tell you. Before the map I will tell something else. You know, they were talking

2459

04:15:08,472 --> 04:15:16,839

and, you know, I was sitting there. Mein eh translator was sitting there. And where you were sitting,

2460

04:15:16,839 --> 04:15:25,289

there was Frenzel and he, and his lawyer. But I had to turn my back a little bit, so I wouldn't look

2461

04:15:25,289 --> 04:15:33,821

at Frenzel. Only I was looking straight where the judges were. There were about two or three judges and

2462

04:15:33,821 --> 04:15:42,271

some prosecutors and they had everything on the tapes what I said in Sydney. And what I said somewhere

2463

04:15:42,271 --> 04:15:50,886

else, you know, when I was interviewed and they had it, and then it was quite a few years after and that

2464

04:15:50,886 --> 04:15:59,170

was in '83, 1983 in Hagen and they were asking question and I was telling them and all that and of

2465

04:15:59,170 --> 04:16:07,620

a sudden somebody, I don't know, it wasn't judge Kremer, somebody else, did I see who was shooting

2466

04:16:07,620 --> 04:16:15,987

when I was escaping? Did I see who was shooting? Then I couldn't keep quiet any longer, I stood up

2467

04:16:15,987 --> 04:16:24,685

and told them straight in their eyes would you look back if somebody was shooting at you? Wir verzeihen,

2468

04:16:24,685 --> 04:16:29,489

eh verzeihen Sie mir bitte. . Entschuldigen Sie mir bitte.

2469

04:16:29,490 --> 04:16:39,805

Yes. And the same thing was with, with judge Kremer, but he was a civilized person, not like the others.

2470

04:16:39,805 --> 04:16:49,724

And then la, Frenzel's lawyer tried so very hard to discredit me. He tried very hard and I said to

2471

04:16:49,724 --> 04:16:59,941

them you have everything black on white, or you have everything on tapes and I'm getting older, I'm

2472

04:16:59,941 --> 04:17:10,356

not old yet, but I have to have everything in my head. And if sometimes a sentence is said back to front,

2473

04:17:10,356 --> 04:17:20,572

you must understand that. And then when it came to that, to that time when I saw, I went to the toilet

2474

04:17:20,572 --> 04:17:30,690

and I saw to that bush, it was a fence, it was a gate, but we called it fence, bush fence, naked women

2475

04:17:30,690 --> 04:17:40,510

were walking in that particular road from one camp to the third camp, was called the Himmelstrasse

2476

04:17:40,510 --> 04:17:46,660

and they were walking to the gas chambers, they were all naked

2477

04:17:46,660 --> 04:17:47,320

Naked, yes.

2478

04:17:47,320 --> 04:17:54,241

and I had to show on the map where that was. Everybody was, knew where our toilets were,

2479

04:17:54,241 --> 04:18:01,319

because we were that many in the camp, you know, because the, the girls, the women and the

2480

04:18:01,319 --> 04:18:07,690

girls had only a different barrack from the men, but it was in the same compound.

2481

04:18:07,690 --> 04:18:08,100

Sure.

2482

04:18:08,100 --> 04:18:10,430

Yes, anyhow.

2483

04:18:10,620 --> 04:18:17,503

And, anyhow, and when he told me, judge Kremer told me, he even gave me, not a pencil but

2484

04:18:17,503 --> 04:18:24,310

a little stick to show where that bush fence was, where the toilets were and I went down

2485

04:18:24,310 --> 04:18:27,250

And where you could look outside to see

2486

04:18:27,250 --> 04:18:28,420

that where I could

2487

04:18:28,420 --> 04:18:28,830

Himmelstrasse

2488

04:18:28,830 --> 04:18:37,095

yes, from when I was going to the toilet I could see it, and then I was, had to show it to them.

2489

04:18:37,095 --> 04:18:46,050

And when I got down, because that was like a big blackboard, and that map was hanging on that blackboard

2490

04:18:46,050 --> 04:18:54,402

[swallows] and I went down to it and I looked at it and I looked at it, and I couldn't find it.

2491

04:18:54,402 --> 04:19:02,926

And I said to judge Kremer, he came down, after I said eh that is not the map of Sobibor. And that,

2492

04:19:02,926 --> 04:19:11,364

that lawyer was so, sitting there and smiling, he was so happy about it. So judge Kramer came down

2493

04:19:11,364 --> 04:19:19,802

from the podium and he came over to the map and he had a look at it and he said can I excu, excuse

2494

04:19:19,802 --> 04:19:28,240

me please, somebody turned it around, it's upside down. And he put it right on that stand where

2495

04:19:28,240 --> 04:19:36,851

the map was, like a blackboard and I showed him there were the toilets and there's the bush fence.

2496

04:19:36,851 --> 04:19:45,633

And you should have heard in that court the clapping. Because there were a lot of students, university

2497

04:19:45,633 --> 04:19:53,813

students and other school people and ordinary people, I don't know, and then that was thing,

2498

04:19:53,813 --> 04:20:02,079

that, that, that lawyer, Frenzel's lawyer couldn't cross me off that I'm not pretending to

2499

04:20:02,079 --> 04:20:04,490

be at, at Sobibor, you know.

2500

04:20:04,490 --> 04:20:10,220

Was it a trap they had put out for you, or was it an accident?

2501

04:20:10,220 --> 04:20:18,193

I don't know who did, they don't know who did it. You know. I don't know. Till today I

2502

04:20:18,193 --> 04:20:26,253

tried to find out who was there, was it the cleaner, was it somebody who could have put upside

2503

04:20:26,253 --> 04:20:34,313

down and you never checked it before you called me over to it? I wish I could speak very well

2504

04:20:34,313 --> 04:20:41,429

German, I could speak to you. How is it in German to check, warum haben Sie nich eh

2505

04:20:41,610 --> 04:20:42,520

Kontrolliert?

2506

04:20:43,840 --> 04:20:44,090

spl

2507

04:20:44,090 --> 04:20:45,050

? Verifiziert?

2508

04:20:45,960 --> 04:20:53,160

No, there's another word for it, we, fe, why didn't you check it before, warum haben

2509

04:20:53,160 --> 04:21:00,524

Sie nicht eh das, das gesehen? Dat, das, das, that, that isn't, nicht eh, forgive me, I,

2510

04:21:00,524 --> 04:21:07,724

I can speak German, but not when I have to speak to somebody. It comes out with a lot of

2511

04:21:07,724 --> 04:21:14,270

English. You know how it is with a language, if you don't use it, you lose it.

2512

04:21:14,270 --> 04:21:14,420

Yes.

2513

04:21:14,420 --> 04:21:19,564

Yes. But when I read, I can understand every word from a German

2514

04:21:19,564 --> 04:21:23,810

magazine, a book. And I still have got German stuff.

2515

04:21:23,830 --> 04:21:30,990

So from Hagen you made contact with Jules and Dunya

2516

04:21:30,990 --> 04:21:31,470

Yes, yes.

2517

04:21:31,470 --> 04:21:34,240

you already had contact with the other survivors?

2518

04:21:34,740 --> 04:21:40,278

I think they have, they have been there, because there were never two survivors called over

2519

04:21:40,278 --> 04:21:45,270

to Hagen together. They, everybody, when they want to come as a witness, they were

2520

04:21:45,270 --> 04:21:47,550

They had to come alone.

2521

04:21:47,550 --> 04:21:54,996

they were marked, marked out different times. So I don't know who came after me. It could

2522

04:21:54,996 --> 04:22:02,197

have been, but I still, later on I couldn't find out what they did to Frenzel, because

2523

04:22:02,197 --> 04:22:09,888

they said he's not a well man, he was already in, in eh in jail and he was released because

2524

04:22:09,888 --> 04:22:17,580

of health problems and all. He himself had five children at home, he was only a cabinet maker,

2525

04:22:17,580 --> 04:22:25,026

Frenzel, before he, he became a SS-man and all that. But I didn't know all that. And then

2526

04:22:25,026 --> 04:22:30,100

people were asking me, wou, did he got sentenced again. I said

2527

04:22:30,100 --> 04:22:38,633

I said don't ask me, because I couldn't care less what happened to him. But when I came back

2528

04:22:38,633 --> 04:22:47,167

to Sydney, you should have seen, the Sydney Jewish Museum, there wasn't a Jewish lawyer, there

2529

04:22:47,167 --> 04:22:56,056

wasn't even another lawyer, they wanted to know how it, a came along like that in a German court,

2530

04:22:56,056 --> 04:23:04,856

how many were there, ex, expect me, you know, alone to be alone without anybody who could be beside

2531

04:23:04,856 --> 04:23:13,479

me, only my son was with me. You know? Who, who could, he couldn't even protect me because he,

2532

04:23:13,479 --> 04:23:22,279

he was only, he knew what I was telling. He I was alone there and I had to protect myself. If they

2533

04:23:22,279 --> 04:23:31,346

would have had, like Frenzel had a lawyer, I should have had a lawyer too. But I didn't, I didn't

2534

04:23:31,346 --> 04:23:40,679

know I could have asked for one. But one thing it was very, very good, that judge Kremer was a beautiful

2535

04:23:40,679 --> 04:23:49,391

human being. I kept forgetting that he is a German judge, because he was so humane. And the others

2536

04:23:49,391 --> 04:23:58,280

were not like that, they kept on asking questions, like asking me did I see who was shooting. Kremer

2537

04:23:58,280 --> 04:24:06,902

didn't ask that. Or there was another question: how did I know that the, in the th, third camp,

2538

04:24:06,902 --> 04:24:15,703

because mein brother was in the third camp and found out, but that's a little too much to stretch

2539

04:24:15,703 --> 04:24:24,503

it out, how I found out that the younger brother was in the third camp and then they were executed,

2540

04:24:24,503 --> 04:24:33,036

the 27th of June, how did I know there were 27 eh inmates in third camp? And I said, I don't

2541

04:24:33,036 --> 04:24:41,570

know who asked me that question, another judge or was it Kremer, I said I didn't know how many

2542

04:24:41,570 --> 04:24:50,104

was there, but then I stood up and I asked judge Kramer would you have forgotten your mother's

2543

04:24:50,104 --> 04:24:59,259

birthday? He said no. I said the 27th of June was my mother's birthday, I never said how many inmates

2544

04:24:59,259 --> 04:25:00,859

was in camp three.

2545

04:25:02,250 --> 04:25:02,690

But you knew the day.

2546

04:25:02,690 --> 04:25:10,329

I knew the date because that when my brother was shot, the whole lot, something happened there

2547

04:25:10,329 --> 04:25:17,968

where they were working to the mines, one night they exploded and they, it was said that they

2548

04:25:17,968 --> 04:25:25,607

wanted to escape and somebody said a, a dog went over and then the mine exploded and that was

2549

04:25:25,607 --> 04:25:33,246

the 27th of June. You know. Everybody in the camp, the girls knew. Why did it have to happen

2550

04:25:33,246 --> 04:25:40,803

to him, and that's my mother's birthday today. And that's what I told, told the, the,

2551

04:25:40,803 --> 04:25:46,799

in, in the court. But I stood up and I said it in German to judge Kremer.

2552

04:25:46,800 --> 04:25:52,340

It was also the beginning of our friendship with Dunya, isn't it?

2553

04:25:52,340 --> 04:25:52,700

Pardon?

2554

04:25:52,700 --> 04:25:55,590

It is also the beginning of our friendship with

2555

04:25:55,590 --> 04:26:05,528

That friendship with Dunya is hard to describe. She was a friend, she was a sister, she was a brother

2556

04:26:05,528 --> 04:26:15,072

and a mother, was the most precious person for me. Because I got to know her. And when I was in

2557

04:26:15,072 --> 04:26:24,715

Amsterdam, in the Rijksmuseum, Dunya took me to that room where her mother had a room of the, the,

2558

04:26:24,715 --> 04:26:34,555

the, the things from her book. She had a room and on the door was that big boot [or booth?] hanging,

2559

04:26:34,555 --> 04:26:41,640

I've got a small boot [or booth?] hanging from that Ravensbrück camp.

2560

04:26:41,640 --> 04:26:43,350

Because Dunya's mother was in Ravensbrück?

2561

04:26:43,350 --> 04:26:52,183

Yes. And I want to show you, I've got something hanging in the laundry what Dunya send me over from

2562

04:26:52,183 --> 04:27:00,928

Ravensbrück. Oh gosh, Dunya was something that nobody can replace her for me and for Andrew It was

2563

04:27:00,928 --> 04:27:09,674

something that we have a bond. You should have seen the photograph, the children when I stayed with

2564

04:27:09,674 --> 04:27:18,245

her, I send this photograph back and, and Jetje gave it to the sons, because when they were little

2565

04:27:18,245 --> 04:27:27,427

children, I stayed there with Dunya. You know both children were with me, we used to speak a lot. Anyhow,

2566

04:27:27,427 --> 04:27:36,260

and I couldn't maybe understand that, but Dunya, Dunya was speaking Germany and I speak German, she

2567

04:27:36,260 --> 04:27:44,919

could speak English just as good as German, but better German than, than English and I was a lot, I

2568

04:27:44,919 --> 04:27:53,752

was really good with German then [laughs]. And then there are certain things I have forgiven people,

2569

04:27:53,752 --> 04:28:02,497

but one thing I will never forgive, Jules not to let me know when she passed away. Through a student

2570

04:28:02,497 --> 04:28:11,418

in Melbourne, who was interesting, he just came back from Amsterdam and he was interesting about that

2571

04:28:11,418 --> 04:28:19,989

I, how he found out about Dunya and he told me that Dunya is not there. And that was, her birthday

2572

04:28:19,989 --> 04:28:28,734

was the 30th of June and I send a birthday card and always little presents, not elaborate things but

2573

04:28:28,734 --> 04:28:37,392

so she will remember me, you know, and she died. I don't know a day for her, before her birthday

2574

04:28:37,392 --> 04:28:46,838

or a day after her birthday and Jules never let me know. And I, and I told him I can forgive you everything

2575

04:28:46,838 --> 04:28:55,671

wrong but I'll never forgive you for that. You know what Dunya was for us both, for Andrew and for

2576

04:28:55,671 --> 04:28:58,119

myself. And even for Marie.

2577

04:29:00,650 --> 04:29:07,510

Now I think we have most the subjects we could do.

2578

04:29:07,510 --> 04:29:07,890

Yes.

2579

04:29:07,890 --> 04:29:12,720

But is there something we have forgotten or is there a message you have at the end of the interview?

2580

04:29:14,280 --> 04:29:15,490

A message to who?

2581

04:29:15,490 --> 04:29:15,490

The world.

2582

04:29:15,490 --> 04:29:17,660

To the world?

2583

04:29:18,650 --> 04:29:19,380

To yourself?

2584

04:29:19,380 --> 04:29:28,946

Yes. I'll tell you something. Never eh I don't want, how shall I say, eh, vengeance. Because I'm

2585

04:29:28,946 --> 04:29:38,698

not build for, I'm not born for vengeance. I only would like that it would be done right, I'll never

2586

04:29:38,698 --> 04:29:48,078

forget, get and I will never forgive them. But whatever I do, it's not because I hate them, because

2587

04:29:48,078 --> 04:29:57,366

hate is disease, it will eat me up. But I'll never forgive them what they did. I know there's a

2588

04:29:57,366 --> 04:30:07,118

new generation, I don't hate the new generation, I don't, don't eh how shall I say, the they've

2589

04:30:07,118 --> 04:30:16,499

got new live now, they can't look back. And I maybe should not look back, but it's so hard. And I

2590

04:30:16,499 --> 04:30:25,972

couldn't burry the things what happened to me when I was younger, but when I'm, one gets older you

2591

04:30:25,972 --> 04:30:35,631

can't shake it. When I was younger I should, could shake it off like a duck shakes off the water from

2592

04:30:35,631 --> 04:30:44,919

the, from the feathers. But I can't do it now. It stays with me. All the time. And what I can say

2593

04:30:44,919 --> 04:30:54,300

to the world, be good, be a good man, don't harm anybody, think twice when you eh, don't forgive

2594

04:30:54,300 --> 04:30:59,780

somebody, there's always forgiveness for a lot of things.

2595

04:30:59,780 --> 04:31:06,596

Now there's a poem you just cited to me by which you want to show your generosity

2596

04:31:06,596 --> 04:31:11,790

to all others who have suffered. Do you re, mind to repeat that?

2597

04:31:12,130 --> 04:31:13,160

What is it, for that, that's

2598

04:31:13,160 --> 04:31:13,160

Yes.

2599

04:31:13,160 --> 04:31:13,440

that is a song.

2600

04:31:13,440 --> 04:31:13,440

Yes.

2601

04:31:13,440 --> 04:31:13,440

Yes.

2602

04:31:13,440 --> 04:31:16,390

Do you want to sing it, or you want to

2603

04:31:16,390 --> 04:31:46,196

I maybe a tiny it, because I haven't got, because of mein nose and throat, mein eh voice

2604

04:31:46,196 --> 04:32:12,400

is not good to sing it, but I will remind a little bit the melody maybe. [sings]

2605

04:32:12,400 --> 04:32:16,151

Ich will mich vergessen, singen sehr viel, alles wie ein Traum, wie in Kinderspiel , wo ist mein Welt,

2606

04:32:16,151 --> 04:32:19,830

auf der grosse Welt, wo ist mein Heim, wo ist mein Zelt, freulich spielt Zigeuner Lieder, Ich möchte

2607

04:32:19,830 --> 04:32:23,509

vergessen von All, klingeln von den Zigeuner Walz, schon Alles in Leben verloren, kein mother, kein

2608

04:32:23,509 --> 04:32:27,152

father, kein Heim, bin Ich den von ein Stein geboren, warum ist die Welt von mir weit. Die Sonne hat

2609

04:32:27,152 --> 04:32:30,758

niemals für mich nicht gescheint, der Regen hat immer with mir mit geweint, kein father or mother,

2610

04:32:30,758 --> 04:32:34,401

mother hat mich nicht erzogen, och nein, gepflecht hat mich der Wind und der Schnee, freulich spielt

2611

04:32:34,401 --> 04:32:38,043

Zigeuner Lieder, Ich möchte vergessen von All. That's the refrain. I guess and from now klingeln

2612

04:32:38,043 --> 04:32:41,759

soll jeden von den Zigeuner Walz, schon Alles in Leben verloren, kein Vater, kein Mutter, kein Heim,

2613

04:32:41,759 --> 04:32:44,200

bin Ich den von ein Stein geboren, warum ist die Welt von mir weit.

2614

04:32:44,200 --> 04:33:13,100

Can I ask you something, where you

2615

04:33:13,100 --> 04:33:13,310

Yes.

2616

04:33:13,310 --> 04:33:16,660

this, this poem, this song is very important to you.

2617

04:33:16,660 --> 04:33:17,990

Yes.

2618

04:33:18,610 --> 04:33:22,960

Do you feel yourself a Zigeuner or, or

2619

04:33:22,960 --> 04:33:29,866

I fee, I, I felt myself when it happened, because he hasn't got anything in the world,

2620

04:33:29,866 --> 04:33:36,459

he hasn't got a home, he hasn't got a you know, hasn't got the, the, the , he

2621

04:33:36,459 --> 04:33:43,051

hasn't got a mother or a father, didn't, didn't bring him up it looks like he

2622

04:33:43,051 --> 04:33:49,566

never had anything, he, and he was asking bin Ich denn von ein Stein geboren? Warum

2623

04:33:49,566 --> 04:33:55,059

ist die Welt von mir so weit? And that Zigeuner used to be like that.

2624

04:33:55,180 --> 04:33:56,660

Now you became a

2625

04:33:56,660 --> 04:33:58,900

And I became a Zigeuner.

2626

04:34:00,010 --> 04:34:00,500

Thank you Regina.

2627

04:34:00,500 --> 04:34:11,403

Not that I became a Zigeuner, but I felt like that Zigeuner. And there's another little

2628

04:34:11,403 --> 04:34:23,287

song in Polish, that somebody came and recorded, from Sydney, he's a professor of international

2629

04:34:23,287 --> 04:34:34,191

song writing and I, I didn't know that he will record it and he got it even translated!

2630

04:34:34,191 --> 04:34:41,419

But that is in Polish, I never translated that in any other

2631

04:34:41,420 --> 04:34:46,230

Can you tell in Polish? We'll translate it.

2632

04:34:51,290 --> 04:35:01,216

I can tell in Polish of course. A mother, a woman was asking a, eh little boy, [says something

2633

04:35:01,216 --> 04:35:11,351

in Polish], that was a recorder, he was playing, a little boy [says something in Polish] and that

2634

04:35:11,351 --> 04:35:21,382

boy answered [says something in Polish] mama will translate it later. [says something in Polish]

2635

04:35:21,382 --> 04:35:31,726

And then he came on s, not singing, but the music [says something in Polish], you now that recorder

2636

04:35:31,726 --> 04:35:42,280

[says something in Polish]. Now I'll translate it for you. A woman was asking a boy who was playing

2637

04:35:42,280 --> 04:35:52,519

with a melody, and that melody had words and she ask him: why Johnny do you, is your music so sad?

2638

04:35:52,519 --> 04:36:02,550

And he said because I'm sad, because I haven't got, I've, my father and my mother died af,

2639

04:36:02,550 --> 04:36:12,790

straight after him and their graves are just there behind the hill. And then he started on playing

2640

04:36:12,790 --> 04:36:22,821

and he said to his recorder [says something in Polish] please eh, eh make the music, let's all

2641

04:36:22,821 --> 04:36:32,852

the hills and the fields and the meadows hear you, the music and let them know how hard it is to

2642

04:36:32,852 --> 04:36:38,390

be a, eh [says something in Polish] that is, what is

2643

04:36:38,390 --> 04:36:39,530

Say it in German.

2644

04:36:39,530 --> 04:36:42,870

eh, it hasn't got any, parents, what is the child called? Eh, orphan

2645

04:36:42,870 --> 04:36:43,150

Orphan.

2646

04:36:43,150 --> 04:36:50,660

but the hardest pain in life is to be an orphan. And that is

2647

04:36:50,660 --> 04:36:57,920

from the primary school, that song. I know dozens of them.

2648

04:36:57,920 --> 04:36:59,200

Regina, thank you very much.

2649

04:36:59,200 --> 04:36:59,200

Thank