Memoirs of Holocaust Survivors Residing in South Florida

Our Story of Survival

Holocaust Survivors Mendel 'Manny' Riba and Sally Tolub Riba's Memoir

As told to Bobbi Kaufman

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The Sue and Leonard Miller Center for Contemporary Judaic Studies
and The George Feldenkreis Program in Judaic Studies

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The information in this book is presented in good faith. The words in this book are the words of Manny Riba and Sally Riba as they recalled their personal experience in the Holocaust. This is their story and their truth.

On the cover: Sally and Manny with their dog Heidle on the farm in Pietrolesie. 1945.

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FOREWARD

"For the survivor who chooses to testify, it is clear: his duty is to bear witness for the dead and for the living. He has no right to deprive future generations of a past that belongs to our collective memory. To forget would be not only dangerous but offensive; to forget the dead would be akin to killing them a second time.…

"... I have tried to keep memory alive…I have tried to fight those who would forget. Because if we forget we are guilty, we are accomplices."

- Elie Wiesel

As time goes on, the number of Holocaust survivors alive today is rapidly dwindling. With their passing, the incomprehensible cataclysm known as The Holocaust, or Shoah, is fast morphing from a 'lived memory' into a 'historical memory'; from a personal experience of 'those who were there' into impersonal commemorative monuments and museums.

All too soon, there will be no one left to offer first hand testimony of what it was like to actually be there when all hell broke loose; all too soon, even those who knew and heard directly from the victims of the Nazis and their collaborators, will be gone.

It is, therefore, a matter of great urgency that we gather and preserve for future generations as much primary documentation and testimony as possible about the lives and experiences of those heroes who survived the Holocaust, managed to build new lives, and were willing to tell their stories.

Memoirs serve as a very important means of preserving these testimonies. Several years ago, Holocaust survivors began approaching Bobbi Kaufman, asking for help writing their memoirs, describing their lives before, during, and since the Holocaust. She began working with the Holocaust Memorial Miami Beach (HMMB), writing the memoirs of Holocaust survivors who were docents and contributors to the memorial. This collaboration was instrumental in her developing a series of in-depth, book-length memoirs. Six books were completed and uploaded onto the HMMB website and the HMMB created lesson plans for each book to be used in teaching about the Holocaust.

Now, in collaboration with the HMMB, the Sue and Leonard Miller Center for Contemporary Judaic Studies, and the George Feldenkreis Program in Judaic Studies of the University of Miami, the series has been named Memoirs of Holocaust Survivors Residing in Florida. The existing books were graphically redesigned and several new books have been added to the collection, with the objective of continuing to expand the series. The complete series will be freely available to the public in digital form on the HMMB and Miller Center and Feldenkreis Program websites.

Our hope is that this series will make a significant contribution to the growing literature of Holocaust survivors' memoirs and serve as a tribute to their ability to make new lives for themselves while never forgetting.

Dr. Haim Shaked
Director, The Miller Center and Feldenkreis Program
University of Miami

DEDICATION

Dedicated with love to our children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren.

Never Forget

— Manny and Sally Riba

MANNY'S STORY
CHILDHOOD

I was born September 15, 1923 in Chmiclow, Poland, a little suburb one kilometer from Dzialoszyce. My name at birth was Mendel Ryba. When I emigrated to the United States I changed the spelling to Riba to be sure the pronunciation remained correct. I had four sisters and one brother: Channa, Cela, Blema, Sarah, and Itzhak. I was the third child. My sister, Cela, was married to Hershel Zelowski. They had one little girl, Fela, who was named after my mother. She was born in 1939 right at the beginning of the war. I was the only person in my family to survive the war.

My mother and father were both from Dzialoszyce. My mother's name was Faigle Pila. She had two brothers and two sisters. She was the youngest child. Her brothers and sisters lived in little nearby towns. Because my parents' home was where the family would gather, I would get together with my cousins when they came on the holidays.

My mother died before the war. In the fall of 1937 she died of diabetes. She was buried on top of her mother, in the same grave. That was a great honor because they both gave a lot to charity. The rabbi said my mother was a *tzadik*, a righteous person.

My father's name was David Ryba. His nickname was Faivish. He was also known as David Chmcleveh — David from Chmiclow. His business was buying cattle, slaughtering them, and selling the meat. My father's income from slaughtering the cattle provided ninety percent of the income for our town's Jewish communal services. My father paid five zlotys to the community for every cow that was slaughtered. This money paid the salaries of rabbi, the *hazan*, the *mashgiach*, and the *shochet*, plus the upkeep of the synagogue, and so on. The community raised about 35,000 zloty a year and my father was paying about 30,000 zlotys of it. My father had a lot of money. Everyone respected my father; if David spoke, that was it.

My childhood home in Chmiclow had a big fruit garden. There were beautiful cherries and apples. There was a family that tended the orchard and marketed the fruit for my father. They would bring us baskets of fruit for the weekend. We ate whatever food was in season. When blueberries were in season we cooked with blueberries. When apples were in season we cooked with apples. If a food was out of season, it was out of existence. When the fruit got ripe my mother would cook it and store it lined up on shelves in the basement. On the side of our house there was a big lake that was full of carp fish. A family made a living renting that pond from us and raising the fish. Every Friday the guy came and brought a big fish for my mother to cook for *Shabbas*. In the fall we would put a couple of wagon loads of potatoes, beets, carrots, and other

vegetables in the basement – everything was stored away for the winter. My father would store two hundred pounds of sugar, two or three big bags of flour. Sure, there were mice in the basement, but we had two cats. My father also always had two dogs.

My mother did not like the house we lived in, so in about 1930 my father bought sixty acres of land on a high hill overlooking the city of Dzialoszyce where he built a house. The house was on top of the hill with a view overlooking the city and for twenty or thirty miles. The house was built in the European style. We had big rooms. My brother and I had one room, the two little sisters had a room, and the two big sisters had a room. We had an oven to bake bread and a big basement to store all the food for the winter.

Shabbas dinner at my house was always a full course dinner. At our house we never knew how many people there were going to be for dinner. When my father went to *shul* my mother would tell him to bring home an *oirech*, a poor man, for *Shabbas* dinner. But he always cheated: instead of one he always brought two. The table would be set and the meal was always set in the middle of the table. Everybody took as much as they wanted. The silverware was in a silverware holder. We would start with chopped onions, then the fish, then soup, compote, and always *cholent*. There was a lot of food. We didn't worry about cholesterol or calories at that time — we just ate.

My mother always had help. We always had a Jewish maid plus we had non-Jewish help who came in on Saturdays to light the fire because Jews could not start a fire on *Shabbas*. My father built a little house, like an apartment, adjacent to our house. We had a couple living there. The man did the outside work around the house and the woman came in and helped in the house.

Our house did not have indoor plumbing; there was an outhouse. When we were kids we had a chamber pot. To get water we had to dig a well. Because we were on a hill the well had to be very deep. There was a bucket with a cable and to get the water we had to drop the bucket and pull the water up. That was the water for the house. To take a bath the water would be heated on the stove in the kitchen on our wood and coal burning stove. When I got to be about seven years old I started going twice a week with my father and brother to the *schvitz* bath [steam bath] and to the *mikvah*. At the steam bath we had a little broom made out of leaves and a little bucket of water. We would go in and soap ourselves up. The higher up we went on the benches, the hotter it got.

Our house was lit by kerosene lamps. My father paid to build a little windmill and put in a little generator so we had two little light bulbs in the living room and one in the hall. In the city there was a Jewish couple who sold electricity. In the daytime they used water to run a mill. At night they did not run the mill, instead they ran a generator and sold a little electricity to the town. In

Dzialoszyce there was no movie theater, but there was a hall where two or three times a year troupes came to entertain. Sometimes a good *hazan*, cantor, would come to the synagogue for the weekend — that was a big doing!

The Jewish organizations for Israel at that time were very active in the smaller towns. In our town we had Betar and Shomer Ha'tzair. I was always involved in Betar. We had meetings and get-togethers. We were singing together, boys and girls. This was my entertainment. Keren Kayemet, the Jewish National Fund, was a big item at that time. My family had no thoughts of going to Israel.

My father went to synagogue, *shul*, on *Shabbas*. The *shul* was a little house where people were praying. My mother and sisters didn't always go. My mother wore a *sheitel*, a wig. She had one for every day, one for when she went out in the afternoon, and a special sheitel for the holidays.

My siblings and I went to public school. We all went to the same school but were in different classes. Public school started at eight in the morning until two o'clock. At two o'clock we went home for lunch then we went to *cheder*, Jewish school, until six. Every day. I was not a good student. I never got in really bad trouble because I had too much respect for my parents. I did not always go to synagogue, but I always went to *cheder*. I also went to a special rabbi who my father paid to teach me. My father had to pay him to teach me privately because I did not always do very well

at *cheder.* Actually, I was thrown out! My sisters went to *Beis Yaakov,* Jewish school for girls, after school. The teaching there was not very rigorous, it was mostly how to behave like a lady.

Our next door neighbor, Zaganowsky, was the chief of police. He had a boy, Stasha, who was my age. We went to school together and we did homework together. We did everything together. I slept at his house and he slept at my house. He joined the Boy Scouts and convinced my father I should join the Boy Scouts, too. At that time Jewish boys did not join the Boy Scouts, but I became a Boy Scout.

My father sold meat to the markets in our town and he also sent meat to the bigger cities: Sosnowiec and Krakow. In our town there were about six kosher meat markets and three non-kosher markets. Every man who worked in these markets was like a partner to my father. (My mother's father's brother was the *mashgiach*, the kosher slaughterer, in the town. Until 1937 rny father delivered the meat using horses and wagons. He loaded them up at night, put ice on the wagon, and then went and made the deliveries. In 1937 my father sold all the horses and bought a truck. With that one truck he made all the deliveries.

Each week, my father would go out into the field to buy cattle. My father's nickname was Faivish. When he would come to a town the people would say, "Faivish is here." If he didn't buy cattle that day, the kids would go in the road and throw stones at him. He had a little goatee and big

whiskers — he looked Jewish. One day, he was riding on a horse and one of those rocks hit him on his side. Right away he went to the barber and cut off his beard. When he got home that night for supper we all looked at him and said, "Dad, what did you do?" He said, "Kinderlach, Children, I'm a Jew, but God didn't say to go out and get killed for that. So I cut off my beard." My father always wore a hat; he never went out without a hat even after he cut his beard.

Every day my father would go to every one of his customers' stores, take out a piece of paper and say, "You took so many pounds of meat." Then he counted up and he took the money. Every Sunday morning the store owners would all meet at a *bierstube*, a tavern or meeting room. There would be food: they would roast a couple of geese, there would be goose gizzards, there would be kegs of beer, pretzels with a lot of salt and pepper. I would go with my father. He would take out his paper and say, "On Monday you took so much, on Tuesday you took so much, on Wednesday you took so much..." There would be five little pieces of paper. "On Monday you gave me so many zlotys, on Tuesday so many zlotys, how much do you have left?" The guy would count up how much he had left and took out what he needed for himself, and the transaction was done. There were no books, no computers. Everybody was sitting and eating and drinking as much beer as they wanted. No one got drunk. There were no women there.

My father taught me one thing: I had to be able to take care of myself. When I started to go to *cheder* in the town, my father took me by the hand and took me into the grocery store and the bakery and said, "This is my Mendel. When he comes in, whatever he wants you give it to him." Every day at lunch time (after public school and before *cheder*) I would go in and get enough food so my friends and I would have a nice picnic. We did not have club soda at that time so we used to take vinegar with a little syrup and baking soda and put it in the water, mix it up and it boiled, bubbled. One day I went into Plasznik's grocery store and I wanted vinegar. They said they didn't have vinegar but they had essig. It was very strong. We don't see it now, but at that time it was available. I took a bottle of essig and when I opened it up I burned a couple of kids' hands. The rabbi from the *shul* called up my father. My father came and asked me why I did that. I told him I wanted something else but they didn't have it so I thought this would be good, too. My father said, "Come on." He took me to every store and said, "You see this kid? When he comes in, give him nothing. He cannot control himself. Give him nothing." My father had eight stores as customers and in every one I called the owner 'Uncle'. So I went around every morning to all their stores and every one of them gave me five groshens. At the end of the tour I would have forty groshens. People had to work half a day to make that much money. I had forty groshens for lunch. My father was a good teacher! I learned how to take care of myself.

On Thursday afternoons my father went to deliver meat to Sosnowiec. My father's brother and youngest sister lived in Sosnowiec. Sometimes I would jump on the truck on Thursday and spend Friday and Saturday in Sosnowiec with them. Sunday afternoons the truck would come back to pick me up and take me home.

THE WAR BEGINS

When the war broke out I was spending the weekend in Sosnowiec. Three or four days before the war started the Polish army came in and confiscated my father's truck. I had gotten to Sosnowiec in the truck, but I couldn't get home by truck. I had a bicycle. I wanted to go home, so I went on my bike. When I got home there was a group of boys who were organizing to go to Russia. I told my dad that I wanted to go to Russia with them. He said, "You're going no place." I said, "I want to go, I'm afraid." He said, "Whatever is going to happen to me is going to happen to you." He went out and took a sledgehammer and broke my bicycle.

A couple of weeks after the war broke out my uncle and his sons came and said to my father, "Let's go to Russia." My father said, "Why am I going to go? Who's going to do something to me?" He thought he was untouchable. He could not believe anything could happen to him. My

father did not want to go, but my brother, my brother-in-law, and I wanted to go with my uncle. My father did not change his mind but he just could not convince us to stay. He didn't feel comfortable, but there was nothing he could do about it.

My uncle had two horses and a big wagon. In the afternoon he drove up to our house with his three sons and another friend and said, "We're going to Russia." And we went with him. We drove strictly at night. In the daytime we hid behind the trees in the shade so the Germans couldn't see us. If they saw us they would shoot us. We traveled for two days until we got into a small town. When we got there, the German army drove the Polish soldiers out and surrounded the town. There were dead people in the streets, dead horses, and everything. There was no distinction — they were killing everyone. We survived by lying under a wall in a building. When we came out, we discovered our wagon was all smashed up; everything we had on the wagon was gone. The following day my uncle went out into the field and picked up some bruised-up army horses. There were twelve or thirteen of us and he gave each of us a horse. We headed back home to Dzialoszyce. When we got back home what could my father say? He said, "Come in and have something to eat."

THE GERMANS ENTER DZIALOSZYCE

When the Germans came into Dzialoszyce in 1939 our life was already not normal. Everybody was trying to find a way to save himself. Soon, Jews from other towns began to come in until there must have been over ten thousand Jews in our town. Right away we had to wear armbands with the Star of David. We could not do any business. The Germans tried to confiscate our land. My father gave a lot of our valuables to our neighbor, Zaganowsky, the police chief, to keep them safe for us. We buried the jewelry in the basement. It may still be there now.

On the second day of Rosh Hashanah in 1941 when we left the synagogue after services we found our home had been destroyed. The basement was still there and the jewelry was buried in the bottom. We went to my sister Cela's apartment and stayed with her. There were the five of us plus my sister and her husband and their baby living there. Then another couple had to move in. We all lived in that two bedroom apartment for about six months until we were deported.

My younger brother, Itzhak, and my brother-in-law, Herschel, had a notion that something was going to happen so they did not come home to my sister's apartment at night. My father had a lot of farmers that he supported and who owed him money. One of those farmers was named Novack. He agreed to help my brother and brother-in-law

because my father had been good to him. My brother and brother-in-law went to Novack. We never saw them again. A couple of weeks later we learned that a neighbor had found out that Novack was hiding two Jews so they turned him into the Germans. The Germans came and shot them. The neighbor who turned them in got a reward for discovering a Jew. He got ten pounds of sugar as a reward.

While we were at my sister's we had to do municipal work, ditch work. The men had to work, but my sisters did not work. My family owned land. Our neighbors, Jewish people, the Shapiros, also had a lot of land. The Germans confiscated all the land and made a big cooperative. The Germans put in a commissar, a man to run the land. The Shapiros had a lot of cattle and the commissar did not know what to do with them. The commissar found out that my father knew what to do with the cattle so he put him in to deal with the cattle. My father became an advisor to the commissar. He did not get paid, but he got a little privilege — a bag of potatoes sometimes. He treated my father pretty good.

There were a lot of cattle hides so my father suggested they set up a tannery. The Germans needed leather, so my father advised the commissar to let us tan the leather to fix the harnesses for the horses. He took my father's advice and set up a tannery. Together with a friend of ours, Baragis, whose father had a tannery, we set up a tannery and we

worked for that commissar tanning leather for eight or nine months. In the beginning, I was working in the ditches. The roads were bad so the Germans made the Jews go out on the road and dig ditches to make better drainage. When my father went to work for the commissar, he pulled me out of that work and set me up to run the little tannery. I worked in the tannery for about six or eight months.

MURDER, SELECTION, AND DEPORTATION

One night, around the holidays in the fall of 1942, German and Polish police surrounded the city. Nobody could get in or out. They came and knocked on doors and told everyone to get out of their houses and go into the center of the city. There was no list, no names; it was just like herding a bunch of sheep. We did not go out; my father said not to go out. When the people gathered in the center of the city they were told that anybody who was sick or didn't feel well could go on a wagon. They didn't know where they were going. A couple of days before, behind the cemetery, they had dug a big ditch. Nobody knew why or for what. They took all those people on the wagons and went out about a mile or a mile and a half and made them undress and they shot them. They shot about eight hundred people, maybe more.

We had all our bundles put together. When my father looked out the window and saw thousands of people marching by our house, he said, "Let's go. Everybody's

going; we're going with them." We joined the group of people marching. A policeman my father knew saw him in the group and hit him on the head with his carbine, and said, "You Goddamn Jew." We just kept going. They put us out on a field and had us wait until they got everybody together. They kept us on the field overnight. We could see the train station from the field.

My sister had a baby girl, Fela. After many hours, we ran out of water for the baby. When I saw Stasha, my non-Jewish friend, coming over to me I said to my sister, "Cela. Stasha is coming and he is going to get me some water." Stasha came over and I said to him, "Stasha it is good that you came, we need some water for the baby. Get me some water." He said, "I cannot get you water." I said I needed it for the baby. He said, "Manny, we cannot give you anything because you are going to die." I asked, "Why are we going to die?" He said, "Because they told us that you killed Jesus Christ, so you are going to die for that."

The next morning they came to the field and they made a selection. The children, the girls, the women, and the babies were sent to the left and the others to the right. My four sisters and the baby were together in the same group. They went to the left. They mixed in with the crowds and that is the last time we ever saw them. My father and I went to the other side. We stood there for a couple of hours. Everybody was confused. Then the train came and they started getting us in — just like cattle. There was no

roll call, no accounting at all. Everybody grabbed whatever they could. A lot of the packages were left behind. We got on the train. From Dzialoszyce to Miechow we were in open railroad cars, like coal cars. We were all from the same town; everybody knew each other. The ride to Miechow was about three hours. In Miechow they reloaded us onto cattle cars. On these trains there were people from other towns. We were crowded in like herring. The windows were tied with barbed wire. We were all confused. Everybody was in the same position; there was no one to be a leader. We didn't know where we were going, what we were doing.

ARRIVAL AT SKARZYSKO

We arrived in Krakow in the afternoon and they kept us in the railroad cars all night. While we were sitting there, before they took us down to the camp, my father wanted water. He offered a Polack one hundred dollars for a bottle of water. He brought him a bottle of dirty water for one hundred dollars. In the morning they unloaded us and put us in a camp in Prokocim, a suburb of Krakow. (Prokocim was the railway station outside Krakow. It was the official name of the area which included the Plaszow camp where Oscar Schindler's factory was.) There were two camps at Prokocim divided by Jerusalcmska Street. Jerusalemska Street went up the side of the hill that was central to the Plaszow camp. As a bit of Nazi black humor, it was named Jerusalem Street by the Nazis because it went up to heaven. It was paved with tombstones from the Jewish cemetery.

The camp on one side of Jerusalcmska Street was a concentration camp built to house surplus people, people who were not needed to work or who were unable to work. It was called Julag, an abbreviation for Judenlager. Julag was built on the grounds of the Jewish cemetery. There were about thirty or forty barracks there. Amon Goeth was the head of that camp.

On the other side of the street was the camp called Plaszow. The camp must have been three or four hundred feet all the way down a hill. There was a big empty lot, maybe ten, fifteen, twenty acres, between the highway and the camp. The people who could work were at this camp. There were barracks, a kitchen, and a place for the commander. Mueller was the commander. My father and I were taken to Plaszow. No one asked our names; there was no registration. We all were assigned numbers. Everybody was given a slice of bread and those who had a container got some coffee. Later on, after a couple of days, everybody got a little container. Most of the people had some food in the packages they were carrying, enough for a couple of days. We had no water. We were assigned bunks. We just stayed in a line and marched in. Everyone carried his packages to his bunk. There were four people to a bunk. I was with my father. The next morning they told everybody to go out on a field and line up. An SS man, Mueller, came down and said whoever had gold and silver had to give it up. Very few people gave any. Mueller took out two men in the front and and asked, "Do you have anything?" He

shot them. People became afraid and started to dig out rings, and other things. There must have been a couple of thousand people in the camp. The whole place was surrounded by a fence and barbed wire. There were guards and SS and watch towers. The bathrooms were outside. There were just two holes for toilets.

One of the commanders took a liking to me and gave me the job of lighting the oven in his house. Because of this my father and I were able to be warm some of the time. One day the commander came in and saw my father davening and he shouted, "There is no God!" and he held up a handful of money and said, "This is God." My father continued davening.

About six or eight different companies were building roads and bridges. They came to the camp and each company picked about three or four hundred people to work for them. They lined us up and each company picked out who they wanted. I worked for the Mueller Company doing cement work, building bridges. I worked there for a little over a year. When we were in Plaszow they came one morning and said, "Who wants to go to work?" I was always there, volunteering to work. They had big wagons on rubber wheels. They put ten or twelve of us in a wagon and took us down to the Krakow Ghetto. We were under the supervision of the Ukrainian or Lithuanian SS, not the German SS. We were collecting bodies during the liquidation of the Krakow ghetto. The liquidation was on one side and we were walking in the streets behind them.

The street was all blood. The people were so skinny you could fit six grown men in one coffin.

In the ghetto there were tall apartment buildings. When they were liquidating the ghetto, whenever they found a woman with a baby, instead of her carrying the baby down they grabbed the baby and threw it out the window. Babies were falling out from the windows from the third, fourth floor. I actually saw it. When they emptied the ghetto there were babies laying on the street. We had to pick them up. There were too many of them; we couldn't do anything for them. We pushed the wagons up to where the cemetery was before the Julag camp was built there. There were no tombstones anymore. There was already a hole dug there. We went there and we had to dump those children down into that hole. We couldn't do anything; we couldn't give them a respectable burial. There were SS behind us so we had to just throw them off. We did not cover the bodies; we were just doing the transport. After we were gone we don't know what happened. For doing that work we got a big slice of bread. Many years later I took my son and daughter to see that area.

When the cement work at Prokocim was completed they lined us all up and sent us out to Judenlager. We were there for maybe ten days and then they put us on railroad cars and sent us to Skarzysko Kamienna to work for the HASAG Company, a German chemical company. I was put on the same train with my father.

ARRIVAL AT SKARZYSKO

When we got to Skarzysko there was a selection. There were three camps: A, B, and C. In Camp A they were making shells for bullets. In Camp B they were filling the explosives into the bullet shells. In Camp C they were working with the iron ore and preparing the explosives. I was sent to Camp C to work with iron ore. My father was sent to Camp A. My father was around forty-seven or forty-eight years old. There were quite a few men between the ages of forty and fifty. The Nazis looked for mature people they could give more responsibility to. My father was assigned to operate the boiler system for the entire plant. As prisoners we were running responsible operations. When we were building bridges we were operating cement mixers; when we were doing carpentry we were doing professional work. We all produced meaningful work. I don't know if they had prior knowledge of my father's experience and ability or if he just looked responsible and capable, but at the selection they put him aside.

At Skarzysko they put me to work with picric acid in camp C. We were making water mines. This operation was a "people eater." People couldn't last working there for more than two or three months — the chemical ate them up. The acid ate out their lungs. I was yellow, my feet were swollen, I had swollen knees. I worked there for about four months. I was slowing down and slowing down and

slowing down. As we got worn down, production slowed down. At every station there were four workers: one was cleaning, one was filling, one was weighing, and one was using the press. The most risk was on the men who were using the press and weighing the powder. The man doing the weighing would inhale the powder. After two or three months they were always replaced with new people. When they wanted us to do four presses a minute and we were worn down and could only do two presses a minute, they took us out and shot us.

One day they took out about three hundred of us and shot us. We were naked; they made us undress. They shot me in the neck and the bullet came out of my mouth. It knocked out my front teeth. I woke up in the grave. There was somebody lying on top of me. I knew how to get around, so I went and washed myself up and crawled into the barracks. I had no pants. One guy gave me a pair of pants and another gave me a jacket. I tied up my face because it was still bleeding. The next morning I got up and went back to work. I attached myself to a job I was not assigned to. The job was transport, pushing wagons. If I had stayed hidden in the bunk they would have shot me. They walked around checking — no one could stay in the bunk. My body and mind carried me; I just didn't want to die. I remained at the job with the transport until the end in the fall of 1943.

My father and I were not housed together; we were maybe five or six kilometers apart. At our camp we did not have

baths. On weekends we were marched to where my father was so we could take showers. We had lice, and worse than lice, were these black bugs that got on our skin; they were blood suckers. My father would be waiting for me. He always gave me a piece of bread. My father had contact with Poles where he was working so he had the opportunity to mingle with them. He still had some money. One Sunday I gave my father my pair of worn out shoes and he gave me a different pair of shoes. He knew someone who could fix my shoes.

There was a field they called the "shooting gallery." There they would shoot the prisoners and take their clothes. They always made people undress before they shot them. One day they brought in a wagon load of clothes and told us prisoners to take as many clothes as we wanted. We were going to be traveling so they gave us clothes. When I saw the shoes I had given to my father on the wagon, I got emotional. I thought my father must be gone. I went into the bunk and I laid down and I started to cry. I didn't want to go out. About three hours later I heard, "*Rous, rous*!" They lined us up and took all those who were sick or crippled and shot them. The rest of us were put on a train. We went from Skarzysko to Częstochowa. This was in the fall of 1944. Three days later when we got into Czestochowa I saw my father. They unloaded the cars and there was my father. My father was transported in another car. I saw him walking with a little bag on his shoulder. My father always had a little bag on his shoulder. When I saw him it was like a new world was coming down.

In Skarzysko, when I was there, I didn't know what I was doing, but now when I read about it, I recognize what I did: When I was moving carts and a wagon would break, the capo would say. "Leave it here, we are going to get another one." This was planned so that at night the partisans would come in and get the ammunition from the wagon. I didn't know then how, or who was helping the resistance, but now when I read about it I think, "This is familiar. This is what I did."

CZESTOCHOWA

In Czestochowa there were also three HASAG chemical plants. They had just moved us from one factory to another to fill the labor need in those factories. (HASAG had factories in Skarzysko, in Czestochowa, and in Colditz, Germany.) They put me and my father in different camps working in different divisions. My father was in Camp A where he operated the boiler and machinery. I worked in a steel mill. My job was unloading coal from railroad cars. We shoveled it out and put it in piles. The coal was for heating the ovens for melting the scrap metal. That was my only job for the year. They called my work "transport." I was exhausted. If we slowed down, the capos would hit us over the head. You could miss a meal and survive, but if somebody hit you over the head, that was a death sentence because your body did not have the strength to recuperate. Everybody tried to avoid being hit. I was hit sometimes, but within limits. We worked twelve hours a day, from

seven to seven. They picked us up at seven and we finished work at six. Until they got us lined up and into the camp it was seven. Life just went on every day. We just went to work. We were not fed during the day, but we did have access to water. In the morning we had a small slice of bread and a cup of coffee. At supper we had a bowl of soup and a slice of bread. If you were lucky you got something from the bottom of the soup: a few potatoes, a piece of meat, horse meat. Everybody had his own bowl for soup that hung from our belt. We did not leave our spoon or bowl anywhere. When we would get a piece of bread some people would want to save a half of the piece for lunch. If somebody took that piece of bread from him, by nighttime he would have no energy and he would lose his life. In Skarzysko there was a German doctor who took us all together and he said, "When you get food, you eat it. Your stomach is your warehouse. If you get enough food once a day your body will coordinate to carry it. Do not ever store any food anywhere. Your stomach is your warehouse." From then on, if we saw food we ate it. When people are hungry and under these conditions they act like animals. You just can't take it; you lose your conscience.

We slept in barracks. All the barracks looked alike; they were wide and long. The bunks were four levels high. When it was cold we bundled up with each other in our bunks. Some people had burlap bags to sleep on. Some of the time we could get some straw or wood shavings, but most of the time we just slept on the boards.

We had no real news of the war. We did see planes going over, but we didn't know what they were. We heard rumors but the majority of us were too broken down to pay attention. By that time, praying didn't mean anything. Everybody was for himself. There was no mercy; the morale was gone. We just did whatever we were told to do.

One day, they moved us out of this camp. I have no idea why, they just said go and we went. We woke up that morning and we did not go to work. There was no selection. They just said to get out. They gave us a piece of bread, then we lined up and they told us to get into the railroad cars. They only brought the prisoners from Camp A and from my camp. My father and I were put in the same cattle car. Nor everyone went on the trains. I don't know why everybody did not get on the train, maybe there was not enough room. The following morning the Russians came in. Those who did not get on the train were liberated the following morning. I have friends who did not go on the train and they were liberated. They put us on a train and we sat on the train the whole night. We were on the train for twenty-four hours before it pulled out. We would be on the train for five days before we got out. People died on the train. It was October or November, 1944. It was very cold. We piled a couple of bodies in the corner of the train to make a partition for a toilet area. Then we lay down on the floor between bodies to keep warm. In the five days they opened up the car three times and gave us some bread. Some people got a piece of bread, some people didn't. Whoever could get near the door could get the bread.

After five days we arrived at Buchenwald. There was a big sign that said "Buchenwald." You couldn't miss it. There were thousands of people. First, we went into a big holding area. Then we went into a big building and lined up and registered. When it was my turn to register, my father registered me. He wrote my name; I have a copy of it. They assigned us each a number. After we registered they made everybody undress. We thought they were going to gas us. We knew about Auschwitz, we knew about Treblinka. We had heard the rumors and talk. We then had to go down a couple of steps into a big, long, swimming-pool-like thing filled with a solution to sterilize us [kill any lice or diseases on us]. They pushed us in. We didn't know where we were going. We couldn't stop; the crowd pushed us. When we got into the middle of it, a thing like a bridge or canopy or a press came down and pushed us down to immerse us so they could sterilize our hair. It was scary. It was like the way they dip sheep. When the canopy came down a lot of people went down and never got up. We got out on the other side and we dried off. Then we stood by a window and they gave everybody a little cap, a jacket, a pair of pants and a pair of wooden shoes. They shaved our hair; they shaved us all over: under our arms, everywhere. We were lined up, there must have been about ten men with shavers. They did not examine our teeth. There was no medical examination. They did weigh us. I weighed seventy-two German pounds, about eighty American pounds. I was skin and bones.

They put us in barracks. I was assigned to Barracks 65. My

father was in the same barracks. As we walked in they said, "You're next, you go here," and we would take the next bunk that was available. The bunks were four levels. If the second one was filled, you took the third level. This was all overseen by Jewish police called capos.

After a day or two, they took us out in the afternoon and led us to a pile of sand. We had to take our jackets and turn them around to make something like a bucket out of them. We had to fill them with two shovels full of sand and then walk about a couple of hundred feet, drop the sand, and go back and get another load of sand. We never had any other work assignment in Buchenwald. When we were carrying the sand we saw American prisoners of war in Buchenwald.

Sometimes we saw planes flying over. Before an air raid a couple of planes would come in in advance. They flew quite high and they made a smoke circle over the camp. We would hear bombing, but we didn't know where they were bombing until later when they took us to Weimar. The Americans had bombed Weimar, a city in Germany about three or four miles from Buchenwald. Two days after the bombing they asked people to volunteer to go there to work. They needed laborers to clean up. My father and I registered to go to Weimar to work pulling bodies out from the ruins. We pulled out hundreds of bodies from the fallen houses. We just put them on the side and others picked them up. We were there for three or four days.

When this work was done we went back to Buchenwald and they lined us up and made a selection: left, right, left, right. They sent me to the left and I wanted to go with my father to the right, but they cut me off. (This selection took place around the middle or end of December. We lost track of the days by then. We had been in Buchenwald for five or six weeks.) They put us on trains. My father was put on a different train; I didn't know at the time where my father was going. My father went to a HASAG plant in Treglitz and I went to one in Colditz. We were about five or six miles apart. My father and I were working for the same company and the company's engineers were moving back and forth between the two plants. My father got acquainted with one of the Germans who went to both plants. Through him my father found out where I was. This German came into my plant, looked me up, and he gave me a piece of newspaper and wrapped up in it was a piece of bread — a good chunk of bread and a note. The bread and a note was from my father. He asked how I was and said where he was and that he had a good foreman and that he was supervising machinery. How he came from being a butcher to being such a valuable mechanical supervisor, I don't know. At Colditz I was assigned to be an electrician: I was pulling wires, I was making connections. Don't ask me how I got to be an electrician or how I did it — I don't know. They told me to put in wires, and I was an electrician. At Colditz they gave us three meals a day: we got bread in the morning, soup at noon, and another bowl of soup at night.

About the end of March they told us to get dressed and line up because we were going to march. They took us on a walk from Colditz to Theresienstadt. The SS was walking with us. Every SS man walking with us had a lot of luggage with him. They had a little wagon with the luggage on it. I volunteered to pull the wagon. So I always walked in the back behind the group. It was in the spring and the trees were blooming. As we walked by the trees we ate the blossoms off the trees. That gave us a lot of energy. I was weak, but I was always energetic. I always tried to do something. The march lasted about five or six days. One night we got to a factory, a cement factory. The SS men went into the offices. All the prisoners stayed out in a field, but because I was pulling the wagon the SS man let me stay in the building. When I got into the building I saw a closet with some clothes in it. I saw an engineer's white coat in there. I took it and I wore it. I wore it for the rest of the march. I put on that white coat and I marched in that white coat.

One of the days when we were marching, a fellow named Dovche Altman, David Altman, a good friend of mine, got sick so he was walking in the back. I was in the back with the wagon. I didn't want to let him drop, so I held him on my arm and he followed. An SS man came and shot him. His whole brain got on my face. I left him, I had to keep going. He was my friend from *cheder*; we grew up together, we went to camp together.

My father was on another march. When they got into Marienbad — it was a cold day and it snowed — my father caught a cold. They shot him in Marienbad on the road. Three days later, in the morning of April 15, my group got into Theresienstadt. My father's group got in that afternoon. I knew those people. I asked, "Where's my father?" One of the men told me he saw them shoot my father in Marienbad on April 12, 1945. That's how I know the date.

When all those transports, marches, got into Theresienstadt, they put us in a building under quarantine because they didn't want us to bring in any diseases. There were nurses walking around with white coats. Then I realized I had a white coat, so I put on the white coat and I walked out from the quarantine. I walked all over Theresienstadt!

After we were there for six or seven days they took us into a bath and they showered us. First of all, we came in and there were four girls, Jewish girls, with blankets and we had to undress and put our clothes on the blankets. Then we went into showers and they showered us with hot water and the girls scrubbed us. Then we had to sit down on a bench and the girls shaved us. After we got out from there they put us on an inspection table to see if there were any more animals [lice] on our skin. It was all done by Jewish girls. And believe you me, there was no thought of anything!

In Theresienstadt, on the second day, I went to work gathering corpses. People were dying like flies. They had wooden boxes, long boxes, and they put two corpses in a box. They made us go with a wagon and gather those boxes. There was a gathering point where we dropped them off. What happened from there, I don't know.

When they removed the corpses from the bunks, they threw the mattresses outside. In the afternoon we had to pick up the mattresses and take them to something like a steam bath where they would be sterilized. We had a wagon to collect the mattresses. There were many buildings in Theresienstadt, so as we walked with the wagon we were snooping. We walked around to the back by the kitchen to see if we could grab some potatoes. I saw an open door, so I ran in. I got into the basement and there was a lot of food there. I ran in and I started eating. When I wanted to go back out, the door was closed. I didn't know what to do, so I sat down and I slept overnight. Next day, they opened the door and I came out. Nobody missed me at Theresienstadt; nobody checked us; there was no roll call.

LIBERATION

I was in Theresienstadt until May 8, 1945. On May 7, at night, we heard that the Russians were coming. Everybody went to bed, to the barracks, but I was walking around with several other people when, all of a sudden, behind the wall we saw Russian tanks. It must have been about three

o'clock in the morning. All of a sudden we didn't see any SS men by the gate — not a Ukrainian SS or a Lithuanian SS was there. A Jewish policeman was there. We wanted to go out but he wouldn't let us. So we went down about three or four blocks and climbed up on the wall. The wall must have been a six or seven foot high wall. We got on the wall and we jumped over and we went up to the tanks. The Russians talked to us, but we couldn't understand what they were saying. We were in our striped uniforms and our heads were shaved. I said we were Jewish people.

The Russians took us down to where there were a whole bunch of German prisoners. There was food, and we ate. We had nothing else on our minds but food. We took empty rucksacks and we filled those rucksacks with whatever was edible: salami, bread, whatever we could get. I said we were going to go back to the camp and bring some food to our friends. When we got to the gate the Jewish guards yelled, "Where are you coming from?" and tried to stop us, but they let us in. When people in the camp saw that we had food they fell over us. They grabbed the rucksacks. They ate. One of them kicked me and gave me a bruise. I got up, I went up to the barracks, washed myself up, and laid down for a couple of hours of sleep. In the afternoon when I woke up there was chaos; nobody knew what was what. It must have been three or four o'clock in the afternoon. Five boys were with me. I told them, "I was out there; I already know what is out there. I know the way. Let's go"

When we got down to the gate, they wouldn't let us out. So, we went about twenty feet to where the barbed wire was already cut. Six of us went out. We got over the barbed wire and there were Russian tanks there. The Russian tanks took us into a little town. It must have been maybe three or four kilometers from Theresienstadt where they let us off. There the Czechs had put up a soup kitchen. To anybody who wanted soup, they gave soup and a piece of bread. Two Czech men came over to us and asked if we were cold. We said yes. We were just wearing little jackets. It was cold; it was May, but it was still cold. So they took us in and gave us sweaters and underwear and shirts and we all dressed up. They dressed me up, they gave me a suit. They took our uniforms.

I went out, and a Russian captain asked me what we wanted to do. I said we would like to go home. He said, "How do you want to go home?" I said I didn't know, so he took us down to where the German prisoners of war were. They had horses. They gave me horses and a wagon. I went over to every German prisoner and took whatever I could pick out. I put everything on the wagon and started driving home.

We went from Theresienstadt to Bratislava and from Bratislava we were supposed to go to the Polish border. We got to Bratislava late at night. There was a lot of food on that wagon. The boys with me wanted cooked pork. They ate, but the following day they got diarrhea; they alI got sick. Four of the boys were taken to the hospital. I did

not go to the hospital — I stayed with the horses and wagon. On the wagon was a metal box held on with a chain. We broke it open and it was filled with German marks. It was a bank! We had some ersatz coffee. I took a can, put in the coffee and water and burned the money to heat the coffee. We drank it and that helped with the diarrhea. Now there were two of us. We each had a bag. I stuffed about five or six stacks of that money, a couple of thousand marks, in my bag. We drove with those horses until we got to the Polish border. There the Polish army took the horses away. We took whatever we could drag with us in our hands. When I left Theresienstadt I was with six guys. Two of us survived. The other four we never heard of again.

We got on a train and we got off in Sosnowiec. Every city had a house where Jewish boys could go when they got in. I stayed in that house in Sosnowiec for two days. After two days I decided to go back to Dzialoszyce where I was born to see what was left. I wanted to find out if anybody was left there. My youngest brother and my brother-in-law did not go to a camp; I hoped maybe I would find them. I left my stuff in that house in Sosnowiec. From Sosnowiec to Miechow there was a train. From Miechow to Działoszyce it was about twenty kilometers. They had a little choo-choo train that went about five or ten miles an hour. The trip took about three hours on that train. We got in at night. I was with four guys. We stayed in a house in Dzialoszyce. The next morning we looked around. There must have been about thirty boys in the city.

When my family first left Dzialoszyce during the war, the chief of police was our neighbor. He and my father were very good friends. When the Germans came in and took us out from our house, we put everything into his possession. Now I went to his house; I wanted to get some family belongings, some clothes and things. It was late in the afternoon when all of a sudden I saw a gathering and I had an intuition that something didn't look good. I started to run away. The townspeople started shooting after me calling, "Jew bastard. You're alive! Why didn't they kill you?"

I was with four guys. The next day I didn't go out. The following night we blocked the door and went to sleep. About ten o'clock they started knocking on the door. We looked out. There were a whole bunch of people. We didn't like it. I had a blue trench coat. I put on the blue trench coat over my underwear and we went up on the roof. We spread out over two or three houses. They broke into the house and they took everything, all our belongings. The Polish people took everything. One guy called my name and said, "I'm going to get you anyhow." They did not want the Jews back. In the morning we went down and found out they shot six boys, Jewish boys. We grew up with those boys — we went to *cheder* with them. One boy's name was Plotnick. We knew we had to bury them. We got a wheelbarrow and with the wheelbarrow we took them up to the cemetery. We dug out about two or three feet. We didn't cover them properly, we barely covered them up with dirt, but we buried them. After this pogrom we knew

we had to get out. In the afternoon the little train came in. We got on the train and I went back to Sosnowiec. I had no shoes, no pants, just slippers and some underwear and a trench coat. That is the way I came to Sosnowiec.

I went back to the house I had shared with the other guys, where I had left my luggage that I brought from the camp. I had three bags sitting there. I had the German money. All of a sudden, the exchange rate was four or five zlotys for a mark. I changed a couple of thousand marks for zlotys and I was a rich man! In Sosnowiec I found out I had an aunt in a town about ten or twelve miles from Sosnowiec, near Katowice. There was a streetcar from Sosnowiec to her town. I took the streetcar and I found my father's brother's wife who had survived. They gave her back her house and the bakery. We were glad to see each other. She said, "I would like to do something. I can make a living, but I need money to buy some flour." I said, "I can give you some money." I gave her a couple of hundred zlotys and I said, "See what you can do." I spent Friday and Saturday there, and Sunday I went back to Sosnowiec. In Sosnowiec I got acquainted with people who were smuggling. All of a sudden I was smuggling with them — we were going back and forth between Silesia and Poland trading. We brought back some cotton and some material we could sell easily in Poland. I made a couple of dollars. I was a businessman already!

The end of June or the beginning of July, 1945, I decided to go to see my aunt. My aunt had the bakery going. I met

Sally, my future wife, there. She was with four other girls. Sally and I talked and I said to her, "What are you going to do?" I told her I had gone to Silesia and things had worked out for me there and I was going to go again. I said, "Do you want to come along?" and she said, "Yes." She took her clothes, whatever she had, her little bag, and we went to the train to go to Silesia.

SALLY'S STORY

I was born in Lodz, Poland, March 1924. My name at birth was Shcindel (Sala) Tolub. I was the youngest of seven children. All the children were born in Lodz. Actually, there were nine children, but two of them died in a typhus epidemic in Lodz when I was four or five years old. I remember, like in a dream, the hospital where my two sisters died. One was my sister Chaicha's twin, and the other was my married sister, Esther. It was very bad. There were about two or three years between each of my siblings. I was born late in my parents' lives. When I was five years old I was an aunt, my oldest sister had a child already. I never knew any of my grandparents. There were aunts and uncles and cousins in Lodz, but I was five years old when we left Lodz and moved to Sosnowiec so my memories of them are like a daze.

I had a married sister and a married brother living in Lodz. Another sister was named Rifcha. I had a brother named Moshe Eli, a brother named Chaim Leib, and a brother named Shlomo. Shlomo survived the war. He was in

Russia during the war and wound up in Israel after the war. I had another sister, Gittcl, we called her Gucia. She survived the war but she became an invalid during the war. After the war she went to Israel and had four children. There was another sister about two years older than me, Chaicha. She was a twin, but her twin died in the typhus epidemic. My sister, Esther, also died in the typhus epidemic. Three of us survived the war: me, my sister Gucia, and my brother Shlomo. My parents and the rest of their children and their families perished in the Holocaust.

My father's name was Shmuel Tolub. He was born in Warsaw. My mother's name at birth was Sura Krayndla Srwarc. She was born in a small town near Lodz. When I was about five years old my parents moved from Lodz to Sosnowiec where my father opened a little factory making seasonal shoes. In Europe when it was cold, everybody wore, in the house, slippers that kept their feet warm. In the summer they wore different shoes, like patent leather shoes. In between those seasons there was little work for my father's factory. He employed a few people who must have come from the small towns for jobs. My brothers, Shlomo and Chaim, worked in the factory, and my sister, Gucia, took orders and made the packages so everything was ready when the customers came to pick them up. The factory had a couple of machines. Everything was made from new leather; the tops were leather and the soles were leather. The shoes were handmade, but not custom made for a specific person. We were the wholesale part of the

business. Our customers bought shoes to sell to other people.

My father walked to work every day; everybody walked. We didn't have cars, but there was a streetcar that went around the whole city. It did not have cables, but it had railings on the street. My mother did not work. In Poland it was not usual for women to work. Women were home taking care of the family. My family home in Sosnowiec was in an apartment house. We paid rent. There was a Jewish population. Some sections of the town had Jews, some didn't. Our section felt Jewish because the bakery was Jewish, where we bought milk was Jewish, the materials stores, the dressmakers, were all Jewish. There was one bank, a Polish bank, but nobody went to it. You just shook a hand when you made a deal. People honored this.

Our apartment in Sosnowiec had two rooms. Everybody, including my parents, slept in one big room. We had beds and we had couches. One person could sleep on the couch. Then we would put up another bed and then two beds would be put together. We managed. In the middle of the room was a dining room table with chairs. On one wall was a big closet where we put all of our clothes. The kitchen had a table and it had closets for china, pots, and pans. We had a maid who slept in the kitchen.

We had running water, but if we wanted hot water we had to heat it on the stove. There were outhouses. In the winter it was cold, never mind the dark! We couldn't take a

shower in the house; there were no showers. We had to go to the main shower owned by a private company. We paid and they let us use the shower. We came with our own towels and a change of clothes. In the winter it was very cold and slippery. We went once a week; we wanted to be clean for *Shabbas*.

We kept a very kosher home, very traditional. We didn't pluck chickens at home; nobody plucked chickens in the house. I don't know why people assume this. We went to the butcher store and they had chickens that were cleaned already. Somebody else plucked them. Women didn't bring them home with the feathers. On the farm they were plucking chickens, but not in the city.

Friday was a very busy day in our house. We had a maid so she prepared the carrots and the potatoes for the *cholent*. Every week we had a *cholent* [a stew of vegetables, barley, and meat]. Nobody cooked *cholent* in their house; everybody took it to the bakery to cook overnight in the oven. When the bakery shut off the oven, when they were done with the *Shabbas* baking, everybody came with their pot of *cholent*. This was Friday afternoon. We actually walked a couple of blocks to the bakery. I was the youngest so I always had the honor to do it. The pot was covered and it was not only covered, it was covered so nobody could open it. On the top, on the outside, they put a number and they gave you a ticket with a number. The *cholent* went into the oven. Then Saturday, by twelve o'clock, everybody lined up and the baker would take your number and find your pot.

We had to take towels with us to carry it home because the *cholent* was hot. That's what everybody did.

My mother had candlesticks, a candelabra with maybe five candlesticks. This was the centerpiece put on the table every Friday night for *Shabbas*. We would be dressed very nicely. My mother would take out the *Chumash*, the Bible, and read a *parsha* [portion] in Yiddish. After dinner, when everything got cleaned up, we met with friends or we went for a walk. We had fun that way. We didn't know anything better. It was fine.

My mother was more religious than my father. My father was a little more lenient. He did not keep his head covered. My mother went to synagogue every *Shabbas*, my father didn't. I did not go to synagogue every *Shabbas*, but on holidays we all had to show up. My mother had two wigs, one for every day and one for *Shabbas* and the holidays. For *yomtov*, holidays, women always brought their wigs to get them styled, freshened up. The wigs were all made of real hair, not artificial. In the house my mother covered her hair with a kerchief. (Orthodox women always covered their hair.) She never wore pants! There were no pants! Dressmakers made everything for a woman: clothes for everyday, fashionable clothes, and then holiday clothes. Everybody did the same. My mother had some jewelry. For the holidays she wore beautiful earrings. I don't remember watches. She mostly had nice necklaces and earrings. Everybody had beautiful gold earrings. I don't remember her wearing a wedding ring.

I did not think we were poor. We were comfortable. I had nice, new clothes made for me when the holidays came. We didn't buy ready made clothes. If we wanted a dress, we bought material, went to the dressmaker's house, and told her what kind of dress we wanted. She had girls working for her. Only the major seams were done with a machine; all the finishing was done by hand. In Europe, for Passover everybody wore new shoes.

My mother took me with her wherever she went. Every summer I went with her to a spa for two weeks. The spa was in the country, in the hills. There were woods all around where I went for walks. We stayed in something like a boarding house. They fed us five meals a day; they wanted to fatten us up. In the morning we had sponge cake with milk. Then, at eleven o'clock again there was milk and cakes. At noon or twelve thirty there was dinner, a big dinner. Then we had the evening meal and entertainment—high entertainment. This was the point of being in the country for two weeks. My father was with us in 1931; I have a picture of him there that year. I was the only child my parents ever took with them. Me, they schlepped all over.

I remember my mother sometimes pressing a cloth to her head. I think she had headaches and high blood pressure. She didn't take pills—there were no pills for her headaches. Sometimes they brought in leeches and put them on her neck and they drained the blood and then she got better. I understood that my mother wasn't very healthy; but she coped with everything.

We did have one doctor. He did not have a doctorate diploma; he was like a trader in all things. This guy who presented himself as a doctor had another title: a *feltcher*. It meant he knew a lot and he knew nothing. But he advised people. Whenever somebody ailed with something like a headache or a cold, they called him. The *feltcher* would come with alcohol and bankes, little suction cups. He would warm the suction cups with a candle and put them on the patient's back, on both sides of the lungs. And it drew out the illness, by the suction. The skin got very dark. He served our little town. Sometimes our home remedies were terrible, sometimes not. If somebody had a swollen finger they would take a raw potato, make a hole in it, and put the finger inside. It took out the poison. And it helped. There were doctors and hospitals, but for some reason the Jews seemed to shun them. But if somebody did get very sick and they went to the hospital they did get help. The only doctors in our town were in the hospital; I don't recall any doctor's office in our town. I remember my brother, Shlomo, had to have an operation. He had appendicitis. During the night we called for a horse and buggy to take him to the hospital. They took care of him.

I wanted to get into the public school. They gave me a test and I passed it, so they accepted me. If there were any school problems my older sister, Gucia, would go with me, not my mother. My mother didn't speak good enough Polish, she wouldn't understand what they would tell her. My sister and I were already the intelligent generation, we understood more what was going on. In school I learned

to read and write in Polish, but at home we spoke Yiddish.

I tried to be a good student, but I was only fair. Some things were harder than others. Arithmetic was very hard, but I passed the grade, so I must have done okay. I liked school to a degree. I loved to read; I would read a book a week. As soon as I had some time, my nose would be in a book. Especially in the winter I would go to bed early and lay under the covers with a book. I just loved to read! I still love to read. There was a library in the town. We had no television, no radio.

To school I wore dresses with something called an apron, that was more like a dress, we wore over our dress. It was navy blue with a white collar and long sleeves. The collar came off so it could be washed often. The dress and apron came below the knee. They were long, but comfortable to sit in. Everybody wore the same thing. Every school had its own emblem. Our shoes were leather; closed shoes. In the summer we wore sandals which were lighter leather with a cutout design on the outside so the air could flow through.

My Yiddish was very good; I could read and write Yiddish. After school, about three times a week, I went to *Beis Yaakov*, religious school for Jewish girls. We didn't learn to read Hebrew; we just learned to *daven* (pray) in Hebrew from the *siddur*, the prayer book. The only thing that was wrong with that is that nobody explained to us what the words meant. Every word we said we didn't know what it

meant. This was like the Dark Ages.

I liked to play outside with my friends. We played a lot of soccer in the courtyards of the school. After school we had a group and we would practice. Nobody supervised us, there was no coach, we just spent the time. We had a group of friends, just girls, and we would go to each others' houses, put on the record player, and we would dance. We taught each other how to dance. There were no boys; we didn't get together with boys. In the summer we would be free. We would be outdoors; there were many nice places to go. There were country clubs but we had to pay to go to them. We had a park that had a little water running through it where we would put our feet in and splash around. In the country there were small rivers where people went bathing. It was a different life: We met and we walked and we talked and we told stories and jokes. That's how we entertained ourselves. Sometimes we went to the movies. I saw Jeanette McDonald. Sometimes they brought in live theater. In the winter we were happy to stay home where it was warm.

I became friendly with two boys my own age. One was tall and the other was short, like caricatures. We called them Pat and Patachon. Their real names were Beryl – they both had the same name. We would meet at a park with a few other friends. We just sat and told stories and jokes and sang songs. In Poland we had a lot of songs about jail: if you didn't listen to your mother you would find yourself behind bars. We were always singing. After the war, one of

the boys sent me a letter from Russia telling me to sing the jail song. Everything was fun; we didn't know anything but having fun. We enjoyed ourselves, but this was so far, far away, another galaxy.

Nobody I knew went to the university or college, very few Jews were allowed. When we finished seventh grade we graduated from public school, then we went to learn a trade. Some of my girlfriends wanted to be nurses or work in an office. By sixth or seventh grade my formal education was completed. When I finished school my mother signed me up to be an apprentice to a very, very good dressmaker. I went for private lessons. My mother paid for me to learn. I had a good eye for clothes. The dressmaker had very good clientele which was important because it would help me to get a good job later. The apprenticeship was a three year program, but I only was able to complete one year because of the war.

WAR THREATENS

There were rumblings of war, everybody was talking about it. We knew a war was coming, we just didn't know what to expect. We heard rumors, but we didn t take it to heart... People were talking about how this war would be like the First World War where only those on the front lines suffered. We couldn't imagine how different this war would be. Everybody thought we were going to be safe. Nobody made any preparations. There was nothing organized for people.

The first thing I remember happening was at the end of the summer when I was in Lodz with my mother visiting my sister, Rifcha. During the night we heard, like thunder, the tearing down of the monument of the president of Poland. My mother was so worried and nervous. She said, "Come on, we're going home." My father and my other sisters were in Sosnowiec. So we took the train home. Sosnowiec was about eight hours away from Lodz by train. (Sosnowiec was near the border between Poland and Germany.) By the time we got back to Sosnowiec everybody was talking about the war. Everybody was hoarding food. We knew in a war we wouldn't be able to go to a store and get food so everybody emptied the shelves. They loaded up on food, potatoes, flour, whatever they could get their hands on. Every home did it. Nobody used canned food. We didn't even have aluminum foil; everything was wrapped in newspaper.

The Germans came in overnight. The Polish army fought the Germans for one day. The first thing the Nazis did was put fear in people. They went into the best houses in our town, took out the prominent men, ten of them, and hung them in the middle of the city. They set up gallows and they hung them because they were Jews. They made the whole town come and look and watch them. My father cried. I never saw a man cry like that. With so much fear we knew whatever they said we would do. We never refused, we were afraid.

By Rosh Hashanah the Nazis were already getting to the small towns and destroying the synagogues, burning them. A lot of people ran away; young men. Two of my brothers, Chaim Leib and Shlomo, fled toward Russia hoping for safety. They left separately, some weeks apart. They went with their own friends. I remember them leaving. One of my brothers wound up in Lvov which was on the border of Russia and Poland. Many people were going there. People were sleeping in the street; the town was overwhelmed. My other brother, Chaim Leib, we never heard from; we never saw him again. We don't know what happened to him.

My brother, Shlomo, was in the Polish army. They were trying to form an army in England called the Anderson Army to fight the Germans. Many of those who volunteered to go to England were Jews. Shlomo, who was in Russia, volunteered for the Anderson Army. All the volunteers went on a transport that left from Russia and went through Cyprus. When they stopped in Cyprus all the Jews escaped. Shlomo would survive the war in Israel, but I did not know anything about him during the war. Today, my family believes Shlomo was a liaison between the Haganah and the Palmach [Israeli paramilitary organizations formed to defend Jewish settlements].

THE GERMANS ENTER SOSNOWIEC

When the Germans came in they formed a committee, the Judenrat, and they made the Jews do the dirty work. We called them the Jewish militia. They had to carry out all the Nazis' orders. The committee had a big office in a building they took over. The Germans wanted to collect gold from everybody. They made the Judenrat form a committee to collect the gold, to go from house to house collecting. They were told that if the Jews did not give them gold, they were to shoot them. This was a Jewish committee! I remember somebody coming to my house. Everybody gave something, maybe not all they had, but they gave something.

Everybody who was able had to work. You had to register that you wanted to work. If you worked, they gave you a work card. If you were not working or you were disabled, you were not worth anything and they got rid of you. I got a work card because I worked. The Nazis took over a factory to sew uniforms for the German army that was going to Siberia to fight. I was assigned to work there. I

went to work there, but I still lived and slept at home. There were three shifts. I preferred working on the day shift. When I had the night shift I was dead the next day. I couldn't sleep during the day because there was a lot of noise. The windows were open and outside was the clop clop of the horses and buggies. My sisters, Gucia and Chaicha, were working at the same factory. The three of us did not want to all work on the same shift because we knew that sometimes they took a whole group out and we never saw them again. We knew that if the three of us were taken away our mother and father would not survive. So we arranged it so each one of us was on a different shift.

All our work in the factory was done on sewing machines. I knew how to use a sewing machine; I had learned in school and there was a sewing machine in our house. The Germans brought in all the material which was already cut. They put us at machines. There was a supervisor. One person was working on sleeves, one was working on the body suits, one was working on the pants, and then everything got put together. By working in the factory we got a work card. If we had a work card we got food. Everybody had an allotment of how much food you could get. Sometimes, but not very often, they let a wagon of potatoes come to the factory and they gave out a few pounds of potatoes to the workers to take home. We didn't have to hide them; this was allowed. This was just for the Jews; the Polish could just go to a store and buy food. The Jews were not allowed in the stores.

My father was working, but my mother stayed hidden at home. Sometimes, the Nazis would come from door to door to take the older people away. We had, on the top floor of our building, a little storage room where everybody stored their Passover dishes. We didn't have room in our apartments, so there was this little room. Whenever we heard the Nazis were coming to collect people to be sent away, we pushed my mother and one other woman into this room until the Nazis went away and then we would let them out.

More and more restrictions started. First, Jews had to wear a white armband with a blue star. Everybody had to wear it. Then we had to wear a yellow star in the front, by our heart, and one on the back of all our outer garments. Everybody had to sew it on their clothes. They gave it out in the committee so everybody had the same star. We went to the committee, we got our star, we sewed it on, and we wore it.

They closed the schools, just closed the schools, all the schools. I saw signs everywhere saying "No Jews Allowed." There were no taxis, no horses and buggies. Movies were restricted. I didn't go to my friends' houses. I would go to work and go home, that's it. After seven o'clock nobody was supposed to be on the street. The big doors to our apartment building would be closed for the night. They said that if they found anybody on the street after seven o'clock who was Jewish, they had the right to shoot them.

My father had customers who were not Jewish. One night, there was information that the Nazis were going to come to the building where we lived and take all the men. One of my father's customers came to our apartment and said to my father, "You take off the armband. I'm going to walk with you to your factory." And he did. My father didn't look Jewish, he looked distinguished. My father took off the armband and he went from our house to his factory which was maybe two miles away. My father stayed overnight in the shoe factory and the next day he returned home.

My sisters, Gucia, Chaicha, and I were still living at home and working in the factory making uniforms for the Germans. My sisters and I would go for bread as soon as they opened the doors at five o'clock in the morning. There were three of us, so we went in three different lines for bread. We knew not to go together in one line. They rationed how much bread they could give out. They opened the bakery and they gave you a loaf of bread, you paid them, then all of a sudden they would shut the bakery and say, "No more bread today." That's why my sisters and I divided ourselves. If we all stayed in the same line, by the end when they closed the door and said no more bread today, we would go home with nothing. The Germans had a sport, they thought it was very funny, shooting people who were standing in a bread line. They were shooting people in the line; people were falling over. One time, when I was in the bread line and I already had my loaf of bread, I was starting to go home when all of a sudden one

of the Germans yelled for me to stop. I was not about to stop. I started to run and he ran after me with his rifle with a bayonet at the end. With this he was running. I outran him. And I had my loaf of bread. I brought it home. They thought this was a sport, some kind of sport. We never left our parents alone and we never let them go in a line. We had too much respect for them. Sometimes they were stabbing people in the lines, the older people. I don't like to talk about it; there are such bad memories about it.

We lived on the third floor of an apartment building. Across from us was another building where a girlfriend lived who used to go to school with me. We would meet on the street and walk to school together. Just past her building we could see the synagogue, the Great Synagogue on Dekerta Street in Sosnowiec. On November 9, 1939 we saw a fire. They burned the whole synagogue down. Maybe they let the people out; I don't know. For the Nazis it was a big joke. That was the synagogue my family went to; we knew what the synagogue meant to our town. We watched from our house, we watched the smoke. It was such a tragedy; grown-up people were crying. Men, healthy men, were broken down. They broke our spirit. And then people say, 'Why didn't you fight back?' Years later when I went to Poland with my kids I showed them. And my daughter said to me, "How do you know they burned down the synagogue?" I watched the smoke!

Once, some soldiers stopped me because I didn't cross the street correctly. I didn't step on the right part of the

sidewalk; which was the law. When we went across the street we had to go up on the sidewalk. I just walked on the street. I just wanted to go home. The soldiers were standing on the corner where I wanted to go and because I didn't want to walk into them, I sidestepped and they stopped me. They stopped me and said, "Why didn't you go on top of the sidewalk? Why did you go under the sidewalk?" I said I was thinking about something and I forgot that I had to go on the sidewalk. My mother saw me from our apartment window; she saw them stop me. My mother got so scared when she saw they stopped me on the street that she right away sent down somebody with money for me to pay the fine. She thought I didn't have the money to pay the fine. They arrested a lot of people for not paying the fine. I knew what she was doing. I shook my head to show the guy she sent that he shouldn't come close to me because I was talking myself out of it. The soldiers were in good humor and they said, "Listen, we'll let you go this time. Next time you have to step up on the sidewalk if you want to go." But they were standing there, so I couldn't step up on it. I said, "You know, I was thinking about something." I talked myself out of a lot of troubles and this was one of them.

The Judenrat had everything written out for them: "This is what you do today and this is what you are not supposed to do!" Everybody obeyed the rules. The rules were posted all over. Whenever they were posted everybody came right over to read them. So we learned the rules. We had to have

permission for everything. Everybody had to register. They knew everybody's name, they knew how many children were in every family.

In the beginning of the war the Germans started to export Jews from Germany into Poland. Sosnoweic was just across the Polish border. They sent transports of whole families to our town, but there was no place for them to live. The Judenrat said we have to give up rooms in our homes for those people. One day, soldiers came and took one of those German Jewish men down for questioning and held him overnight. The next day we did not recognize this man; he was so beaten up. It is almost better to die than to come back in the condition he came back in. He couldn't even walk. A healthy man, beaten for what? They threw him out of Germany and then they beat him here. Whatever the Germans wanted to do, they did. The Poles stood still.

The building we lived in was all Jewish families. The female janitor was not Jewish. When the Germans came, she told them she was a good woman and that she was going to work with them. She said, "I'm going to help you out. I'm going to tell you everything you are going to want to know about the Jews." And she did. Because she was married to a German man she had access to some food. Because she wanted money sometimes she would sell us a few potatoes or an onion. After the war I went back to Sosnowiec and I went to our building. She was still there. And she said, "Oh, my God. It's too bad what happened here." She was so two faced.

SELECTIONS AND DEPORTATIONS

On August 12, 1942, Jews from two other towns were brought to our town. They put all the men, women, and children from the three towns – Sosnowiec, Bendzin, and Dombrowa – up on a hill. We sat a whole day. How inhumane this was to sit a whole day on a hill without toilets, without water. Children were crying; they were hungry. A whole day. They made from people animals. First, they took a lot of the men away, especially the young ones. My father wasn't taken because he was doing useful work. Then the women were taken; supposedly they were going to work in the factories and camps. And then whole families with the children, old people, young people, were taken. Then, about five o'clock in the afternoon they said to form two lines. Families were to stay together. There were two lines; one was going to the right; one was going to the left.

My family had four work cards: my father had a card, I had a card and my two sisters had cards. My mother did not have a work card. When it came to the selection we knew people without work cards were being taken away. I was tall for my age, my father was tall, and one sister was tall. My other sister wasn't. We put my mother in the middle of us and we squeezed her so they saw four hands with cards and they passed us to the right. People going to the left were going to their death; whole families. The

selections took place over four days from August 12 until August 15, 1942.

After the selection they opened a ghetto. The Nazis took over a whole section at the end of Sosnowiec, called Srodula, and made a ghetto. The Nazis established which houses were going to be used by the Jewish people and moved the Jews into those buildings. They took over a lot of buildings and told the Christians who were living in those buildings to move out, nicely. Of course they paid them because they were Polish people. The Nazis gave them something for their inconvenience and they were quiet. They found other places to live plus they got rent for theirs. That's how it worked.

THE GHETTO

We knew the ghetto was starting when they came for us and said this is where you are all going to be. House by house, apartment by apartment, they emptied the Jews out of the buildings. All the Jews from Sosnowiec were shipped to the ghetto, everybody. The Jewish militia and the Jewish committee helped the Germans. Whatever the Germans wanted them to do, they did. The committee had signs saying, "This and this day everybody has to go to the ghetto." Everybody did not go to the ghetto the same day. They went street by street. They were very organized. When it was your street's turn you hired a horse and a buggy. They took your furniture and helped you transport

whatever we could. We packed it all together: the beds, a table for eating, a cabinet where we had our clothes. We brought pots and pans, whatever we could take. I don't remember if we took everything in one trip, I don't think so.

One of the boys I had been friendly with, Beryl, the short one, came to help us. He schlepped furniture; he set up everything. He was the best help. Later, Beryl, the tall one, sent me a letter from Russia where he had escaped to. In the letter he had written me a song to the melody of *My Shteitela Belz.*

They assigned us a house in the ghetto. They gave us an address. It wasn't a new house. A Polish family had to move out. It was a small house on a hill. A few feet away was another house. The house had one big room and a kitchen.

The outhouse was outside. We got one room for our family and then another family came into the second room. There were two big kids, about our age. We shared the kitchen and some other stuff. We got along: one cooked in the morning, the other cooked in the evening...

The people living with us didn't become like family — they were simply neighbors in the next room. There was no friction, but if you put two families in a house right away

they don't become friends. You have to know the ways of their style, your style. That's how it was that time.

The Poles got a free hand. I didn't hate them; I thought they just didn't have any common sense. They saw the people were suffering and took advantage. "Give me gold, I'll bring you. What do you need? I'll be here next week." Even when we went to the ghetto, my mother, she should rest in peace, had jewelry. For jewelry they brought us stuff: barley, flour. They were going around among Jews in the ghetto saying , "What do you need? You have jewelry? Give me jewelry." The polish were doing this. Then my mother started to sell linens and towels when the jewelry ran out and we needed something. This was the black market.

People were selling gold, people were selling silver — not selling, they were giving it for food. And the Polish people took advantage; they came from door to door. They came every week. "What do you need next week? I'll bring it but you have to give me the sheets or you have to give me the towels." If we ran out of the gold pieces then they wanted clothes. They came into or house. They were not bashful. They said give me gold and I bring you barley, a bag of flour, potatoes. They had a free hand.

We had rations but the rations were not enough, so we had to buy extra. My mother was not working and by the time my father didn't work either. They closed up the shop where he worked. He had a card, but there was nothing to

buy. In the beginning when the Nazis came in to our town we were supposed to give them all our jewelry. Nobody gave everything the first time. If they caught you with jewelry, if you didn't give it up, you went to jail, their jail. Jews were hiding it, but then in the ghetto we needed it for food; thats when we gave out the jewelry. I don't remember what my mother did with her candlesticks.

I continued working at the same factory where I worked before going to the ghetto, doing the same work, making uniforms, whatever they needed. We used to get up at five o'clock in the morning to go to work. They had a gathering point. Everybody who goes to this factory meets here, those who go to the other factory meet there. We had to go down a hill to a meeting point on one street. There were hills and in the winter it was sippery. When we were walking on the road that was slippery, my father would show us, "You walk like a duck. You spread your feet this way and you walk so you don't slide." This was a good lesson. We didn't slide down the hill. At the factory they didn't pay us, but sometimes they gave us some food to take home. This was our payment but we had no way of not doing the work.

While I was living in the ghetto and working in the factory in Sosnowiec, the Red Cross sometimes came to inspect. The Red Cross didn't come every week or every month, but once the Germans that were running the factory got the notion that the Red Cross might come to inspect the

factory, to see that the quarters in the factory had air and light or if machines are broken, they made things appear good. The Red Cross was very satisfied. They walked by the food and saw it was edible, that we could eat something that was edible. But they didn't know the background, how people suffered. We couldn't show that we were sick. Right away there was a place the Germans could send us very fast. We had to watch what we were saying. The supervisors were always on the floor, walking. Everybody was very busy — we didn't even look up to see who was coming to see us. So the Red Cross walked away very satisfied that the Germans showed that they were humane and were treating us like human beings. There was always someone working at the head of the group who kind of quietly let out the warning not to speak about what we knew was going on. The Red Cross never spoke to us, never asked us a question — why would they? They were satisfied.

SEPARATION FROM MY FAMILY

Every morning we lined up in the streets and the militia counted heads. Everybody had to be there who was going to work. I was in line with my group when one of the militiamen who knew my brother came over to me and said, "Sally, you get out of the line." I said, "No. I can't. I've got to go to work." He didn't tell me why, but I knew something was cooking. Then he came over again to get me out of the line and he said, "I'm telling you to get out of

the line." He still didn't tell me why. I stood there. Everybody stood there and then we saw something going on. Soldiers surrounded the whole group of us who were waiting to go to work. There was a truck stopped on one side of the street where we were gathered and another truck was stopped on the other side of the street. We were trapped. We couldn't go anywhere. We stood there and waited to start marching to work. And then a car, an official car, came, so one truck had to move to let the car through. As soon as they opened this street everybody started to run. I ran home to the ghetto. (That's why I don't remember there being a fence around the ghetto.) As we all ran they were chasing us and shooting after us. The whole group disappeared. When I got home I was out of breath; I fell into the house. My mother said to me, "What is it? What are you doing?" I said, "They are grabbing the people!" My sister, Chaicha, was at home when I got there because she was supposed to be going on the next shift. So she stayed home. My sister, Gucia, had already been put on a transport and taken away.

The Nazis knew the names of all the people who ran away because we were all registered to be going to the factory. They had a list of all the people alive, all the Jews. So, about a week or two later they came to our house on Friday at midnight. (We knew it was midnight; we still had watches, we had a clock. We were not illiterate altogether. We were very intelligent in our own way.) At midnight we heard knocking at the door so my father woke up and told me

to go hide. He knew they were coming for me. We had our furniture and my father had made a little hiding place behind the cabinets. And so I went and hid behind the furniture. Two militia men came in. They were Jews. They asked for me by my name. My father said, "She's not home." So they said, "Okay, you get dressed and you come with us." When they took a hostage they never let him go back home. So my father would have been the hostage and they would have come back for me also, so I got out from my hiding place and I said, "Here I am. Give me ten minutes." I had to get dressed. I asked for ten minutes to get ready. They stood right in the room, they didn't move. I put on my clothes. I took a change of clothes in a bag, a paper bag. We didn't have fancy suitcases. I put in underwear, and I think a blouse and another skirt or something. I can't even remember putting it together. But I stood right there behind this closet and I got dressed. I had to wear a jacket; it was cold outside. I said goodbye to my father and he started to cry. My mother cried to God, "He took all my children away. Now he takes my baby. Why are you taking my baby?"

The jail was in something like a big basement. There were very many people because they were bringing people in from the whole ghetto. They guarded us overnight. It was terrible. People were crying and one was singing. There were men and women; they didn't separate us. We were sitting and standing; it was a big chaos. Whoever they brought would wind up in this room until there would be a selection. We stayed in this one big room for several

days. There was a bathroom, but don't ask about the facilities. We were fed, but food wasn't something that worried us very much — that we left behind our parents, our family, that's what we worried about. We worried about where they were going to send us. When they took us in for questioning, they were not very nice about it. They hit us if we said a wrong word.

For some reason they let the families know where we were. My mother and father came. I couldn't go talk to them, but from the window I saw them standing there, crying. I stood by the window because somebody told me my parents were standing outside. So I saw my mother and father again. My parents had gone to the committee to find out what happened to me. The committee knew everything. They told my parents, "She is still here. You can go and see her, but you can't go in and talk to her. You can wave to her." This big room was outside the ghetto. My parents had permission from the committee to go outside the ghetto to go see me. Because they took us all from our homes with nothing, after a couple of days they allowed our families to bring us clothes. Everybody's family brought clothes. My mother packed up my clothes in a suitcase and brought it. She did not hand it to me; I saw her only out the window. She left the suitcase at the door and they took it in. And that's how I had a suitcase when I was selected for transport. The next morning they did a selection. They selected who was going to go on a transport and to what camp. They called us by name. The transports were bringing us to factories for work, for slave

labor, without pay. We waited there until they were ready to ship us out.

I had been in the ghetto, Srodula, for more than a year when, in March or April 1943, just before Passover, they closed the factory where I worked and started taking people away. I was taken from the ghetto before the ghetto was liquidated; by June I was sent to a camp. Between June and August 1943 they cleaned out the ghetto of all the people. They made the ghetto Judenrein, no Jews. My sister, Chaicha, who was a couple of years older than me, stayed with my parents. I don't know what happened to her. I don't know what happened to my mother and father.

TRAUTENAU WORK CAMP

In the April 1943 selection of factory workers they chose people to send to different camps. They took us to a train station. They put us in one section of the station and had us sit there with soldiers watching us. Nobody talked to us; we were not allowed to talk to anybody. The train we went on was a regular train, not a cattle car. We arrived at a camp in Czechoslovakia where they were expecting us. The name of the camp was Trautenau. We were going to work at a factory the Nazis took over. I did not know anybody on the train, but when I got to the camp a friend of my sister Chaicha was there. She knew me from home. A few people there remembered me from home, through my sister. They were mostly a little older than me. They

advised me what to do, what not to do. We became friends.

While I was at Trautenau a big transport came from Hungary. These people suffered more than we did; for some reason they couldn't take the hunger like we could. They were all educated people. An opera singer was there. She sang so beautifully that everybody opened the windows when she was singing. There was some humor there, too, in the whole tragedy.

Everybody got a locker and that's where we kept our things so people didn't steal them. The lockers were narrow, about six in a row. There was a big attic for the suitcases. I was rich! I had two coats! I had a winter coat and I had a spring coat from the suitcase my mother had bought for me. Later on, I gave away some of the clothes for more food. Little by little I gave up everything. One lady, who was older than I was, took a liking to me. She was friendly. I did not know her from home. I had some little things with me from home that were very cute: some pins that would light up, some were little dogs, some birds. I started giving away those *tchotchkes* (trinkets); I gave one to her. She worked the night shift in the kitchen. When we went to get our food ration we brought our own pot for the soup. She advised me, "You put this pot on top of your locker." In the morning when I went to get it, it had soup in it. Then I gave her something else. She kind of kept an eye on me. I don't know why. Every morning I had some more food from her.

Ours was a small camp. There were maybe eight hundred people, all women. Everybody was housed in the same building, it was a factory the Nazis had taken over. The living quarters were on a couple of floors. There was a big room with sinks and faucets. Ten people could wash at one time. Once a week we had hot water, so we took showers and we did the laundry. On the other days there was cold water. In the cold water we washed as best we could. We kept ourselves clean. Everybody's hair was cut short, very short. One girl was so ashamed, so ashamed, a pretty girl, a young girl.

There was another big room where we ate and slept. There were tables and benches in the center of the room, and the bunk beds and closets were on the side of the room. When we got our food we sat down on benches to eat. All the workers slept in the same room. The bunk beds were only two high. I had the top. Everybody had one blanket, so in the winter when it was very cold we doubled up to have two blankets and slept together on our narrow cots. Everybody had a straw mattress. There were no bed linens. There was something under our heads but I wouldn't call it a pillow. We didn't have comfort, but we made do with what we got.

I made friends there. I had a group that always stuck together. There was one Helen, two Renias, and me — four of us. If any of us volunteered and got more food, a portion more to eat, we shared it with each other. We talked about everything. We didn't know politics; we were just hoping

the war would end. We were just hoping to see our families, that they were alive.

One day I made a mistake. I had one piece of jewelry, a necklace my mother had given me, and I wore it one day. We were going in the line for food and I was wearing a white, very thin blouse. I was wearing the necklace and a capo saw me wearing it. I stayed in the line and I didn't say anything. A week later they announced that everybody who has jewelry has to give it up. There were supervisors, higher up, and capos under them. Capos were Jewish people who did the dirty work for the Germans. The capo came over and said. "What do you have, Sally?" I said. "I have this." I knew I could not lie because she had seen me wearing it. It was shaped like a leaf with the monogram of my sister who passed away in the epidemic. E.T. for Esther Tolub. I gave it up and I couldn't sleep. I kept thinking that's all I have from home. I have nothing else. How could I give it up? But, if I would not have given it up they would have put me in their jail.

Sundays we had off. We did our laundry on Sunday, we did the cleaning of our bunk on Sunday. This was our day off to do everything. There was a garden outside so when it was nice everybody went outside to sit a little in the fresh air. We brought something to read and we visited. There were two supervisors. One knew everything that was going on, all the reports went to her. On Sundays she would watch how we behaved. One day, in the garden, I went over to her and I said, "Look, you have so much, I

have so little. I had the only thing from home that my mother gave me. That's all I had left. I gave it to you because you asked for it. I need it back so badly." And I started to cry. She liked me, she knew I was a good volunteer. I always kept myself dean. The next day, I had it back. She sent it with this woman who worked with me. She said, "Sally, here. She gave it back to you." I didn't show it to anybody and I sewed it up in the lining of my clothes. For the rest of the time everything went into the lining of my coat.

I was hit when I was in the camp. There was this woman, a supervisor, who was not Jewish. Because her husband was German she was afraid of nothing. She believed they couldn't touch her, that she was the boss. Once, when I was walking in front of the kitchen, somebody called me and I turned my head and this woman gave me a slap across my face. She said, "You *farfluckta Jude*, miserable Jew, can't you see where you are going?" I walked past her. I didn't make a comment, I didn't say anything.

The food was not adequate. It was plain, very plain. We each had a container. They gave us soup or coffee, black coffee, ersatz coffee. Breakfast was a container of soup and a wedge of bread cut from a round loaf. At lunch we had a container of coffee and also a piece of bread. Then there was a cooked dinner. There was water. Water was always available; we could just go over to the faucet.

I was the best volunteer. When a transport of food would come in the Germans needed workers to unload it. I was always the first to volunteer. I was off on Sunday so I always volunteered to work. They gave me a little extra food for it. This incident was toward the end almost: A transport came in with bread, German bread, loaves of bread, not wrapped for hygiene or anything. We had to unload the bread. So this old guy, a guard, said, "All the whole bread goes in this place and all the broken bread goes in this place. Don't give the Germans the broken bread." That's all we had to hear, that this bread was not good for the soldiers! It was good enough for us. I had on pants, it was in the winter. I had on long pants with long underwear underneath. So all the bread went down there. My pockets were full of broken bread. When I went back into camp all the girls were waiting by the door. I was walking like a duck. My friend said to me, "Sally, what's the matter with you?" I said, "Come follow me." I couldn't show her by the door because everybody would have seen. The other girls wanted to work there too, but they only allowed so many.

For a while, I volunteered in the kitchen. One day they killed a horse. We came to work and this horse was hanging in the front, all skinned and ready to cut. They needed volunteers to cut the meat. They cooked it. I tasted it. It was very tough. I didn't like horse meat. But when you are hungry, you eat.

At work we were like robots. We had a certain hour to go to sleep and a certain hour to wake up. We got washed,

got ready, had breakfast, and stood in line outside to be counted. Then we marched to work. The factory where we worked was in Trautenau. They were making yarn. The factory was making yarn even before the Nazis took it over. The factory converted vegetable fibers into yarn, an involved process including washing to separate the strands, drying the strands, combing, and creating the final yarn for sewing. Every floor in the factory had a function. The girls that worked with the wet yarn got cut hands from the yarn. They had to stretch it and put it on beams to let it dry. That was bad work. They put me on a night shift which was very bad because they put me on a machine that caused the girl before me to lose an arm. The yarn was crumbling up and I had to rip it apart before I got it into the machine. I wasn't very good at it. I said to the guy who oversaw us, "You know what? I really cannot work this machine. I'm afraid I'm going to faint and fall into the machine." I talked to him. He was nice enough to get me off that machine. So they put me on another job. It was very hard work. We had to pick up the wet yarn on one floor and carry it to another floor where it would dry. We went to one floor, picked up the wet yarn and put it on our shoulders. The yarn was in rolls, spools, not bales. We put the rolls on our shoulders so our body bent over from the weight. We went to the other floor where we had to try to hang the rolls of yarn up to dry. It had to be very hot in there to dry the yarn. We burned our feet when we walked. We had to run up and down two flights of steel steps carrying the yarn on us. When the yarn was dry we had to carry it to the next floor to be packaged. From

carrying the yarn on my shoulders my body went down. I was failing. I knew I had had enough. My kidneys were killing me; my back was killing me. One time, this was the lunch hour and I was in this dry place, I wanted to stretch my back hoping it would help. I lay down on the floor. I felt somebody behind me. A bigshot came. All of a sudden he sees me lying on my back. I didn't say anything; I just got up. He was not a Nazi; he was the boss of the factory. The factory was being run by the civilians who worked there before the Nazis took it over. He saw the way I stood up, how crumbled I was, and let me go.

They counted us when we left for work. Why? How were we going to escape? To where? The woods? What would we have in the woods? At least here we had food, we had shelter. At work, sometimes some of the Czech people would bring us a cucumber or something and we would hide it in our clothes. We were not allowed to bring food into the camp. After work they would count us; nobody was ever missing, everybody always showed up. We stayed in our parade lines. One time, all of a sudden somebody lost a cucumber! She moved wrong and It fell out. As a punishment they cut the hair of everyone in the group to teach us that we shouldn't bring in any food from outside. So we stopped taking it because we were afraid if they caught us the whole group would suffer.

The Red Cross never came to inspect the factory at Trautenau, but the Nazis did come. One night, it was eleven or twelve o'clock at night, and they woke everybody up and said everybody had to go down to the dining room.

So we did. There were about five or six Nazis there — very strong, very elegant, very macho. One sat at a table and one stood up and they said we had to take all our clothes off and put on a gown like the ones at a doctor's office when you have to undress. We stood in a line. All of a sudden they said to us, "Take off your gowns." Then we had to turn around as they looked to see how many bones they could see through our skin, to see if we were still able to work. We were all skeletons. This was a selection in front of men, not women! Do you know the embarrassment we went through? They picked out some women who had too many bones showing, and they sent them to Auschwitz. They told the rest of us to go back to our bunks and get dressed. This is just one of the stories. I can't really tell all of the stories. I don't even want to think about it. It's just too hard!

MENGELE

At the same time they made that inspection of us, Mengele came to our camp. I didn't know who he was. They all came with big stars on their shoulders. It was as if God showed up! At Trautenau there was a room for sick people, an infirmary. In German they called it the *krankenhaus*. There was no doctor. Whoever was really sick was allowed to stay a day in the *krankenhaus*. One time I was sick and was in the *krankenhaus*. I had a big blister on my arm so I couldn't go to work. My back was killing me and I had a high temperature. I thought it was my kidneys, but it was my back. I was in the sick room on the day Mengele came to the camp. At night this very elegant guy, Mengele, shows up in the *krankenhaus*. He was going through the beds, an inspector. We had no idea who Mengele was. There were a few dead people, women, laying there in this makeshift hospital. There were two women who had died. Mengele said, "You are going to bury them, you come with us." So they took me and another couple of people and made us go with him. They wrapped the bodies in something like a shroud. The bodies were placed on a wagon. We went up a hill. Then we had to take the bodies off of the wagon and bring them down into a ravine and bury them. When we finished and went back up this hill Mengele said to me, "You go back. Someone's knee is sticking out. Go down and straighten out the knee." I almost fainted. You do what you have to do to survive. This was one of the darkest days of my life.

LIBERATION

I arrived at Trautenau just before Pesach in 1943. I was liberated by the Russians on May 8, 1945. The Russians took over the town and the Nazis started to run away. When we looked up on the hill and saw them leaving — it was like a hurricane. Everything they owned was on buggies and they were running up the hill. We watched it and we knew this was the end of the war. Still, we didn't open the door, we didn't go anywhere. We were afraid to go. We didn't leave the camp for two weeks after we were free. We were afraid to leave the camp. We stayed in groups for safety. It wasn't safe because we didn't know who was on our side and who was against us. We were afraid to leave the camp because we heard so many stories. It was a big, big tumult.

One day, one of the Russians came by, opened his sleeve, and showed me how many watches he had. They had taken the watches off the Germans. He took off one watch and gave it to me. I thanked him. The next day, my friends said I should go out and bring them bread. So I went out on the street and a Russian on a horse came over to me. I didn't speak Russian, but he spoke to me in Russian and he saw my watch. He said I should give it to him. He's with a shotgun and a horse and I am just walking. I gave him the watch. That's why we stayed for two weeks in the camp. Everybody was afraid to go out.

When we heard we were free, some of us did try to get even with the woman in the camp who liked to hit us. Nobody liked her. She believed no one could touch her because her husband was a German, but Germany was going to pot already. So they directed her into the hall and everybody hit her because she was always hitting us. I couldn't even hit her. I just stood away, but everybody else did. They took her to jail and she had a heart attack and died.

There was no organization helping us in the camp. We had to find a way to get food. During the night a few of us went to the baker in town and said we wanted to bake some bread because we needed food for the people that were left in the camp. So all night we baked bread and brought it in for everybody to eat. We did this for a couple of days. Things started getting a little bit better; we could get some food in. We shared a lot; no one was an island. The baker, a Czech, knew our situation, that we were from the camp. He helped us. He said, "Come, I'll teach you how to do it and you will work with me." Then we baked cakes and brought in cakes. I didn't know how to bake! Baking powder we put in, yeast we put in, everything! However it came out, everybody ate it. Nobody cared so long as it wouldn't hurt us. A Czech man who knew the situation we came from, invited us to his house to give us a good meal. All four of us, Helen, the two Renias, and I walked to his house. They treated us very nicely. They prepared such rich food with dumplings and everything. We started to eat; it was very good. I had a little bit and

then I couldn't eat any more. I had to go to the bathroom. My stomach had shrunk after so many years of having too little food. It was wonderful food, but I just looked at it. They said, "Don't be embarrassed, eat." After the war a lot of people *shtupped* (ate) too much food and they got sick and many died.

GOING HOME

The camp started getting empty. People were leaving and we just stood there. Finally, we decided after two weeks it was time to go home and see what was going on in Poland. I had to start searching for my family, to find out who was left alive. First, I wanted to go to the town where I lived before they took me to the ghetto. I went there by train. There was no train schedule; the train stopped and we got on. We had no money, but we didn't need any. We didn't have to pay to go on the train. We didn't have to pay for some other things. Nobody had to pay right after the war. They gave a lot of leniency to all the people, not just the Jews. I went on a regular train. I was so happy to be going home. I had nothing much with me, just some underwear and a change of clothes. This was the original stuff my mother brought to me. I was with my three friends; all four of us stuck together. They came from the same vicinity in Poland.

When I got off the train I walked back to the home where my family lived before going to the ghetto. The name of

the street was Koscielna [Church Street]. A woman, the caretaker of the apartment building, was living there. At the beginning of the war the Jews had given her a lot of money to bring food for them. Because she was working with Nazis she had a connection to buy as much food as she wanted. When I asked her for information about what happened to people she told me this person came back and this one came back and from this one she didn"t hear. She was very well informed. I slept one night at this woman's apartment. I paid her to sleep in her apartment. Polish people were living in my family's apartment. I asked a Polish woman who knew me, "Don't you know what happened to my parents?" She said, "No. But I heard they found some skeletons in the basement."

Then I went back to the ghetto, alone. It was very dangerous to go back to the ghetto. The Polish people did not want the Jews to come back alive. They had a saying, "If Hitler didn't kill you, we will finish you." I went into the house we had in the ghetto and a woman was living there, a Polish woman, and I told her who I was. She had the door open. I said, "This is my parents' furniture. This was their bedroom." She said, "Oh, no! I won't give it to you. This is mine, not yours!" But I said, "Listen, I don't want it. I just want you to know this furniture belonged to my parents." She thought I came to take it away. Where would I go with it? There was nothing there that I would have liked to have. I just wanted some information about what happened to my mother, father, and sister. Bad memories.

In every town they formed a Jewish committee. We went to the committee in Sosnowiec and registered. When people were looking for family members they registered with the committee. The committee was in a big office. There were people sitting at tables. They had a good system. Through the committee I found my sister, Gucia. Then the committee told me somebody was looking for me, but they didn't know who. My brother, Shlomo, was looking for me through a Swiss committee and somehow found where I was living. He sent me a letter with his address and we started to write letters back and forth. I didn't see him until we brought him to the United States in 1959. He married in Israel and had two children.

I was homeless. I had no address, I had no home, I had no money, I had no clothes, I had no telephone. And then I found out I had no parents. But, I had my life; I had survived.

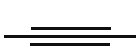
The committee gave us a start, so we had something. The committee got involved in all the dealings, they took care of everything. They gave us food each day. Through the committee we met many people who were alone. The committee helped us find a house, a room, somewhere to sleep overnight or to stay for a couple of weeks. It didn't cost us anything, they took care of everything. So, we got a furnished apartment in a building and we stayed there for a few weeks. I was with my three friends.

One day at the committee we met a woman named Helen Ryba. She was looking for help in her bakery. When we showed up and she heard we needed housing, she offered us a job. She was going to give us room and hoard, but no money. We knew this was not forever, that this was something temporary until we found something, so we went to work for room and board. We worked in the bakery for a few weeks.

Then my sister, Gucia, found me. We were reunited in the fall of 1945. She came to town and looked me up at the committee. Somebody told her they saw me alive. My sister came to this bakery where I was working. She looked like herself, but she looked like an invalid: she didn't have the tips of her fingers and she had a hole above her heart where she was shot. She had been working in a factory in Czestochowa. When the Germans heard the Russians were coming close they took all the people that worked in the factory and put them on a train, not a regular train, but something like a cattle car and shipped them out. They knew they were going to their death, so when the train slowed down, a lot of them jumped off. They were in the woods. The Germans saw them jump and started shooting at them. My sister got a bullet right above her heart. They were lying in the woods, there was no communication, nobody was looking for them. So, during the hours or days they were lying in the woods, some of them froze. My sister froze her fingers. The Czechoslovakian people who found them took them someplace where they could be helped. All her fingers froze so they had to cut them

off. When my sister found me I was still working in the bakery. Soon, my friends and I, the four of us, got another apartment to live in and my sister came to live with us. This was all temporary living; everybody had a plan to go someplace. We planned from day to day.

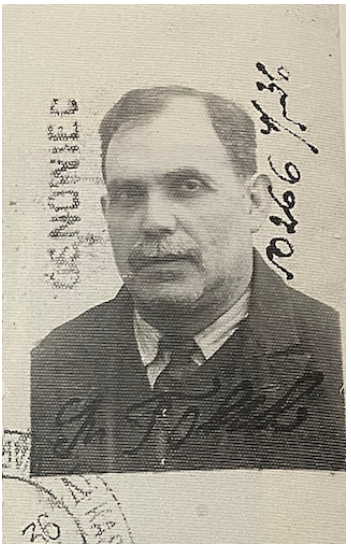
MEETING MANNY



And then I met Manny, my husband, through my stay at the bakery with Helen Ryba. Helen Ryba was Manny's aunt. We got introduced and then he left. This was the only time we saw each other. The second week he came again and said he was going to a town, Reichenback, and asked if I wanted to go with him. I had nothing better to do. I easily gave up my job selling bakery goods and I went with him.

The necklace that once belonged to Sally's sister, Esther Tolub.

Sally's mother in the white dress. Krynice, Poland 1931.



Sally's father. 1936

Sally (right) and her sister, Chaicha. Lodz, Poland C. 1925.

Sally's sister, Rifcha, with her husband Hershel, and their sons Fishel and Zyndle.

Rifcha's Rosh HaShanna card, C. 1933.

Sally's sister. Rifcha, her husband Hershel, and their three sons Fishel. Zyndle, and Tuvia.

Sally in the country with Fishel, Zyndle, and Tuvia. C. 1938.

Sally's brother, Shlomo, in the Polish Army C.1938. He survived in Israel.

Sally's sister, Chaicha. She was taken with my parents.

Sally's sister, Gucia Moneta, with her daughter, Yaffa, in Israel, Early 1950's. Gucia died in Israel in 1983.

Sally's sister, Gucia. She survived the war and died in Israel in 1983.

Seated on the bench from left to right: Sally, Sally's mother, Sally's brother Moshe Eli, Sally's sister Rifcha, Rifcha's husband Hershel. The boys seated on the ground: Fishel, Zyndel, Tuvia. At a spa in Lodz, Poland, C. 1938.

Shlomo in the Polish army. Shlomo is in the middle.

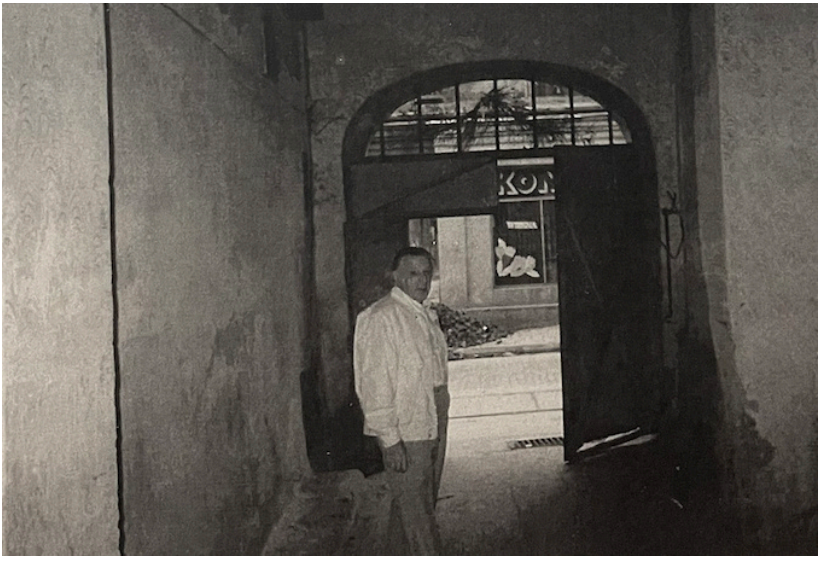
Sally's brother, Shlomo, his wife, Chaia, and their son, Shmuel. Israel, 1947.

Sally, 1939.

Sally's war ID photo.

Sally's class marching to school. Sosnowiec, Poland, 1930's.

Manny and Sally at the entrance to Sally's father's shoe factory in Sosnowiec. The photo wastaken on a family trip to Poland in 1989.



Manny a the entrance to Sally's childhood home in Sosnowiec. The photo was taken from the courtyard looking out toward Koscielna Street. Photo, 1989.

Manny with his siblings and brother-in-law. Manny is standing on the right. The photo was taken on the family property overlooking Dzialoszyce with the church steeple faintly visible in the upper left.

The back row right to left: Bella (Basia), Channa, Channa's husband Hershel, Esther-Tzena (Tzesia), Manny.

Seated: Itzhak, Sara-Blumah (Blemah)

Manny's sister, Channa.

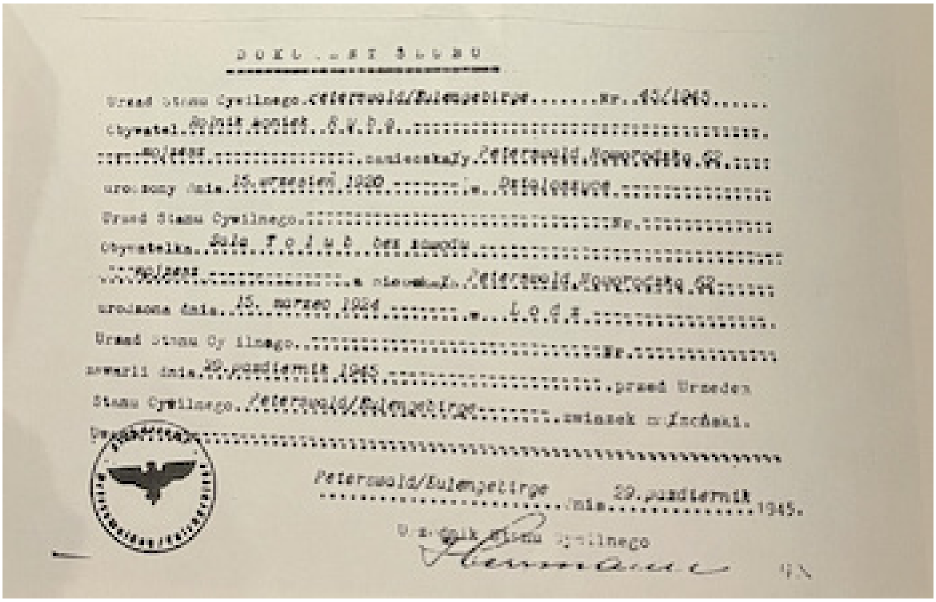
Manny's sister, Channa, with her husband, Hershel, in front of the Dzialoszvce Church.

Manny's sisters, Tzesia and Channa. Dzialoszyce, Poland. C. 1933 or 1934.

Manny's sister, Channa.

Manny's sister Cela's house in Dzialoszyce, Poland. The family was taken from this house in 1941. Photo, 1989.

The synagogue in Drialosayce destroyed by the Nazis.


DOKUMENT ŚLUBU

Urząd Stanu Cywilnego Peterswald/Eulengebirge .... Nr. [illegible]/1945
Obywatel [illegible] R u b e
[illegible] zamieszkały Peterswald [illegible] 62
urodzony dnia 15 wrzesień 1920 w [illegible]
Urząd Stanu Cywilnego .... Nr. ....
Obywatelka Sala T o l u b bez zawodu
[illegible] zamieszkała Peterswald [illegible] 62
urodzona dnia 15. marzec 1924 w L o d z
Urząd Stanu Cywilnego .... Nr. ....
zawarli dnia 29. października 1945 .... przed Urzędem Stanu Cywilnego Peterswald/Eulengebirge .... związek małżeński.
Uwagi ....

Peterswald/Eulengebirge dnia 29. październik 1945.
Urzędnik Stanu Cywilnego

Sally and Manny's marriage license with the German seal.

Sally and Manny's wedding. Pietrolesie, Poland.
September 30, 1945

Manny and Sally in Pietrolesie, Poland.

Manny in Pietrolesie.

Manny.

Sally and Manny with their dog Heidle on the farm in Pietrolesie.

Sally and Manny on the farm in Pietrolesie.

Sally in Germany. C. 1948.

MANNY AND SALLY TOGETHER

Manny's words are not italicized.
Sally's words are italicized.

Sally and I got on the train to Reichenback, Poland. When we got there we went to a house I had stayed in before. I had a key; whoever stayed there had a key. There were twenty or thirty keys. We stayed there overnight. Whoever didn't have a place to sleep or anything to eat would come to this house and be satisfied. They did not charge any money. We called the guy who owned the house "uncle". The following day Sally found out that she had a friend there, Nina. She went to see her friend and I went to town prospecting.

I went by an office and saw a sign that said if you could prove that your family had land in central Poland, they would give you a farm. *The Russians had given the property over to the Polish officers to give out the property.* I went in and I registered. I told them where my father had land. Either they believed me or they checked me out, but they took a guy with a horse and buggy and they drove me and said, "Here is your farm." They gave me a 160 acre farm in Pietrolesie, Poland. I went back to the house and Sally was there. I told her they gave me a 160 acre farm. Sally said, "You are not a farmer. What will you do with a farm?" But we went to the farm.

There were two ladies, two sisters, and a boy about ten or eleven years old still living on the farm. They were German, the Fogel family. Before the war this area was part of Germany. After the war this area, Upper Silesia, was assigned to the Poles. It is still Polish. So we got the living quarters upstairs and they had a room downstairs, and we took over the farm. We were there for two or three weeks when there was an inspection. They asked who was on the farm. I said Sally and I. We were not married at the time. They said that's too big a farm, you need a partner. I went to my friend, Moishe Weisberg, and I registered him as my partner. The farm had nothing. I had a few zlotys, so I started buying, manipulating.

When we were on the farm I met a Jewish Russian colonel. The Russian army was there. That colonel got attached to us like a father. He came to our house and Sally gave him a cup of tea. He invited us to his house and put vodka on the table with glasses and sliced onions and black pumpernickel bread. We played cards and he said to me, "When you drink and you don't want another drink, you turn your glass upside down. But if you don't turn it upside down and you don't drink, it's an insult." I used to go into central Poland and bring moonshine vodka for the Russians. I would bring it in five gallon containers.

Sally's brother, Shlomo, found out that Sally was still alive. He found our address and sent us a care package in the mail. We opened it and Sally found peanut butter. We did not know what peanut butter was. We thought it was

soap. And it smelled. We did not have washing machines, so when we washed our clothes we had to boil them. We would use old fashioned brown soap. So, Sally took half a cup of the peanut butter and put it in. After the peanut butter started boiling, Sally came to me and said, "Something is wrong. When we put in soap we get foam and here we got something else. What is it?" We didn't know what it was.

We made friends quickly. We met people who were in the same situation we were in and we made friends with them. Friends became like a little family. I went back for my sister, Gucia, and brought her to live with us. Manny's aunt came, too.

People were getting married very quickly. Nobody had a family; everybody was looking to connect. For a lot of people it was a second marriage; their first families had disappeared. People didn't want to live alone, so they wanted to get married. Every few weeks there was another wedding. We had no families to help with anything so we had to do everything on our own. We stuck together to make weddings. We had to organize food, we had to bake. We bought herring. We had to clean it and slice it up. We had bread, some cake, and a lot of schnapps. This was a simcha, a celebration. When we found some chickens we cooked chicken. If we had enough stuff, we made dinner. It was a big thing to make a dinner. We found a room where we could have a lot of people. We baked and we cooked and we sliced. The Russians played music. We were a group to help each other.

Manny and I talked about getting married. We talked about it and we were getting ready for it. I didn't want to live in sin. We wanted to find a husband for Gucia, she could not just live with us. People were pressuring me that it was not right for me to get married before my older sister got married. Manny and I met an older man my friends recommended for Gucia. He had lost his entire family. Before the war Gucia was a very fine lady, but now because she was defective she would have to accept this man. He agreed to marry Gucia but first he had to travel to finish some business. We were afraid he wouldn't come back, so I decided to go with him to make sure he came back. He did come back. He was a good guy and he would take care of Gucia.

Sally had gained weight by the time of the wedding. She was pleasantly plump. My hair had grown back, but I didn't have front teeth. Sally said before she married me I had to put in those two teeth. When I was shot it knocked my teeth out. I had an infection in my mouth for two and a half years. When we were liberated I didn't want to go to a German dentist. There was a Jewish dentist, but he didn't have any anestesia. He took a pair of pliers and pulled half the tooth. My face swelled up like a balloon. I went home and drank a bottle of vodka. I agreed to go to a dentist and had two teeth put in. Sally said now we could get married.

Sally wanted to bake a cake for our wedding. I brought her some flour, but she needed sugar. We did not have anything sweet. We found out we could get sugar beets

so I got her three or four sugar beets. Sally cooked the beets and made syrup. With that syrup she made our wedding cake.

I had a friend who was in the NKVD, the Russian equivalent of the FBI. I had a small horse I bought from the Russias. We had a little wagon and we went to other farms and whatever they had we confiscated. I put on a red band and I had a revolver. I saw a chicken, I took a chicken. One time I brought home two rabbits. This is how I organized the food for our wedding. It was not stolen, it was organized. We didn't call it stealing. We did things the old fashioned way. We got food from the neighboring farms. They were still German farms and they had stuff stored away. We just took what we wanted. We did not pay them for it.

For my wedding I wore a borrowed dress — a very simple wedding dress — and a pair of flat sport shoes. I only had one pair of shoes. To my wedding I wore a shirt and a jacket and a yarmulke. Everybody who came to the wedding had a horse and buggy. There must have been twenty or thirty horses. We had to tie them up. For every horse we prepared a little bag of oats and hay. We gave each horse a wedding present! When all the horses were tied up I washed up and went in to be the bridegroom. The wedding was on our farm. Our biggest present was a bouquet of flowers. *At the time, nobody had money to buy a gift so everybody brought flowers from their garden. They made for us an aisle of flowers. And they made a chuppah. We didn't have sweet wine; we*

had vodka. We had a frailocher wedding. It was very lively. We had nothing, but our wedding was full of life. We got married September 30, 1945. I was twenty-one and Manny was twenty-two. We got married and we were legitimate. We got married in Pietrolesie on the evening of the last day of Simcha Torah.

To conduct the ceremony we brought a guy from Reichenback, the next town. He was the rabbi, the mohel, whatever was needed, he was. He wasn't a rabbi, I don't know what he was. After they said Mazel Tov everybody took out their gun and started shooting in the air. We were allowed to have guns; Holocaust survivors made their own rules. *We got to be friends with a lot of the higher ups in the Russian army. We invited them to our wedding and they came. A lot of them danced the kazatzka on the tables.* Sally managed to have a lot of plates and a lot of silverware. We put the silverware and plates on the table and whoever came dug in. After we got married ten people came for breakfast. *For my honeymoon I was serving breakfast to ten friends! Manny invited everyone — honeymoon or no honeymoon, big deal. I hired a German woman to help clean up.*

The man who was supposed to take pictures got sick so we didn't have any wedding pictures. So, two days later we went to the next city and had pictures taken. I borrowed the dress again and Manny came with his suit. The sleeves were a little short for him — the suit was traveling around to all the people just like the dress was. We didn't bring any flowers, so pictures don't look so bright, but it is okay.

LIFE ON THE FARM

Later on, the authorities started to come to the farms and say, "You have two cows, three pigs." They counted them and those things were registered. The farmer could not sell them. This was under Communism that came into Poland in 1945. I went into central Poland and I bought a little calf and I brought him to another farmer and I gave him the calf and I took a big cow. All of a sudden I had four big cows on the farm. Then I needed chickens. I made a little area and I put in about eight chickens. Sometimes we got two or three eggs. One morning we got up and there were three or four people for breakfast. I said to Sally, "Why don't you go down and see if there are any eggs." Sally went out and was gone fifteen minutes, twenty minutes — and no Sally. I went down and saw Sally sitting and looking at the chicken. She said, "Look at that poor chicken. She worked so hard until she laid that egg. You want me to take it away?" She couldn't take away the chicken's egg to make breakfast. So this was Sally the farmer lady. *I am a city girl, not a farm girl.* Our four cows did not give much milk, but they gave a little milk. We made a little butter and a little cheese. Sally traded this with the Germans. She would trade a piece of butter for gold earrings. For the next fifteen or twenty years whenever a baby girl was born Sally had earrings for her!

The Communist government came around to our farm and saw our four cows. They said we had to give a quart of milk from each cow, four quarts a day, and every other day we had to deliver eight quarts, two gallons, of milk. Sally told them the cows didn't give that much. They said we were in violation and we couldn't have any cows if they didn't give milk. I went to a guy I knew and asked what I should do. He said you take a little milk and you put some water in and make sure there is enough to make two gallons and deliver it. Sally delivered it every other day. At the end of the month they wrote us up that the Ribas were the best farmers in town!

Then we planted potatoes. The government wanted each farmer to donate a certain number of pounds of potatoes per acre so there would be food for the army. We didn't have enough. Sally took a couple of bags of potatoes, put them on the wagon, and put them on the scale. Then she drove around four times and unloaded the same two sacks of potatoes each time. She got them weighed over and over again and we delivered the full count again. *Each time I wore different clothing, a babushka, a jacket, a dress. The son of the people we took over the farm from drove the wagon. I sat next to him. We weighed our potatoes then ten minutes later we came back and weighed them over again. We did what we had to do.*

One day Manny and I were on our way home with our smart little horse and buggy when we decided to visit our friends who lived on a farm a few miles from our farm. On the road

a Russian soldier with a bayonet stopped us. We didn't know he was drunk. He climbed on our buggy to ride with us. He was arguing with Manny telling him which way to go. Meanwhile, I had jewelry in my hands. I was wearing boots. As they were arguing I took off my rings and bracelet and stuck them in my boots. While they were arguing our horse turned around the whole wagon and started galloping toward our town. When he turned the wagon around, the Russian fell off. This was a smart horse.

A day before Pesach the authorities said they were going to send all the Germans out of Poland. Since I could speak German, they put me in charge. I was working sending the Germans out. In one place there were two German sisters who said they were sick and they could not go, so the authorities asked me what they should do. I said they were well enough to go on a wagon and when they got to the German side they could stay there. One of the women went to the toilet and swallowed poison. Then they asked me what to do with the other one. I said send the other one to Germany. One went and the other was buried.

There was a lot of antisemitism in Poland. We lived in a town where there was a highway. One or two hundred Jewish people lived on farms stretched out along this highway. They were being robbed, bandits were coming in at night robbing and shooting. We needed to figure out what to do. I came up with an idea: I got a roll of wire, maybe a couple of thousand feet of wire. We got on the

roof, put up a stick with a ring, and we ran that wire from one farm to another, to about ten farms. Every farm had a bell on the top of their chimney. In case we needed help, everyone had a bell on the top and we could communicate this way. A lot of times we used it for fun. We got home late at night and we pulled the wire and everybody started shooting in the air.

We knew we were not going to stay, that our future was not in Poland. Living on the farm was just a stopover. We began making preparations to leave Poland. Sally had a brother in Israel and I had my mother's brother and family in Israel. So our goal was to head toward Israel. We made a plan to leave Poland, head to Germany, and make our way to Israel. We had been on the farm since 1945 and we left in October 1946. About six weeks earlier the government had come and said I had too big of a farm and since Jewish people had started to come in from Russia, they assigned a family to live with us. There were two couples and about six kids. They came in and they said they were our partners. We had no choice. Sally did not like them and was not going to leave them her things. Sally had accumulated a whole bunch of crystal. We had two cabinets filled with the nicest crystal, china, and dishes. I had to take a sledgehammer and a pail and for a week I was chopping crystal. There was beautiful Rosenthal china.

In the fall of 1946 we got approval that we could go across the border for a picnic. We appeared to be three families going on a picnic on a horse and buggy but we were really leaving

Poland and going to Germany. When we left for Germany Sally's sister and her husband were with us. So were my aunt and two more friends. The only thing Sally took with her was her dog, Heidle, a little dachshund. Through my Russian friend we hired a Russian army truck to take us to the border. *When we came to the border between Poland and Czechoslovakia they said no dogs can go across. If you want to go, you go, but the dog has to stay here. So I talked to my dog. It sounds cuckoo but it is true. I told her in German, "Stay right there and don't dare move." She looked at me like she understood. When we crossed the border and we were on the other side I said very loudly, "Heidle, come on." And this dog, like a rocket, went across the border. The guards were looking and wondering what went on!*

At the Czech border I told them we were going on a weekend picnic and we were going to return in a couple of days. There were Russian guards at the border. They took away all our papers, all our documents. We had to give up all our ammunition. I had to give up my two revolvers. I had a grenade I always had on my belt. They took everything away and we got into Czechoslovakia. The Haganah met us there. The Haganah would organize our transport in Czechoslovakia. Whatever documents we still had we had to surrender to the Haganah. They wanted to make us stateless — that we had no citizenship. The Haganah was the Zionist military organization.

They took us to a camp where we stayed overnight. Then they arranged to put us on a train to Austria. We got all

our things loaded on the train. When we left the farm we didn't know where we were going so we took things we knew we would need: sheets, towels, pillows. We wanted something for a normal place in very abnormal times. When the Russian soldiers came on the train to check out everybody, they went through the luggage with bayonets making big holes in our baggage and pillows. Our pillows had down feathers inside — feathers were flying. We were sitting on the train for a long time and the train didn't move. I got off the train and went to buy Sally a bunch of kilbasas. Sally was pregnant and she said she wanted a pickle. She sent me back to the store. I got mustard and a whole pail of sour pickles. I got back to the train and all the women went after the sour pickles. The pickles went fast. Finally, the train left for Austria. *In Austria they put us up in tents. Whole families stayed in tents. Everybody slept on cots. There were no real bathroom facilities. If you had to go to the bathroom you had to climb up a hill. We had Heilde, my dog, with us. One morning we couldn't find her. We started to yell for her. She came with a salami in her mouth. She went into some tent, saw a salami, and brought it to us. This was a smart dog.*

We arrived in Germany in the fall of 1946, after the Jewish holidays. Many of the survivors in Germany were in displaced persons' (DP) camps under the supervision of UNRA, the United Nations Refugee Assistance program. Sally's sister and my aunt went to a displaced persons' camp called Wasseralfingen. It was near Ulm. Sally and I did

not go to a displaced persons' camp. From the time we were liberated we were always on our own. Sally and I went to Kempton in Germany. Sally's cousin, Peter Tencer, helped us. He had connections. *When we were still living on the farm my cousin, Peter, found me. He thought I would need help so he gave us his address in Germany and said if we ever came to Germany we should go to him and he would help us.*

We went right away and registered as refugees. The first day they gave us our ration stamps. They also gave us an apartment we had to share with two old ladies. There was a kitchen and only one bedroom. As soon as we got settled in the apartment, Sally took the food ration stamps and went out to shop. At that time she could get two grams of butter and eight ounces of meat. She bought everything she could. She went home and cooked a meal. The next day she went to the store wanting to buy again. The grocer said, "Frauline, you got your allotment for the month and that is all you're going to get." We found out that twenty or thirty miles away there was a DP camp called Landsburg where we could buy everything on the black market. So we went to Landsburg and Sally got the food we needed. We stayed in that apartment for three or four weeks. One day we went out and left our dog in the apartment. When we got back, Heidle wasn't there. The dog got out and the Germans caught her. We found out later there was a butcher who was butchering dogs. Heidle was a hotdog.

I was pregnant, so the apartment was no longer good quarters for us. There was a committee to help displaced persons. They gave refugees special privileges. They took property away from the Germans and gave it to us. We went to the committee and because we had a little influence, they allotted us a villa on top of a hill on Ubleherstrasse Street. The villa belonged to a big SS man named Lederer. He was a pharmacist. Lederer's wife was still living in the house with her son and daughter. *We got along with the Lederers very well. They stayed on the top floors and we stayed on the bottom. There was a garden in the back and we had a maid.* Lederer was a prisoner of war. While we were there he got out of prison. He opened his pharmacy again. He taught Sally how to make near beer. There were many American pilots living in the houses around us. This was the time of the Berlin Airlift. We started doing a little black market business with the Americans. *Once, just before the Jewish holidays, Manny bought a load of live fish. He wanted my brother-in-law, who was in a DP camp, to make some money, so he sent the fish to him. My brother-in-law sold the live fish.*

We had a big American Ford, twelve cylinders. We could not get enough fuel, so we put an oven in the trunk and we were driving on wood and charcoal. We would put the bag of charcoal on the roof. *Could you imagine what a pleasure this was? It would be raining outside and we would have to get out of the car, open up the trunk, and shovel in the charcoal to get home. This was life at that time.*

For us, the world was opening up. We were looking to better ourselves and we never looked back. We wanted to go forward. Our son, David, was born on May 7, 1947, in Klempton. There was no *mohel* (man to do a ritual Jewish circumcision) in Kempton, but where Sally's sister was living, there was a *shochet* (a person who did the Jewish ritual slaughter of animals) who did circumcisions, also. He did the circumcision and David started hemorrhaging. We called for a doctor and a German doctor came. He said he had never seen a circumcision and did not know what it was. I took Sally and the baby to the hospital where an American doctor examined the baby and gave him something to stop the bleeding. *A little while later, my sister, who was still living in the DP camp in Wasseralfingen, gave birth to a baby girl they named Yaffa.*

PLANNING TO GO TO ISRAEL

We again got involved with the Haganah and began to get ready to go to Israel. Sally's brother was already in Israel. He was a shoemaker. I bought machinery and supplies to make shoes and sent everything to him. One machine for cutting leather, I kept. I wasn't planning to become a shoemaker, I was looking to bring assets so we could get something going. I could buy leather in Germany for one dollar and sell it in Israel for five dollars. We did the same thing with silverware and china. We bought valuable stuff. In the fall of 1948 when Sally's sister, her husband, and daughter left for Israel, we sent everything with them.

I was wheeling and dealing. In October 1949 I was in Munich when I walked by the American consul and I saw a sign that said, "You can register to go to America." So I went in and I registered. America was an opportunity and I took it. I went home and Sally made something to eat. At the table I said, "By the way, I registered us to go to America." She said, "Good. You want to go to America, you go to America. I'm going to Israel and I'll wave to you on the way."

About thirty days later I was out doing a deal when I got a call that I had to go to the American consul for a medical checkup. I didn't go, but a friend of mine went and told them he was me. They checked him out. A week later Sally got called to go to the doctor. They never did examine the baby. *They called us to the consul to see if we could read and write. They gave us a German newspaper and if we could read it, we were okay. We had to have a conversation with them in German. This was the American consul. Both of us passed.* Thirty days later we got a notice, "Be ready in eight days to leave for America." Sally changed her mind and agreed to go to America. I told her if we didn't like America we could always go to Israel. *When I thought about it, I didn't want us to be separated. We were a family. I didn't know what was waiting for me, but I decided to go. This was my future.*

They sent us to the port of Bremerhaven where the ship was leaving from. HIAS kept us for almost ten days until it was time to get on the boat. It was very cold.

We left Bremerhaven on January 20, 1950, on the ship General Howse. If you were carrying a baby they gave you a room. I wasn't carrying the baby, I was holding him by the hand so I could carry our belongings. So they put me in the bottom of the ship. It was like a tank. I couldn't find Manny. He went with the men — we were separated on the ship.

When I got on the boat they asked me what I could do. I said I was a meat man. So they put me in the kitchen to wash dishes. They kept me stuck in the kitchen. I saw a friend of mine was walking with a broom and he was coming in and going out. I asked him how he could come and go freely and they kept me tied up in the kitchen. He said, "I'm working in sanitation. I say, 'me sanitation,' and I can go anywhere." He took his broom and walked out. In the corner I saw a broom. I put the broom on my shoulder and I walked out. They called, "Where are you going?" I said, "Me sanitation." So the whole time I said 'me sanitation' and I walked all over the ship. I didn't do a thing until we got to New York.

I was so seasick I could not raise my head. I went to the sick room and asked if they could please take care of my child. They said they could not take him because he was not sick. I said I cannot take care of him. I didn't know where Manny was, so I had a very bad trip. We were ten days on the water and for nine days I was sick. I ate the first meal on the boat and the last meal. When I saw the Statue of Liberty, I ate. We arrived in New York on February 1, 1950.

We arrived just after they closed Ellis Island. When we got off the boat in New York we didn't know anybody. A Jewish woman from HIAS (the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society) greeted us saying, "Welcome to America." I wanted to cry. It was heaven for me. She gave me a paper cup of coffee. I was not used to this. HIAS sent us to a Jewish restaurant. They put us in a taxi and told the taxi driver to take us to the restaurant and then to the hotel. My first meal in America was chicken soup and flanken. It was very good.

The first morning in the hotel, David was hungry. I went out to get food for him and I got lost. I didn't know how to get back to the hotel, but I eventually got back. *Every day I would go with David to the Museum of Natural History and show him how people became people. I didn't have anywhere else to go. I didn't know anybody and I didn't speak the language. We stayed in the hotel for a month or two. HIAS was paying. We did not abuse the hospitality. Manny was busy every day going to meet people and find a job and a place to live.* We wanted to get an apartment. I bought a Jewish newspaper, *The Forward*, and found a rent controlled apartment in the Bronx on Hall Place. The landlord was an attorney named Fleishman. We moved in and I went out to look for a job. I had a sign that said, "I am a butcher. I need a job." *I was teaching Manny English from a little dictionary.* I went to a butcher and he gave me a job plucking chickens. I was making $25 a week. Four days later I got my drivers license. A week later I went down to 14th Street and bought a 1949 Chevy. Driving home to the Bronx, I got lost.

Irving Deutch lived in our building. He worked in the garment district cutting material for yarmulkes. He would bring home a suitcase filled with material. So I bought a sewing machine, and he bought a sewing machine, and Sally and his wife, Stella, began sewing yarmulkes. At the end of the week Sally was making more money sewing yarmulkes than I was plucking chickens. *In the evening I would listen to the radio and sew. Every Friday we got a check. Stella and I would split the check. I was also sewing for myself in the Bronx, making dresses from patterns. At that time Loretta Young had a beautiful style and I made those same dresses. We met people in the garment district. We got to be friends with the owners of Collette International who made the finest designer clothes. They gave me their samples, they were my size. We always dressed in New York.*

We made a lot of friends, we looked out for each other. We made big dinners with cholent and all the European foods. We spoke to each other in Yiddish and a little English. All the greeners, the refugees, would go to the HIAS office on the weekends to look for survivors.

Our daughter, Susie, was born in Bronx Hospital May 17, 1951. People started going to the Catskill Mountains in the summer because it was so hot in the city. Manny and I rented a room in Dutchess County near Monticello. The women would be there during the week and on the weekends the men would come up. We learned to play mahjongg. We planned big

entertainment for Saturday nights: dances, parties, entertainers from the nearby hotels. Every week a different couple was in charge of planning.

I found out I could go into the slaughter business. I went to work for the Chicago Dressed Beef company running the cow and bull department. I worked for them for about a year. In November or December 1956 I bought a plant in Whitehall, Wisconsin. In April 1957 I became the first U.S. exporter of kosher meat to Israel and the biggest meat business east of the Mississippi.

My life was really unbelievable. Manny was always bringing animals home. Susie had a chicken. We always had horses to go riding. One Sunday morning my family came home from horseback riding and I was hysterical: our monkey was riding around on the lazy susan on my buffet! We had a neighbor on our street who had a little girl named Mary, so Manny brought her a lamb. She walked it like a little pet. Manny would just throw these little animals in his car and bring them home. Once he brought home a baby goat. One day, Manny came home with a little calf that was born at the plant. He just threw it in the car and drove it home. When I approached it, it took off. I had to chase this calf down the street through our subdivision. People thought we were crazy.

In 1962 we moved to La Crosse, Wisconsin. There we made lifetime friends. The synagogue was the center of our social life. I always helped in the synagogue kitchen: we baked, we cooked,

we prepared, and we served. I was even president of the sisterhood. Every Saturday night Manny and I went out with other couples.

In 1983 I sold the Wisconsin place and we moved to Florida.

OUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN

Our son, Eli, was born in Whitehall on February 21, 1960. He was born a sick child. He had Down's Syndrome and he had a hole in his heart. We just fell in love with him. He learned to read and write, and now, thank God, he is a mensch from all the love he got from our family. We did our best and we are still doing our best.

Our son, David, and his wife, Abby, have a daughter named Elizabeth, and a son named Joshua. Joshua has two sons, Nathan and Jake. Susie and her husband, Steve Schneiderman, have a son named Barry and a son named Zachary. Zachary is married to Erin. Eli now lives in a home with six other guys. He calls them his buddies. He would be lonely at home with just us. He has fun there, they have parties, he has a job at a shelter. Our children all have a very good relationship with each other. Within my small family there is a lot of love and respect and that is what is important. We tried.

When they were young I never talked to my children about my experience in the war. When we first came to the United States, nobody talked about it. Everybody said, "Shh, don't mention it." My children knew there was something wrong. They didn't have grandparents like other children. We put on a happy face and that was that. We did our best, and that's all.

OUR LEGACY

We want to be sure that no one forgets the Holocaust. To make sure it is remembered, we have endowed a fund for Jewish teens to go on the March of the Living. The fund is our legacy, our way of being sure Jewish children will go to Poland and see and come back and tell their schoolmates and friends what they learned. We must never forget. *Our families were important, respected, and intelligent people who suffered so much. They deserve to be remembered — from generation to generation.*

Manny Riba passed away July 14, 2009. Eli Riba passed away March 3, 2015. Sally Riba passed away November 9, 2019.

ABOUT THE WRITER

I began writing for Holocaust survivors in the 1990's when survivors I met on The March of the Living asked me for help writing about their feelings on returning to Poland for the first time. Later, survivors I interviewed for Steven Spielberg's Shoah Foundation asked me for help writing down all the things they did not speak about in their interview. Soon, other survivors began approaching me seeking help writing a book about their experiences in the Holocaust. I met with the survivors, recorded our numerous conversations, organized and wrote the stories in the survivors' own words, printed the books, and then handed the books to the survivors as my gift to them. The books were written solely for the survivors and their families; they were never intended for publication. They are being published now because my friends, Carol and Jaime Suchlicki, recognizing their historical value as first-person testimony, introduced me to Dr. Haim Shaked to discuss finding a wider audience for the books.

Thank you to Dr. Haim Shaked director of the Sue and Leonard Miller Center for Contemporary Judaic Studies at the University of Miami for agreeing to publish the books and for your guidance and patience as we worked together on this project.

I am grateful to the March of the Living for introducing me to the world of Holocaust education and finding a role for me in it.

Thank you to the Shoah Foundation for choosing me to be an interviewer and for mentoring me through more than thirty interviews of Holocaust survivors. Your training led me to do the work I do today.

Thank you to the Holocaust Memorial Miami Beach for encouraging the docents at the memorial to work with me to write their memoirs. I appreciate your confidence in me and your respect for my work.

Thank you to the my dear Holocaust survivors for sharing your most painful as well as your most joyful memories with me. Thank you for answering questions that no one should ever have to ask or answer. Thank you for trusting me to write your memoirs accurately and respectfully. It has been my honor and pleasure to work with you.

—Bobbi Kaufman

"One day, they took out about three hundred of us and shot us. They shot me in the neck and the bullet came out my mouth. I woke up in the grave, covered with blood. I crawled out, washed myself off, and went back to work."

— *Manny Riba*

I was homeless. I had no address, I had no home, I had no money, I had no clothes, And then I found out I had no parents. But, I had my life; I had survived.

— *Sally Tolub Riba*

Manny Riba was a prisoner in Prokocim Labor camp where he worked cleaning the streets after the liquidation of the Krakow Ghetto. From Prokocim he was sent to Skarzysko labor camp, then by cattle car to Buchenwald, and finally by death march to Theresienstadt where he was liberated by the Russians.

Sally Tolub Riba grew up in Sosnowiec, Poland. During the war she worked sewing uniforms for the German army. From the Srodula Ghetto she was sent to Trautenau labor camp where she did slave labor until liberation by the Russians.

Manny and Sally met and married in Poland in 1945. They emigrated to the United States where they raised their daughter and two sons.

There is a concept in Judaism of a positive commandment, something that is time dependent, something that must be done *now*. One must, accordingly, applaud this important effort by the Miller Center and Feldenkreis Program of the University of Miami to collect and publish Holocaust survivors' memoirs as there will soon—too soon—come a time when the last survivors will be no longer. Sadly, tragically, this testimony is not only urgent but timely because the world in which we live echoes their world and the quality of their witness. The very nature of their survival has much to teach today's generations. One must express gratitude for this project and in the sagacious words of Hillel say: "If not now, when?"

Dr. Michael Berenbaum
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American Jewish University
Former President and CEO
Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation
(Now USC Shoah Foundation Institute)