

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Interview with Ezra Sherman
May 16, 2014
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PREFACE

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EZRA SHERMAN

May 16, 2014

Question: This is a **United States** Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with Mr. **Edg** – **Ezra Sherman**, on May 16th, 2014, in **Washington, D.C.** Thank you very much, Mr. **Sherman**, for agreeing to speak with us today.

Answer: You're welcome.

Q: We're going to begin the interview at the very beginning. So, I'm going to ask a few questions about your childhood, about your family, about the town you were born in, or the village you were born in. So I'll start now. Can you tell me please, your name at birth, your date of birth, and we'll go from there.

A: My name is **Ezra Sherman**. Was born in 1931.

Q: What was the date?

A: February 25th, 1931.

Q: And was your name **Sherman** also, when you were born?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay. Where were you born, Mr. **Sherman**?

A: A li – a little town, was **Poland** that time. The name is **Mlynov**.

Q: **Mlynov**. And –

A: To-Today they call it **Mylniv**, it's **Ukraine** today.

Q: Oh, so you were born in the –

A: **Poland**.

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Q: In **Poland**, but in the eastern section.

A: In the w – in the west.

Q: In the west?

A: The west section, not the eastern.

Q: Oh, I – but how could it b-border the **Ukraine**?

A: Til '39, was **Poland**.

Q: Okay.

A: In '39, the Russian captured the west part of **Ukraine**, in what's today called –

Q: Yes, west part –

A: – west part –

Q: – of **Ukraine**, that's true.

A: Yes.

Q: Okay, okay. And **Mlynov**, was it a large town?

A: A little town with about 1200 Jews living, and a couple hundred Gentiles;

Ukrainian, Poles, Czechs some. And around was still villages.

Q: So, it was small.

A: Small, very small town.

Q: And most – but mostly, from you say, it was mostly a Jewish town.

A: I would say yes. The majority was Jewish.

Q: What were your father and mother's names?

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A: My father's name was **Moshe**.

Q: **Moshe**.

A: Yes. And my mother's name was **Esther**.

Q: **Esther**. Do you remember her maiden name?

A: Yes. My mother's name was **Golysuk(ph)**.

Q: **Golysuk(ph)**.

A: And my father **Sherman**.

Q: Yeah. And were they also from **Mlynov**?

A: Yes. They – in there, yeah, yeah.

Q: Okay. So did you have a larger family, aunts and uncles, and –

A: Yes, from both sides.

Q: Yeah?

A: I would say about 200 people.

Q: So your father's side, do – did he have brothers and sisters?

A: I had one brother – two brothers and a sister.

Q: You?

A: There were four kids, yes.

Q: Okay.

A: I was the youngest one.

Q: What are – what were their names?

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A: My brother after me was **Josef**(ph), and my sister, her name was a **Jawa**(ph).

Q: **Jawa**(ph)?

A: Yes. And my older brother, the oldest, was **Jacheal**(ph).

Q: **Jacheal**(ph)?

A: **Jacheal**(ph).

Q: **Jacheal**(ph).

A: Yes.

Q: Mm-hm. And how much older was your oldest brother?

A: My oldest brother was eight years older than I am.

Q: So he was born in 1923?

A: He was in 1922.

Q: '22.

A: Yes.

Q: In 1922. And how did your father support the family?

A: My father had a butcher shop, and he used to like be a middle man, selling cattle, buying cattle.

Q: Would he go out to the villagers and buy cattle from them, or they would bring it to him?

A: In **Mlynov** was with the biggest market in the **Wolyn** area. **Wolyn** was like a county here.

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Q: Yeah.

A: The biggest market. Every Tuesday was a big market, from everything from **A** to **Z**.

Q: Okay.

A: And he knows a lot of – or used to deal with a lot of farmers, a lot of **[indecipherable]** and used to make a nice living.

Q: And so, can you describe a little bit about how he would purchase the animals? Would he go out to the farms? Would they bring them – he was a kosher butcher, I take it?

A: Yeah. He knew a lot – all the villagers around there, you know.

Q: Okay.

A: He was born there, he used to deal with them, handle with them, lend them some money, or – a lot of business did with them. He was a successful businessman.

Q: What kind of a personality did he have?

A: He?

Q: Yeah.

A: He was a sm-smart guy. He knew how to deal with people, with a lot of farmers, a lot of Czechs, Poles. He had a mix, it was a mixed ter – the majority was Ukrainian, but a lot of Poles, Czechs, villagers.

Q: So, he must have spoken many languages.

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A: He spoke Russian, he spoke Ukrainian, he spoke Polish, Jewish.

Q: And at home? What did you all speak at home?

A: At home we used to speak Jewish.

Q: So, Yiddish, yes?

A: Yeah.

Q: Yiddish, okay. And, was he alone in this business?

A: Yes.

Q: So, no help from the family, or did your mother help him sometimes?

A: My brother got older, used to help him here and there. But we were little.

Q: Yeah, yeah, yeah. And did your father have brothers and sisters? Did you have aunts and uncles?

A: Yes, my – my father had three brothers and a sister.

Q: And did you know them well?

A: Hm?

Q: Did you know them well?

A: Yeah.

Q: They lived in the area. And what were their businesses? What were wa – how did they make their livings?

A: One brother had a – a store of, you know, like a little supermarket, you know.

The other one, I don't remember. I don't – I was – the war broke out in '39.

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Q: You were young.

A: I was nine years old.

Q: What are some of your earliest memories from childhood?

A: Hm?

Q: What are some of your earliest memories from childhood?

A: I think I remember since I was fi – four or five years, when I went to **cheder**, you know.

Q: Mm-hm. Tell us a little about that.

A: Huh?

Q: Tell us a little about that.

A: In my town, I would say every child went to **cheder**. Then I – I got a Hebrew teacher. We were five, six kids, and he used to teach us. And then when they broke out the war, everything is gone.

Q: Yeah. Well –

A: Then I went to school, to Polish school for two years.

Q: You did?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay. So it was a public school?

A: Public school, yes.

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Q: And was this – were most of your friends in that school also Jewish, because the town was Jewish?

A: No, mixed.

Q: Mixed.

A: Was mixed.

Q: Okay. Did you ever experience prejudice in the – in the classroom?

A: We used to fight, but I don't know if it was because I'm Jewish or not Jewish.

Just kids, you know?

Q: Yeah. And did you speak Polish, of course, in this –

A: Hm?

Q: Did you speak Polish?

A: Yeah. Still remem – can si – communicate good.

Q: Yeah? Okay. Tell us a little bit about your mother. What kind of a person was she?

A: About my mother?

Q: Mm-hm.

A: My mother died, I think, in '37.

Q: Oh, so you were little.

A: Yes.

Q: You were little. Do you have memories of her?

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A: Very little.

Q: Yeah. As the youngest, you must have missed her very much.

A: Yes.

Q: Yeah. Your brothers and sisters, since you were the youngest, was there someone who paid particular attention to you and helped you?

A: Yeah, next door my grandmother lived –

Q: Okay.

A: – with my mother's – her sister. They used to take care of me.

Q: And what do you remember about your grandmother? What kind of a person was she?

A: I remember almost everything. The names, the –

Q: Tell me.

A: – where they lived. They used to come each to other, because the town was a little town, five houses, or six houses here there, the left to the right, th-they lived.

There were also some of them had kids, my mother's sister had two daughters.

Another one had – my mother had three sisters, and three brothers also, there were seven kids.

Q: Your – what was your grandmother's name?

A: **Hannah**(ph).

Q: **Hannah**(ph). And she was your mother's mother?

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A: Yes.

Q: Okay. Did you also know your father's parents?

A: Only the grandmother.

Q: Only the grandmother, okay.

A: Both died before I think I was born. One gr – one from – my mother's father wasn't – lived in **United States** for eight years.

Q: Did he?

A: He came here in – after the war, 1920 or '21, with some relatives, they live in **Baltimore**. And after eight years he came back, and a year or two he died, I think. Was before 1930.

Q: Can you – what – what is it that caused your mother's death? How did your mother die? Was she sick?

A: Yes.

Q: What was the illness?

A: When I was born – before I was born, she slipped on the ice. Ever since then, she got sick. I was born in seven months.

Q: You were premature?

A: Yeah.

Q: And so was she in bed most of the time? Is that how you remember her?

A: She – that time she was sick, yeah.

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Q: Yeah, yeah. What did – did your father have any free time to play with the children?

A: I didn't hear you.

Q: Did your father have any free time to play with the children, to pay attention to the children?

A: Yeah. In the evening he used to come home, I used to help him count the money, help him fill up cigarettes.

Q: Did he ever tell stories?

A: Hm?

Q: Did he ever tell stories? Did he ever tell the children stories, you know, about his life, or about – about how the day went?

A: Some of them, yes. Little bit, not too much –

Q: Was he –

A: – because there were certain time, when I take to **Palestine**, we were about 30 - 40 youngsters, all of them orphan. We didn't talk about the past, til I would say the last 15 - 20 year, we start to talk out.

Q: You're talking about yourself?

A: Yes.

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Q: Okay, okay. I'd like to break right now, just for a second. **[break]** Okay, do you have any other memories of what the town looked like, of **Mlynov**, from before the war?

A: Sure, I have memories. I remember every street, almost every house, remember almost 70 percent of the people, even the names there.

Q: Really?

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah.

A: It vi – did you see “**Fiddler on the Roof?**”

Q: Yes.

A: That's was **Mlynov**.

Q: Well, is your local – was **[indecipherable]**

A: This was **Mlynov**. Some – all the houses, some a little bit nicer, some – this was the –

Q: But wasn't it –

A: No – no paved streets.

Q: Yeah.

A: When was raining, you know, what – walking in mud, that's all. No water in the houses, no electricity. The – before the war, I think in '38, we got some electricity.

Q: That must have been a big thing.

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A: We were one of the first houses, because my – my grandmother's brother, he had a mill, and he purchase a generator and got some electricity, and we were one of the first houses that we got it.

Q: That's a big thing. That's a big thing.

A: Yeah, that time was a big deal. No radios – maybe in the whole town you could find five radios, maybe.

Q: What about cars?

A: Mm?

Q: Did anybody have a car?

A: The prince had a car. We had a prince, a Polish prince lived in –

Q: Oh really?

A: Yeah. He had a car, and another guy, the – a farmer si – had a car, that's all. Used to see – a bus used to come twice a day, that's all, to a bigger town, was coming, you know.

Q: Did the kids chase the car or the bus?

A: Yeah, used to chase it. Run it after them.

Q: What were the – what were the Polish people, the Gentile people like in the town?

A: Some of them were nice, some of them.

Q: Okay.

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A: And most of them were anti-Semite.

Q: Did you feel that, did you experience that?

A: I as a child didn't feel it. If a child in school told me something, I-I fought him, or he hit me, or I hit him. That's what was – that's the way I was raised. My father told me, don't give in, fight.

Q: Yeah. As a little kid, I would suspect that you didn't have much idea of the big historical, political things going on at the time.

A: I knew what's going on, I – I knew. When the war broke out in '39, my father came home – Saturday they used to – he came home from the killing house, he used to kill the – the – Saturday night, in the evening [indecipherable] he came home a Saturday evening, and he says, we in the war. German attacked **Poland**. Because near their place was a big – a bridge, a wooden bridge, that he saw these Polish soldiers putting straw under the bridge to destroy the bridge, to [indecipherable].

And my father remembered the Germans – Austro-German from World War I. Then the next day, or days later, he took a wagon with horses, and he put this all, everything of – of ours on the wagon, and we head to the Russian border. And we were close, the Russian border was about 50 miles from us. That – that – today it's east **Ukraine** –

Q: Right, right.

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A: – that they call it. And we came close to them by maybe 10 - 15 miles. The Russian soldiers holler and said, you can go back, they already in your town. Then the **Russia** took away **Ukraine** from – they got the agreement with the German.

Q: How did that affect – and did – did people in the town know that there was an agreement that **Russia** had with **Germany**?

A: Most of them didn't know. Only til the Russian came in. Because we didn't have radios, everybody didn't have a radio. And only from voice to voice, you got the news. **[break]**

Q: Okay. So – so the Russians are in the town, and people don't have information, they don't have radios to find out what really is going on, it's only, you know, one person says to another person what they – what they see, or what they might have heard.

A: Exactly.

Q: Okay.

A: That's the way it was. And the Russian came in, they – right away, if somebody had business, they **sophisticated**.

Q: Well, did that happen with your father?

A: Yeah, even my father's store they took away, and everything. And it was a very hard time to make a living, because if you got the – wasn't jobs also, it's a little town, it's not a – then my mother used to, you know **[indecipherable]**

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Q: Well, your mother was gone by then.

A: Hm?

Q: You – you said your mother was gone by then. Who was it –

A: My mother was gone.

Q: Yeah. So your father would be –

A: My father made a living, he always find a way out.

Q: But not easy.

A: Yeah, it not easy, sure. And when they caught him, we have to leave the town.

Q: What did they catch him doing?

A: Used to deal with the Russian. At that time everything was a problem. Sugar was short, it – kerosene, oil was short, everything was short. Even the – after a couple months, even bread. They used to give away a – a kilo – a kilogram bread for a day, used to give to people.

Q: For a family?

A: We didn't have problem because my – my father knew all the farmers, and the farmers always used to hide. They – th-they have what to eat. And he used to de – deal and deal, you know, the way he made a living. And we have to leave the town because they cau – they [indecipherable] was involved with one of the high ranking officer, the Russian.

Q: In black market?

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A: Everything – yeah, the bribery was all – everything was bribery. With the communist system you’re – they – they – they didn’t steal, they used to get. They never – they knew – didn’t – no, they won’t steal. You get it. And that’s the way it was, and –

Q: Were people frightened?

A: – we have to move to – about 10 - 12 miles, another town. We had a house there also.

Q: Your father?

A: Yeah. He moved there, all of us.

Q: And what happened to him, if he got caught? Did they let him go, or did they keep him?

A: Bre – paid off. And he moved to the other town and we lived there til the war broke out again in fer – 41st, when **Germany** attacked **Russia**.

Q: Before we get there, I want to talk about this other period. Were people frightened when the Russians came? Did they feel kind of uneasy, or was it –

A: Listen, it – most of the people were poor. You saw “**Fiddler on the Roof**?” You had a couple families, why – 20, 30 or a hundred, I don’t know, they made a decent living. Most of them, they lived from day to day.

Q: Yeah.

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A: Then – that's the way it was, the life. And the Russian came in. They – some people were already communists, you know, or illegal, because in **Poland** was illegal to be a communist. And that's the way some of them – even they arrest some of them sent a-away to sa – to the gulag, wherever they call it.

Q: Did you know any people who were sent there? Did you know any people who disappeared?

A: Very few. Very few.

Q: Very few. What happened to the Polish prince? When the so – when the Soviets came, what happened to the Polish prince, who was –

A: To the **Bolshevik**?

Q: No, no, no, no, to the Polish prince who had a car.

A: They ran away before the – he ran away. He got a plane, he ran away. He had a big farm, very big farm. About two, three villages, **Ukraine** used to work for.

Q: I see. I see.

A: My father used to deal with him.

Q: With the prince's family, or with the villages? Who did your father deal with, when you said that he used to deal with them?

A: He used to deal with the prince.

Q: Oh, did he?

A: Sure, he used to deal with the prince, his manager, whatever.

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Q: Uh-huh. And was it usually a fair deal, or not so much?

A: He used to buy from him a lot of things. Sometimes sell, and sometimes he used to ask for 40 horses he needed, and my father used to get him 40 horses.

Q: But all that changed when – when the war br –

A: The Russian came in, everything changed.

Q: Okay. Did you go to school?

A: Yes.

Q: Did school life change?

A: When the Russian came in, I was already in the other town.

Q: Okay.

A: Couple months. They came in in the s-s – end of September, less. The war start September first, and they came in 10 days maybe, or less. I don't remember exactly the date. Then I went to school. The first year at school was in Yiddish, everything Yiddish, but we used to study Russian. Next year, finish with Yiddish, with Jewish. Only Russian. And I studied two years.

Q: Well, tell me about religious life then. Did people still go to synagogue?

A: Most of the people there religious.

Q: Yeah.

A: Most of them. There was some mi – modern religious, some fanatic religious.

Q: What about your family?

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A: My family was modern.

Q: Modern.

A: My father used to go Saturday to the synagogue, otherwise no. During the week, he didn't.

Q: Yeah. Did he used to talk about the – you know, what these changes were in that – what was the name of the other town you moved to?

A: **Dubno**.

Q: **Dubno**.

A: **Dubno**.

Q: Was it larger than **Mlynov**?

A: Yes, it was over 8,000 Jews living there.

Q: Wow.

A: Yes.

Q: Wow.

A: And the majority were Jewish also.

Q: Okay. What kind of a house did he have there?

A: A nice house.

Q: In the center?

A: No, the – the si – by the end of the [**indecipherable**]. A nice house we have.

Q: And how did he support the kids in **Dubno**, same way?

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A: The same way. He became the horseman of the commandant of the city.

Q: Really?

A: Yeah.

Q: What did that mean?

A: He used to take care on the – the horses there. The commandant has to gr – go someplace, it wasn't cars like today. Didn't drive a **Lexus [indecipherable]**. Then he – he used to work, and a – a couple weeks, or a couple months later whatever, he took a Gentile and he put him in wa – on this place. And he used to handle **[indecipherable]** to make a living.

Q: And when you moved to **Dubno**, was it just the children and your father, or was there more family members?

A: The father – the father remarried that – later. A couple months before the war.

And –

Q: So you had a stepmother.

A: – it was my stepmother, yeah. And – and the war broke out in '41st, it – it was the end of the – no, before the war broke out, it was the vaca – vacation time, because the war broke out 22nd of June, 41st.

Q: That's right.

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A: But we finished school I think, three weeks before that. Then I went to visit my grandmother, because all my friend I grew up with are there. And when the war broke out, I was back in my town with the grandmother.

Q: **Mlynov.**

A: Yes, **Mlynov.**

Q: And what happened? How did you experience it? How did you find out that – that – now that the war is here, on our doorstep?

A: Saturday night, by three o'clock in the morning, we had a – a big airport, military airport near the town. They bombed the airport. Three o'clock in the morning we heard the explosion of it. In the morning we got up, everybody knew it's a war, again a war. By two o'clock the planes came again, bombed again. And they threw a couple bombs in the town, here and there. It was killed a couple – three or four people was killed. Not Jewish, Gentiles instead. And we knew the war, Sunday. And Thursday night the German were all in the skirt of the town. And it was a shootout between some Russian [**indecipherable**] and Friday morning they were in town.

Q: Five days.

A: I remember this like was yesterday.

Q: Tell me about it. What did you see?

A: When they came in, the first thing they took the rabbi to the river and killed him.

Q: You saw this?

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A: I didn't see it, but –

Q: But people said, yeah.

A: And here and there they caught another couple guys, young boys, they killed them. And after a couple weeks, the front went further. Start to come the Gestapo, to come.

Q: Tell me – before the Gestapo comes, tell me, where was the first time you saw a German soldier?

A: Friday morning.

Q: Friday morning?

A: Yeah.

Q: Were they just marching in, or –

A: Hm?

Q: Did they just march into the town, or –

A: They just came in on bicycles. Bicycles, then came in with the horses, and the heavy weapons and the – they stood a couple of days, and then came another unit all the time. But the – the front get deeper to **Russia** then. Was not military, only where the king we – or the prince was living, it was a commandant, a German with a couple German soldiers, and that's it.

Q: So they stayed there in his – in his old house?

A: Yeah, yeah.

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Q: Okay.

A: Yeah, then they start little by little come into the – create a Judenrat, you know, a Jewish [indecipherable]. And they said okay, we need two kilogram gold. If not, they'll kill 50 people. That's the way it start. And the ki – and it was go on all the – all most of the time.

Q: So tell me this: you were caught – you were in **Mlynov**, your father and the other children were still in **Dubno**?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you stay in **Mlynov**, and they stayed in **Dubno**?

A: I stayed in **Mlynov** maybe another two months. Then, one day, my grandmother knew some Ukrainian, and they took me walking [indecipherable] walking to **Dubno**, was about 10 - 12 miles, they brought me back to **Dubno**, and I was staying with my family in **Dubno** another maybe two months [indecipherable]. And the minute they start to talking about tho – a ghetto, but – and they used to run aro – round around men, Jewish men. I saw two execution, because my – my house was – we lived near the cemetery, big cemetery –

Q: In **Dubno**?

A: – in a hill, yeah, in **Dubno**. And from my house, I saw the graves, everything there. And I one time – the first time they round around 150 men brought them to the cemetery [indecipherable] and I saw they shoot them. The second time, they round

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around by 300 men. My father went up on the – on the roof and hide. They didn't come to – even to look for him. Maybe they didn't know, because we were – li-lived with some Gentiles and Ukrainian, any kind. And then I went back to **Mlynov**. And then –

Q: So you saw this all?

A: – maybe another month or two, they made a ghetto. Round up all the Jews in a couple streets near the river, was a big river there.

Q: You had older brothers. What happened to your oldest brother?

A: My – my older – my oldest brother, when the Russian came in, he went back to dub – to **Mlynov**, and he stood with my grandmother. He was already that time 18 years old. And he got a job there, with the Russian. He was a director of a restaurant, the – only the military used to eat there.

Q: Yeah.

A: Yeah. And he worked there, and the – the war broke out. He and another five guys took bicycles and ran away to **Russia**. That's the way ga – he survived. Then he was in the Russian army, then they transferred him as a Polish citizen to the Polish army, and he finished the war, and he survived.

Q: [**coughing**] Excuse me. So, he had an idea that the only way – that the only way to survive was to go east.

A: Yes.

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Q: He – he – he knew that.

A: We – in my grandmother's house lived two pilots, Russian pilots. They ki – I remember Sunday afternoon they came over with the truck, and took their wives. Their wives – they said, you want to come with us. Get out on the truck and come. Nobody, not my grandmother, not my aunt – two aunt, didn't want to go. Who – most of the people from our town that I know, maybe 45 tell the people run away, most of them survived. In **Russia**, in the army, not in the army, they survived.

Q: Those who stayed?

A: And those who stayed got killed.

Q: When – you said that after that second execution, that second time when you saw 300 men executed.

A: Yeah, 300 men they killed.

Q: Your father sent you back to **Mlynov**, or you went back? How did that –

A: I went back to **Mlynov**.

Q: Because of this?

A: Also with a Gentile of my father's acquaintance, he took me back to **Mlynov**, and I stood with my grandmother.

Q: Okay.

A: And I did – I went – one time I went back with – also with a Gentile, a Ukrainian. He took me – there was the ghetto from the beginning when they made the ghetto,

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you could go in even with the – a wagon with the horses to the ghettos. The first couple weeks was like [indecipherable] then the Gentile brought some potato, some food for my father, and he – and I visit there.

Q: So your father was already in the ghetto in **Dubno**.

A: Yes.

Q: And you went with a Gentile to the – to **Dubno** –

A: To – to see my family, and I was there a couple hours, and went back with the – the same – the same farmer took me back.

Q: How come you didn't stay with your father?

A: Hm?

Q: How come you didn't stay with him?

A: I can't hear you well.

Q: How come – why is it that you didn't stay with your father?

A: I don't know, I ca – I have no explanation.

Q: Okay. Was your sister with him?

A: Yes.

Q: Was your other brother with him?

A: Yes.

Q: And your stepmother?

A: Hm? Yes.

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Q: And your stepmother.

A: Yes.

Q: Did they have their own children, your stepmother and your father?

A: No.

Q: No children. What was her name?

A: I don't remember.

Q: You don't remember. Okay. Was she a nice person?

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay. But you have no memories of her?

A: No memories. Was very a short time I was with her.

Q: Yeah, yeah.

A: Because when the Russian came in, I was **[indecipherable]** the whole summer in **Mlynov**, and then I came back for another month maybe, or two, I don't – it's very hard to remember this.

Q: When was the last time you saw your father?

A: It was in 1942.

Q: How? What was the circumstance?

A: When I – the Gentile took me to the ghetto with him. He brought him some food.

Q: So that was the time –

A: That was the last time I saw –

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Q: – was the last time. And you returned to **Mlynov**.

A: Hm?

Q: And then you returned to **Mlynov**.

A: And then I returned to **Mlynov**, I stood with my grandmother.

Q: And what happened when you stayed with your grandmother?

A: What happened? Well, they round up the ghetto – in April '42, they made a ghetto there. They ordered all the Jews in maybe two streets.

Q: So they waited until April –

A: Three, four families in-in – in two rooms.

Q: So it means that from June '41, until April '42, in **Mlynov** there was no ghetto?

A: No.

Q: Okay.

A: No, no.

Q: But in April '42 –

A: April '42 til October eight. Exactly the date that they –

Q: You remember.

A: – surrender the ghetto and killed all the Jews the same day.

Q: Hm. Okay. Let's talk about when you first go into the ghetto, and you started telling me two rooms, many families. What – what were the circumstance – how did life change? What happened to you?

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A: To me, didn't change much, because I didn't stay – no in the ghetto. Even before the ghetto I used to go out, farmers that I knew or don't knew, used to help and take the cow for – places that they cow used to eat the grass. They used to give me some food. Sometimes used to give me some food, I used to bring, give in for my grandmother. I wouldn't stay in the ghetto [indecipherable] just used to come to sleep sometimes and sometimes didn't come even to sleep.

Q: So you were – you were in some ways earning your living to – to be f – to be fed.

A: Yeah. Yes.

Q: And you were an eight year old boy.

A: Around the town was villages –

Q: Ten year old, yeah.

A: – Ukrainians. Some Polish. A couple of – and I wasn't afraid. I used to go out and even if I didn't know him, I'd say, you wanted me to help you, take your cow to this? Say okay. [indecipherable] We had some – one village almost in the skirt of the town, they were like – they called them [indecipherable] they – they – they kept Sabbath, like the sh – the – here, the – you know. They were nice to me. Used to give me food, used to go out with the cow, two cows, all day, used to give me food for all day. Used to come [indecipherable] used to give me a loaf of bread, take [indecipherable] with something [indecipherable].

Q: Were they Ukrainian?

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A: Yes.

Q: Was there a difference between how the Ukrainians and the Poles –

A: The – some Poles were anti-Semite, exactly like the Ukrainian. Most of the Ukrainian were anti-Semite. They were primitive people, they – they used to believe what the – the pope told them. And the pope was also uneducated. It's – it's not the popes today, the-they finish college, or whatever. But some very little. If the popes and the Ukrainian wouldn't cooperate with the German, another million, million and a half Jews would survived. Because used to go and point, here's a Jew.

Q: But you didn't feel this fear?

A: I wasn't afraid, I was a little **boychik** and I used to go. I didn't sit in the ghetto, the eight month of the ghetto was, I don't know if I was a month in the ghetto.

Q: So you would go back and forth?

A: Every day, is true.

Q: Back and forth?

A: Crawl under the fence, and out.

Q: Did your – was your grandmother afraid, or was she glad that you would go – go out?

A: I don't remember if she was afraid or not, I didn't ask. I became one day older with 10, 20 years.

Q: Yeah, yeah. What was life like for her, for your grandmother in the ghetto?

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A: Like everybody else. Was sh – everything was a problem. Winter was a problem, was cold. No wood, no clothes. I used to help her, here, take a piece there, a piece. And she had a daughter, Aunt **Maris**(ph), my mother's sister, she lived with her also. Sometimes used to bring some potatoes, some vegetables and some of the – whatever used to give me.

Q: Well, tell me, is – if there were so many people in – in two rooms – you'd say how many families?

A: My – my mother – grandmother's house, she had two rooms, only we lived, nobody came.

Q: Oh.

A: No.

Q: But it was part of the ghetto?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay. Okay. So then when you'd bring back food, it wouldn't be that other people would see that it – only grandmother gets it.

A: Listen, they took by 1200 people, they squeeze it in two, three streets. They squeeze it in, and that's what was in. Also, from sa – we had some in the villages, some Jewish farmers. Not too many, but there were. Also, they brought them over from the the surrounding area, in the ghetto.

Q: Were there other kids who would also kind of go under the fence?

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A: I cannot tell you because I didn't cooperate with nobody.

Q: Okay.

A: Some – some, yes, but not too many, cause –

Q: Were there any German soldiers –

A: – they were with their – with their parents, and they were afraid, scared. I wasn't afraid. I don't know why, nobody told me what to do, but –

Q: Did you ever feel like you were in danger during that six months?

A: Every day was a danger.

Q: Every day.

A: Every day was danger.

Q: When you –

A: If I saw a policeman, and most of pri – all of them were Ukrainian. Some of them I knew. Even some of them that I knew, I used to come back to the gate. Say, how you get out? I say, what will you, I tell them – they were so primitive that I told them, **Ivan** told me to go – let me go out. You get smart overnight.

Q: The first time you saw those executions in **Dubno**, was that the first time you saw a person being killed?

A: Yes.

Q: You were how old?

A: That time, in '42, was I 11 and a half, something. Eleven.

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Q: How did – I can't imagine how – what kind of effect that has on a child.

A: What can I tell you? I saw even how they pushed them into the – to the dig.

Q: Did that change you overnight?

A: Yeah.

Q: Is that the time when – I don't want to put words in your mouth, but when was it that you knew you were not safe? When was that first time that your feeling of safety and security –

A: Every day was not safe. Every day, every minute you were not safe. They could come into the house and take you out and shoot you. For nothing. Or beat you up.

Q: Did you see many German soldiers in these ghettos?

A: In the ghetto, no. Used to come in the – they want to collect another couple kilo gold, came in, two SS, or three, that's it, they didn't go into the ghetto. They came to the Judenrat, or called the Judenrat to the commandant. The most of them Ukrainian. All of them, they're Ukrainian collaborators. Police. In the ghetto they didn't come in, they didn't go in. Well, once in a few – but I wasn't too mi – two month in the ghetto. The wintertime I was more in the ghetto, when it got cold.

Q: Yeah.

A: But is – when it was nice outside, like 50 degrees, I never sit in the ghetto. Even if I just walk around a village here or village there, never sit in the ghetto.

Q: So, did you come across those – any Germans, often?

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A: Before the ghetto, yeah, was a lot of German. Was a chi – like, you know, the second line. They used to stay there. Was some unit, they stood a couple weeks, or weeks. I used to do business with them. They looked for eggs, and butter. This was their [indecipherable] eggs, and butter. I used to bring them eggs, and g – and get from them cigarettes. And go to the farmers, give them the cigarettes, and get eggs.

Q: [indecipherable] business.

A: Some of them really were – the older Germans, some of them really were nice. Just to – they stood by three weeks, or four weeks. They used to take care of the horses, to give them the shoes. They used to even give me sometimes whatever they ate, give me also, sit and eat with us. But they, most of them, they were – specially the first line, they didn't want bother with the Jews at all. Even the second line also, they – the Gestapo came in.

Q: How did you know they were different? How did you know the Gestapo were different?

A: The clothes, like uniforms.

Q: And how did they behave?

A: Terrible. Terrible. They're mad criminals, all of them.

Q: What did they do?

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A: Most of the Gestapo were criminals. Some cooperate with them, like the **Lithuania. Lithuania** were – they had two division Gestapo, **SS**. And they also were – used to wear the black uniforms.

Q: Tell me – tell me then, the people who shot – those two executions that you saw, who were – do you know who the shooters were? Were they Germans? No.

A: Most of them Ukrainian.

Q: So, at that cemetery, the – the – it was Ukrainians who were shooting.

A: Yeah, they round them on and took them to the gates at the cemetery, and digged the hole there and shoot them, just as I said.

Q: But from the uniforms you could tell they weren't German?

A: Ukrainian police.

Q: Let's go now to – you mentioned October eighth. What happened October eighth?

A: October eighth I was in the – in my grandmother's, I was sleeping. Early in the morning they surrendered – the ghetto was surrendered the Ukrainian police. And when they start to break into the ghetto and round up all the Jews near the synagogue, I tried to run out from the ghetto on the – the same spot that I used to always sneak out. And I just put out my head, and I saw a policeman's laying on the **[indecipherable]** with a machine gun, and I went back. I went back to my mother hou – my grandmother's house, and they st-start to screaming, everybody out, out

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out. We run out, everybody, I run with everybody. And they – the sp-sp-spot that they put us in is near the synagogue, one side mens, one side women. And it was the gates in the middle in the – a road. And I was sitting with every – near my father's brother, near him. I saw him, that I went to sit. Everybody was underneath, nobody could stand or si – underneath, that was the – and they used to take in groups. Was a house across the synagogue, so a parking lot, like a parking lot. And they used to take in groups to the house, search them, take away whatever they had, and that – from there, straight on the truck. Used to fill up the truck, and I saw, and take them to the killing [indecipherable]. The killing [indecipherable] was maybe a mile from there, outs – of the skirts of the town.

Q: And people knew what was going to happen?

A: Yeah, because they – they used – they dig the holes there, a couple weeks before that.

Q: Did everybody realize –

A: They knew – they knew that that's – they prepared this for us. Then – and the policeman was still walking like this, you know, like he'd – and I saw I'm getting close to the – that's another five minute –

Q: You're on the truck.

A: – I will be marching to the – to go. I said to the policeman, I have to take a leak. In Ukrainian. [indecipherable]. He said okay, go over here. I walked out from the

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place, and walked – there was a house. And **[indecipherable]** detached to the house was a little shack, and was a – a kit – a kidster –

Q: A what?

A: A goat. A sheep?

Q: A goat or a – or a sheep?

A: No, not a – not a sheep, a – with the –

A2: **[indecipherable]** in English or Hebrew.

A: Okay, it's like a sheep, let's say, like – like ba – like a sheep, with – and when I saw the policeman walk a little bit further, I jumped in, and there was a little **haddock**. I jumped up, was some straw there.

Q: Oh, so there was like a little shelf?

A: Yeah. And I jumped up to the top and hide myself there.

Q: Okay.

A: It was laying – and I saw through the boots was –

Q: The slats.

A: – slats –

Q: Yeah.

A: – I saw what's going on. And after that – three, four hours, they finished.

Finished **[indecipherable]** and I fell asleep there. But before they still was continuing, I – from the shack was a door to the house where they used to search in

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the – the people. All of a sudden, I looked down, I see a girl, a neighbor, I used to go to school with her. I said – her name was **Mica(ph)**, **Mica(ph)**.

Q: **Mica(ph)**.

A: **Mica(ph)**. Then I – I said come on, I pulled her up to me. And she was laying with me til we both fell asleep there, til early in the morning. I said, early in the morning we have to try to get out of there. And who wake me up? The Ukrainian was – it was close to the gate. The gate was closed, and they were already knocking, going to go in to take some stuff out. And I heard this noise, and I see nobody there. We went down, and I – I knew where exactly every house there, every little – and I – we jumped over the – the fence.

Q: Oh, so you could jump over it?

A: Yeah, we went over. Find a way. And said let's go out from the town. And on the way from the town was – we went into a house. That used to be a Jewish house, but the neighbor ours, a Pole, was living there, because he has to leave his house, and he got the Jewish house, the different, because the ghetto was there. When he saw us, he was a very good friend my father's. And this girl lived next door to him, he knew her. A nice, nice Pole, very nice guy. He saw us, I thought he-he – he was shocked. And he gave us two pieces bread, he says, go to the forest, called **Smoldova(ph)** forest. He say, I know some Jews hiding there. Go there. And we start to go in the road, for the road that the German used to drive in, and we walked maybe mile and a

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half, two miles. And I says, let's go into a house. I saw a little house near the road. Let's go, so they'll maybe give us some food [indecipherable]. And we walked into this house. It was an old woman. He say, okay kids, sit down. I'll be back in a couple minutes. And she walked out onto another house and she – I see – I was right away felt something. I see she is coming with a policeman. How do I know the policeman, he got there on the hand, the strip. That's the way they used to go. Came in, and he took me first to a side room, it was storage room. And I was wearing new boots, and a new coat. And he stripped me of the coat, took away the boots, and that was – then he took in the girl, the same thing, took away whatever you got. And he ask me, where you going? What are you going to do? I said, I'm going back to town. He said okay. I'll be a couple minute, he has to hide, whatever. And I got in my coat – it was a **fitta**(ph) coat, you know.

Q: A what kind of coat?

A2: Shearling

A: Huh?

A2: With the fur.

A: **Parva**(ph)?

A2: Fur.

A: Fur coat.

Q: It was a fur coat?

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A: Yeah. And my grandmother put in – in the coat [indecipherable] my mother's chain from the wedding, and her chain, maybe a kilogram gold. He took away everything. He didn't know that's there, but – and I walked maybe a – a quarter mile, or 300 yard, whatever, and in the side was a little forest that like [indecipherable] as kids, we used to go there. I knew the area, and after this little forest was a river, and the other side of the river, used to live my grandmother from my father's side. I knew the area. I said to the girl, let's go. And she says, I'm not going. Then what are you going to do? She said, I'm not going. And I say, if not going, I'm going. And I – I run away. So I went to the forest, went to the river. Near the river where my grandmother was, was not deep. I knew you can walk over, and I crossed the – a small river, not a big river.

Q: Do you know what happened to her?

A: Hm?

Q: Do you know what happened to that girl?

A: I know, sh-she – she is – she didn't survive. I exactly – no, I know. She walked maybe another mile, a mile and a half, was an intersection a little, and I think there they caught her. I checked it, some Gentiles in the area, they don't know. Maybe the policeman got her, and she not survive.

Q: Was she your age?

A: Hm?

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Q: Was she –

A: My age.

Q: She was your age.

A: Exactly my age. I went to school with her. And that's the way I start my surviving.

Q: But you had no shoes?

A: No shoes.

Q: So what happened to your feet?

A: What happened to your feet? They was – after a couple weeks, they were swollen all over, from cold. And this little town, it called **Morawicz**(ph) –

Q: **Morawicz**(ph).

A: – it was a mile and a half, my father was born there, you know. And when I was in the ghetto, I used to go there to a Czech woman. She has a cow also, and I used to take care when the cow go out. I knew very nice woman. I came to her. That's the only person I knew there. I came to her, she – she – she – she **[indecipherable]** herself, she said – she gave me food, she says, any time, come over early in the morning, or in the evening, I'll give you food. And I – the first night, when I crossed the river, the first night, my father's sister lived by the end of the cemetery there. Well, I turn here, turn there, I say, I'll go into the cemetery and sleep there, whatever. Sleep, who could sleep? In middle of the night I hear some Jewish

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speaking. I got scared. Little by little I get closer, closer, closer, and I meet there two sisters. The **Tennada**(ph) girl. They were also run away, whatever. Now, I said to myself, I cannot stay with a group. I say, I-I have to go. In the morning -- early in the morning I moved out from there. And in this town a couple weeks, used to -- it's a li -- it's like a village, a big village. Here, there, I used to come to this Czech woman, who went to a Polish village, and I went into a stable to sleep over, and early in the morning, the Poles find me, he want to kill me, whatever, I run away, and came back to this little town or village, whatever you want to call it. And the woman told me, listen, if you will tell -- go, they will catch you here. Come over wa -- told me, tomorrow by noontime, I'll take you away from here. She said, I will walk, and you will walk after me. If you see something, a wagon, or -- it not a high -- the highway like here.

Q: Right.

A: Regular road, mud. And I walked after her, and she took me five miles from there, to a -- a Polish family. I didn't knew him, but my father knew him. He used to make salamis and any kind of thing, and my father used to sell the meat. The ko -- not the kosher meat, used to sell it, too. He knew my father good. He said okay, you'll sleep over here tonight. Early in the morning I'll take you ba -- two miles from here is a Czech village.

Q: A Czech village.

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A: Czech village. He took me maybe a mile, because was a house here, a house there, Ukrainian, he says, I'll take you there, in – in the [indecipherable]. And that's the way I came to the Czech villages, Czech villages.

Q: So that's how you came – so was this crossing the border into **Czechoslovakia**?

A: No, not **Czechoslovakia, Ukraine** –

Q: It was still Czech village in **Ukraine**.

A: – in my area, it was a seven, eight miles from the town. You have a lot of Czech villages, and **Poland** took away **Ukraine** in 1918 –

Q: Okay.

A: – World War I. They brought over settlements; Poles, Czechs, even German villages we had a couple, Germans, strictly German. That's the way they settled there.

Q: Okay.

A: Maybe before that, I don't know. Then I came in to the first house I walked in. When the woman saw me and my feet were swollen already from the cold, it was in the morning was already a frost. She said, sit down, move away from the oven, because it's no good for – the heat. And she run to the cellar and brought over potatoes, and rubbed them like for – pancake potatoes

Q: Right, grating, grating potatoes, yes.

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A: Yeah, and put on – on my foot. I was there maybe two weeks, and it took away the swelling.

Q: So, did you have socks on, or were you completely –

A: Yeah, socks I had.

Q: Okay.

A: Because my grandmother put me on two pairs of socks in my jacket, and all of a sudden I put my hand, to see I have pair – two pair of socks. She says, I'll keep you til I'll take care on your feet. Then she arranged with another neighbor, another farmer, who went – he kept me also two or three weeks. Then I – they transfer me to another, maybe three, four farmer over there, maybe a month and a half or two, I was there. Then snow, it started to snow. In **Ukraine** it snows snow, it's four or five feet snow. There was one farmer kept me there also about two or three weeks, and he seen it was a mile, mile and a half from the main road, where the German used to travel there, and he says listen, it's more safe for you if you will go in deeper in the forest, and other Czechs –

Q: Czech village.

A: No – yeah. This village, it was – it called the **Banofka**(ph).

Q: The **Banofka**(ph).

A: The **Banofka**(ph). And he said, you go to to this village, the name is **Moskofchinna**(ph).

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Q: Moskofchinna(ph).

A: Moskofchinna(ph). And early in the morning he says, I'll come in, I'll giv-give you some food. And he took a big sack and wrapped me around with ropes, because I didn't have any coat, nothing. He wrapped around my feet with – also with some sacks, and he says, you go out from my house and go straight, no left, no right. Will be some forest, some places no forest. It's not far, maybe two miles, or two and a half miles. But I walked out, start to walk, maybe 15 minute later start a snowstorm. Terrible. You couldn't keep your face up towards the – and I walk. I was – was a little boy, I wasn't tall. And I walk. I have no choice what to do. And all of a sudden I – I go like this with my head down, because I couldn't keep my head straight, because it's windy and snow. And all of a sudden I hear some ringing near my side. I look right, two horses near me with a wagon. It was a Czech horse. He knew right away that I am Jewish. Who lets a kid like this – he said, get up on the wa – and he brought me, he said, I'll tell you which house to go in. And I went into this house, you know, the farmer's – you couldn't go walk into their house to the front, only have to go into the back. And I walked in and I knocked on the door, it was in – in the morning, I don't know what time, who know what time? And a woman saw me, she crossed over herself, because from – it was cold, and there was – ice was hanging from my face and everything. She – she – one minute, and she took a shawl, and brought me into a storage room where they used to prepare food for the pigs, for

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the – for the cows and – and it was there also that place, they used to warm water to cook potatoes for their – she says, wait here a couple minute. And it was warm there. I got to warm up. She came in with a big kettle, a wooden kettle. And she got exactly boiled water. She said, take off your clothes, everything, because I was – it was already maybe two months or two and a half months I didn't wash myself, and change nothing. Lice all over. And she put in the hot water to this kettle, she says, take off your clothes and go in. And she took all the clothes, burned, everything to the fire, put it in. And give me a good bath, and I had already wounds here from the –

Q: Wounds? Yeah.

A: – from the [indecipherable]. She run bath, brought over a – a jar with fat from the – from the bacon, whatever you call it, and she smeared me on, br-brought some kerosene to my head to kill the lice, whatever. And I was there a – over a month, month and a half they kept me.

Q: In that little room?

A: No. Used to sleep – they had a helper, Ukrainian. Used to sleep with him, where the horses, and they made on the top hanging, like a bed, and there I slept, I and the helper, the other helper. I used to sleep there. It was warm in there. Where horses is warm always, because they breathe. That's the – yeah. In one side horses, one side the [indecipherable]

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Q: Tell me – as you were describing this, it was hard for you to continue talking.

Why at that particular moment?

A: Emotion. And I was there about a month and a half, and one day in the morning – she had two sons. One son the Russian took away to the army, one son was there, in [indecipherable] with her. Very nice to me. I was sitting with them near the table and eating, and whatever they ate they gave me, they treat me really like a human. He came in early in the morning, he said, you have to run away. The Ukrainian police with some German here looking for Jews, because in the area were Jews hiding. And somebody told the police or whatever to the town, it's the Jews that came in, and a search, and they caught six Jews and killed them. I tried to get out from this sta – run out and get in – it was outside, they used to keep the straw, you know, in bundle. I tried to pull out the thing but it couldn't go, couldn't take out. I run into the stable, and I went up a [indecipherable] was straw for what used to prepare. How I went up, I don't know. It was so high that I couldn't get down later. And – and I – little by little I went near the wall, and then in the straw, all the way down. When they came, and they saw me, I tried to run out, behind the stable, out. Was policemen there with the machine gun [indecipherable]. One guy from my town, I knew him, he was sleeping this night in – in – by the chair, he also tried to run, and he had a gun. They hit him in the – in the hand and they killed him la – they killed six Jews the same day. Next morning, when the son there came in to take

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some straw for the cattles, for the horses, I – little by little I see him. I – his name was **Ithzikella**(ph) from the tal – from the Bible, from the **[indecipherable]** very nice guy. I say, **Ithzikella**(ph). He was shocked. How you went up there? I said, I don't know. He have to bring a big ladder to take me down. He took me down, and he says, they called me **Edik**(ph). He says, you will have to go. I'll tell you where to go. I'm not throwing you out, I'll tell you exactly where to go and not to go. And next day, prepared me a big bag with food and everything, and he took me also beginning of a forest. It was deeper in the forest and it was a valley there, he said, there is four farmers. You will go straight, and then you'll go climb a little bit the hill, and in the valley you'll see the farm. Go there, cause this is much deep, nobody comes there. Then I walked almost all day through the forest. Was snow, but between the trees the snow is not so high. But in the minute I walked out the forest, 200 yard was uphill. There was already two, three feet snow. And it wasn't so cold. When it's not so cold, not a frost, the snow is very –

Q: Sink down.

A: I used to put in one leg, like take out th-the leg, and the other one sank. And I – took me some minutes to walk. And I already hear the wolves talking. Did I ever hear wolves talking between them? And I got tired, putting one leg til I pull it out a leg. And all of a sudden I fell down and start to cry.

Q: Of course.

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A: And I tell myself to –

Q: Was that the first time you cried?

A: – who will help you, I tell myself. I was crawling for maybe 50 yards. Then all of a sudden I see some lights. Lights at night looks to you like far away, but it's close, and it was downhill to the valley. I start to run, and roll over, whatever, and the first stable I sneak in and fell asleep on the straw, whatever. In the morning I woke up. I'm in the house, near a – near a – the farmer came in to take some stuff for the cattles. He saw me, took me in, he said, if I wouldn't find you, you would freeze in. That there – was there – he kept me a month, he transferred me over to another one about – I was there til end of – no, in the beginning of '43.

Q: How could you keep the dates in mind? With all of this going on, how could you know that this is November, and this is October, and this is –

A: I didn't know, I – I – I – til the ghetto, I knew – I knew alre – after I run away, I'd almost didn't know, didn't count no month, no month. Didn't count time, I didn't thi – but approximately. And by the last Czech, from the four, I was there.

Q: So you stayed in each of the four houses?

A: Yeah. They – they – they – between them talked, I'll keep him, next month you'll take him. And even – and one Czech that I was, the first one, a whole family from my town, it was hiding in the stable there. I used to go to the stable every day there, take some stuff, and I didn't know.

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Q: Really?

A: Yeah. It's a father and a mother and three kids. Those – they – the whole inside, and they were sitting there. I didn't know it. Much later, after the – by the last Czech that I was, they had a sister, was our neighbor.

Q: In Mlynov?

A: His name was **Schultz**(ph).

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Then when I came over to him, he start the real, was your father – I said **Moshko**(ph), because in the [indecipherable] it's not **Moshe**, **Moshko**(ph), with a **ko**. Oh, you know, my sister is your neighbor in the back. He kept me til, I would say April '43. Why ri – April? I'll tell you why. But the meantime, the Ukrainian [indecipherable], the underground start to – they used to kill Jews, like – like to – more than the German. Used to all of a sudden they come in to [indecipherable] once, twice, three, I used to – I saw some – because was between forest all the way around. He got scared for me. And one day, came in a girl there from my town also. She survived also. She used to study – his daughter studied with her, and her father was the pharmacist from the town. He says, I'll send you to my brother in another tow – another village. And one Sunday his brother came over, with a pair of horses, a wagon, and took me – took me to his village, and he kept me til end of the – til – til the Russian came in, til '44. Almost a year.

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Q: So tell me, when he took you in his wagon, were you – could people see you, or were you hidden in the wagon?

A: No, I wasn't hiding. Never was hiding.

Q: So you sat up there on the wagon?

A: I was helping whatever I could. Whatever I could do, I did.

Q: No, no, no, I'm talking about when he came to the village.

A: Yeah.

Q: And he took you with his wagon, back to his own home, were you hidden in the wagon, so people wouldn't see you?

A: No, no.

Q: No?

A: Sitting. Even the – his brother, when he took me, this was a Sunday. He stopped near a – on the way, it was a mill, you know, and he's supposed to something arrange, or bring in some wheat [indecipherable] and two young Ukrainian girls, one said to the other, this looks like a **zhid**. A **zhid** was the – a Jew. In Ukrainian it's **zhid**. Then he heard that something, he right away left everything, take the horses, and run away. And he kept me til the Russian came in in February of '44. I was there almost a year.

Q: What was his name?

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A: Sleeping with them, everything. Also used to go in summer, used to go out in the morning, used to bring – clean out the – the stuff from the cows overnight, bring them water, give them – when his daughter came to milk the cows, everything was already clean in the – give them some straw to eat and **[indecipherable]**

Q: Did you feel safe there?

A: Huh?

Q: Did you feel safe there? Did you feel safe there?

A: Yeah. Because it was away from the main roads. Never saw there a policeman, or somebody – if somebody we see some – you know, when you drive, when the soil is dry, it makes a lot of – I used to see f-far away something, then I used to go out, and go away from the houses – used to go to the field, or I used to – he had a big tree of cherries. I used to climb on the chi – on the tree, and nobody could see me, so much big was the tree.

Q: And did they treat you well?

A: Yeah, they treat me like a child.

Q: What was their name?

A: **Schultz**(ph).

Q: **Schultz**(ph)?

A: **Schultz**(ph), yeah.

Q: Uh-huh. And they had lived in **Mlynov**?

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A: Hm?

Q: And they were from **Mlynov**?

A: No. They were in the villages.

Q: But then you said the other pla –

A: His sister. They had the sister next door to us.

Q: In **Mlynov**?

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay.

A: Her – her husband used to make shoes, he used to – he was a handyman. He came one day to vi-visit me – not me, visit his brother-in-law, his sister.

Q: Right.

A: And he saw I'm walking around without shoes. He says, come here. He took a piece of paper. Stand up. The top. He said, but the sole has to be wood, I don't have leather for this. And he made me – after two weeks or 10 days, he brought me a pair of shoes with sole of wood.

Q: A sole – a wooden sole.

A: Wooden sole.

Q: Wooden sole.

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A: It was one thing bad in the winter. Why? The snow used to build up, and all of a sudden I got higher. I do – there I was very live a normal life. I was afraid, you know –

Q: Yeah.

A: – if I saw somebody. And you know, the farmers is not house to next – to another one.

Q: Yeah.

A: Was all this couple hundred yards, each from other. Nobody used to come in – if some – a neighbor came in, or – they knew I – they knew I'm Jewish. But Czechs, almost there's 25 or 30 Jews that survived, most of them Czechs helped them. Used to live in the forest and underground, whatever. But used to give them food, let them take a shower or something. Good people, the Czechs.

Q: You mentioned that when you were in the snow, that's when you cried. Was there any time before then?

A: Hm?

Q: Was there any time before then?

A: Crying?

Q: Yeah.

A: No. I'll tell you the true, I didn't think a minute of my situation. From the beginning I was thinking what I will eat today. I'm not talking breakfast or dinner,

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what I'll – where I'll find something to eat. But in the minute I reached the Czechs, I didn't have a problem with food. Whatever they eat, they gave me.

Q: So, in some ways, except for that woman who could have meant your death, the very first one, when you had your boots and you had your jacket –

A: Yeah.

Q: – you weren't betrayed by anybody –

A: Huh?

Q: – but she – that woman, who had that first house, where she called the policeman.

A: Yeah.

Q: She betrayed you.

A: Yeah.

Q: But nobody else did.

A: I don't – no. No. I didn't si – in the area I didn't stay, I stayed maybe three, four weeks.

Q: Yeah.

A: And the minute I hit the Czechs, nobody. Maybe some of them didn't want to keep me. I went between them and this here, I went into Ukrainian. Some of them were afraid, used to give me some food, a piece bread, some apple, whatever they had. But most of them, they say go away from me. They were afraid also.

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Q: Yeah. So when you stayed at this place, at this place for a year, with **Shairtza(ph)**, yeah, with the family **Shairtza(ph)**, what was the husband's name?

A: Don't remember.

Q: You don't remember.

A: I called him **Shairtz(ph)**.

Q: **Shairtz(ph)**. Okay.

A: I don't remember.

Q: Do you remember when the Russians came?

A: Sure.

Q: Tell me what it looked like.

A: Like soldiers.

Q: No, no, but I mean, did they come down the road, were there many of them?

A: The first Russian I met had **Shairtz(ph)**.

Q: Okay.

A: And then, one of my town – a boy my age, all of a sudden came – I knew he survived, he came over, because his older brother, and the brother to this girl that I pulled her up to the attic, also survived. And they came to the **Shairtz(ph)** because not far from there was a Polish village that was evacuate from the Poles left. They run away because the Ukrainian used to kill Poles, to start the war between the Poles and Ukrainian. Used to burn every night villages, each other. And they survived, and

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they came over to the Czech. And I told them – one is – was **Eliezer**(ph), and one was **Manasha**(ph) [indecipherable]. And I told them – they – they were older than I am, they were that time 18 or 19, say, oh, we have to – we have to – we going to the army, we going to – and they never came back, and nobody knows even where they were killed. And one of the – **Manasha's**(ph) brother, **Enoch**(ph) was a – he also was my age. We went through cheder together. He came over, and he says, let's go. Where'd we go? We went to **Lutsk**(ph), 25 miles from the village. We walked. And we came – before evening we came there, and still the front was not far from there. And all night the German were bombing the planes, and we took – we went into a house, empty house, but start to fell pieces. Next morning we run away back, we went back to – to the village, and the [indecipherable] I came back. Came back to [indecipherable] and the same soldiers still there. And I got friendly with a – the headquarter was there from the – a brigade. Got friendly –

Q: In the house of the – of the family **Shairtz**(ph)?

A: Yeah, I was staying in there. Th-Their guns was shooting to my town. My town wasn't still – **Mlynov** was still liberated that time.

Q: Okay. I'm just confused about geography now. The last I understood, you were with the **Shairtz**(ph) family in this very distant village.

A: Yeah.

Q: And a Russian soldier comes there.

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A: Yeah.

Q: And a brigade of soldiers, more than one comes there.

A: Sure, a brigade.

Q: Okay.

A: A brigade of heavy artillery.

Q: Okay. And do they stay in that farm?

A: Yeah.

Q: So they take over the farm?

A: No, they didn't take over, only the colonel got a room –

Q: In the house, okay.

A: – to sleep there. The rest were – they slept in the stable **[indecipherable]**

Q: And how did – how did they behave with the family?

A: Very good.

Q: Okay.

A: Friendly. Friendly, very friendly.

Q: Okay.

A: Then I became friendly with the colonel.

Q: Okay.

A: He **[indecipherable]** and I used to – you know, I saw heavy artillery, and as a child I used to all day sssk – around them.

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Q: So that means that when they came, you knew that they already controlled the territory?

A: Yes.

Q: And so you didn't have to hide any more.

A: But my town – my town was ba – 12 miles –

Q: From the **Shairtz**(ph)?

A: And they – it still – German were there, because they came from **Kovol**(ph), from the other side.

Q: Got it.

A: And the artillery, the heavy artillery, they used to – I say – I ask him – I knew Russian, because I was in school two years. I speaked **Ukrainish**(ph) also. I ask him, where you shooting? He says, from **Mlynov**. I say, shoot them. Destroy them all over. And I became friendly with them. I used to ride on a horse better than them, without a saddle, with a saddle. It – then the colonel asked me, what are you going to do? I said, I don't know. Don't know where to go. He say, you know what? Come with us. You'll be the son of the brigade. And he was a you – a young man, he was 24 years old, he was a colonel.

Q: Do you remember his name?

A: Hm?

Q: Do you remember his name?

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A: Volkov(ph).

Q: Volkov(ph).

A: And I finished the war with them, in **Berlin**, 1945.

Q: So they – you met him when? What was the month and year you met him? You met him in '44? When he came to the family farm **Shairtza**(ph) and he said, come with me, when was that?

A: '44. March, something like this.

Q: So – okay.

A: And they treat me terribly better. They make me a uniform in my size, everything. I used to sleep with the colonel in the same bed.

Q: Really?

A: Used to make him vodka, because when I was with the Czechs, all winter, used to almost every night make vodka, because vodka was more than eight dollars.

Q: Well, tell me how you make vodka. How do you make vodka?

A: From potatoes, from wheat. It's a process.

Q: But can you make it overnight?

A: Even today I can make vodka. Is probably cheaper to buy in the store.

Q: How long does it take?

A: Takes two weeks til the stuff gets cooked by itself.

Q: Okay. So what does the colonel do in those two weeks?

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A: The colonel? Well, he didn't sit down to have breakfast without a glass of vodka.

Not only him, all – all the officers. They were drinking like horses.

Q: Well, I want to take a break right now, at this moment, because I think we've finished – **[break]**

A: And not look so nice.

Q: Well, there's the tradeoff, huh?

A: Yeah. I would trade in.

Q: You would trade in, yeah. **[break]**

Q2: Okay, we're rolling.

Q: You're rolling. Okay. This is a continuation of the **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum** interview with Mr. **Ezra Sherman**, on May 16th, 2014. And before the break we were talking about your odyssey, and your survival in the forests and in the homes of – of mostly Czech, but not only Czech farmers and other people in – near **Mlynov**, in that area. And we kind of finished up where you were saying that the Russian forces, the Soviet forces liberated the area, and a Colonel **Volkov**(ph) invited you to join them, and even made an – a uniform for you. So you joined them. What become – what is your job when you're with that brigade? What do you do?

A: I didn't have any job to do. I just did whatever I want. Used to go watch sh – with the – near the big cannons, they used to shooting, is the – sometimes used to go with

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[indecipherable] or visit some [indecipherable] or some places where they used to – what they call it? Watching point.

Q: Mm-hm, oh yeah, where they were – where they were observing.

A: That's all. I didn't have – I didn't have to do nothing.

Q: You were adopted.

A: I had my horse.

Q: You did?

A: Yeah. And the servant – the colonel had one guy, one soldier used to take care on the horses. One guy used to, like a private servant.

Q: So tell me, where – after **Mlynov**, where did they go? Where did the – this was a brigade?

A: They pushed the Germans back to – to **Germany**, what mean for – liberate **Ukraine**, then we went into **Poland** –

Q: Okay. What parts?

A: – where was – we were staying in the other side of the **Wisla**, on **Valso(ph)**, almost two months.

Q: Waiting? You know, sitting there?

A: Sitting and because probably after that I start understand to there, that **Stalin** was against the Polish underground, because they were getting orders from **London**. This was the **Krajowa Armia**, they called it.

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Q: So tell me, when you were aw – sitting there for two months on that other side of the river, what was – what did you – how did you explain it to yourself at the time? Why were you just sitting there for two months?

A: I'll tell you the true, I didn't think, I didn't discuss politics, because I – maybe I didn't understand what's going on exactly, I just – just –

Q: What did the soldiers say?

A: The soldiers didn't talk nothing – soldiers, they didn't say. The officers used to, between them, they used to let them get cooked by themselves. Let the German finish them, because when they start to fight against the Germans, the Germans finish them little by little. And then the Russian [indecipherable] and came in, and took over [indecipherable] from there, pushing.

Q: So, when you were with them in – in **Warsaw**, did – what did you see when you went into **Warsaw**? Do you remember?

A: We didn't go into the city at all.

Q: Okay.

A: We didn't go into the city. We – when they break through, and we [indecipherable] from the other side, and from there we went west.

Q: How did the countryside look?

A: The countryside, yeah. Cause with the heavy artillery they couldn't go into the city.

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Q: Okay.

A: Because the city was almost destroyed. Ninety percent of the buildings was destroyed. The Germans went from street to street and blew up.

Q: Did you – did your – what wou – you were with this Colonel **Volkov**(ph), what brigade was this, or what was its identifying description? Did it have a number, was it part of an army, what was it?

A: Sure. It belonged to the first Ukrainian front. Was first – first division 174
[indecipherable] brigade battalion.

Q: Uh-huh. Okay. The f – 174th –

A: Battalion is the brigade.

Q: Is the brigade, okay.

A: There they didn't call brigade battalion.

Q: Battalion. 174th battalion. And their route was from **Mlynov** to the **Wisla**,
Warsaw?

A: From – yeah, from around **Mlynov** **[indecipherable]**

Q: Mm-hm. To there?

A: From **Mlynov** through **Brot**(ph) before **Lemberg**, **Lvov**.

Q: **Lvov**, uh-huh.

A: **Lvov**. From there we crossed the **Bug**. We were staying near the **Bug** also a couple weeks. And from the **Bug** to **Krakow**, around, we – we didn't go into the

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town. The town used to go in, foot soldiers, tanks. But we didn't go because until the **Bug**, the – the heavy cannons, horses used to –

Q: Pull them.

A: – pull them, yeah, pull them. Four horses each cannon. And near the **Bug** they change it to little tractors became more a – and then forward to **Berlin**.

Q: I have a question that's a bit of a sensitive question, about the army. Many east European countries were terrified of the Soviet army, because of rapes, because of what happened to the female population. Did you see or hear anything about that when you were with them?

A: Here and there, I knew it was going come. But the main thing was, where I was with them it was – we went **Ukraine, Poland**, and in **Germany**. In **Poland** also, they used to abuse, here and there. But when you crossed over **Germany**, then was a holiday.

Q: Okay.

A: Because what German did in **Russia**, things like a human being wouldn't even think [**indecipherable**]. And it was like take **advance** back, pay them.

Q: Revenge. Revenge back.

A: Revenge. And they were talking and they were so – so ready for this, you wouldn't believe it.

Q: Can you share some of the things that were said?

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A: Listen, I personally, whatever I did, I did. But I don't want to describe this, because it's a lot of things not pleasant, a lot of them pleasant. I took revenge as a child, I was f – 14 years old. Whatever I did, I did.

Q: Okay. I wasn't asking in this sense about you particular – in particular. I was asking more about the behavior of the other troops.

A: Listen, some behaved like animals, some behave – they forced them. Specially in **Silesia**.

Q: In **Silesian**(ph)?

A: **Silesia**. **Silesia** was the part that the Russian gave German land to **Poland**, because they took away **Ukraine**.

Q: Right. Right.

A: **Silesia**, it's a big – was a very rich farmers there, those princes, whatever any – **Barone**(ph), what they called them. What they saw how they living, they had electricity, they had radios, they had cattles, they had – very, very rich. Big, big farms there were in **Silesia**, beautiful land. And you're talking there – there was a – about 15,000 – 15 million Germans there. And 12 million, they pushed them out there, a lot of – right away, a lot of – pushed them, and they took advantage **Russia**. If they find a Russian soldier killed, they burned the whole sa – village and killed everybody. But doesn't matter wa – how – what they did, they didn't 10 percent what the German did to them.

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Q: Did you – did your battalion also capture soldiers? Did they take any Germans prisoner?

A: Sure.

Q: Can you describe what happened, when that would be?

A: I'll just tell you one second. One time the – some unit got ger – 12 Germans, and one of their **surgent** was from **Siber**(ph), very nice guy. He was really – he was like – to me like a father. He says – they called me **Vaska**(ph). Come, we'll take him to the headquarters there. I or him, you know, the other two soldiers. And he tells me, **Vaska**(ph) be careful. I'm going to finish them here. And he finished them, all of them. Killed them. Now he tells me, you know why I did it? His family, before the war broke out, came to **Odessa** to visit relatives, and the Germans killed them. He said, I have to take revenge for them. This is only one of those. In a lot of those locations, they did a lot of them like this. They start to run away, we shoot them. Nobody asks question too much, and that's it.

Q: What I'm thinking though, is that you are, at this time, 14 years old?

A: Yeah.

Q: That's an awful lot for a 14 year old to see.

A: But as I told you, when – in the war, I got older 10 years in – overnight, in my mind.

Q: Yeah. Yeah.

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A: I didn't think like a boy 14 years old any more.

Q: Were you able at this point, to find out what happened to your family, to your father, to your sister?

A: I knew what happened to my family. My family was killed two months before they finished [indecipherable] of the ghetto.

Q: You knew in **Dubno** what it was already over?

A: Sure. Because they went from town to town. First one they finished the big ghetto. From our area and from **Ukraine**, they didn't send to camps. Only here, there they – yeah. They used to dig holes, and kill them on the spot. All the – around the area there. Was tel – little towns, a lot of little towns, a thousand Jews, 1500 Jews, 600 Jews. They came in in the morning, and during the day they finished them.

Q: Your brother had gone east.

A: Hm?

Q: Your brother had gone east, your oldest brother.

A: Yeah, he ran away to **Russia**.

Q: Okay. Were you – did you – were you asking questions about what happened to him, or you thought he was killed too?

A: When he came – when I met him?

Q: I'm asking, did you know that he was alive?

A: No.

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Q: Okay.

A: I knew when he's alive, we were s-stationed not far from my town, about 30 miles. And I came to visit to – I said to the colonel, I want to go to see maybe if somebody alive, family or whatever –

Q: In Mlynov?

A: Yeah. Then he says, I cannot go with you, but talk to somebody of – of the officers, and see. Then I went to the commissar, the politician, the – whatever there was there, in charge. He says, okay, I'll go with you. He took two horses, and once it's 30 mile with two horses, three or four hours, we were in town. I came to the town, and I s – met some survivors, couple f-family – singles, Jews. Very – maybe 15 people that time was. And he told me, a week ago your brother was here. He was in the Polish army. He was in the Russian army, then they transfer him to the Polish army.

Q: The Polish Soviet Army.

A: Yeah.

Q: Not the Home Army.

A: No, the communists [indecipherable]

Q: Right. Mm-hm.

A: [speaks foreign language]

Q: Ah, yeah.

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A: If you know this story.

Q: Right.

A: And he gave him his military address, left him. I got the address, and I write him a letter. I mean, 10 days later I got a answer from him. He was stationed maybe 15 miles from me, I didn't know where.

Q: So you got an answer –

A: And that's the way I got connected with him. And after the war, when they transfer my unit from **Berlin** back to **Ukraine**, and it was 10 miles from my town –

Q: So you didn't see him – you didn't see him when –

A: Since 40 – first of '45. Four year didn't see him.

Q: And then you didn't see him when you first wrote to him. It is, you wrote to him, you got an answer –

A: No, I just [indecipherable] we got –

Q: Okay.

A: Then, there was, after the war, in **Ukraine**, near my town, a family that I told you they were hiding, four kids in [indecipherable]. This guy was one of the best friend my father. When I – he saw me, he says he going to move to **Poland** because everybody that was a Polish citizen could move to **Poland** – go to **Poland**, because **Ukraine** became **Russia**.

Q: Right, right.

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A: He says, listen, another week or 10 days, we going to move to the train station, and we waiting for the cars come in [indecipherable]. He says, come with us.

Q: This was a Polish person?

A: Huh? Yeah.

Q: This was a Polish person?

A: A Jewish.

Q: A Jewish person, okay.

A: Jewish. A Jewish person, because every person that lived before that in **Ukraine** that was Polish –

Q: Right, could go back, mm-hm.

A: – could move to **Poland**.

Q: Mm-hm. Right.

A: And they moved a lot of – most of the Jews start to move to **Poland**. He says, come over and stay with – come – you come with us to **Poland**. And in one day, I took off. And when the train come, I loaded whatever they got – I was very light passenger – and went with them to **Poland**, to **Bytom**, near **Katowice**. And there I wrote my brother, and he told me he cannot come, he cannot leave. He was an officer – communication officer there. And he was by – 50 miles from where I was. I took a train, and I was wearing Russian uniform, everything. And I went, and that's the way I met him.

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Q: And this was in the – he was still in the **Ukraine**, or he was now in –

A: Hm?

Q: Your brother, where was he?

A: In **Poland**.

Q: He was also in **Poland**?

A: He was in – it was the Polish army.

Q: Was staish – ah, got it –

A: It was in Poland.

Q: Got it, got it, got it, got it. Okay.

A: Not far from the Czech's border. Place was called **Sheenach**(ph).

Q: **Sheenach**(ph)

A: **Sheenach**(ph). It was a half town, was a – it was full Deutsche.

Q: Were there still any left?

A: He was in the army, yeah. And got connection with him, I was staying with him a couple weeks there. And **[indecipherable]** to start the Jewish organization is **Palestine** brigade is came over from **Italy**, and start to organize, the **Bricha**, if you know what's the **Bricha**.

Q: But tell me – tell me what that meeting was like with your brother?

A: Hm?

Q: Tell me a little bit about the meeting with your brother.

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A: Oh di – my brother?

Q: Yeah, when you first met him.

A: Listen, I was excited, he was excited that he got to go back. I stood with him in the Polish [indecipherable] couple weeks there, because most of the officers were Russian. From Captain [indecipherable] was Russian. His brigade commander was a Russian [indecipherable] Russian. And I was in uniform Russian, I speak Russian well. Then I was again, like adopted [indecipherable] and then is – we came to meet some Jewish – I went to one kibbutz, other kibbutz didn't like it. I didn't want to stay with kids, because they were kid from even my age, but they were different. I – I was thinking differently, I was – they want to play. And you got some acquaintance from kibbutzim, from the [indecipherable] left a couple months, he decides he is running away.

Q: Your brother does?

A: Change his – change his uniform and send us – so we were in a ki – in – near **Breslau**, in kibbutz, in a farm from those sle – was **Silesia**, all **Silesia** [indecipherable] til they made our papers and they smuggled out us from **Poland**. Was a group from 40 or 50 people, all of them – all of them deserters of Russian army from Polish army.

Q: I'm going to stop at this point. We'll come back to it, but I want to go back to a few other moments. You say that when the army crossed into **Germany**, number one

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it was like a holiday as far as revenge was concerned. But tell me a little bit about the battle towards **Berlin**. Since you were there – I mean, somebody who sees this is an unusual witness. Can you tell me what kind of activities were involved, what kind of battles were there? Did you get into **Berlin**? Talk a little bit – I mean, this is the – the capital of the Reich.

A: When we crossed the **Oder** – **Oder** was –

Q: Right.

A: The Russian concentrate there, you wouldn't believe it. Two and a half million soldiers, 40,000 cannons. Every three, four yards, a cannon. Eight thousand tanks. I never in my life saw so many tanks. By 18,000 airplane. There were one German and 25 Russians against. Like flies. That time they had already – the front became smaller, everything. Not only **Berlin** was. It started – fight start from **Königsberg** on the **Baltic**.

Q: Of course.

A: And the soldiers were so anxious to go in to take advantage, you wouldn't believe it. And they were talking freely. The officers used to tell them, we have to take advantage what they did to us. On every tank, on every vehicle was said, kill the **[indecipherable]** whatever they did to us. Really they – you didn't have to give them what got to get high from this. They were waiting for – waiting because it's a – to supply the ammunition and everything, takes time. You wouldn't forget the

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second line used to come in, wagons with horses. Any kind of nationality, with bags [indecipherable], any kind. It was soldier, they didn't even know what Russian.

Muslims, any kind of –

Q: And – but the place was also full of refugees and people –

A: Nah.

Q: No?

A: Was the refugees – not only refugees, was a lot of people that they liberated, and that the –

Q: Right.

A: – German had over 12 million slaves for labor. They used to work in farms and factories, except Jews that – from the camp. Slavs, Poles, all the territory there. They force young people.

Q: Yes.

A: And they used to work.

Q: So when the Soviet army came, they liberated these people?

A: Sure.

Q: And what happened with these people? Did they feed them, or did they go away?

I mean, it was –

A: Some – the German had by – over three million Russian soldiers. Some of the soldiers, they right away took into the army, because they have a lot of losses. Til the

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– when they came, a lot of losses was on – they paid a heavy price for this. They were short of people, they used to – a lot of them, they were ki – able to – took them there. A lot of them they sent them straight to **Siberia**.

Q: Why?

A: They blamed why they didn't fight, and why they didn't run away to the partisan. That was **Stalin**, he didn't really – he didn't trust none of them, because the German when they cut – took them to the – all the polit – politician officers, they had a star, a big star on their –

Q: On their hands? Or on their sleeves?

A: Not on the hands, on the –

Q: Uniform?

A: On the uniform, a big star. They shoot them on the spot. Right away. They were the first ones that they shoot.

Q: Oh, you mean the political officers.

A: Political officer.

Q: When the Germans would capture them, they would be the first that they would shoot.

A: They captured. They capture over five million prisoners. And even though they were fighting – I just read the book, second time, on **Berlin**. American writer write it. But not just a book, every details they write.

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Q: But you – you didn't see personally that there would be soldier – Soviet soldiers who were liberated. Or did you see that?

A: Yeah.

Q: You did?

A: I – I saw that.

Q: Yeah?

A: I saw them. They ver – very bad shape. Very bad shape. I saw in **Dubno**, when I was in **Dubno**, they – near the cemetery they kept Russian prisoners.

Q: The Germans did.

A: Yeah. It was a swamp stuff. And they were laying outside, maybe **[indecipherable]** who knows. Every day they used to carry a little wagon and people used to – soldiers, prisoner used to carry them. And would – used to carry people that died, from dysentery, or whatever. I saw I – one of them, all of a sudden a hand lift up. It had something covered, a piece of **present** or whatever.

Q: A pi – a tarp.

A: He still was alive, and it was a big hole there, with – with – used to make white paint, it's what they call it. It's not paint that we paint here today, but used – they used to make it from –

Q: From lime?

A: Huh?

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Q: Was it from lime?

A: Yeah, exactly.

Q: Okay.

A: They used to – the bor – was filled for infection. And they used to throw him in there. It was alive. Every day they used to go out there.

Q: And this is still in 1941 –

A: Yes, in 1941.

Q: – you're talking about, in '41.

A: '44, yeah.

Q: Or '44, which one?

A: '41, no.

Q: '41, '41, yeah. So that's early in the war, when they capture the Soviets.

A: Yeah.

Q: When they captured them. So, they had been – that's when they had been allies and all of a sudden **Germany** attacks the **Soviet Union**?

A: Yeah.

Q: And you were – I'm going back now to the end of the war, did you enter the city of **Berlin**?

A: Yeah.

Q: What do you remember from the city of **Berlin**?

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A: Fighting that never in my life saw.

Q: Yeah.

A: Building to building, room to room.

Q: And you were there, with a gun?

A: Sure, I was near the cannons. They used to shoot direct. This was **Howitzer 155mm**. One – one bullet is to destroy two buildings, o-or half a street **[indecipherable]** because they were hiding and they shooting through the window. Then brought in the heavy artillery in the street, and shoot straight. And they were hiding in the cellars. Was – **Berlin** was 70 percent destroyed. Was street you couldn't even move, all the buildings, the rubble was **[inaudible]**

Q: They say that at the end –

A: **Berlin** was a – the fight – in the city was a fight, about two, three weeks. In the city.

Q: Yeah. Well, from – from what I've read, and the newsreels I've seen –

A: Mm.

Q: – it says that by the time the Soviet army got to **Berlin**, there were no German soldiers any more, there were only 14 year old boys that **Hitler** then inducted in the army.

A: They had enough soldiers out there, 14 year boys, there was very little.

Q: Very little.

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A: So what. Just for – for the – to show the world that, you know, those picture that he puts his hands on his face.

Q: That's right, that one.

A: No, that's bullshit.

Q: Okay. So they still had good fighters.

A: Soldier, they had fighters there, they had good fighters, they were fighting. Was those crazy **SS**, those – those **[indecipherable]** yeah.

Q: Oh yeah.

A: That's was. Was older – older people there, those **storm [indecipherable]** what they called them, it was. But they were fighting. Not – not so easy was.

Q: Did you get to the center of **Berlin**?

A: Yeah. I was even where the **Reichsburg** was.

Q: Really?

A: Sure. After the –

Q: After the flag?

A: Oh, sure.

Q: After the Soviet flag was hoisted.

A: Yeah, they didn't let me go to the –

Q: Where didn't they let you go?

A: Hm?

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Q: Where did they not let –

A: They didn't let me go to the first line.

Q: Oh yeah.

A: I want to go, but they didn't let me.

Q: Yeah. Did you have a gun?

A: Sure. Took away from a German officer, a **Parabellum**.

Q: And you used it?

A: Sure. What do you think, I –

Q: Were there si –

A: At to –

Q: Mm-hm? Go ahead.

A: I knew all the weapons how to operate. All the Russian, all the German weapon.

Q: That was quite a –

A: Light weapons, I'm talking.

Q: It was –

A: Like machine guns, guns, rifles.

Q: That was quite an education.

A: Oh yeah. But I fought in **Israel** and by then I became a expert on this.

Q: Well, this is what I was thinking.

A: Yeah.

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Q: That wa – that this is great training for later on.

A: When I – when the war broke out in **Israel** in 1940 se – end of '47 fighting, I was already trained good.

Q: Yeah. You – let's go back to **Berlin**. You're in the center of **Berlin**. By that time that you got to the center, was the war over, or not? Were you still fighting?

A: No, the war was over.

Q: Do you remember – do you remember where you were then the war –

A: Eight – eight of May, was finished, no shooting. The [**indecipherable**] was eight mu – May nine, why? Because **Stalin** want the German headquarters will sign in **Berlin**, because they signed a couple days before with **Eisenhower**, with the –

Q: Right.

A: Then he said, no, I don't accept it, I want in **Berlin**. Get the – sign again.

Q: And where were you when May eighth and May ninth happened? Do you remember?

A: Yeah, in **Berlin**.

Q: Yeah, but where?

A: Still in **Berlin**, yeah.

Q: In a roo – in the center, or in the suburbs? Do you remember wer – where you were when you learned the war was over?

A: Not – it's almost this – near the center. On **Oranienburg strasse**.

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Q: **Oranien** –

A: **Oranienburg strasse** was the main synagogue, is Jewish synagogue.

Q: Oh. Was it still standing?

A: When I came second time to **Berlin**, with my – when my brother run away, we slept in this synagogue a couple days, and we saw the moon. The roof was all s –

Q: So on May eighth, you were on **Oranienburg strasse**, near the synagogue?

A: Yeah.

Q: Was that by accident?

A: No, that was the headquarters there.

Q: Was Colonel **Volkov**(ph) still with you?

A: Yeah.

Q: Well, what did it feel like to hear the war is over?

A: I don't remember what I feel that time. It's very hard to –

Q: Yeah.

A: Because if I would be older, I don't know if I would be survived, because I want to take revenge on them. Maybe because I was too young, I'm still alive here, and I can sit here and tell the story.

Q: Do you think that he protected you from doing that?

A: Hm?

Q: Did the colonel know this, and did he protect you from doing that?

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A: Yeah.

Q: Did you see civilians in the streets afterwards?

A: Siv – German civilians? Sure, I saw. They were getting out like mice from the holes.

Q: Yeah. How long did the brigade stay in **Berlin**?

A: Another 10 days, approximately. And then the whole division put us on on train, back to **Ukraine**.

Q: **Volkov**(ph) too?

A: Yeah.

Q: Did you ever say goodbye to him? Did you ever say goodbye to him?

A: Yeah.

Q: How did that happen?

A: I told him I want to go and see my brother.

Q: And – bear with me now. You go – you leave **Ukraine** with the other Jewish family who – because you're Polish citizens and you can go back to **Poland**?

A: I didn't need Polish or citizen.

Q: All right.

A: I didn't need any paper, I just had a paper like a vacation pass from the headquarters. And if I need some help, I could go into the **Kommandatura**, if you know what's –

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Q: Right, yes.

A: – the military –

Q: Headquarters.

A: – headquarters. In each town they had the military headquarters. That's all.

Q: And so, you said goodbye to him before you leave **Ukraine**?

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay. Okay.

A: When I went to **Poland**, I didn't think t – in my mind that I'm going to run away.

I wasn't a deserter, because I wasn't nowhere –

Q: You're not in the army.

A: I'm not in the army, that's all, because he – the colonel thought after everything's finished, he send me to a military school in **Moscow**, because his parents – he was from **Moscow**. His parent was one of the head professors there in the school. He want to send me to there – to the school that time. But I didn't come back.

Q: Did you ever communicate with him again?

A: No.

Q: Okay. Let's get back to the point where I interrupted before, that we're talking about **Bricha**, and about people leaving **Poland**. Tell me how you left **Poland**, under what circumstances?

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A: Well, got connection with some kibbutzim, with some organization, it was jew – is – isra – Jewish parties, like **Betar**, like **Dror**, like **Hashomer Hatzair**. Any kind party had their own kibbutzim.

Q: Okay.

A: And I went here, visit a couple there, visit a couple day here, a couple day there, and got some no – people know –

Q: Explain what a kibbutzim is to those people who won't understand. What is a kibbutzim?

A: Kibbutzim in **Israel** was a collective farm, and collective life.

Q: Okay.

A: You had a room where to live. You had a diner for everybody, you eat – everybody eat the same, everybody get some clothes, once a year get some vacation, a couple days. And get some – couple dollars to spending. That's was the collective life.

Q: Okay. Now, in **Poland**, there were the representatives of these different collective farms who were saying, come live with us, come live with us?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay.

A: And they organized the people, and little by little send them to **Germany**, to **Austria**, to **Czechoslovakia**, to **Germany**, any kind of zone: American zone,

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English zone, French Zone. And from there they tried to ship them to eas – to **Palestine**.

Q: So tell me, you're in **Poland**, which is the Soviet zone, yes?

A: Yeah.

Q: How do you get out of the Soviet zone? How is this done?

A: It was **Poland**.

Q: Yeah.

A: We smuggled – we supposed to go to the Czechs bor – to **Czechoslovakia** together. Then all of a sudden, the Russian closed the border. Then we went to **Berlin**.

Q: Back.

A: Yeah, but we went to ch – to **Stettin**. **Stettin** was not far from the border to get into **Berlin**. And we were a group, some women also with them – well, some guys were mar – was married, and all of them were deserters. And I went with my brother in **[indecipherable]**. And it wasn't so easy to go, deserters with a – some papers we had, but it's made-up papers, not legal papers. Then, one of the guys met an officer, a colonel. He used to haul gas to **Berlin** wi-with trucks. And here and there, find out he's Jewish. He said, I'll take you.

Q: Pol-Polish colonel? Or the Soviet – Russian.

A: No, Russian.

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Q: Russian.

A: Russian.

Q: Russian, okay.

A: I find out he's Jewish. He says, I would wish I can go out with you. But he had a wife with two kids.

Q: Yeah.

A: So he says, they in **Russia**. They put us on in two trucks. They put on in the back bottles with gas, and he smuggled us into **Berlin**. And they – and they told us to get to **Oranienburg [indecipherable]** for the – the – that was the center of some registration, also Jews already stopped **[indecipherable]**. They brought us over there, and he said goodbye. He didn't want to take any money, nothing. And we were there a week or 10 days **[indecipherable]**. Some young guys thought to go to German girls, whatever, and the Russian military police used to, at night, searching for deserters. They were Russian, used to desert. And they arrest two guys from our group. Okay, make it short, they –

Q: No, don't make it short –

A: They brought them out.

Q: Yeah.

A: They brought them out and they – and they shipped us to the French zone. In the French zone. And we were in the French zone a couple weeks, until they made up

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some papers, and we traveled to the – to the end near **Bergen-Belsen**, on the British zone, but we have to smuggle over the border, between the Russian zone. We got all the way was made up, got a guy there, a Polish guy that used to smuggle us to the forest, and we came to **Bergen-Belsen**, the – the **Palestine** brigade, the Jewish – Jewish brigade from **Palestine**, they were waiting near the border, and put us in on two truck, brought the thing to **Bergen-Belsen**.

Q: Here's a question.

A: And there we were in the American zone.

Q: **Bergen-Belsen** –

A: No, British zone.

Q: British zone.

A: **Bergen-Belsen** was the British zone.

Q: The British zone.

A: I'm sorry.

Q: Yeah. When was the first time you heard about **Auschwitz**?

A: Hm?

Q: When was the first time you heard about **Auschwitz**?

A: I was two days after they liberate **Auschwitz**. Did you see – did you see the children when the Russian [**indecipherable**] walking with those little childrens?

Q: You were there two days after was –

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A: It was be exactly two days after the liberation. We were not far from there, you know, from a couple of –

Q: So you saw the camp.

A: – [indecipherable] I went with them there, too.

Q: What did you see two days afterwards?

A: I see all the – the crematoriums and everything. Still people there were li – living, or dying, because the Russian organized as much they could, the medical units. They wasn't so organized like the American.

Q: So, you still saw **Auschwitz** with the – my goodness, you saw everything.

A: Hm?

Q: It sounds like you saw everything.

A: Yeah.

Q: Like nothing was spared.

A: I saw in **Kraków** also what was there. In **Kraków**. What, you think **Kraków** was less than – than **Auschwitz**?

Q: What was in **Kraków**?

A: Same thing. They had near **Kraków** a concentration camp. Same thing they had, in a smaller –

Q: So, did you also see **Birkenau**?

A: Hm?

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Q: Did you see **Birkenau**, near **Auschwitz**?

A: Yeah. We went to there, I was twice there, the – a couple days later I went with another couple officers there.

Q: Were – were there – aside from the people who could not move, who were dying, was it still full of prisoners, or of people, or had they left? Was the camp empty?

A: No. The Russian did what they could.

Q: Okay.

A: They send in all the unit that could be free.

Q: Okay.

A: Then send them in, they did what they could, listen, If a guy was starving, you couldn't do nothing. They – first what they didn't know also. They gave him some food, some meat. They – they died from this.

Q: Yeah.

A: If a person doesn't eat, starving for food, you have to feed them with –

Q: Little by little.

A: – a different food.

Q: Yeah. What was **Bergen-Belsen**, by the time you got there, that's a long time later.

A: This was – I can tell you this was, I think, in November.

Q: November.

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A: November '45.

Q: Yeah.

A: Something like this. It was already organized, but still were survivors. You – you
se – you saw like **Muselmann** walking in the – still.

Q: Yeah.

A: But the British did what they could. Food was [indecipherable]. And what kind
food? Military food. Cans. I remember when we came in, the same night they took
us to a soup – a supplier [indecipherable] and they told us, take whatever you want.
Everything was cans. Fish cans, meat cans, everything was in can. We would – we
stood there a week, something. And then we traveled to **Munich**, and from **Munich**
we went to **Laupheim**, a big conce – we open up this camp.

Q: What was it called?

A: **Laupheim**.

Q: **Laupheim**, mm-hm.

A: It's near – it's near **Stuttgart**.

Q: Okay. **Baden Wurttemberg**.

A: **Olen(ph)**, **Stuttgart**. That was 60 kilometers from **Stuttgart**. And there I was six
months, we were. And we were the fi – one of the first that we went to **Palestine**,
illegal.

Q: How did that happen?

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A: They took us on truck from **Laupheim** to **France**, and kept us in **France** about two, three weeks til they organized about 1200 people. They put us in in the boat.

Q: What did –

A: The boat, the name was **Beria**. And they took us to **Palestine**, and before – about two days before the British got us, brought us to **Haifa**, to the port. The boat, our boat, run away. We – they transferred the middle in the ocean for a little boat, 1200 people, and the boat run – run away. Came back with 12 – with 2700 people. They build up [**indecipherable**] couple stories now, with – the name was **Haganah**.

Q: **Haganah**.

A: The second time, she from **Romania**. And that's the way I came. It wasn't a treat, it was a – the British kept us for a couple weeks there, because every month they used to get 1500 certificate. We have to wait. Because we came in, and a day before came in another boat from **Italy**, with also 1200 [**indecipherable**] people. Then they got the f –

Q: The certificates.

A: – the certificate from th – we have to wait for the next one.

Q: So tell me, the boat that left **France** was **Beria**?

A: Yeah.

Q: And it was named – it's not named after **Lavrentiy Beria**? It's not named after **Lavrentiy Beria**?

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A: No, no.

Q: No, no, no, no.

A: **Beria** was a – a settlement near **Tsvart(ph)**.

Q: Ah, okay.

A: A kibbutz.

Q: Okay.

A: Near **Tsvart(ph)**, three miles from **Tsvart(ph)**, in the mountains.

Q: Okay. So –

A: The name were **Beria**. Not **Beria**.

Q: So – not **Beria**, no. That would –

A: This – this bandit.

Q: Yeah. So, **Beria** the boat takes you, and then can't land, but – but offloads you onto a smaller boat –

A: Yes.

Q: In the middle of the –

A: In the middle of the ocean.

Q: – the middle of the ocean.

A: We went over to a Greek boat, what was loaded with coal. And most of the people were sitting in the bottom.

Q: On – okay.

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A: And no water, two way – two days almost, without water. And in the middle of transfer, all of a sudden came a British plane. And in a – in the middle of the night already, they got two cruisers on both side of – it was about two days from **Haifa**.

Q: Right. And that's where they stayed until they let you in? Or did they let you into **Haifa**, and there you –

A: No, they brought us – they brought us over to **Haifa**, and they didn't have room in [indecipherable] in the camp they – it was a big boat there sitting in the port, also that brought a – th-they let us stay there for a week, and then they took us to [indecipherable], it's a couple miles from **Haifa**. I, as a child, they let go out after 10 - 12 days, and I went to the kibbutz.

Q: So you were then how old, when you say, as a child?

A: '45 – almost 15 years.

Q: Almost. Almost 15 years.

A: I was in kibbutz, in one of the kibbutz, I was there about a month, and I didn't like it there. Then I find out that a group that I knew the – the kids from **Laupheim**, that they – **Yagur**, kibbutz **Yagur**, if you heard. Near **Haifa**.

Q: Okay.

A: Then they transfer me to that, and there I was the –

Q: Where was your brother?

A: Huh?

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Q: Where was your brother?

A: My brother was in kibbutz that I was there, because his wife – he was married already in **Germany** – his wife, her si – her sister lived in the kibbutz. Then he was there til the war start. After the war, he didn't go back to the kibbutz, he left the kibbutz, he went to **Haifa**.

Q: Okay.

A: He all – he got the – one child.

Q: So you're at a second kibbutz, and you stay in the second kibbutz?

A: I stay – sure, I stay til the end of '47.

Q: And what did you do there, in that kibbutz?

A: I was working in agriculture garage – in garage. I used to work on the fields also, on tractors, used to repair, I learned there. It was a professional school there, the German Jews set up in '33.

Q: Did you go back to school?

A: Li-Like mechanically.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And I was studying there, and st – and working in the garage, half a day studying, half a day –

Q: Did you ever have formal schooling again?

A: Huh?

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Q: Did you ever have an formal education again? Like going back to a regular sch – there –

A: In – in – in-in **Yagur**, in kibbutz, sure.

Q: Okay. So it was there. That's where.

A: Yeah, two years, all done.

Q: So in total you had two years before the war started?

A: Before the war started I got two years in Polish school, and two years in the Russian. Four years. And then –

Q: And then this – and this, and the kibbutz. And is that your formal education?

A: And the rest I finish by myself, by writing, reading.

Q: Amazing.

A: Reading a lot of books.

Q: Yeah, yeah. Amazing.

A: Street school.

Q: Well, you know, that street school is probably the most important. The hardest, but the most important.

A: When I was in business in **Philadelphia**, the closest street was a big church. Then one of the head of the church, they used to come for repair the cars, tires. Then one day ask me – I used to talk with him politics, and I read a lot, I knew – I knew – I

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have a lot of knowledge. He used to – he ask me one day, what kind college did you finish? I tell him street college.

Q: Yeah. Yeah. At the end of '47, what happened? At the end of 1947, what happened?

A: The minute – in November 22nd, '47, the UN decide to give the Jews a little state. The Arabs start to shoot in buses, shoot in transportation, attack some kibbutz there or there. I was already in the **Palmach**, in the underground unit, in ur – when we were in kibbutz, they start to train us right away. They used to, at least two, three days a month getting trained.

Q: And tell me what was – what was **Palmach**?

A: **Palmach** was elite – elite unit that was mobilized most of the time. They used to stay in kibbutzim, a half month working, a half month training.

Q: Okay.

A: And in end of '46, they put us in the whole group.

Q: So tell me, did they recruit you, or do you volunteer? Who found you –

A: They recruit us.

Q: They recruit.

A: They recruit us. They recruit us when the Arabs got – attacked transportation, then from the beginning, we used to go in in the bus, seat two guys with submachine guns that used to make in **Israel**. Took it apart, keep it in the back. When something

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start, we used to put it together and – and then in the f – before the declaration of the state, in May 15, '48, when **Ben Gurion** said, we became a legal army. And the **Palmach** was almost three – three brigades, organized.

Q: And that would be how many people?

A: And we were like here, the – the Marines. Always in the head, always special operations [indecipherable]

Q: What kind of work did you do? I mean, what did you do in the **Palmach**?

A: From the beginning, I was a platoon commander, a soldier and a platoon commander. And we got caught in **Jerusalem**. We used to – all the convoys to **Jerusalem** because the Jordanian army cut off the road to **Jerusalem**, cut off the pipe of water to **Jerusalem**. Then the **Palmach**, we got stationed all the road to **Jerusalem** to secure the [indecipherable] by the last convoy, was by 180 trucks. And Colonel **Marcus**, did you hear about him? Colonel **Marcus** was a American colonel that he went to **Israel**, he was fighting, and he – he became the commander of **Jerusalem** area. Then we organized the 180 trucks, and we were securing them. We brought food, ammunition, water to **Jerusalem**, because by that time, was about 60,000 Jews. And this convoy wouldn't arrive **Jerusalem**, **Jerusalem** would fell. People would die from hunger. And we got caught, the whole brigade in **Jerusalem**, and we were fighting there. We tried to catch the whole city. We caught **Katamon**, if you heard about this, it's a big section, we were fighting. The **Castel**(ph).

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Castel(ph) is the big mountain to go to **Jerusalem**. We opened the road, and then we si – little by little, we took care on all the – almost all the road, til we opened up the **Burma** road. We were securing the **Burma** road, because from the beginning we couldn't get there with – with trucks, with nothing. We brought over thousands of people from one side, and on the other side, and people with hammers, wi-with shovels, with everything, made a little pass. And used to – one side used to come from tele – **Tel Aviv** side. Trucks with food, with ammunition, whatever we need, and carry on the b – on their backs, on their arms, to the other side, and load the other trucks, go to **Jerusalem**. That's what started **Burma** road. And lit – and we were securing the area, because the Jordanian army was not far away from there. And little by little, brought tractors and blew out, and we made a road.

Q: And you were 17 years old?

A: Yeah. Not only I, was a lot of my age. And that's the way we open alternative road to **Jerusalem**. And – and we si – were til the first ceasefire. The first ceasefire was in – I think in June. End of June. Was a ceasefire for three weeks. Then – now all brigade, they brought us down, we got some replacement because we got about a 180 people – soldier died, in those couple months. And we went back in this area after the ceasefire. The meantime, it was an embargo. But when the British left on May 15th, were boats already waiting outside to come in, with weapons. We got a lot of weapons from **Czechoslovakia**. We start to get some cannons, some planes, little

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by little, we rebuilt, and we start to push the Arabs back. When there was the second ceasefire, we were in a different situation because we could bring in everything, just money. And with money you know from where it came. Who could give the money? American **Joes**. And that's the way we finished the – the war in '49, til the ceasefire. And if they couldn't kill that time, the **Irgun**, **Bernadotte**, if you know who was **Bernadotte**.

Q: Familiar, but not quite.

A: **Bernadotte** was there, from the **UN**, the head of keep the ceasefire. And **Lehi** killed him in **Jerusalem**. We were already ready to attack, take away the **West Bank**, maybe would take it in three days. But because they killed him, the whole war was cancelled.

Q: When did you put down your gun? When did you put down your gun?

A: Which gun?

Q: Which gun? The final gun.

A: I still have the gun today.

Q: You still have it today?

A: Yeah.

Q: I mi – I mean – I meant it metaphorically, when did you stop fighting?

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A: Yom Kippur War, when I came here. After Yom Kippur War, I fought the Independent War. I fought the '54, I fought the '67, I fought the '74. But the '74, I was already [indecipherable]

Q: You mentioned before, when we weren't on – you know, filming, that when you were in that kibbutz where there were 40 – 40 orphans –

A: Yeah.

Q: – that you never spoke about what had happened during the war. Why do you think that was?

A: No, none of us.

Q: Why? Why did people not –

A: I don't know, no explanation. It was like a secret, nobody [indecipherable] 10 - 15 - 20 years ago, I used to go twice a year – the last 20 years used to go almost twice a year to **Israel**. Used to meet, and we used to talk between – why we didn't talk about nothing – this? Nobody got an answer.

Q: Nobody got an answer, huh?

A: No.

Q: When was the first time that you did start talking?

A: I would say about 15 years ago.

Q: So that would be already 1999, or 2000?

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A: Something like this. You know, most of the time, when I got married, I got different world, how to make a living, how to build up myself, how to supply for the family everything. I didn't think about this.

Q: Tell me a little bit how you met your wife.

A: Hm?

Q: How did you meet your wife?

A: I met my wife in **Israel**.

Q: In **Israel**? In one of the kibbutzim?

A: No.

Q: No?

A: In **Haifa**.

Q: And when did you get married?

A: In '56. Christmas night.

Q: Christmas night, '56.

A: When we went out from the wedding – **Haifa's** a big port – all the boats start blowing [**indecipherable**] noisemakers. I said, what it is? He said, you – what, you don't know it's a Christmas night?

Q: It was for your wedding.

A: Yeah.

Q: Tell me, how many children do you have?

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A: Two daughters and a son.

Q: And grandchildren?

A: Six.

Q: Six grandchildren.

A: Everybody two.

Q: Okay. I have a couple of – couple of general questions. If you could speak to your father today, what would you tell him about your life, about your family? What would you want to tell him?

A: I will tell him the same thing what I'm telling you.

Q: Yeah. You would tell him what had happened.

A: Same story.

Q: Yeah. That's speaking to someone who shaped you. What would you want to say to somebody who comes after us? What would you want them to understand about what happened?

A: It's very hard to – even to think what to say. What can I tell them? I can tell them my story. I can tell them that people should behave a little bit different to us. That's all. What can I tell them more? That the whole world, even **United States**, they knew what's going on in **Europe**, they knew what the German do to the – not only to the Jews, they killed also five million Poles, and plus other nationality. And they knew what's going on. And what they do? Did you hear – did you hear somebody

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give a speech about this? Maybe they were too busy with – with their own war, but they should at least say something.

Q: A real abandonment.

A: Yeah. When I was hiding, I didn't maybe think about this, I wasn't maybe enough old to think things like this, but after, I start to think, where all the world was? And they had the power to do something. Maybe not – maybe if they would threaten **Germany** that we will wipe you up of the wa – of the war, maybe they would behave a little bit themselves, but they didn't do nothing.

Q: You were telling me also earlier that there were young men when you were – you know, when you were still in the ghetto in **Mlynov**, who went to the Judenrat, and instead of giving the gold to the Germans, the young men were saying, give it to us so that we can get weapons. How do you explain that, that the young men wanted this, and the – and the older men, the **Judenrat** did otherwise?

A: I don't know what to tell you, I just give you the story, what was, the time was witnesses to this. They begged to them, give us money, give us something that you give away to the German, we'll buy some and try to survive. Maybe 25 percent would survive, but give us something. Let us at least do something, not to go like sheeps to – to the killing area. I don't know, maybe this was the – the – for years the Jews were depressed. Maybe the – they were too religious and b-believing in something that cannot help us. Can only pray and can believe in something – I don't

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know. I've no explanation. As I told you, that I don't believe any more in this traditional religion, because when I crawled between the legs to the synagogue – why? Because I want to also hear th-the praying, and I saw what's going on, everybody's crying and everybody is begging, and the roof didn't open up and those ... and the angels didn't come and save us. And what can I tell you more?

Q: Yeah. When – I'm sorry.

A: No problem.

Q: When – when did it become possible for you to open up and talk about si – because clearly there's such a cost.

A: The last couple years.

Q: And why?

A: Listen, you get older, you start to think different. With age, you change your mind, you change your behavior. You physically get changed, and maybe that's the **[indecipherable]**

Q: Do you think your family knows you better now that you – when you have opened up?

A: I hope.

Q: Yeah. Yeah. I mean, you have raised a successful – you've had a family, you've raised children, you've had grandchildren.

A: Thank God. Listen, if it's a will, it's a deal.

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Q: There goes another thing. It sounds to me like you inherited some of your father's strength. Because if he knew how to deal –

A: I think so, I think so, yeah.

Q: Yeah?

A: My father was a strong man.

Q: Yeah. Do you think that it was also, because he knew so many people, that that helped you in – when he knew so many people in the villages, and the surrounding area, and when you would knock on someone's door and say, I'm his son –

A: I – I didn't know too many. I know some of them, but I came in in some villages to see – I mean, I didn't know them at all. I mean, they ask me whose – who you are, who's your father? When I told them **Moshke**(ph), then they're oh, we know him good. But – because he used to deal with them, you know.

Q: Yeah.

A: My father used to – I'll give you just an example. Every week, he used to kill seven cows; seven, eight cows. We used to have in our stable, steady, staying six, seven cows, because he used to supply for them and the Polish army used to come for maneuvers all summer, used to supply meat for them. They used to supply meat for the prince, he had like two – 300 people working for him, he has to give them some food.

Q: What was his name?

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A: Who? The prince? I don't remember.

Q: Oh, okay.

A: I have in the book – I have a – we have a book from our town made, all the survivors

Q: Okay.

A: I have the name, I – I didn't –

Q: It's okay, it's okay.

A: Yet? I – I don't remember. I have the name in the book.

Q: Okay.

A: I should bring the book with me.

Q: That's okay. Is there anything else you'd want to add? Is there anything else you'd want to add to this story, that we haven't talked about?

A: What can I add more? I told you the whole story. I'm happy that I can tell the story. And I'm happy that I decided I want to be interviewed.

Q: Us so too. So are we. And we're very grateful that you did.

A: Because I want to leave something for the children.

Q: Thank you. And you have. You have, very much so. Very much so. Thank you very much.

A: Thank you.

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Q: Okay. And this concludes – this concludes the **United States Holocaust**

Memorial Museum interview –

A: Right.

Q: – with Mr. **Ezra Sherman**, on May 16th, 2014.

A: I remember I sent sometimes relations.

Q: Thank you for that. Thank you. Okay. And for sharing today. I know it's a cost.

A: Thank you.

Q: Mm-hm. Okay.

Conclusion of Interview