

NATIONAL

Life stories

**LIVING MEMORY OF THE JEWISH
COMMUNITY**

JACK GUNZ

Interviewed by Devora Coutts

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Mr. Gunz, could you please tell me first, where you were born and where you lived, where you came from?

I was born in Senta, it's a town in Yugoslavia. We moved to Subotică, 40 kilometres away, when I was 12 years old. Now, in Senta, I went to Cheder, like all the other boys, and we were poor there, we went to school there, there was a Jewish School at the time, where we went to, there was Jewish Studies, and in the afternoon, we did Serbian Studies, that lasted until a few years, then the Jewish School stopped, and we went to a Christian School.

Can you tell me a little bit about your family, your parents, brothers, sisters?

We were, we were four brothers and two sister. My father and mother worked very hard. He was a watchmaker originally, but then he started silver-plating. Eventually we, in Subotică, itself, I remember, we moved over, we established a factory, where we manufactured silver and silver plate, indeed, a lot of our main business was sport cups, we were the largest in sport cups in Yugoslavia, and things became very bright, we bought our own house, we had a nice big house, we had a nice factory, and at the time we had about, perhaps 8 or 10 workers. My father used to travel, selling the goods, and my mother was the Manageress of the factory. When I was 12 years old, my father took me to Ilok, that was in Croatia, in Yugoslavia, to study in Yeshiva. I wasn't Bar-Mitzvah yet. He left me there, I had to fend for myself, that is to say, that was about a few hundred kilometres from home, and the custom was that when the Yeshiva Bucher come, usually they didn't have money, and every day, they went somewhere else to eat like, they called it, "The day belongs to Rosenbergs", and this day belongs to that, and so every Sunday, and every Monday I knew where to go for breakfast, for dinner and for supper.

So this was nice, the local Jewish community looked after the children.

Yeh, the local Jewish community looked after that.

For sleeping, I had a room where we slept, three or four boys, in one room, with three or four beds.

And who paid for that?

We had to pay for it, because my father gave me money to pay for it. I was Bar-Mitzvah'd in Ilok, and I went from, I was there for two years, and then I went home to Subotică, to find we had a more decent flat, and nice factory, where we manufactured silver, and silver goods. I stayed at home for a very short time, then my father sent me over to Senta, where I was born, there I was a half year Yeshiva, and then we went to Kaniza, this was the next village, where we went to Yeshiva for about 1½ years, till I was nearly 16. Then I came home, and from there, my father sent me to Rumania to the Satmar Yeshiva.

You were quite a learned man by then?

Satmar Yeshiva, well, we had to study very hard, it's not the Yeshiva it is today, we had to get up half past three in the morning, by 4 o'clock we had to be in the Yeshiva to study, and of course, there would be food, we didn't have enough as we should have had, and I was hungry many a times. But it was accepted the Yeshiva Bucher is hungry, but he still has to study. That went on till I was nearly 18, I came home from the Yeshiva. I came home from the Yeshiva, our factory was now really large, prosperous, and my father wanted to teach each of his children a trade. I was, by now, 18 years old, my brother was at home already, my younger brother, Shimon, and he was working already in the factory, and I went to learn the goldsmith's trade, I became a jeweller, apprentice jeweller for two years, and then my father bought from him goods, in order, he shouldn't send me to clean rooms and do other odd jobs, just to learn the trade. And I learned the trade within two years. I'm going back to my experiences as a Jew, in my younger days.

Tell me about the community in the town where you were born?

The community in Subotică was about say, nearly, about 100 families, most of them prosperous. There were only one poor Jew who had a job, but all the others were well-to-do, and very rich people, not like Senta where there were many poor people. It was a very nice community, as community, and it was all prosperous.

Was your father involved in the community?

5,000 Jews lived in Subotică, including one hundred families, orthodox religious Jews, in the community where we belonged. Now, regarding anti-Semitism, I experienced anti-Semitism, the same with the others, from my really very young age, even in Senta when I was a little boy, when it was Easter Holiday, we didn't dare going out, when the people came out from Churches, we didn't dare pass the Church, because if they catch us, they were throwing stones, they were taking our hats, throwing our hats about, occasionally, beating up, but if we were caught in Easter time or Christmas time, they could beat you up very severely, because they heard in Church what the Jews did, killed their God. When I grew up a bit bigger, 13, I was even more afraid, because when you grow up, you're not considered a child any more, so the bigger boys would attack you. So when we noticed Christian boys coming this side, we went over to the other side, if they didn't notice us, we were just lucky. But if they noticed us, they would come rushing over, and we would start running, and our hats would fall, and if we were fast enough, we lost the hats, because they didn't go after us.

What did your parents tell you to do, if you encountered non-Jewish children?

Our parents couldn't say anything, because they were in the same danger we were, not with young boys, but they had abuse from grown ups.

So what was the advice did they give the children? To run away, that was the best thing?

Just run away, just don't take notice, don't fight back. That was the attitude of the middle European Jews generally.

What about the Jewish community there as a whole. You said there were 100 Orthodox families, what about the other ones?

The other one families, like Liberals here, who were also very prosperous, and the main shopping centre was occupied mainly by Jews, the factories, all the establishments, Jewish. Like Yom Kippur when everybody closed down, the town was dead. The Christian's main occupation was agriculture, there was some in industries, like where I got apprenticed, that was, he was called a Mr. Zigler, he was a small man, and he looked a very kindly man when my father took me over there, and he says, "You, boy, you will become a jeweller, if you stay with me, you will become a perfect jeweller. You do everything what I tell you." At the beginning he was rather friendly, he hoped for my father's business, because he was manufacturing, my father was travelling, and my father took gold jewellery with him, as he sold silver, so he sold the gold as well. When we got really befriended already, after half a year, three-quarters of a year, we used to go into all sorts of discussion, including religions. Now my parents, and the Jews generally, told me, "Never discuss religion with a Christian, because inevitably you'll get into trouble." I didn't want to discuss, but this Mr. Zigler, he pressed me, he said, "Why don't you talk to me, just talk to me, just tell me." So then I came out, and I told him, "Look, you were told your religion, I was told my religion. You believe in yours, I believe in mine. I can't imagine your religion, you can't imagine my religion." "But", he says, " But The Messiah came already." He kept on pressing and pressing and pressing. Now, he kept on telling me, "Why did the Jews kill Christ?" I says, "I don't know anything about killing Christ, what I know, what I read a little bit, it was a Roman occupation, and there was very bad time for the Jews, and the Jews longed for Messiah to come and redeem the Jews. Many people claimed they are Messiah, and Jesus must have been also, one of those who claimed that he's Messiah, he was probably a Rabbinical student, and he probably studied a lot, and he wanted probably good for his people. But the Jews did not believe that he is the real Messiah, but finally he was put to death by the Romans, the Procurator of Palestine, Pontius Pilate.

What was his reaction to your knowledge?

Now, when he heard all these things, he got a bit annoyed, "Why don't you recognise him? He is the continuation of the Jewish people?" Well when I told him that our Laws can't be changed, the laws what was given on Mount Sanai, applies today, and God doesn't change his mind, now you have to keep this, and you don't have to keep that any more, or things like that, he was rather annoyed. But since this talk was very uncomfortable to me I stopped talking about it, and I pretended I had to go out while he is asking something else, to avoid his questions. He noticed that, but he let me this time.

Did he stop talking about it then, or not?

He didn't really, but if I went out, then he obviously talked with his wife, but he talked to me, and I could hear it through the kitchen, because the factory was just near his kitchen, just a room of the flat. But as anti-Semitism grew, the Germans started the War, and when the War started with France, and the Germans were very near Paris, there was big excitement in town. Most of the population in town were Bunyevacim, sort of Croations, were all Catholics, and their hatred of Jews was in them. When they saw the Germans succeeding, the population became very bold, and started to be openly anti-Semitic, not like, my best friends are Jews, but they were openly anti-Semitic.

So people who didn't show anti-Semitism before suddenly started.

Openly. Openly.

Or before you knew it, you knew they were anti-Semite before,

Well, we all knew that, they were anti-Semitic, because

So then they had courage,

They came out openly, and as my apprenticeship was getting towards the end, I don't want to say what happened all those two years, I had apprenticeship another few months, and the Germans became stronger on all their fronts, and they,

Can you remember what year you're talking about now?

Now, we're talking about the year of 1939-40. I'm talking now of 1940. I think the Germans ruled already in Belgium, and in France, and of course, the population read all about what Hitler does to the Jews, the was known all over Europe, and people were openly anti-Semitic, and didn't even hide their faces if they wanted to tell you, "You bloody Jew", as they say in English, or "Dirty Jew", or whatever it is, and, "there will come a day for you, and it won't be long," and so on.

What was the feeling at home with your parents,

We had no feelings, you couldn't with the family, we just suffered in silence.

Did you carry on working?

Carried on working, yes. We carried on working until the Hungarian Occupation. Now, but I mustn't tell you this, what I wrote already in my book. As it was nearer, it was now four weeks before my final apprenticeship, and as my boss kept on pressing me, and talking louder and louder, and saying, "Well, you know, you Jews, you deserve your fate." "And you know they're killing Jews in Germany, and I'm afraid it will come to you as well." "And all that, because you killed Christ." I said, "I didn't kill Christ." And he says, "No, but you did. But you did." And the last four weeks was terrible with him, he kept on stronger and stronger pressure, just the pressure. He used to go into his room when he had his friends there, and his wife, he used to drink,

he used to laugh, and I heard that, he tells them, what he tells me, and what I reply and so on. It came just one week before my final day there, and he pressed me very hard, and suddenly he came in, he was very excited to come in, I could see that they discussed, and I could hear that they discussed me, that he is not brave enough, he can't tell me what he really wants to, so he came in excited one morning, and he tells me, "Do you know, the Germans are killing Jews already in France and in Holland, and they take them away, and they're really killing them. You don't know about it, but I do. And the time will come when, when, when you will become as well, and I'm afraid all of you will be killed. All of them because you killed Christ." I didn't open my mouth. I was afraid of him, he was going to hit me. He looked at me, he was near me, he looked with murderous eyes, until my eyes, until he said, "Why don't you answer?" And I looked at him, and I was really afraid he was going to hit me, and so he says to me, I says to him, "Well, during our conversation and this respect, regarding Christ, you told me that the Christian religion is based on love and forgiveness, so even if Jews killed Christ...." "What do you mean 'if'? Pontius Pilate was a Jew." I said, "Pontius Pilate, as far as I know, was a Roman, a Roman Officer." "No, Pontius Pilate was a Jew." Of course, he didn't know exactly the history, all his things, what he knows, is to hate Jews. And he looked at my face, and I said to him that he'd told me the Christian religion is based on love and forgiveness. He says, "Yes, but not for you Jews who kill our God. Never for you." And I didn't know what to say. I excused myself, I had to go to the toilet. In the meantime, he went into the kitchen, and to tell his wife how he told me off, and I slipped out, and I went out of the yard, and I went right away, home, and I never returned there again.

It must've been very frightening?

Very frightening. If somebody is my boss, and teaches me the trade, I worked for him for two years, he didn't pay me a penny, and if he stands up and he says, "They will be killed", and he looks like he wants to kill me himself, that was very frightening. Now, I never returned to him. After the War when I came home, I went once to see him, just to pay respects because I heard he is ill, and I went in, and he was surprised to hear my voice, he was already blind, he went blind, and he recognised my voice, and he says, "How did you come back?" That was his question. And I could see in his voice, he is not friendly, and he is just surprised that I came back. I said, "I'll come to see you again." I never went to see him again. A few months later I heard he'd died. That was the story of his death. But I have to tell you another anti-Semitic story, what I can't forget, as long as I live. When I was about 15 years old, and I've told you about the Rumania Yeshiva in the Satmar Yeshiva, I had toothache for weeks and months, I didn't have money to go to a dentist. I didn't want to bother my relatives, but I had such pain, unbearable pain, aspirin didn't help any more. A dentist was, at that time, rather expensive, and the young man, the Bucher in the Yeshiva, everybody fended for himself, toothache, toothache, so once somebody told me, "You know, there is a very kindly priest whom I know, somebody went to him, and extracted his tooth without any pain. Would you like to go there?" I says, "Yes, I don't care who does it, it doesn't take money, although it would have been better to go to a dentist, because there was only a little hole there. I went to the priest. I went alone, the others, the students, had to learn. I looked in one day, and a big priest came out, a tall big priest came out and looked at me, a Jewish boy, with sidelocks, "What", he said, "you want?" I didn't speak Rumanian, and I had to just show him, with my

finger, my tooth and my headache, and my aches. And he looks at me, and looks at me, like, "A Jewish boy, you come here - I should help him." Suddenly his face lit up, and he started smiling, and he winks me, "Come in." And I came in, and he took me down, it was a big Church, he took me through the yard, but I went to, I must've gone about 100 yards down, there he took me to a little room, and told me to sit until they bring something. He arrives there with a Prayer Book, and he starts praying, and he says, "Jesus", this is the only word what I understand. Jesus, and Jesus and Jesus and Jesus. And he said, "Now, open your mouth." And as I opened my mouth, he put his tool in my mouth, and he says, "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus" again, and I started to get very frightened, what is all this Jesus? when I've got toothache? And he started, at that time, there was nothing to prevent you from,

Pain, yes,

From aches and pains, and he put his tool in my mouth, and started shaking it. I got such pains, you can imagine, instead of pulling it out, he just moved it, left, right. I started screaming. I was in such a pain, I thought I faint, but he kept on again, then he again prayed. He did that for about a quarter of an hour, 20 minutes, and I was already in such a shape, I wanted to get off the chair, I wanted to run out, but he pushed me back, and he kept on doing that, and he kept on saying, the more I was shouting, the more he was praying, and saying, "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus." What he was saying, what I understand, he says, "I do back for the Jew, what the Jew do to him." I took the blood, because blood was pouring from my mouth. Half an hour later, he brings in something or other tool, and he brings some strong drink, and gives me to drink. "You drink it up." Puts it to my mouth, I didn't know what I was drinking, and I was drinking a very strong alcohol to take the pain away, whatever it is, then he started moving, "Jesus, Jesus", I was shouting, "Jesus", and suddenly he pulled out my tooth.

He pulled it out, mmmm.

He tortured me, and I thought I'm going to faint a few times. Then I realised what I've done. I would have never believed it, that a priest would do such a thing, but the hatred, the in Christ, that is how fragile it is, even today, that, that brought the whole anti-Semitism, although the early Christians were Jews, but when the real Gentiles took over the whole thing, it became hatred for the Jews, and I want to further than that. Now, in 19, by the end of, by the beginning of 1941, the Hungarians occupied part of Yugoslavia when the War broke out with the Germans, the Germans occupied the rest, and the Italians occupied on the coast, and a part of Volvadinna, up to nearly Belgrade, on this side of the Danube, the Hungarians took over. As the Hungarians came in, our situation became worse and worse. Now, first of all, there were Yugoslavs, Chetniks, they're called, who fought against the Hungarians, and they started shooting, like, partisans.

They were not soldiers, these people?

No, civilians, whatever, soldiers escaped. And there were a few shootings, and they, they, they, the Christians put it down to the Jews. Always put down the Jews. My mother lay very ill in bed, and our very good neighbours, because we didn't have

good neighbours, we had good neighbours, they pretended to be good, up till the Hungarian entry. When the Hungarian enters, we lost our neighbours, they all looked at us as Jews, didn't want to know anything, none of them would help us, or be in our part. As we had two sisters and four brothers, we were growing up, young people, and one of our neighbours said to the police, that there are some Jewish boys here, they may have weapons, and they may shoot. They may be one of the shooters, and Hungarian soldiers arrived, with bayonets above them, came into the house, and pushed us left, right and centre, "Where are they?" The weapons, and so on. "We haven't got any." And they tried everywhere, in bed, and so on, and where my mother was laying, one came with a bayonet, and put it through. It didn't kill her, but just put it through the eiderdown where my mother was laying. We thought she would be killed. They were very cruel. All our acquaintances, the Hungarians who were our neighbours

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Fl24 Side A

So the neighbours became very hostile, and they were all waiting the Germans to come, and take us away like the others. I had a Hungarian friend, with whom I learnt at the same time, the trade, he also learnt the jewellery, and I befriended him, we used to go cycling before, together, and we used to play the guitar. He had a guitar, and I bought myself a guitar, used to play the guitar together. But when the Hungarians came in, that was the end of it, he didn't come to me, he didn't call me, and I didn't want to impose myself on him, that was the end of that friendship as well.

Do you think it was his choice, or was he frightened of the reaction of the people?

At that time there was no frightening, I mean, it wasn't like when the Germans said, "Don't hide any Jews, you will be killed." That was the Hungarian occupation, it wasn't German. The Germans came in three years afterwards.

So he was actually joining the usual atmosphere.

It was the Hungarian, the Hungarian atmosphere.

What happened with the other Jewish people in town, at the time, were businesses still going?

Well, it was the same thing, it was the same thing, people, they probably, they're workers now. I wanted to tell you about our workers. The workers combined together, also one was a Jehovah's Witness, but she was no exception, you would have thought that a Witness would be different. They grouped together, they went up to the town, it was called the Town Hall, they complained that we didn't pay them enough, we took advantage of them, and for so many, so many years, they worked too much, too long hours, and they wanted compensation. There was no other way out, it last there a few weeks, perhaps a month, and there was no other way out, if you don't give in, we could be in the biggest trouble, we could be taken to Court, could be anything, though we had to pay them out for years and years, backdated wages. That was a lot of money.

Who made that law?

There was no law about it, they went to complain, and before we were taken to Court about this, what we did, we had to make an agreement, and we were better off, and the law would come and tell us, there was no, like, institution, gradually the law was taken, everybody took the law into their own hands, regarding the Jew.

So you decided it was better for you to pay out?

Better to agree and pay them out, and that was the end of it. But we didn't take them back to work, perhaps, one or two occasionally came back, because it was finished, we lost our contract in the whole of Yugoslavia, and we didn't dare manufacture in

gold or silver, or silver itself, and gradually we lived on the stock what we had, until gradually, you eat it up.

Did you have any Jewish workers at all?

We didn't have Jewish workers.

So you actually lost the workforce there?

We lost the workforce. We were not sorry for it, because we couldn't have paid them, whatever, they would have come back, it would have been much worse.

So, did the family work in the factory then?

Well, my brother, my brother, the second brother, was a metal spinner, was really a Jew who was a metal spinner. It was very hard physical work. I didn't tell you that before. My third brother was an engraver, he was a young man, but he learnt the trade. My fourth brother was learning a chiseller, a silver chiseller, that means to chisel in, make patterns in silver, all handwork.

Really, so they were actually involved in the factory? In the working of the factory?

In a small way, because they were too young. But it didn't take long, when I was called in, because I was the oldest, I was called in to do, it's called in Hungarian "Munka Szolgalat".

Working camp?

That is, to do, instead of military service, to work for the State. Beginning of the Concentration Camps.

In what capacity?

In what capacity? What capacity? Doing anything, anything they wanted us to do. We had to volunteer to go to Hodmezövasarhely, all my age group.

What was that?

There were thousands of them, and we were, we were given to the regiments for the soldiers, what to do.

Can I just go back, you just mentioned another Hungarian word, a minute ago.

Hodmezövasarhely, is a town.

Where was that? Was that far from your town?

That is, no, it's proper Hungary, it would have been 100 miles from our place. Of course, we had to travel there, with our, with our pack, and there we started doing our work. The first day, we were given, we were, we were given big barracks, where to

sleep, we had straw on the floor, and we lay on the straw. Next day, some officers, who were thrown out of the Army, they were not so good fighters, stupid, or any disability what they had, they looked after us. It was like a, we were treated like soldiers in civilian clothes, with a yellow band, we had to have a yellow band, and eventually later, we were given numbers. Now. I tell you the first day. The first day was usually roll calls, and to see who can work where. There was a sergeant, he called out names, and everybody should say "Yes, it's me. Yes." They started treating us very roughly. The beatings started the first day, and for any, for any, anything they felt, they would kick you. Now, at that roll call, names was called out, all the names, like 200, in one barrack, or whatever it was, were called out. So they called out my name, Gunz. I said, "Yes", but I didn't say it loud enough. So the sergeant says, "Louder, I can't say you." Because I was a small man. I said louder. Now, "It's not loud enough. From here I can't see you. Come right here." So I came right in front of him, and he saw I am a small man. And he say, "Can't you say louder? If I say again your name, you say it the loudest you can." That was just one of those things,

To make fun?

To make fun, actually. So I really shouted loud my name, and he says, "Now, you didn't shout it loud enough, come nearer. Now, if I tell you to shout, shout at the top of your voice." So I shouted at the top of my voice the way I can. "Now", he says, "stand to attention." He opened his hands, and he gave me such a

Slap?

Slap on my face, I never experienced it before, I fell, broke my glasses, and I had quickly to stand up to attention. "From now on, if I call your name, you shout at the top of your voice, and get out of here." That was first day taste of what is to, what is to come.

It was so humiliating for you.

Humiliating is nothing, but the hurt, I mean, other people were also humiliated. The humiliation, we got used to it from the first day. But we were concerned, can we do the work? What will we eat? And so on. In the beginning, things were not so badly at the (inaud), so I always asked they should send me parcels from home, and you could occasionally, a brother would come and know where you are, and they didn't object, in the beginning. So I had kosher, for well over a year, I didn't eat anything what's not kosher. And that was very tough because you are dry all the time, except in the morning, when we were given black coffee, that's what you drank, or water.

Were there a lot of Jewish boys there?

Oh, they were all Jewish boys, attached to each regiment.

How big was the group? Do you remember how many?

Well, er, to that regiment there were attached 1,000 young people, like I am, 1,000, and they were in five, divided in five, about 200 in each lot. Now, but we were all working there, about 1,000 in this Hodmezövasarhely, there was a place where the, they told the soldiers to shoot, and so we had to build fences, we had to work very hard. Quotas was given out. First they said, "The more you do, the more you get food." When they, when they got out from us, they did work as much as possible, that became the quota. That you had to finish. You couldn't go back, you had to finish what they told you to do. But it was, we worked, there was no killing, there was humiliation, a little torture, a little beating, we could take it. Then we went, after a while, we went to a town of Szeged, where we worked in a factory.

That was in Hungary?

No, this was still in Hungary. And then we went later on, in '43 already, so I'm jumping now. I'm jumping because it's all the same thing to repeat.

So you were there for nearly two years, is that right?

No, but I would say about 3½, about 3½, but I don't want to repeat all the, "I was hit here, I was tortured there, I was told to do that." It's not interesting, because as long as it didn't kill us, we could survive, and even we worked, was okay. '43, we worked, there was a winter, at the end of '42, our Company was divided into two, from each of the Jewish companies under that commandment, half of them had to volunteer, who wants to go to Russia? And half could stay here. The other half eventually went to Bor, Yugoslavia, to the copper mine. And one half of this, about 1,000, altogether, went to Russia, and as far as we knew after the War, they only lived about a month or so, because it was very cold and they, one after the other, they got frozen. None of them came back.

Tell me, did you know what was happening to your own family in that time?

No, we didn't. Well, until, until we were taken to Bor, in the copper mine, we knew, we knew.

And you received post?

And they were not, they were not deported yet, they had Jewish Law, the laws against the Jews, but, as long as one had something to sell, we were well off, we had a lot of silver and gold, they didn't confiscate that.

They didn't take that away?

Not yet, no. That was, this was only after German occupation, in Hungary itself.

Yes. So we're talking about '41, '42?

'42, '43, yes. In the beginning of '43, or perhaps late '42, they took us to the Polish border to build the roads. Beautiful, we were in the forests, beautiful places, beautiful mountains and trees and so on, and that did good for us, good air and so on, and for

food what we got, we got, but we occasionally got a parcel, it was handed over, it was okay, we had, somebody has got one star only, a Hungarian, a Hungarian guard, who befriended me very well. While we were still in Hungary, and I got my parcels, I opened my parcel and he was only watching for it, and I said, "Come, please help yourself. I got from home." And he's telling me that he worked for a Jewish baker in Budapest, and how nice and good he was to him, because the father threw him out from home, and they were very poor, and so on, and the Jewish baker was so nice to him, and we got befriended, and he was nice to me then, and he ate half my parcel at least, but this same man that came to Yugoslavia to the copper mine, I didn't have any more parcels, nothing to give him, and he knew our fate, what was to become of us, he became very vicious to me in Bor copper mine, where he tortured me, but I will tell you later.

In the meantime, when you were with this Regiment, were you allowed to go out at all?

Out? No. No, no, we had our barracks,

In the barracks, yes, was it surrounded by fences at all?

It was, you couldn't escape anywhere in the middle of forests, you can only go to Poland, it was on the Polish border, it was very far from residential, you couldn't run away because if you were caught if you run away, you were Court Martialled, they would kill you. They will hang you.

And did you see any happenings, attacks on the people, on the Jewish people there at all? Any killings?

No, there they didn't kill.

Not at all?

But what we noticed was, occasionally we saw some people coming from the Polish border, individual people, running and looking at us. We knew they were Jews. They were the few who run away from Kolomai, there were big killings already in Poland, they took all the Polish Nationals from Hungary, back to Poland, and they killed them there, mass, mass graves, and we know for definitely they were Jews, somehow, some people met them when they were on their way, and they said who they are, if they recognised us, with the yellow band, as [inaudible] they recognised ourselves as they're coming back there, they escaped from the mass killings.

Did you have any knowledge at all about the Concentration Camps?

We didn't have no knowledge whatever, what goes on in Germany. How can we, from beginning of '41, we were there, we didn't know anything, nothing whatsoever. Only what the papers wrote, occasionally we saw a paper, we could only see the Jews this, and the Jews that, in Germany, Hitler said this, Hitler said that, and many Jews are in Concentration Camps in Germany and so on, we didn't know what goes on in Poland at all.

Nothing at all.

Nobody knew what goes on in Poland. Some people came from Germany, the people who run away, Germany from Poland, and they came begging for money, as they were going to Palestine, they're going wherever it is, you know, like beggars they were, and they told horrible stories, people didn't believe them.

People didn't believe?

Didn't believe them, no, didn't believe them. So my father was always a charitable man and give them money, always give money if people come to the door. But we didn't realise that they're telling the truth, there's no exaggeration, and so on.

So, can we carry on with that?

Now, in '43, in the autumn of '43, they took us back to Seged, the town where we'd been before, we worked in a factory, and we were told that in three days time, we're going to get a German officer who would tell us what we're going to work, we're going to a copper mine in Yugoslavia, and he will tell us all about it. And anybody who wants to have a parcel now, can have one, and of course, people who write me letters and so on, not for three days, for a week, it was for a week. So we could write a letter or a message, and all the parents came to say goodbye, brothers, sisters, to say goodbye, and they brought parcels. Unfortunately my parcel arrived a day late, my brother came when he heard what's going to happen. One brother came, then he sent another brother, with a real, a real big parcel, what would have been enough for months to feed, came round, but it arrived a day late. I know it from my cousin that he was also there, but they didn't take him to the copper mine, and he ate up all my parcel.

All your food?

Food. He came back after the War, and he told me about it.

Did your brother have to travel alone with that parcel?

It wasn't far from Seged to Suboticä, it was 40 miles, 40 kilometres, only.

Oh I see, so it was only

That was very near. So, but, I couldn't even say goodbye. My mother was very ill, she couldn't come. My father was, I don't know where he was. One brother came to say goodbye, and he sent my other brother with my sister, but I was gone. So we were taken by boat, on the Danube, from Seged, is River Tisah, and it joins at Titel, that was already Yugoslavia, it joins the Danube, by boat we were taken through Belgrade, all the way to Serbia Nish, the town of Nish, from there by small railway to the copper mine. And we went.

And where was the copper mine?

I forgot to tell you that when a German officer came, still in Seged, and told us, "We don't want anything from you, just work. We will give you good food. We will give you 20 cigarettes a day, we will give you nice lodging, everything, nothing will happen to you. The only thing we want is work, hard work, because we want the copper to be mined in Serbia." Of course, we were happy, a German officer coming, that we are safe and well, nothing can happen, just work hard. And as we arrived to Bor, we were put in big barracks, the biggest Lager, or camp, was called Berlin. There was about 2-3,000 people, I wouldn't remember any more, in big barracks. In each barrack would be about 2 or 300 people, and this was a very big place, this Berlin Lager, Lager is camp, concentration, that was already concentration camp. We were concentrated far from home, and to extract the copper, because there was a copper mine already, but there was a big mountain there, and underneath was copper, and we had to dismantle that mountain, at least three-quarters, to find the copper, that was the biggest reservoir for the German's copper, the raw material. The first day we were introduced where we're going to work. The first week we got 10 cigarettes, the food started off not bad, of course, kosher I couldn't eat a long time any more. We were happy just to eat warm food, whatever we were given.

Whatever you had, it didn't matter any more?

We were introduced the work, and I got to work the, as a mate to a crane. The crane took the, it craned off the mountain, into trains, into wagons of trains, and the trains took off the earth.

So, the crane was sort of digging into the mountain?

Digging off the mountain.

With a shovel, that was a shovel?

The crane, into the trains, the train had about 20 wagons, and all the earth were taken out about a few miles away, and thrown out from there, anyway.

Did you actually operate the crane?

No, I was a mate.

What did you do?

I, it was a steam crane, and I was given the task to feed coal, to heat the steam should be right. Within a few days, I grasped everything, I had to because there was no excuses, they tell you what to do, and you had to do it, work fast, and see there's enough steam, see there's enough oil, oil it, and they worked us very fast, the Germans, very hard at work.

They were guarding you all the time?

They were guarding us, the Hungarians guarded us in the camp, and the Germans at work. We had to work 12 hours a day, approximately, the work started from 6 - 6.

How old were all these people, how old were you at that time?

Well, we we were all youngsters in that group. Oh then, we were already 22, 23, 22, 23.

Were there any younger boys there at all?

No. No.

No younger boys, just that age?

We were all one or two years difference. In the Berlin Lager mainly very young people, very young people, 21, 22, 23, this is their age. I was 23, of course, I was born in '20, so I was 23, but the work had to go on very hard. Shifts. One week daytime, one week nighttime. The Germans apparently, provided, in the beginning, food enough to carry out. We were also promised wages, but we never got a penny. There were over 100,000 other workers in-bought from Germany, they were, they leaders, and the rest came workers from all over Czechoslovakia, Poland, and lot of Italians, especially when Italians became prisoners of war in '43, they brought there thousands and thousands of Italians to work in the mines, they were prisoners of war. But the condition of the food very quickly deteriorated. First the German Command stole a lot from the Jews, what was allocated. It was open stealing, nobody could say no. We didn't have authority to say, and when it came that, the Hungarians, they took of the cream, again, and within a few weeks it deteriorated the food, but it was still hot, it was still sometimes into soup, there was still sometimes potatoes, there was still sometimes (inaud), so we were always, always hungry. After a few weeks we were always hungry. We had to save bread, and find extra bread and try to get from the civilian workers, and give them what we have, and so on, in order to supplement, and once I sold my shirt, and I got a little speck, what is it called in English? A little pig meat. And of course, it wasn't anymore fresh, but I had every day, just a little bit cut off, just to keep my soul, my body a little fat.

You want to tell me a little bit about the routine there?

Now, the routine. This went on for a couple of months, and then I was put on a train, a mate on a train, where I had to do the same thing, keep the steam, keep the coal, and oil in the engines, and I went to the German driver, and he told me always what to do, he just told me, he just drove the train, he always told me what to do. I was with him for a few months. One morning, and the shift starts 6 o'clock, and all the trains had to start off. We had, on the mountains, the mountains went round and round and round out to the top?

The rails? The rails?

The rails, of course! And they were, they were people who did the railways always, and then people who did all other things. All the Jews, there were only Jews working

there, and the Germans TOT organisation, they did the, they managed it. TOT organisation.

What does that mean?

TOT is the German organisation. Builders and so on, and there was a big Company, Siemens, and all other companies who were there to do the work, and of course, they had slave labourers with the Jews. All the trains had to start off, in order for, to fill up the wagons, with earth, to take out, and all the day starts off, and I couldn't start, the German driver wasn't there. That was late '43, could have been, I would say ...

End of Fl24 Side B

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The German officer was in charge, he was away from me, about 20 yards, and he waves with a hand, "Come on with the train, come on." And I waved with my hand, "No, I can't go." And he says, "Come on", louder and louder, and comes nearer and nearer, and I says, "I can't." In German, I spoke German. I says, "I can't go." So he shouts, "Why can't you go." I says, "The German driver didn't arrive, I'm only the mate, I can't drive." So he comes nearer, and he says to me, "How long have you been on this train?" I said to him, "About two months, I don't remember exactly, when", I said. And he said, "And you didn't see how to drive this? How he did it? I want this train out." He took out this revolver and pointed it at me, "Are you going to drive, or should you like a shot, I shot the Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto." That was a sign for me that something happened in the Warsaw Ghetto. Eventually, we heard something, you know, the Italians said, the others they are talking something happened in Warsaw Ghetto and so on, and so many Jews, later we heard, we heard something, and he was in the Warsaw Ghetto. And I don't know how he got there. He said, "I shoot you like they are, like I shot them in the Warsaw Ghetto. You wretch. Are you going to drive?" As he pointed the gun, he would've shot me right away, and I said, "Yes, I'm going." And he says, "You go, and whatever happens to you, I don't care, but nothing should happen to the engine." So I drove out on my own, about a mile about, and they filled in the earth, and I had to drive back the train. There was already another Jewish boy whom I should train for a mate. He should do that. I have to train him. Can you imagine, after not even two months on the train, I have to be a train driver. But soon, an accident happened. A few weeks later, where I had to go forward with the train to connect it to another wagon, and there was another slave labourer, I don't know who it was, he had his foot, he was sitting where he shouldn't sit, where it connects, and the German outside said, "Nearer, nearer," there was only a yard to go already, and he says, "Nearer", and so you've got to give a little steam, and I give a little bit more steam, and it connected to the other train, his foot was still there, and it crushed his foot. And he started to scream. "What did you do?" And they came running from about ten yards away, and other people said, "Jump out, he's going to kill you. He's got a revolver in his hand", and I did an accident, I jumped off to the other side, I put the brake on, nothing should happen to this engine. I jumped out, I started to run, and he ran after me, shouting and screaming. I could run down the mountain, but I run twice as fast as he did, if he would have caught me, he would have killed me, but he had to do his duty and go back, they took him somewhere to the hospital, put in another driver, and work carried on, and I went, I ran down to the mountain, right to the officer, where they managed the train drivers, and the, the,... the drivers and the mates. And I was sitting a few yards outside, and I was pale, exhausted, and I, I thought this is it, I'm finished. And the Manager from the Office, called Mr. Foster, he suddenly came out, and says, "What are you doing there?" He knew who I am, because I had to sign in for trains, when the trains come, he knew all the train drivers. "What are you doing there?" And I said, in German, and I was really frightened. I said, "Something happened." He says, "I can see on your face. Tell me what happened, and I'm warning you, whatever happened, tell me if the engine is okay. If the engine is okay, you don't have to worry. Nothing happened, anybody got killed, just tell me what ..." I told him the engine is okay. "So

what happened?" I told him. "So, never mind. Come in here." And he start talking to me, a few words, and ask me "Where do you come from?" So I says, "I'm a Yugoslavian Jew." "Do you speak the Serb language?" he says, "Yes, perfect. I went to Serb School. Okay, I'll have something to do for you. Come into the office." He sat me down, suddenly he says, "If you speak Serbian I will tell you what to do for me. I will give you little jobs, at night when it's night shift, I want you to be here, and 12 o'clock at night, I want you to go to the villages and bring me wine." He was a drunkard, he needed wine, and finally he found somebody who could speak to the population. But he says to me, "The place is surrounded, a few miles from here. I'll give you a note that I sent you for wine. Now, if they stop you, you must stop right away, otherwise you'll be killed." Because the partisans were out in the mountains. "And if you go out there, they may accuse you of being a spy for them, or you're partisan yourself. In the dark, you have to stop." That happened, I started off, yeh, he gave me little jobs for to do. The following Monday, 6 o'clock I attended the office, and 12 o'clock he sent me to bring wine. He gave me notes, and he gave me a few things what I should change it for. And I went. I went a few times, nobody stopped me. And I knocked, and can you imagine the fright of knocking into houses at 12 o'clock at night, how the peasants were frightened, they didn't know who is coming, and I kept on telling them, "I'm a Jew, please open the door. I want to talk to you. I am a Jew." And finally they opened the door, they saw I am a Jew, "What do you want?" I says, "I work for a German, and he's sent me out to bring wine. He gave me a few socks, shirts, whatever you want, just give me a few bottles of wine, and I give you this, I give you that." And that's what I did. And the German started to like me for that. He was the only German, he wasn't SS, he was just an employee of the Tot Organisation. He was about 50, he wasn't a young man, and he was happy to drink, and he didn't shout at me, he wasn't like the Nazis or SS, that's what I did night after night, until I got stopped a few times, and shot once on top of my head, just to stop, and I stopped and let them have, they saw the note, they knew already, they knew what goes on about the drinks.

So, were you actually relieved from the mine work at that time now?

Yeh, I was in the mine. That's what I had to do.

But you didn't work in the mine any more then?

No, I didn't work on the trains, I didn't work, that was a mine, I mean, just down the hill, and as I sit in this office, he tell me "Do this, do that", suddenly there was, came in, a very high SS Officer, whom they were expecting for the Inspection, and he suddenly just passed by, and he came in, and Foster talks to him, and Foster, "Who is this Jew down there?" He says, "He's got to do me some work." He says, "Don't let him near, heraus von der."

Out of here.

"Get out of here", he shouts at me, work but not coming into the office. What was the office? A little barrack, or something, just a typewriter and there was nothing there, two Germans working there. So I had to go out. "I should never see you here in this office again. Heraus." That means "get out", so as Foster didn't dare to keep

me any more there. He says to me, "I'll find you a job." I mean, I'm jumping months and months now. I can't tell you all the things what I was there, people got killed from explosions, because they had to explode the mountains, but I can't tell you all the stories. He says, "I'll give you a job now, you go to the barrack in the town of Bor, where I live, every day, you have to clean out my room, and do this, and do that. And you go through the town, you have to have again, from me, the

A pass?

A pass, that you do this for me." But I still had to go for wine, but I didn't, I didn't go into the office, oh very carefully, he says to me, "Look round before you come in here." And so I went cleaning. When I went to the town, I went through town, I went into the shop, in a, in a big jewellery shop, where we used to sell our silver and gold, knowing that we sent this man for about 40,000 dinars, was a lot of money, just a few weeks before the Hungarian invasion, we sent him goods on a monthly payment, you know, he had a lot of goods from us. I went into the shop carefully, that nobody should see me, and I asked for the boss. I recognised him because I was there before, and I said to him, "Do you know who I am? I am Gunz's son, of the silver manufacturer, I am here in camp, the German sent me to clean his room. Could you help me?" He comes telling me, "I'm sorry", he says, "I didn't, we didn't receive anything of your goods because the railway station was bombed." But it was all a lie, nothing was bombed there, he'd received our goods, and he says, "I haven't got anything, I'm sorry, we can't do nothing for you." What was a lie, he had received everything, because I could see our goods in the shop still, and he says, "Look, one thing I'll do for you. I'll give you a big lump of bread, and don't come here anymore, because the Gestapo's on the first floor. If they see you coming here, I will get in trouble, and you will have a lot of trouble." He went down, and he brought me a big piece of bread, what was very nice, welcome. With that I went to Mr. Foster's home, I cleaned the home, and I went back to work with my bread, and of course, I had from this bread for a week or so, and I gave for my friends as well. That was the end, I never went to the shop anymore. On my other journey, again, when I went to town, to clean the flat, I, somebody start talking to me, "Oh, you're one of the Jews who work there in the Berlin Lagat, and you work in there", and you know, "Where are you from?" and so on, and I spoke to him in Serbian, he asked me where I come from, I told him where I come from, he said, "Oh, you know, I am going near to your place, where your town is." And asked me about my parents, so I said, "I don't know who is at home, who isn't", ... "But I can bring you whatever you want me bring you, money, I bring you a parcel, just write a note, and tell your mother that she's relying, she can give you whatever they can, money and food, whatever they can." And he says, "When are you coming back from cleaning the barrack?" I said. "and so on", and he waited for me, and he took me home to his place, I could see it there, not rich people, and I met his wife, their little children, but somehow he gained my confidence. Now, I write in my book as well, saying, "Who says nobody helped the Jews?" After all, he came to me, and he wanted to help me. After a few weeks, I can't remember dates, say it was three weeks, I thought myself, "Next time I'm going cleaning, I have to go in and find out what he brings for me." He was going within a day or two. I go in, I knock at the door, till they open, and suddenly he comes here, "What do you want here?" I said, "You remember I gave you a letter, you promised ..." "Oh yes, oh yes. I have been to your parents. I have been there, I talked to your

mother, and she didn't have anything to give, she didn't have money, she gave me a little meat, something, she gave me a little bit, I've got it here, and that's all what I can do for you, I can't do anything else. Now, please don't come here any more, I don't want to be in contact with a Jew." He gave me something, something, a slight something, a little meat. I ate it up, and I forgot about it. When I came home after the War, and my sister returned from Auschwitz, I asked her, tell me, how is that? I asked my sister, "Tell me, do you remember, before you were deported," that was in the summer, before their deportation, before they went to the ghetto. "Do you remember somebody coming to you and bring a letter from me, and asking you should send me." "Oh yes, yes, I remember, I remember we were not long afterwards taken to the ghetto. Mother was later taken to hospital, and we gave him a lot of money for you, I don't remember how much, and we sent such a big parcel, that it would have been enough for you for months. All sorts of cakes, all sorts of bacon, meat, bacons, even bacons they sent me that time, because they knew that that

It didn't matter any more.

"We send you the best of things, didn't you get it?" I says, "No, I got a tiny little, like my finger, and he said I shouldn't come any more to him." Now, what I want to say is, nobody should say that no helpers, there were no Christian helpers, because this man wanted to help me, but he was very hungry, and he took advantage of my confidence to him, and he pocketed the money, pocketed the food, pocketed everything, and he told me not to come to him anymore. This Mr. Foster from the office, wanted to keep me for him, but he couldn't carry on like that, that I should do nothing, just to go cleaning his house, and doing nothing, because he had to have, he was responsible for me, what do I get out from this Jew? So he said to me, one day, "The German kitchen is only about 20 yards away from here. I arrange for you, that you should go in, near the kitchen to peel potatoes, carrots, work for the kitchen, and when I need you, you come, and I give you another job." Next day, I went into the kitchen, and I had the time of my life, peeling potatoes, over the other girls and servants, and German girlfriends, whom they had their girlfriends, with whom they slept together, but during the day they cleaned the rooms, and they had to work for the kitchen. And of course, I had pieces of bread, I had carrots, and I was putting carrots in my pocket, and I put potatoes in my pocket, and I took some home, took some to the camp, there in free time we could cook, a fire, on a stove, and cook some potatoes and that was fantastic. After a few weeks, the German who was in the kitchen, who was the Manager of the kitchen, he says to me, "You come in to the kitchen, and help, help us preparing the food." It means I had to stand over a hot stove, where nobody wanted it, and to stir it, and to lift it down, and take it up, and so on. And I was very happy, I worked very hard, I was sweating, very hot outside, and in the kitchen especially, and after a day or two he started to give me food, and he gave me the food what the Germans had. Now that was a luxury, like in a five star hotel! It lasted a short time. One day, I can't tell you exactly times, because it's, after all, it's 45 years now, afterwards, one day, I see a German, one of the German soldiers, came to the window where they gave out the food, and I heard him saying, "I want some more meat." And the German manager knew there is no more meat any more, and so he says to him, "We haven't got any more meat, but I can give you gemuses, anything else what there is.²

Vegetables, yes.

And I was, I was sitting in a corner, on a little stool, and eating, I didn't have meat, but I was eating my soup, or whatever they gave me, and he says, "What? There is no meat, and that rotten Jew in the corner, he can have meat, he eats up my meat." And he took his dish what he had, and threw it back, whatever was given, and started to shout and scream, "The Jew is eating meat", and he can't have more meat. And the German Manager said to me, "Get out of here quickly and disappear." And I ran out and disappeared, but I heard from, from, 50 yards away, shouts and screams. That was the finish for me in the German kitchen. They couldn't see, they couldn't bear a Jew eating, they couldn't bear a Jew in a German kitchen, so I ran back to Foster right away, and I told him what happened, and he said, "You shouldn't have gone into the German kitchen. You should have never gone in there. You mustn't go in there. But for the next few days, you can't even go to peel potatoes, you have to stay here." And so it happened, so I didn't have my extra bread any more, I didn't have my potatoes in my pocket, but I, I went to the dustbin where they threw the potato peels out, and I took potato peels, because that was also good for cooking, and I took it to the barracks and to my friends and others, they made a fire, you know, and these potato peels, we wash it, and it tastes very nice if you're hungry, very nice. After a week or so, I went back, he send me back to the, to peel potatoes. But I had to be very careful when I went into that shed, and when I came out. I had to see that no German soldier sees me when I went in, or went out. Then I got already so frightened, I didn't dare to take potatoes in my pocket any more, because if I come up from there, a German notices me, he may shout at me, or kick me, but if he finds potato stealing that could be fatal, so I didn't dare any more. But when I was really hungry, and I was given bread, I just stuffed it in my pocket. And now it became already autumn, and in September we were told that we were going back, in a few days time, all the Jews will go back to Hungary. What happened is, the German came back from Greece, from Crete, from there, English invasion, English soldiers, and from the East the Russians came nearer, they were already in Bulgaria, and they didn't want to leave the Jews there. There were about 6,000 Jews altogether, in Berlin Lagat, and outlying districts where they built the railways. We didn't know each other. We knew there is a few hundred, that is a few hundred, occasionally when they had to have supplies bringing in, and taking them supplies, there were a few Jews, there we are 300, there we are 300, they were all named, all these camps were named after German towns. Like Berlin Lagat, came from Berlin, so they had other names, five miles, ten miles, 15 miles. But the time came to go back. They left all the workers there, everything they left there, they couldn't take anything with them from War, but the Jews they had to take, take back, because they didn't want Jews to stay alive, and the Germans didn't want Jews to tell stories, and it was by command that the Jews had to go back. Back, it came to date, we are told in a few days we are going back. I stuffed as much bread as I can, the last few days while we were still going to work, and I had a little stack of bread, the bread was all that was left, you see. Of course, water we had got to find. By the way, we were, while I was working on the trains and so on, we were always starving hungry, and thirsty in the summer, and very cold in the winter. From the hunger we had boils. I don't want to open my shirt to show you where my boils were, on my stomach here, and there were a few Jewish medical students, and a few young doctors, and they tried everything, they didn't have medicine for us, and I remember once, a young doctor, who had just finished doctor. He took blood from one side, and he gave it, the

same blood back on the other side, and that will help me. And after four or five weeks, it healed up, the boil healed up. We had diarrhoea at the time, and we were always afraid of typhus, if we had developed typhus, they would have burned down the camp and us in it, because they didn't want to get typhus. And that's why if somebody drank water, just from the road, after the rain, if they noticed somebody drinks it, then they would beat him up thoroughly, because, because of that. Another episode what's worthwhile telling you, is, while in Bor, while still in work, one day, in the Camp, after work, I noticed there is a big commotion downhill, what it turned out to be, I went nearer to see, curiosity, there came a big Hungarian officer, it was actually the Lager Führer while the Jews were there. He was the Head of the Hungarian military there, and all the soldiers

Saluted him,

Yes, they stood up and saluted, and when I noticed what it is, I started running back up the steps, the hill towards my barrack, but I was, became such a fright, that I couldn't run, suddenly I sat down, and I passed out. What I had, what happened, I got up in my bed, I call it a bed, on the straw, where I was sleeping on the third

Bunk?

Bunk. I got up and there was a few friends around me, and they told me, "You passed out, we brought you in, we put you down, and the Lager Führer the one who came up and saw you lying there, and he wasn't even so bad, except for the soldiers. The Lager Fuhrer said to the Hungarian soldiers, "Maybe you give him some more food, some more food". "Because", he said, "This little, thin fellow". Well this one, told the soldiers, if they were Jews, take him up to where he belongs

End of Fl25 Side A

Fl25 Side B

Exhausted, and he gave me a piece of bread, and I was eating, and suddenly, I think it was 9 o'clock, and the lights went out, and you had to sleep because you got up very early in the morning. It was dark, and I nearly fall asleep, and suddenly a few soldiers came in, and they said, "Where is the lights?" And they put on the lights. "Where is that fellow who passed out this afternoon?" And they were referring to me, and I hear, and I think "Maybe they still will give me something of medical, maybe they will take me to a doctor," and two soldiers approached, I sat up to see what it is, "Is it you who passed out? Why did you do that?" Louder and louder voice. And he says, "Listen, I don't want uncomfortable things. Don't do that any more." And they started hitting me, both of them, the one went away, and the one hit me for ten minutes, kicking, hitting my head, my face, my eyes, my, my, my groin, I don't want to show you, and hitting for ten minutes, and I really thought, "I'm passing out again." I couldn't breathe anymore. "Now, this will teach you a lesson. If you do that again, I'll kill you." With that, they went out, "Switch off the lights", and went out. I was moaning until the door was closed, and a few friends came around, and again, "What is it? Where is it hurting? You'll be all right." And they brought me some water, and so on, and I got up next morning, and had to go to work, I was blue and red all over my body, but I had to go to work. That was when I was working on the train. Now, I must mention that as well, I told you there was a soldier with one star, and by the time we came to the copper mine, he got two stars, now he felt very big. I told you that he started to be very cruel to me there, and he started to tell me that "You bloody Jew, you had all the food, I never had anything", and I didn't dare talking back to him. I mean, after all, he'd said that he'd worked for a Jewish baker, how good he was, I didn't tell him, "Look, while we were, three years ago, I got parcels, I shared it with you, and you told me, and you called me by my first name." I mean, you couldn't tell, you can't understand it, that your best friends became your biggest enemies. And he said to me, "You little Gunz, I don't know what I'll do to you. I will kill you with my own hands one day. God, look at you animal." And of course, these, these little soldiers had very big powers, because the one who was in charge of us, he is called, he was an Officer, I'll tell you later what their names are, I can't translate it so fast. He was a higher officer, he was in charge of the three under him, while they ... whatever the soldiers told him, he would do. Now, there were some days when we didn't work. We worked six days, Sundays we didn't work. Sundays we, everything happened on Sunday, whatever the Hungarians could do bad to us, was on Sundays. Now, you have to go in front of an officer with various complaints. Now, he told this officer, who was in charge of us, that I did this, I did that, he deserved to be hanged for two hours. Now, I can't tell you in English what this hanging means, it means that your hand is tied in the back, and it's roped together, and you, they hang you up, so that your foot doesn't reach the floor. This was a middle-age torture, what the Hungarians used on us. Okay, the Officer agrees two hours hanging.

Was there a reason for him to do it, or was it just out of

No, he said that I did this, I did that,

He found a little excuse?

He just said a few things, and you stand in front of the Officer, and the Officer says, "What you? You troublemaker, hang him for two hours." I mean, there was

They didn't need reasons.

A Jew didn't have nothing. He would have been better off to have been a dog. For four years, I would have been better off to be a dog, because a dog was looked after, they gave him food, they didn't have to do anything. A Jew, that was just a number, I mean, in Bor already, we had numbers, I didn't tell you that, that was necessary, called on your name. Always had to know the number. 14,70 and something like that, was my number, I don't remember it any more. Now, this hanging up is very torturous. It is very painful. You couldn't be hanged more than a quarter of an hour, until you faint. Can you imagine lying on your, hanged up on a, on a rope, that your foot, your toes doesn't reach the ground? And you're hanged up. So they hanged me up, after a quarter of an hour, I was passing out, and they take you down, you passed out on the floor. They bring, another Jew brings a bucket of water. I wasn't alone, there were others as well. They bring a bucket of water, they pour over you cold water, and then a few minutes, you come to yourself, and then they put you back. You faint again, you're down again, and that was done for two hours. Now, this is such torture, that after they let me down completely, I couldn't even stand, I was lying there like a dog for a half an hour, or an hour. And when they helped me up, I couldn't bring my hand forward, you couldn't bring your hand forward. Actually, for a long time I couldn't bring my hand forward. In work, I had to work the way I could, and the German really, said, "What did they do to you?" They called the Hungarians pigs. "What did they do to? Show me who's done it." Because the Germans wanted you to do the work. The TOT Organisation, as long as they were not SS soldiers, or from the Gestapo, they're just ordinary Germans, supervisors, from the TOT, they were not all bad. I don't say they were good, but they were not all bad.

They needed you for the work.

They knew we were Jews, and we were treated like a dog, but they needed you for the work. But this hanging happened to me twice, and a few months later I was hanged again. Now, many people developed heart failure from that, or, anything could happen. In the end, I know of about 24 people who were imprisoned for all different reasons, they were hanged up, and they developed heart failure and so on, and then we went back, they took us back to Hungary, these 24 people they shot, because they didn't want even us, or other Jews to see in what condition they were. They were crippled sort of thing. They were hanged up so many times, and beaten so many times, without food and everything, they were sort of, some of them they caught escaping, some of them were caught talking, Hungarian officers overheard, some of them sent letters to Hungary, or give somebody else for the workers there, they were caught, these letters, what they have written, so they were imprisoned, I think 26, 24 people were imprisoned, and they were just before we went the same day, they were taken up the forest and shot. They shouldn't tell what happened. That's what the Germans and Hungarians didn't want. Everybody, they knew already the War is lost,

but they were killing the last minute. That's I tell you, when I tell you my story about my escape on the way, on the way, and what happened in Chervenka, and the killing of the 4,000 people who we left on the first transport, there is no more than 50 came back of the 4,000, except there was who escaped, like I escaped, still in Serbia, near Belgrade, I would say about 100 people escaped. Now, of course, more people would have escaped if people know what's going to happen. But when they took us back, we were so happy, we knew the Russians are near, we knew they had to take us back, and it was a question of a week, ten days, that was the question. A week, ten days, and that separated us from life. Not me, of the rest. They were killed just a week, ten days before the Russians arrived. Gradually. But this story I'll tell you later, unless you want me now to. I would like to turn back on another episode that came to my mind, while we were in Bor Coppermine. We didn't have facilities for toilets. If somebody needed a toilet, the Germans would look away, we would say, "I've just got to relieve myself", and go about 100, or 200 metres away from the mountain, just where people can't see, and just let your trousers down and relieve yourself. And it happened once, that, in the middle of my work, I had to say that "I have to go." And the German says, "Okay, you go, and I'll rush back." I went about 200 metres, and I sat down on the ground, let my trousers down, and I did what I had to do. Within a few minutes, I noticed a German soldier with a girlfriend, perhaps some more, they started laughing, loud, and drinking. I saw them from a distance, probably 300 or 400 metres, laughing and drinking, and suddenly I noticed that the German took his gun and point it at me. And it became a bigger laughter. Suddenly he, I, he wanted to shoot me, and my, he took his gun and fired, it just went over my head, and the laughter grew, and I got such a shock, and I didn't know, "He's going to kill me now, now this is the end." And then came another shot, and this was on the side of me. I grabbed my trousers and I started to run towards the work, so in case he wants to shoot again, he won't shoot if there is a lot of people. And the laughter grew, and then suddenly I reached the work, with my trousers in my hands, and that's how I escaped with my life. Because he thought it's a big fun to try to, to fire at me, and if he kills me there's no responsibility for killing a Jew, that was ... So this episode just came to my mind, that's why I mention it to you now. Now, I want to continue what happened, the way, on the way, how I escaped. We marched on foot from Bor about, I would say, nearly 4,000 people. That was the first transport. The second transport must have been about 2,000 people. Now, we marched, the 4,000 people on foot. We walked about, I would say about 30 to 40 kilometres a day.

Did you know where you were going at that time?

We knew where we were going, they took us back. They took us back, the Germans, the Germans wanted to take us back to Germany to concentration camp, but the Hungarian soldiers who took us, they said we're going back to Hungary. So you can imagine how exhausted we were. We had our last food before we went away, bread and some jam, and of course, we ate every day a bit, when we were resting. Sleeping, we were open, under, under,

What time of the year was it?

It was in the autumn. It was in the autumn, October, November.

And was it cold already?

It was already cold, of course, especially in mountainous region. The wind was blowing. They surrounded us, but I suppose they found places to sleep, and we were glad to have rest, because in the morning we had to start off. We didn't have any warm drinks any more, and the water as we can find. As we passed villages, we run into homes of the, the Serbian homes, they were very kind and nice to us, they gave us food, they gave us drinks, and they said, "Escape, and stay here." Many escaped. I would say altogether, until we, until they crossed Belgrade, about 100 escaped. I wanted to escape, but I didn't have the courage to escape. Many of my colleagues, even a cousin of mine who were there, they told me, "Don't be silly. The Russians are here. Any day we'll be liberated. So why escape now? We will be free in a few days." The partisans followed us all the way, we didn't know that, but the Germans and Hungarians knew that the partisans are very near, they follow us in the hills and in the mountains, and in the forest, and they didn't, there was only a few killings on the way, but not much. They were not cruel to us on the way, so that we could go into, into the Serbian houses, but they watched us when we come out and so on, and we carry on.

What about the people who escaped, were they looking for them, the guards?

No, no, they didn't dare stop, they didn't dare going off the roads, as I said, the Partisans were following us, we were not aware of this.

So the people who escaped, were actually really safe?

Yes. Yes. Yes. As we neared Belgrade, it was nearly 10 days already, exhausted and hungry already, because we didn't get much food, except what we begged in the villages, and I became restless, I thought, "I really have to escape." And I kept on calling a few people, "Let's run out." We noticed, I noticed a young lad coming from Belgrade on a horse and cart, and I was talking to my friend, in Serbian, saying, "Now, you come with me. Are you coming with me? Let's run out." There was a maize field, I want to run out. And as this, the Serbian fellow on the horse and cart neared us, and he heard that we are talking Serbian, so he stopped. There was no guard around. He says, "Are you Yugoslav Jews?" I said, "Yes, of course we are Yugoslavian, you hear us talking Yugoslavian." "I thought everybody was killed, the Yugoslav Jews." I says, "No, could we, but we were in Bor, and they take us back down to Germany." "I heard you wanted to escape. Did you say to your friend, you want to run?" And I said, "Yes, but how do I it? And where will I go?" He says, "Look, I can't stop with you. Look at the hill over there, run up to the maize field, wait till everything is passed, and I will wait for you on the other side of the hill, on the road. You just take that direction, it will take you a little time, but I'll wait on the other side." With that he drove off, because he was afraid. And we looked round, we didn't see anybody, guards I mean, Germans or Hungarians, we rushed into the maize field. But somebody did notice us, one of the guards, there was a few shots after, and we kept on running, they didn't dare coming after us in the maize field, because they were afraid of the Partisans, so we run and run till we come in the middle, and we waited a short time till everything passed. When we saw everything quiet, no soldiers, no German, no Hungarian, everything quiet, we run over the road, and in the,

and the woods, we followed the path towards that hill, we reached it after a while, and the Serbian lad, he was a young lad about 19, 20, just perhaps a few years younger than we were. And he was waiting there, and he said, "Okay now, you sit in the cart, and I'll cover you with all sorts of things. He, he took fruit to Belgrade, and he had boxes and he put us in and covered us with the boxes, and he warned us, In case we, in case people said 'Stoj' means Stop, we should come down and say that we are Jews, from Bor, escaped from transport, and never say you're Socialist or Communist, because they are from the Draza Michaelovits, not from Tito's, and if you tell him, they notice that you're Communist, they'll shoot you on the spot. Because they were at that time already, fighting, with the Germans, against the Tito's. And as it happened, suddenly we hear "Stoj", and from a tree up there, two, two soldiers like, came down, with their machine gun, and asked the fellow, "Who are these two people with you?" They knew him. "But who are these?" So he tell us we should say, so we spoke perfect Serbian, we had just run away a few hours ago, and we are afraid of the Germans, and we would like to stay here with the Serbs. And he says, "Are you from the Communists, you want to fight with the Communists?" I said, "No, no, no, we are never Communists, we don't even know what it is about. We were in the camp now, three and a half years, we're not politically minded, we are just tired, exhausted, hungry and thirsty." He says, "Okay, you can go to the village. Tonight, after you've ate, this young lad will take you to the little Town Hall there" because there was only a very small village there, perhaps 300, 400 people, "and you should say that you want to join the Army." You want to join the Draza Michaelovits's with me, fighters."

Who was that, was it a special Regiment, or,

The Draza Michaelovitz were fighting, beginning to fought against the Germans, but when Tito became very strong as a Communist, they fought against the Communists, and became, they were the King's Party, they wanted the King back in Yugoslavia.

I see. But they knew you were Jewish?

I told them I was Jewish, of course. They knew everything about us.

So really, it seems that the attitude of the local people.

The Serbs were nice people.

The Serbs were good people.

If they had been Croats who caught us, they would have shot us on the spot, I mean, the Croats are Catholics and they were murderers, they were murderers.

So you're talking about the Serbs who were villagers, who had more compassion?

The Serbs who were from a Slav religion, they were not, most of them were not anti-Semitic.

Is it like Protestants, could you compare that?

Not Protestant, proper Slav, Greek Catholics.

Okay.

Now, the young lad took us on to the parents, the parents were about 50, 60 years old. They welcomed us, and they said, "You stay here, we'll protect you, you have to do your work", because they were peasants, "We'll tell you what to do." Well, I became a shepherd and took all the cows for grazing, after a while. But after we had our meal, they took us to the Town Hall, and talked to the Town Hall people, because they were influenced by the Draza Michaelovits King's Party, and we said, "We will join you." And they said, "You have to join us." "But our backs, and please give us a few days, a week, we are exhausted. We haven't got the strength to do anything. And then if you need us, we'll come." Well then they let us back to the peasants, they gave us a bed in a very deep cellar, where we slept. And food we ate with them, they were very kind, and very nice people. I would never forget it. Thanks to them, although we wanted to escape, but they helped us how to escape, and then they helped us, as I will tell you a few episodes later. Next day, I became a shepherd, I took out the cows, although we had to go with the main road, where German soldiers with tanks were driving up and down, but they give me, the peasant gave me an old coat, and I didn't have any more the yellow band, and the Star of David and all that, and I had to risk it, to go without, because I had to work for the peasant, because he gave us food.

But were the Germans looking for any escapees at all?

No, the Germans didn't, didn't dare looking for, cos I said, the Germans didn't turn off the main roads, until the Battle for Belgrade broke out. Now, we were there for a few weeks, it must've been after our Jewish Holiday, New Year, and the Day of Atonement, but we didn't know which is the New Year, we didn't know any more which day is the Day of Atonement, we knew it was Autumn, we knew it was Jews Holidays had just passed, but we didn't know where and when. Probably the New Year was when we left Bor, and when we escaped, it could have been the Day of Atonement. Now the rest of them, Jews from the transport, they were taken to Belgrade. Now, I'll tell you about it later, what happened to them, because a few of my friends came home from Germany, after, after they arrived, a few of them, perhaps 200 arrived, to Germany concentration camps, of those, of those, perhaps 30, 40 people came back, maybe 50 the most. Now, a few of them whom I know personally, we have been together, they told me the whole story, how it, how it happened. And I wish they would be here and tell you personally what it was. But I'm going back now, in the village, what was called Retopek, that's a village about 30 kms. from Belgrade, maybe even less, I don't remember. We walked it when we went back already, when we left the village, but we had a very long walk. Now, after a few weeks in the Retopek village, suddenly we hear everybody should go down to the Danube. That was the Danube river that. The Russians are crossing the Danube from Bulgaria. Of course, we, we, everybody, in the evening after work, we came down to the Danube river, and the Russians arrived, they were filthy and dirty, but they were Liberators, and we hugged and kissed them, even the drunken ones. And we are free. Now we are Liberated. But not completely. After a day or two, that the

Russians were in the little village, suddenly we hear shootings. What happened, that the Russians clashed with the retreating Germans from Serbia, Greece, Croat, all those Germans who retreated, that's where the battle started. Now, the battle intensified, terribly. But before I tell you the story about the battle, I must tell you that we saw the end of the War, and only a week after we were in the Retopek, where the peasant family, families came down from Belgrade to the same peasant where we were staying, some old acquaintances, and they asked us all sorts of questions, although the peasant told us, "Don't talk ..."

End of F125 Side B

Fl26 Side A

Just before the Russians, arrived, actually, about three or four days, there came another man, another family, a husband and a wife, and with their little children, who was the son-in-law of the previous visitor, who came to stay with them, who came two weeks earlier. Now this, their son-in-law talked with his father-in-law, and he soon found out everything about us, although the, the man with whom we were staying said to me, when, after the son-in-law arrived, "Don't talk to him anything, don't tell you're Jews, just avoid him, don't talk to him." But it was too late again, he knew everything, who we were, that we were Jews escaping from the concentration camp. He started talking to us, and asked questions, I didn't like the way he asked questions, and he looked in our eyes, and he didn't look a friendly type at all. He was actually the Gestapo, the Gestapo Office leader of Belgrade, who had the responsibility for the Gestapo in Serbia, so he was a very great man, although he was, a, a, Slav, but he was a Gestapo man, whom we should have been very much afraid of. He had enormous power. That we got to know from the peasant afterwards. He said, "You shouldn't have talked to him, you know, he is a Gestapo. I had to have him here, because of different reasons, but we don't like him, but we had to take him in here. He came here because they're afraid to stay in Belgrade." But things went on another few days until the shooting intensified. As it turned out, the Battle of Belgrade wasn't fought in Belgrade, it was fought in our village, in Retopek, that's where the Battle of Belgrade was decided. The clash was not far from our house where we lived, and as the Battle intensified, we moved down to the cellar, everybody came in the cellar, where we were sleeping. The cellar was very deep. Even if they shoot through the door, we were beneath the staircase, so we were all safe there. The cellar started filling up, there was about 60-70 people that entered the cellar. When shooting stopped, the old man used to go up to his room, and brought down food for everybody, he had plenty of stocks there, he was a peasant, so we ate there, we slept there, for a few days. The Battle intensified so much that the Germans and the Russians, sometimes occupied our yard, the house, and they came into the basement. Sometimes in the night, it was the third, fourth night, that we heard shooting and speaking German, so the Russian fled, we had once a Russian who quickly dumped his uniform, and he asked shirts and all that, to escape, and being caught, was a prisoner of war. And suddenly the door would open, and the Germans with machine guns would just look if there is a Russian there, and talk a few words, and "Who are you? Who are you? Who are you?" And then they went out, and the shooting continued. An hour later, the Russians will come back, so that's how it changed from hour to hour, because we were literally on the front line. On the front line. The third night, that was already six days battle. On the third night of the fierce battle, we heard again, after the shooting, Germans speaking. Now. Suddenly, the son-in-law of that man, who was a Gestapo, stood up, and said, loud, in Serbian, to the, to the landlord, to the owner of the place, "Now look", he said, "We want to be safe here. The Germans are coming again. Once they discover there are two Jews here, we will all be in danger. You know", he tells the landlord, "you know my position. I can't risk to have two Jews here, and they will say 'Who are you?' and I will say 'In the Gestapo.' We have to give up the two Jews." You can imagine the fear what we had. We'd got already once liberated by the Russians after our escape, we thought we were

liberated. We saw the Russians coming over the, we think, "Oh, we are liberated." Suddenly, we are faced with death. Because if they give up two Jews, the Germans didn't have time to send us to concentration camp, we would have been shot on the spot. I started shivering and so did my friend, and we were just waiting for the minutes, what will happen. The Germans didn't reach the door yet, so my boss said, the peasant, said to him, "Now listen, I know who you are, but you should know that the two Jews are my guests. And I am their protector, and nobody should give out the Jews. If you will stand up and tell who they are, remember, in an hour's time, or even before, the Russians may come in, and I assure you, I will tell the Russians who you are. So you'd better sit down and be quiet."

Still very,

I mean, this peasant, he saved our life, that he saved our lives, no doubt about it. And I'll never forget it. And that's coming from a peasant who probably didn't know how to read and write. Five, ten minutes passed, the door opened again, Germans with the machine guns, "Where are the Russians? Where are the Russians? Look round." They had batteries, flash-lights, to look at our face, and I was so trembling, so shaking, that I felt my hands are shaking, just shaking. And I just looked and looked at the Gestapo man, will he stand up and say, he didn't stand up. The Germans went out, but I couldn't stop shaking for quite some time, although the Russians arrived later, two, three hours later, and they didn't give him out either. It was a very great risk to give him out, because what could happen later. Next day, the Battle was so fierce that the peasant decided, and advice was given to evacuate the house because, the Battle intensified, that they will really start shooting with tanks and all that, we can all get killed. So we, the decision was made, that 2 o'clock, between 2 and 3 o'clock in the morning, when everything is quiet, usually there was quiet for a few hours, in the morning. Somehow, nobody shot against each other, maybe they were resting, but it was like an agreement between the Russians and the Germans, between 2 and 4, 5 o'clock in the morning was quiet. And we waited for the 2 o'clock in the morning, everything was quiet, everybody took his things what he had, the peasant took a loaf of bread, and a few things with meat, and out everybody went, and everybody started to flee, going down to the Danube, on the way back, not towards Belgrade, towards the occupied German part, they couldn't go for some reason the other way. But everybody went, we don't know who, we went with the peasant with his few family, and we passed, we saw passing the Russians, they passed, the Germans they looked at us, and nobody shot at us, and a few hours away, we went into another village. We went into the occupied territory, German occupied territory. We had to go back to the Germans. There were tanks on the road, and we went into houses, to see Germans passing, then we go further out the fields.

It must've been very frightening?

Very frightening. It was very frightening, and in one of the rooms we were staying, suddenly I recognised somebody, a fellow of ours, who escaped, and he was in the room there, and we greeted him, and he says, "Don't go now, be careful, and so on", but we joined the peasant, wherever he said we go, we go. Suddenly, the main road in the village was clear, and we all went out, and we went through a narrow street out to the fields. We walked and walked and walked, and within quarter of an hour we

were out in the fields, and we walked, perhaps another half an hour, and we settled, early morning, we settled in, in the fields, to eat. We got to eat. Suddenly we saw coming, an officer, was far away, about 500 yards away, a few officers, and a band of people. They had a few machine guns and a few guns, but the majority didn't have anything, and suddenly we realised, these are partisans. So how did the partisans, they people. Only a few people had weapons, in the front, and we were told, the one who is killed in front, were killed, and took the weapon from them, and they go further, that's how they fought. As we were passing the field, the First Officer who went in front, looked around to us sitting there, and came over, and he says, "Who are you?" So we told him who we are, "Who are these two young lads?" Of us. So I said, "We are Jews, we escaped a few weeks ago, from the road leading to Belgrade, and we stayed with this peasant." "Oh yes, we know about you? Why didn't you all escape? We were following you all the way." So he was an officer, not just an ordinary partisan, he knew everything. So I says, "We didn't know you were following us, otherwise thousands of people would have escaped." "Now, what are you going to do?" he asked. "Are you joining us?" I says, "We will join you."

But he wasn't Jewish?

No. No, partisans. Yes.

Did they have any Jewish people in their ...

No, I wouldn't know that, I wouldn't know that. I mean, they went to the village where the Germans are, to do some, to fight, to shoot, and so on. I said, "Yes, we will join, as soon as we go back to the village, to the peasant's where we are, normally are together." So he said, "I hope you are going to join." We were around those villages in the field for a few days, until we were told that the Battle for Belgrade is practically over. The Russians came over with very big might from Bulgaria, and we should go home. Of course, we went home, all walked, there was no transport or nothing, not even horse and cart. So we went back home, and the main battle was over, although there was still shootings, but those were mainly from the scattered German army, was still shooting. We had to go, the same day, we went, not we had to go, we went to their little headquarter, was there, we told them, we said "We are Jews, we met some partisans a few days earlier. We are going to volunteer, if you need us." He says, "Yes, we need you, we need everybody we can get. There are still scattered fires, and we need to gather the prisoners of war, from the front line. There is still danger, but we need to gather them all together, and we need a few, six people, at the moment, to go out where the front is, there is still a little fighting on. You come tomorrow morning, and with other people, you will join and you go out." I said, "That's very fine, but we are not trained to shoot, I've never had a gun in my hands." He said, "You come tomorrow morning, we're going to train you." Next morning, early morning, we went to the little place where they were expecting us, there were two other Serbs, two gipsies, and two of us Jews. They didn't train the other four, but we two Jews had to be trained. We were on the second floor of the little building, and so he had a gun in his hand, and he said "Come here, to the window, and I'll show you how I keep the gun in my hand, against my shoulder, and I fill it in, fill in the bullet, and that's how you are going to shoot. And hold it to your shoulder, otherwise you'll fall back." So he gave me the gun, after he shot one, he gave me the gun in my hand,

and I put in the bullet, and I shot, against my shoulder, but I thought I shot myself, I got such a shock, the first time shooting. He says, "Don't worry, you're very good. Do it again." I did it again, a lesser shock, and then he took the gun away, "You will be okay now. Now come your friend." And he did the same thing, and we are trained.

And you were trained soldiers?

We were trained soldiers. We got two of us guns, and two grenades, hand grenades, and they gave us some kind of a uniform, whatever they could get. "Hold on, and out you marched, and you, we have so many prisoners of war, and they are gathered already somewhere, and get some more, and you have to take them over the Danube in boats, and take them over to our main Headquarters, to the Russian Headquarters, by " We met with the other partisans, and they gathered them, although there were little shooting, not at us, we heard some little distance away. We took some six, approximately 60 prisoners of war, young Germans, strong, healthy, just captured, or perhaps a few hours ago, and we had to take them down to the Danube where they prepared us three boats. One large boats, and two smaller boats. And in each boat, they are putting about 15 in the two smaller boats, and the larger boat was about 30, 35, where I was given to sit in the larger boat, at the back, and another one, a partisan, a gipsy, in the front, opposite each other, and we have to have the gun in our hand, and tell them to row over to the other side. Now, then we were left on our own. The two little ones went off, and then our large one went off. The Danube was very wide there. I would say, there was more than a kilometre wide, and as I spoke German I told them, "You have to row over, you and you and you start off, and no movement, because I am shooting, the first movement I am shooting." I don't need to tell you I was much more frightened than they are, because I could hardly know how to shoot, and they were young, healthy Germans, and we were run down. First the German says, "We can't, I don't know how to row." And I says, "Shut up, take it in your hands and row, because I am shooting right away." I was very much frightened, the gipsy wasn't frightened down the other end, but I was very much frightened, because if they would attack me, they could just jump on me, throw me in the river, and I couldn't do anything, because there were about 35 of them.

But how did you feel about the reverse roles? Suddenly you were threatening to shoot?

I, my first role, I wasn't happy because I was very frightened. Thank God we came over to the other side, and we told them to disembark, and we met with the other four partisans there, and suddenly I needed to relieve myself, and I said to them, "Now look, you stand over here, and I've got to relieve myself, but I'm afraid they may attack us." They were grinning and so on. And I said, "I am speaking German, let me give the order." And I said to all the prisoners of war, there were about 60 of them. "Everybody turn over and sit down." And then I turned round aside, and I relieved myself. Now we are started to walk afterwards, all walk, long walks, miles and miles and miles, to give them over to the Russian Commandeteur. On the way, I suddenly recognised one of the Germans who was a guard in Bor Camp. I recognised him by sight, because I saw him very often. I never spoke to him, and he never spoke to me, and he never did anything to me, but suddenly I said to him, "Hey you. Where were

you?" And he started telling stories, "Please don't do anything, I've got a wife, and I've got children." I said, "I didn't ask about wife and children." He was about 40. I said, "Where were you the last few months?" He says, "In Bor." I says, "Yes, I recognise you. You were, you were standing guard there, in that place." I took out from my pocket, my yellow band, with the Star of David on it. "Do you recognise what it is? I was there. I recognise you. But you carry on marching." And the way I was holding in my hand, still the yellow ribbon, I suddenly saw Russian lorries coming, and suddenly the lorries stopped, and a few officers came out, "What are you doing here? What is all that? Where are you taking these people?" We were partisans, we had identification, and we said where we are going, to the Commandateur. "What is that in your hands?" Actually I put it on my arm, it was in my hand, I put it on my arm. "What is that? What partisan sign is that?" I says, "It is not a partisan sign. This is a sign where we were in camp in the copper mine, as Jews. I am a Jew." "Are the other Jews also? But what were you talking to this man we saw you talking?" I said, "I recognised the guard there." "Well, don't make any problems. Go on, tell him to stand aside, and shoot him." I says, "Do I have to?" He says, "Of course, you're a Partisan, you recognise somebody, shoot him." I says, "I'm sorry, I can't do it. We've got so many people to give over to your Commandateur, and we have to deliver them all." He says, "Don't worry about that. Just go and shoot him." "I'm sorry, I can't shoot him. He didn't do anything to me, and even if he would have done, I'm not a murderer. Let me give him over to the Commandateur there, and let them do what they have to do." And he recognised what I told him, and they made a little fun of me, and he says, "What kind of a Partisan are you? Never mind. Tell me first, is there some Russian speaking here?" So I said loud in German, "Who speaks Russian?" And about ten or 12 people came out of the line, they were Ukrainians who joined the SS. They said, "You tell them we want Russian translators." So I said, "We want Russians translators," and so on, and so these 10 or 12 people came forward, and he says, "Okay, I want these 10 or 12 people." They tell them to line up, to come aside, line up, turn round, he took his machine gun, and he machine gunned them down, because they were joining the SS. That's what they were looking for, they were looking more for Russians, or Ukrainians, or White Russians, who joined the German Army, and he told us we should say what happened when we come to the Commandateur, and that's what happened. We came over to the Commandateur, the people, and then six partisans from Retopek, to the village, over the Danube, and we were there for a short time, and when we heard the road is clear to go home to Subotica, to our town, we just asked the officers, "Please let us two Jews go. We want to go home, see what happened to our families." We didn't know at that time that there was an Auschwitz, we didn't know that time where our parents were, nothing, we never knew about Auschwitz, we never heard about it. We only knew that my mother, the last letter what we had in June or July, that we will be taken to a ghetto, and I will write to you later. And we never heard anything.

What year was that now?

I'm talking about 1944, it was already that time, November. At last we are liberated, and the officers agreed, because we are going to see the family, on the condition that we go home and see our family, our mother, father, brother and sisters. We didn't know anybody, we didn't know anything what happened. I want to cut the story short, because I keep talking to you till tomorrow morning. I want to tell you that we went

on our way to Belgrade, and on the way, we saw the German Army destroyed. Hundreds, perhaps, many hundreds of vehicles destroyed, people lying naked, shot, all Russians, all Germans, sorry all Germans. There must have been a tremendous battle. And we had to walk about, I would say, 25 kilometres, approximately, to Belgrade. In Belgrade we looked for the Jewish Community, there were a few Jews, at home already, but nobody give us anything. We begged for food here or there, we watched out for trains, and we walked to the trains, slowly trains started moving, for a short distance, it took us, about a week to get home to Suboticä. We arrived in Subiticä, with some other couples who said they are Jews, but we don't know up to today, whether they were really Jews or Fascists, just fleeing. We arrived in Suboticä very early in the morning by train, but we couldn't go out of the station until about 7, 8 o'clock in the morning, because whoever was in the street was shot, nobody, it was still dangerous to move, although the Russians were there already a few weeks, but the Germans were about a few hundred miles away, so we had to be, in the morning they let us out, so I started walking with this couple with the children, walking in town, and walking towards our house. I went into our house, it was occupied.

Who was there?

There were a couple, they occupied our house, they, the Town Hall gave them our house for local people to live in. I said to him, "This is my house, and the sooner he goes out of here the better." And they were very frightened, they said, "Give us a few days and we go out." In the meantime, our neighbour, who were an elderly couple, noticed me, recognised me, and he showed big enthusiasm, "Thank God you came ..."

End of Fl26 Side A

Fl26 Side B

So he offered us food, what was very welcome, because we were really hungry. And those young couples as well, and I said, "Where can we sleep?" Asking. And he says, "Come to my house, I'll give you whatever you want to. You were our best neighbours, we are very sorry." I was asking where are my parents, my brothers, sisters. He says, "Everybody was taken away from the home, we've got no idea where they are. They say that everybody was killed, but we don't know anything, we are so sorry." Okay, I don't want to continue with that. We accepted his best bedroom what he had, we slept there for a few days, he gave us food, until I told the couple, they were very suspicious to me, I still today think they are Fascists, wanted to leave the country. I told them that I am going over to my house, and they were very pleased I am going away, and they disappeared suddenly. I went to my house, I got myself a room, and I waited a few weeks until the people moved out, they were in a hurry to move out, they were afraid of me, although I didn't threaten them, and one day, I came home, there were full of Russians in the house, the Russians occupied the house, because it had a very big garden, a lot of rooms, and the Russians needed a place, I came upon 50, 60 Russians, and I came home, and I said, "What is all this?" And they said "Well, you're a partisan", because I still had the uniform, "and you understand we need the place," and there were three Russian girls, Jewish girls, who were nurses, and spoke in Yiddish. And of course, I was unhappy, but not very unhappy.

You had no choice?

I had no choice. And this lasted a few weeks until they went away. Now, I unfortunately, we started hearing news that they took everybody away. Still didn't know anything about our friends. Still didn't know anything about the concentration camps, but during the winter, nobody came home, because they were not liberated yet, because the liberated only about May, '45. In the, early in January, I hear door banging, open the door, and suddenly look out, my father arrives from Budapest. One of my brothers, he told me one of my brothers is in Budapest. My brother, second brother, he work with the Zionist Organisation, and he took round the Swiss and the Swedish Schutz Passe, what they gave out, that they are Swedish or Swiss citizens.

What was that? What was that word?

Schutz Passe, is saying that they are protected by the Swedes or the Swiss, you've probably heard about it. This was done. My brother, gave my father one, and my father also escaped from the transport taking them to Austria, and he leave, they found him afterwards, Christian family, and that he was hiding in Budapest for about two months, or six weeks, until the Russians came and liberated him. And my father said my brother is there, somewhere in the Zionist Organisation, and I decided to go and see him, and I went see, I went up to Budapest, of course, with Russian transport and soldiers, because there was no other transport, as a partisan, although I didn't join yet, and I arrived in Budapest, and I managed to, after a few hours walk, to find out where are some Jews, and there is, some place, there are some Jewish Kibbutz in the making, there was my brother. We were happy, my first, my second brother, yes, and

he told me how he survived, and I told him how I survived, and they never believed I am alive, because they heard terrible stories from Bor, and there introduced me, in the Kibbutz, was Chana Senes mother, who, Chana Senes, she was executed, the mother died. Now, I want to finish here, because I want to go over to other things. I came back to Subotică again, and I met three people, who were shot through the head, through the nose, and through the throat, but they were bandaged heavily, but they were alive. "Who are you?" I recognised one of them who was with me in Bor. They told me the story they were the three Jews who came out of about maybe 1,000, 1,800 who are murdered there. One says, 2 thousand 200, the other says 1800, I don't know how much. They came out from that Hall where they were murdered, they were waiting 24 hours after everybody left, and they came out, and they were taken to the hospital, just before the Russians arrived, and they came out alive. And they told me the story, how it was after our transport crossed over to Belgrade, they were abused, they were hitting them, and killing started. Without food, without anything, it took them about three days to get to Cervenka, a village near Novisad, and there the killing started on the night they arrived there. They started killing by ten, always ten and ten and ten. I have also a friend, he is called Rotenstein, who lives in Israel, Bnei-Brak, who lived it through, and he has escaped there, it was very very seldom somebody could escape there. He ran out, they shot after him, and they run after him. He lived it through, the execution, and he told me everything how it happened, because he ran away in the morning when the executions stopped, because the Russians came nearer, and they were afraid, and they had to stop and take the rest of them, and the rest of them they took towards Germany, but they were killing on the road until they arrived to Germany. If I would have more time I would tell you in more detail what I know, but I want to tell you about that other thing as well.

Were the rest of your family, where did you find them?

The rest of my family, it was in about June '45, my sister suddenly arrived home. I used to go out to the railway station always to see who comes home. Some people came, like young people of my age. But no women. Women, a few women and girls started to arrive in May, June, July, no, later, yeh, June, July, August. Now we thought, we knew there is some Jewish girls, we can marry. Before we thought it's finished, we never married a Jewish girl any more, because there were no women at all. So my sister arrived suddenly, on the day, I met her and we hugged and kissed, and I cried, and came home, and she was in a very bad shape. She recovered a few days. And she told me all the stories what happened, the ghettos, how they were taken away. Mother was taken from hospital because she was very ill. My sister was taken, my little sister of 11 or 12, she had her tonsils out, they were taking her from hospital to the ghetto, and from the ghetto they were taken right to Auschwitz, where they were killed the same day when they arrived, and my sister who was 16, she was healthy, and they took her to work, and they told her that the chimney, your mother and sister is burning. Later in Budapest, I just found out from some young people talking, where they were eating, they were talking, how they were saved, and who was there, and I was just sitting, I didn't know them, and one of them asked, "Who was there? Do you know my friends?" And he suddenly says, Yitzchak Gunz was there." That was my brother, I just listened, that was in Auschwitz, but my brother was in Auschwitz for about 6, 7, or 8 months, and apparently he worked in the

crematorium, to regard, to burn the dead Zonderkommandos, but he was shot, they took the Jews back, and he couldn't walk, and he was shot. And as I hear what he says, suddenly I said to him, "Please tell me more about this." And he said, "Who are you?" I said, "Please tell me more, you mentioned my brother, Yitzchack". So he was surprised to find a brother then. "Who are you? Are you the oldest brother, who was in Bor?" I says "Yes." "Well, your brother told us a lot about you, and he told us that you are not alive any more." They had heard such terrible stories from Bor. "But please don't ask me any more, I won't tell you anymore. It's enough what you heard. And he wouldn't tell me any more about him, my brother. So I knew that my youngest brother was shot, when I went home, suddenly somebody came to say that they were together with my brother Shmuel, who was in Russia, and they, they took them back to Hungary, and they took them to Austria, and he has told us when his Yorzzeit is, because he saw him, he was frozen to death. He was very weak, he couldn't stand up any more, he was hungry and thirsty, and so he said, "This is his Yorzzeit." So that is as far as I know for my other brother. And of course, my mother and sister were killed in Auschwitz. Now, people tell me sometimes, in conversation, "Do you forgive the Germans? Do you still hate the Germans?" It's very hard to ask somebody who went through so much, my reply would be, "Tell me, if somebody would you kill your mother, what would you do? Would you forgive him right away? Or somebody didn't kill your mother, but your brother or sister? It's murder. But if somebody kills thousands or millions, it's history, not a tragedy. But my mother was killed, for me, it's a tragedy. For you," I'm talking about Gentiles, when they ask me a question, "You read history? So many millions of Jews were killed. For me it's a tragedy. You ask me to forgive." I don't hate the young Germans of today, but when I meet somebody of my age and older, in Germany, or in Hungary, it comes to my mind, "he could be a killer."

He was there.

He was there. He saw everything. Don't tell me the Germans didn't know, the Hungarians didn't know, they knew everything what's happening. They knew more what's happening than we Jews knew, what's going to happen. Who am I to forgive? Am I God to forgive? One who wants forgiveness should ask God for forgiveness, not me, I haven't got no right to forgive. I tell you this story because I want you and everybody to know what happened. With us, eye witnesses, who lived this terrible thing through, and we got out alive, for some miracle, no reason, because we were not better, I would say my brothers were better than I am, but we, us, we survived, we are eye-witnesses, I want my children and my grandchildren to know what happened. From my mouth, from my eye-witness. I want everybody to know. I want the killers to know. And I want to ask the killers, "Why? Why? Why did you kill us? Because we are Jews? We didn't kill Christ. And your religion is forgiveness. And the whole anti-Semitism was created by the Christians who took over from the early Christians who were Jews, and they started hating us. And this hate never stopped, and I doubt it will ever stop. And this brought the Holocaust. Now, how can you say that the Christian religion is based on love, and kindness and forgiveness? And the Messiah came, and people improved. if you are saying the Messiah came, the people are still murderers. Not only they murder us Jews, but, you're killing each other. Most of the wars in Europe, were fought Christians against Christians. This hatred for the Jews didn't stop with the Jews, it started a World War, and not only 6 million Jews were

killed, you can't stop when you're a killer, killing only Jews, approximately 50 million people were killed in Europe. So if anti-Semitism starts, and killing starts, the end will be many more people will be killed, and you will kill each other, because once you become a killer, you just kill, irrespective of who they are, after you killed the Jews, it will be your turn coming." I want to mention that after many years searching for those Serb boy, who saved me, helped to save my life. I was searching for years and years. I managed to trace him last year. I went to Belgrade, and I went to the village, Retopek, and found him there, we hugged each other, we talked to each other, I thanked them for what they had done, because my other colleague who was with me, died a few years ago in Israel. And I will never forget the kindness of these Serb people who were, I would say, righteous Gentiles. These happened, only one of millions. I forget to mention to you, that in Cervenka, where the execution took place of my colleagues, the Hungarian soldier with the two stars, whose name I remember, Kovac, I was told by some of my colleagues, that this Kovac was shouting that, where is little Gunz, me, "I will murder him, where is he, tell me where he is." They couldn't find me. He wanted to keep his promise, because he said to me, in Bor, "You, I'll kill you with my own hands." Of course, he didn't find me there. Years later, I went to Hungary, and I met a few people with whom I'd been to the camp, who, some of them escaped, in Yugoslavia, some of them, about four or five, came back from Germany, and told us all these stories. I inquired about this two star soldier, I wanted to confront him. Not to kill him, just to ask him, "Tell me, what did I do to you? Why did you want to kill me? Why did you hang me up and torture me for two hours? Twice. Like it was done in the Middle Ages? Didn't I give you, in the beginning, my parcels what I got from home. What did I do to you? What went into you to be a beast? If you are a beast, I would like to meet you, confront you, I didn't do anything for you." But I couldn't find him, although one of my colleagues knew where he is, and he told me where he is, but he persuaded me not to go there, not to go to him, let lying dogs lie. Don't start afresh, it would mean a new big trial and everything, and I advise you, for the sake of anti-Semitism, don't do it, because in Hungary there is still a great deal of anti-Semitism, and don't do it. So they persuaded me don't do it, and I never did anything.

I want to ask you actually, as a religious man, how did you feel when you were taken away? How did you feel when all that was happening, all those terrible things? Did you change your mind about the existence of God?

Well, very hard to answer you. The existence of God, I didn't deny, I don't deny the existence of God. As a matter of fact, we got some prayers, what it says, it says in the Tehilim,

Oh, the Psalms.

The Psalms, where it says, "I raise my hands to Heaven, and I ask God, help me now. Where are you going? This is the time, help me." And we did it. Some of them, some religious people there, there were some religious people, who were strongly religious, all, all the time until they were killed. Myself, I couldn't believe what's happening. We couldn't see what's happening. We asked very but I wouldn't tell you that I deny God's existence, but many did. I would say most of them denied God that time, and even after the War, they didn't want to know about

God. But I keep on saying, there is God in Heaven, an answer to what happened, I can't give an answer. I can't give an explanation, and I don't try, because we don't understand God's ways, and I can't explain God, I can only say, I did ask, "Where is God?" I didn't find him there. Why we are deserving that, that's a mystery, and I don't think on it any more. What I'm thinking about is the humans. How humans can do to each other what animals don't do to each other. How humans can kill for the sheer lust, while animals kill only if they are hungry.

What about the beginning, when people were taken away, when all the havoc started in the community. Didn't you think, or did you think, "Why do we have to go, who are these people to take us away? Why do we actually have to go." Didn't you think, "Can't we run away, can't we escape?"

When they took me away, there was half normality. My parents were still at home, and the Government issued a law, the Jews were very much law abiding, we didn't think about it.

So, because there was the law, you actually followed it, and you did what you were told?

There was no refusal. You can't refuse a law.

But you could see that it was only the Jews that were taken away?

That's right. That's right, well, we know that the laws came out against the Jews, and we were just hoping that nothing terrible would happen, things will pass, there were in history many times when Jews suffered the same thing, but they didn't kill them all, like, although some they killed, like in Spain, perhaps. In Spain, perhaps a third of the Spanish Jews were killed, a third had to run away, and a third became Christians, Maranos. Later on, when I was already in camp years, and they took the Jews to the ghetto, why they didn't run away that time, is still a mystery. They took them like sheep, and cattle to the slaughterhouse. Why they didn't run away, this is a question, although they were the last minute, there were the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, there were here and there uprising what never came out, but generally, the Jews were taken to the slaughterhouse, without knowing what's going to happen to them.

When they really couldn't go, would they run away?

There wasn't much to run away, where would you run away?

Nowhere to go.

99 per cent of the population, they didn't help, they didn't care, or they couldn't care less, and they didn't risk their life, in order to save Jews, there were only a number of people who risked their life, who had humanity in them, and wanted to save Jews.

So how do you feel about today, living in the Pravoslav, do you think there's anti-Semitism? Are you worried about it?

Oh, I'm certainly worried about anti-Semitism, because there is a lot of anti-Semitism today, and although the Churches today try to, try to eliminate it, sort of thing, but they don't do enough. First of all, it's too late for what happened, but they don't do enough to eliminate it. And even the Pope himself, he didn't come out, really, really, to do something about it, because all the Churches are still filled with, with priests who preach that the Jews killed Christ. He may say today that it was Pontius Pilate, it was the Jewish fault, and even if the Jews, say the Jews persuaded Pontius Pilate what to do, although from history the Jews didn't have much to say, but how can you kill today's generation for what the Jews did that time? Does anybody kill today, grandchildren, for what their parents have done? Does anybody in Australia convict the whole of Australia, because the first thousands, or ten thousands of people were murderers?

Do you think it could ever happen again?

Well, the way humanity is, everything could happen again. What we want to tell the world, what happened, in order to prevent it, it shouldn't happen again. Anti-Semitism and Jewish hatred is still strong enough, to, to incite the people to do irrational things, but it could happen, things could happen, especially in Christian Catholic countries, because the Catholic teaching, apparently, is anti-Semitic, and the biggest anti-Semites were the Catholic countries, where we'll take non-Catholic countries, like England, the anti-Semitism is much milder than in other countries. Take, for instance, Yugoslavia, where I come from, where there are Catholics, the Croats, the Croats they killed all the Jews, they didn't wait for the Germans, they murdered them mercilessly, and the Slavs, the proper Slavs, the Serbs, were very good to the Jews, they didn't murder anybody. Take Hungary, Catholic countries, they were bigger murderers even than the Germans. Take Poland, they were very big murderers. Take Ukraine, they helped the Germans a lot, they joined the SS, and they take the same cruelty as the Germans.

Thank you very much.

End of FI26 Side B

END OF INTERVIEW

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INTERVIEW SUMMARY SHEET

Ref. No.: C410/O9

Playback Nos: F124-126 inc.

Collection Title: Living Memory of the Jewish Community

Interviewee's surname: GUNZ

Title: Mr.

Interviewee's forenames: Jack

Date of Birth: 28.12.1920

Sex: M

Date(s) of recording: 9.11.1988

Location of interview: Interviewee's home

Name of interviewer: Devora Coutts

Type of recorder: Marantz

Total no. of tapes: 3

Speed: -

Type of tape: C60 cassettes

Noise Reduction: Dolby

Mono or stereo: stereo

Original or copy: Original

Additional material:

Copyright/clearance: Full clearance given

Fl24 - Side A

Early life in home town. Family life. Father's occupation. Emphasis on Jewish Orthodox education for boys in family. Life within the local Jewish community. Experienced anti-semitism. Anecdote of a catholic priest who displayed extreme anti-semitism.

1941: Beginning of German Occupation. Neighbours and friends (non-Jews) becoming hostile.

Names of places/Jewish terminology

Senta - town in Yugoslavia.

Cheder - Jewish Day school, for Jewish studies only (Hebrew).

Subotica - town in Yugoslavia.

Ilok - small town in Yugoslavia.

Yeshiva - Jewish High school for Jewish studies only (Hebrew).

Bar Mitzvah - A thirteen years old boy (Hebrew)

Yeshiva Bucher - a boy who studies at Yeshiva (Yiddish/Hebrew).

Satmar - famous Jewish town in Rumania.

Beth-Hamedrash - a house for study and prayer (Hebrew).

Ashkenaz Jews - Jews who come mainly from Europe (Hebrew).

Subotka - Hungarian name for Subotica.

Yom Kippur - Day of Atonement (Hebrew).

Bunyevatz - Catholic Croats.

Vojrodina - district in Yugoslavia.

Chatniks - Serb freedom fighters - fought Hungarians.

F124 - Side B

With rising anti-semitism - problems with workers in family factory. Loss of workforce. Family working in factory. Rounding of Jewish men for labour camp.

1943: workforce divided for Russian front and copper mine. Rest of family still at home.

1943: Mr. Gunz joins others to go to Bor copper mine. Working on a steam crane. Reasonable conditions to start with - worsen later. Description of mining work.

Names of Places:

Munka szolgalat - labour force (Hungarian).

Hodmezovasarhely - town in Hungary.

Szeged - town in Hungary.

Bor - copper mine.

Kolomai - Polish border town.

Tisa - river in Hungary.

Titel - town in Yugoslavia.

Lager - camp (German).

Tote }
Siemens } German organisation

F125 - Side A

Accounts and incidents of working at Bor copper mine. Special relationship with one of the German officers, helped Mr. Gunz to have lighter work for a while. Didn't last for very long.

September 1944: Jews were going to be sent to Hungary. Germans planning to leave. News of Russians coming through.

Names/spellings

heraus - out (German).

Foster - Guard's name.

Gemuze - vegetables (German)

Lager Fuhrer - Camp Commander.

F125 - Side B

Various accounts of cruel treatment at camp. Punishment by hanging for hours - for no particular crime. Prisoners marching out of camp towards Hungary. Many escape with help of Serbian population. Mr. Gunz and friend also escape. Guards don't look for escaped prisoners. Serbian peasant family let them stay and work on farm. Tribute to his rescuers. A battle being fought between Russian and German armies near the village.

Names/spellings

Cervenka - village in Yugoslavia.

stoj - stop

Draza michaelovits - soldiers fighting against Germans for King's party.

Tito -

Retopek - village in Yugoslavia.

F126 - Side A

Battle between Russians and Germans outside village intensified. People hiding in cellar of peasant house deciding to leave and run to fields. Meeting with partisans - asked to join them. After two days training given task to accompany a large group of German prisoners of war across the River Danube to Russian headquarters. Deciding to go home to Subotica to find out fate of family. Long journey home - finding house occupied by local people.

Names/spelling

commandature - headquarters.

F126 - Side B

People leave family home. Russian soldiers take it over for their purposes. Finding what had happened to members of his family. Lost members of family in death

camps. There was still ignorance of what had really happened in death camps. Thoughts, reflections and feelings about Germans, forgiveness, belief in God, anti-semitism today - could the Holocaust happen again?

Names/spellings

schutz passe - protection pass.

kibbutz - communal living - usually agricultural (Hebrew).

Chana Senesz

Cervenka - village in Yugoslavia.

Novisad - town in Yugoslavia.

Rotenstein - name

Bnei-Brak - town in Israel.

Auschwitz

Zonderkommando

Yitschak

Shmuel

Yorzeit - anniversary of death

Kouac - Hungarian name

Tehilim - Psalms

Pravoslav - part of the Christian religion in some place in Europe.

END OF SUMMARY