

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Holocaust

Personal Experience

O.H. 1109

JULIUS SHUDMAK

Interviewed

by

Barbara Crowley

on

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JULIUS SHUDMAK

Julius Shudmak, the son of David and Rachel Shudmak, was born March 20, 1913 in Poland. He attended public school in Poland and received Hebrew education. At age thirteen, Julius became apprenticed to a tailor and began to help his father support the family of eight. At age fourteen, he joined a Zionist organization, where he heard lectures about Jewish history and literature.

At age sixteen, Julius began preparation for emigration to Israel. Later that year, his father died and Julius took over as head of the family, working at his father's trade, shoemaking. In 1934, Julius opened his own tailor shop.

In September, 1939, when war broke out, Julius was sent to a labor camp in Germany, where he worked ten hours a day for three months, clearing out the land for a highway. In June, he was sent to a large and disciplined camp of about three to four thousand inmates. He remained there until 1945, when he was taken to another camp, Gross-Rosen. There he worked in a stone mine, where many prisoners were killed when boulders were dropped on them from above by guards.

Next, Julius was taken to Buchenwald for a few weeks, and was then sent deeper into Germany, to Vissengel, a small camp where he worked clearing away stones for oil production. Julius was then taken to Shelsingen, a coal mine camp, where he was liberated by the French army.

Julius was a tailor in Germany for a short time after the war, staying with the family of a friend in a small village. At the end of the summer in 1945, Julius walked until he came to the site of United States occupation. After staying there a bit, Julius applied for emigration to Israel, and began the wait in the camps.

In 1946, during the wait in the camps, Julius met and married Esther Bittman. In 1949, they were permitted to go to Israel, where they lived for ten years before coming to America.

Today, the Shudmaks have two daughters, Leah and Rachel. In 1980, Mr. Shudmak retired from Kessler Products, where he worked for twenty-one years.

-Barbara Crowley

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C: Mr. Shudmak where you born?

S: Poland

C: And your birth date?

S: Three, twenty, nineteen thirteen.

C: What is your family background, your father's trade?

S: My papa was a shoemaker.

C: And religious background?

S: I'm not sure.... My mother's mother had a _____. That's what they made a living from. My father's papa was a shoemaker too. They had four sons. Three were shoemakers and one was a tailor.

C: So four generations of...

S: Yeah this was a generation thing.

C: What was your education like?

S: I finished seven regular grades in Poland. And Jewish education. They call this Hebrew school.

C: Growing up do you remember anything of the Jewish nature?

S: Yeah.

C: Can you tell me about any of that?

S: The little town, population 25,000. 80-90 percent religious people. Very Orthodox people. We observe the _____. Go to the temple every week. My papa was a hard working man to support our family of six children. You can imagine. I wouldn't complain too much. According to the time and the style of living, it was fair. It was a really hard life for us.

C: Hard work, you mean?

S: You can't compare this to today. I am going back 50-55 years. _____ For living was really low. The main thing was to cover up the everyday things you need for human life. Clothing was a big problem. It was very expensive. The apartment was simple, two rooms. Six children and two other people is eight people. This was the way the people lived. I would say about 98-95 percent live in this kind of way. You better not let the people have a little bit bigger apartments. It was not jealousy with people because I have the same thing that you have, the same two rooms.

C: You don't remember any...

S: When I finished school I was thirteen years old. At about 13 and a half, I went to a tailor. I started working. I make the first year a half dollar a week. For Poland _____ Is nothing. Money you could buy a lot of things because bread was not expensive. Meat was expensive. 2 neufs a kilometer, almost 2 pounds. This was the first year. The second year I got a raise to 10 neufs. Every penny that I make I give to my parents. I took out meat packet money and some to pay to go to a movie or something. We try to be helpful to our parents. The money that my father made, this was never enough to be in life for 8 persons. I belonged to Zionist organization for 14 and a half years. Hebrews cult organization. I had a very good time there when we come together. They had a nice house there. Come together, boys and girls. Only we can't prevent _____. And we sing and dance and lectures other times about Jewish history and literature. I enjoyed this very, very much. At about age 16, I went to what they call _____, this is a preparation for emigration to Israel. I spent a year there. I went back to tailoring for a time. I had to wait. The amount of the Jewish population that could come to Israel was very little. And you have to wait a year before you can go there. After _____, my father got a little bit sick. And I tried to help him, from tailor, the shoemaker. I lent him a little bit, as the shoemaker, as much as I could. And one time I came home my father died at age 53. He left our family of six children. I had no choice. I had to stop to take over the place to replace my father and make a living still.

C: You were sixteen?

S: I was sixteen years old. I worked hard. I did my best that I could. By _____ broke out the war between Germany and Poland.

C: Before we go on can I ask if you remember any Jewish incidents from your childhood that you personally witnessed or that you remember?

S: Everybody knows that _____ was very high. And they tell you every place not to be a Jew or Jewy and all those kinds of things. You know you live in a country for so many years and you get used to it. Sometimes they beat us up on the way when we walk through the woods. We had to accept we didn't have a way out from this particular situation. The state didn't do anything about it. I remember a holiday, people from a little town came and started fighting with the Jewish. They came when the temple closed. Stones and sticks. We tried to fight back and we tried to push them back far enough to get them into the temple. We were successful, I would say. We had a couple strong boys, young boys. This was going on from

time to time. This was the way of life. When you come up from _____ and they tell you all the time, there is the Jew, there is the Jew. You can't do much because when you answer him, he beats you up more. You have to be careful and deny it and not to walk in the gentile Neighborhoods. We live mostly close to gentile Neighborhoods. Some are very fair people that you can get along with. My customers were 80 percent gentiles.

C: Your wife mentioned that the gentile Christmas was particularly a difficult time.

S: Gentile Christmas was a time to stay home because of the weather. It was really cold, a lot of snow. It was about 20- 25 below 0 nobody liked to go out 11 o'clock outside to buy something. And of course with _____ it was different _____. He and I can go outside without _____ or anything. I wouldn't take a chance to go in Poland without _____ on a holiday. It's a feeling when you like somebody, when you feel that somebody likes you. You trust them, you go, but when you know he hates you so much how can you go...

C: When the war started then you were supporting your family?

S: Yeah and after this I took over the shoemaker after my father died. I made more money as the shoemaker than I did working with the tailor. When I worked for the tailor I made about 15-20 neufs a week. When I work in my own shop I made about 50 neufs a week. I don't remember exactly, but I made much more.

C: So you supported your family? What changed for you when the war started? I guess it would have been September 1, 1939?

S: 39, Yeah this was the month. I can't tell you the exact month and the date, but this was close to the Jewish holidays. Everybody that knows history knows that the war broke out in 39. We lived close to the German border. I would say about 50 miles. The second day of the war they approached and we got very afraid we got together with three families. This was my girlfriend's father. He had horses. We attached them together and started to run closer to the Russian border. He was a man who knew the exact way to go. We left after a couple of days. The gentleman come from the other side. From the East side. We stopped in the middle because we couldn't go ahead anymore because this was closed. They came from another side, when we got stopped we couldn't go anymore. I lost my mother and sisters along the way.

C: Oh, what happened?

S: I don't know what happened. I lost them. And I was by myself. I was sleeping there _____. I had to leave that morning. And _____. I had a bike. I took the bike and I went straight to the place where they were going, _____. It was closer to the Russian border. I come into the town. A gentleman is calling me, come here, come here. No, I have to go. I am looking for my mother and my sister. He said you are a liar you are a spy. And he started talking and on the way to going this way. A gentleman, a regular soldier start to talk to me. What's my name and where am I coming from. I told him my name is Julius Shudmak and

I am a shoemaker. I only came here because people are afraid of you. When the officer started talking to me I got that feeling. I was scared to death. I thought I was finished. The soldier came out and said this man is going three hours with us. He is looking for his family. And I was lucky they didn't shoot me. And I went into the little town and I found my mother and I find my sisters. I found all of them. They stick together. They went home. On the way back home they killed a lot of Jews. They shot all of the Jews.

C: And you saw that?

S: And I come to my town from my _____ Shouldn't I? Yeah they killed the man and they killed some other people. I started to go back. I went to _____ with the bike. I find my cousin there and they told me to very careful on the way back home to _____. It was close to the high holidays and I make with my bike 50 or 60 kilometers in a couple hours. About 6 hours I was with the bike, maybe 5, 6, 7 hours, I don't know. I come home and you have to prepare yourself for the high holiday. The situation in town was very, very low. Everybody was very scared. The people only talked this man was killed, this man was killed. And so many families were scared they never came back to the town. We had the holiday. The second day in the holiday, gentleman soldiers came in up for the holiday came in and pull the Jews out to the street and beat them up and tried to tell them to work for them. This particular holiday is meaning maybe, I wouldn't say, _____. The holiest of holidays is the new year, Yom Kipper. And they beat them and they have to go. This particular holiday the Jewish had to go into the temple without shoes. And they took them out without the shoes and all dressed up and other things they wear. I was lucky they took me to a factory. This was the first factory that built the train. And I worked there two days solid. They sent us from the Jewish community they sent out a couple hundred young boys and they sent us other places to work without money, without anything.

C: Where were you sent?

S: This was the same town. We clean up. In that time in work there was a lot of cleaning up work. We clean up everything in the factory. End of the week we went back home. And now they start to make a highway. And we had a cemetery about 400 years old and we had a new cemetery that was close to the railroad, a couple feet. They tried to make the length of the highway, we had to dig holes to take apart and most of the souls from the cemetery to take away. We had 100 maybe 2 hundred Jewish boys worked there a couple weeks to clean out everything. And after this they made the highway there. The first year I worked in my shoemaker place. It was very little work people were afraid to come or nobody needs something. Yeah it was very little work. And after a time, a police man. He was a German living on the side of Poland. He told me to try and take out what you can from the shop because tomorrow your shop will be closed. Its not aloud for a Jewish tailor or barber to work. What I did I had a back room and put the machine back there and I took out the leather and the little bit of things and took them home to my house. Tomorrow they closed it up. And in my house I had no work at all. I had saved a little bit of money. We lived off the money. They stopped to take the young generation to camps. My sisters got scared they were taken. We had in the attic a little room, and I covered up the attic. It was one room and behind the room was a little hole to the attic. They went into the

attic there and slept all night. They gentleman soldiers came about 2 o'clock, midnight. I wake up and they ask me, this is the place that you live? How can you live in such a little room? I am happy, this is the way that I live here. My sister was in the second room crying. He talk with me, I talk with him and he went out. I was lucky. I saved them, they didn't go to jail. In February of 1940 they were looking for men to send them to camps. I tried to hide, but they took my mother. It was winter time, cold, snow. They told me my mother could get sick so I got scared. I went to the public school. I came to the big round door. A higher rank soldier picked me up because I was late. I should be there at 7 o'clock and I was there about 11 o'clock. I was lucky I was wearing a heavy, winter coat because it was 25 below zero. I took so much beating but if I didn't have that heavy coat on... I was lucky he didn't hit me in my head or in my back. On the _____ another town. Big Jewish population, they call it _____. They concentrated there from other towns the Jewish people and in another two days we went to a camp. The name of the camp was _____.

C: Where was that?

S: This is Germany. They call this _____. We went to work they built a highway. They call this the _____. You know from here you go to the turnpike, it was the same thing. We make the first from the beginning from the work. They start this I think to Germany and to Poland. They were preparing for the war to have a good way for moving the whole army and everything. And we start the beginning of the work in this place. You know how you dig the hole and you cover up the whole you _____ up. The population was not to big I would say about 500 young men. We went every day to work in the morning about 7 o'clock and we come back home about 5 o'clock. The food was poor. One pound of bread a day maybe, soup, and potato. In the beginning we were lucky because they could send a little bit of food to us. This didn't take much time, maybe three months, the beginning of summer. June. They sent us away to a big camp with about 3 or 4 thousand people. Big difference. They started building, they call this _____. This is a factory to make cannons, big ammunition for _____. The big thing was we had to build the buildings. We start to work to level out the ground for those buildings. This was a concentration camp. Everything was different here. At 5 o'clock in the morning they wake you up. 6 o'clock you have to be out to get your soup and bread. The bread they brought in the room, but the soup you had to pick up. You have to wait and they have to divide the people. A hundred people go in this direction and a hundred people go in this direction. And we went to work in our clothes in the winter time. The clothing was striped and very thin. Shoes from boot and socks were really cold. And when you work in this particular condition its not too pleasant I would say. And I would wish to nobody to go through what we went through at this particular place.

C: What happened?

S: People was about 800. They got skinny and weak. They couldn't do the work on the place. They sent them to little hospital and after they send them away to finish them up. They had a policy how long you can work. They give you a piece of bread and a little bit of soup and you are not able to work they will not give you much. They killed them. After this they had a plan, nothing special, everybody knows it. He tried to killed most of the Jewish population. The

camp was designed to concentrate to give you work and work to make you weak, then you can go. I was lucky. I got from my house a little bit of help. The concentration camp was _____ to me. I was lucky I had good work. The factory was working not only Jewish, but other nations. Russians, Germans, criminals. All kinds of the population they sent in. After I arrived they sent me to start to build a hospital. The hospital built houses. I was lucky they sent me to _____. The landscaping was work I liked and not too heavy. I spent the whole summer working different scaping. After this they sent me, they built a railroad from the factory. When you finished a cannon you had try them out to see if they are working. You have to make a place out of the factory to try this out. We built the railroad. We finished this, I think it was 1943. Everything was ready. They called tailors and shoemakers. And I went up and tell them I am a shoemaker. They let me into a shoemaker place to fix shoes for the people. I was lucky because I didn't have to go everyday so far. I was working inside. This was a big help to me. One day it they sent the Russians to start pushing ahead. We were not too far from the Russian lines, maybe a hundred miles. They started to go ahead deeper into Germany. They buried 5,000 people. We had to work. We started working in winter time with very little food. Maybe once a day we got a little bit of bread. I know one thing. We left on a Monday. We came with 5,000 people. 2,000 people perished on the way to this camp.

C: And what was this camp?

S: This is _____. This was a camp designed to finish up people. It was a stone mine. People work in the stone mine. This is very hard physical work. And the main thing was the people working inside and the police was walking around and they told them to put the stones down. 300, 400 feet down and they kill people with the stones. I would say about 600 people. Nothing under the floor. Wood, nothing. And you got to go at night out to the restroom, you got to walk over the people. Everything was so packed. You couldn't push your hand between two people. After a week, two weeks I see something bite me. I see people are looking and looking. And I take my sweater and I see two lice and I try to kill them. I was ready after a couple hours out my sweater. Thousands of lice. My cousin is running to the toilet. I ask him what's wrong with you? I have to go. It was the sickness, Typhus. Hundreds of people died in the camp. You know when you have thousands of lice that itch you up.

C: Did you catch it?

S: No I didn't catch that. I was lucky. After twelve weeks they took out, they sent us to _____. I was safe at this particular time. People couldn't stand on their legs. They put us on a train and sent us to _____. _____ was much better than here with nothing, it was the finishing place. It was a big concentration here. It was very popular, very famous. You could find engineers and politicians. Big people. The food was much better. They give you a soup it was fat enough. Rice and you didn't go to work at all. They didn't have any more work at all. They took people. They had stones. You had to push stones about 300 feet. And at the end of the day he told me to go put the stones back. This was the work to keep you busy, to keep your mind occupied. Not to give you a chance to think about your situation.

C: So that was really just busy work?

S: Yeah, to keep you a little bit busy. This was the main thing for the people. They didn't have work. They had a couple _____ of ammunition. The Americans destroyed everything there. When they destroyed everything, they not only inside the camp, but around the camp. Nothing happened to the people. They leveled everything but the _____. It was a big _____ of ammunition.

C: You weren't there when they were bombing?

S: No. This was before. There was one time when I was working on the hospital. We heard a very loud noise. The police came and said lay down. We laid down on the floor and they went to another place. We know they weren't stupid people, they exactly what was going on. The Americans were going for a mission some place. I spent a couple weeks there and they sent me to a place far deep into Germany. _____ is the name of the camp. A small camp. The camp was they tried to take out _____ and make oil. We work this particular day. The work wasn't that bad. You dig in the stone and make a mountain about 10-20 feet. Put around material and the stone starts melting. The pipes from inside. The production they complained was very poor. According to the workers what you put in was the production what they didn't _____. It was a very serious tragedy from before. The time from the war was very important. After that they sent us to a little camp, _____. And we didn't have too much time to stay there we did nothing. It was another coal mine. We went in looked through everything, but we didn't start to work because the French army was very close to us. And they picked up everything and we start to walk. They tried to bring us to Austria. The main thing was to kill everyone. Not to leave one man alive. We start to work on a Saturday late in the evening. And I see we go back and forth, back and forth. I couldn't ask nobody why we are going back and forth. We understood that's where they are starting to go ahead. The French army is behind them. 12 o'clock or one o'clock after a night of walking, they put us in a big _____ to sleep there. When we woke up in the morning no gentleman, nobody outside. I said in German, we are free. The gentlemen are gone. I start running and I see a railroad. I went over and I see a little house. The door was closed so I broke the lock and I see it is machines. I closed the door and sat there debating what was going to happen. In the morning I looked and nobody was there. I went to the little town then and the French you have nothing to be afraid of you are a free man. It was a beautiful feeling. A friend of mine after _____ years in concentration camps. He told me I have a _____ and they like if I sleep there. They produced something. They said you can come with me and we could stay together there. They gave us food there and treated us very nice. The couple was I'd say 50 or 60. The husband was a sick man. I tried to do what I could for them for the good care they gave to us. They give us a room. This was the end of the war for me. I spent in this little town, 3 months. I had bread enough, the room they gave me very good food. I was a trader. I took from them something and I would make them something, clothing. I made them shoes. I put together as a shoemaker I could go and make for them other things because I had a feeling I should do something for those people. I make them nice shields and things out of material. They were so proud of me. Everything was so expensive, it was very hard to find something. I made a lot of things for them. I had to make up my mind because they told us we had to leave this town. They made places to bring those other _____ together in one place. I went in this place to see how it looked. I didn't like it. Police outside. A lot of people. We took together twelve people. We

start walking in the direction to the United States occupation place. The main thing was _____ . The name of the people. Walked every day about 20 miles, 50 miles. We took our time. No hurry. We stopped at houses and they'd give us bread. They let us eat over night. After two days of walking we came to a little place. We tried to stay in the little village. After a couple days American soldiers over from Germany found us. We are Jewish and he was in contact with the Rabbi. Army Rabbi. They got in touch with us and told us they would try to locate us in a little time. Provide us with food stamps, clothing. They sent police out to German families to give us clothing. We looked a little bit better. I was lucky you know the luck comes after you. The place I was sleeping the woman's husband was a shoemaker. He had this place in the house and I start to work there. Very kind people, they bought me everything. Was a little village, I would say population maybe 2,000.

C: Where would that have been around?

S: This was _____. And after I arrived and spent the summer. And close to the holidays came two German Jewish. They told us they want us to help concentrate more people to a nicer place. We went, we told our _____ with us. They call this _____. It is what I think you call a castle. They gave us good food, music. Americans came and we had a very good time there.

C: Oh, you stayed in a castle?

S: Yeah, and we took trips. We went to places to look around. This was the good part of life. Beautiful, good surroundings. It was unbelievable. The United States did a lot for us. They did everything they could for us to be comfortable. After that I signed up to go to Israel. I met my wife this place _____. She came to this place too. We got married and we've been together ever since. We spent 10 years in Israel. We had 2 children in Israel together. We came to the United States because it the best country. We are very happy to be here and I am retired here. I appreciate every _____ of my life.

C: Rachel, is she your youngest?

S: Yeah. I work hard to give my kids a chance to go to college. I would not like to have them be a tailor or a shoemaker. They have a better life. I'm sorry we had a hard time. Everybody, even kids with education. My daughter finished art and couldn't find a job she got to Israel. You spend so much money so I would think its.....still the best country in all the world. They can say all they want. Every country, every place is _____. I made a trip to Israel three years ago. On my way back I stop in Amsterdam. My train came 7 o'clock and I had to eat something. I was hungry. And I ask a cup of coffee and a sandwich. So small sandwich and I paid something like \$4. I tell myself I like to be back where I don't pay \$4 for nothing. I come to new York and I get a big coffee and a big sandwich and I pay maybe a dollar and a half. It's not enough though. People are complaining. They shouldn't complain. You go someplace else. You can go to Germany or anyplace and still the best place to live life is here. This is my personal opinion. This is our dream. My father spent so many years here and rented two little rooms. Eight people. We are very happy.

C: Do you remember any incidents from the concentration camps that particularly stand out for you with the guards or what it looked like?

S: I had one accident. When I was working on the place when I was making the hospital. A gentleman foreman asked me to fix his shoes. The policeman came in and caught me. He said good work and I got excited. When you want to work you can stay in the concentration camp not here. And I was sure I was finished because they always look to catch you for something to get rid of you. I was so lucky when I came in they didn't kill me, they sent me to the shoemaker shop. This was the one accident I had besides the one in the Polish town where I was riding my bike and they told me I was a spy and they killed hundreds of people.

C: Why do you think they didn't kill you?

S: A young man, a good looking guy is running back. Why are you running back you should be in the army, why are you running. It was his imagination I must be a spy. And I was lucky because this guy, this soldier was a tailor from _____. I told him I lost my mother and my sisters. He went and talked to him and said he is not a soldier he is looking for his mother. If I hadn't met this soldier I would be a dead man

C: When you were in captive did escaping ever cross your mind?

S: I don't understand.

C: Or you knew that no one could escape from the camps so it never really crossed your mind?

S: You could escape. When you are deep in Germany and you try to escape you have to be lucky to find a family to give you regular clothing and to give you a chance to be a regular human being. This was one thing. And I think people started to run away they got caught and they were finished. They got shot. We know exactly that nobody will get out alive. This is the way they will finish us up. It will take another couple months and another couple months. You have to the best that you can.

C: That's what you were thinking of?

S: Yeah We were thinking that because we talked with German criminals they told us you will die. Maybe not today, but three months later because the plan is to kill all of us.

C: Why didn't you give up? Why do you feel that you survived?

S: You can surrender to police you can't do anything. Even when you try to do something. We had experience. We had a chance to help German army. They told us how far they were in Russia. You had to be quiet. We thought maybe if we help them they will help us get through here. First of all you have to know when you start at 40 and go down to 45 and 44 this particular foot they give you makes you sick. I was lucky I made the 100 miles in the winter time. I was

skin and bones. I had 60-70 pounds when we left the concentration camps. You can see in pictures the people are bones and skin. You can expect men after 4 or 5 years in a concentration camp to be a strong man. You work 12 hours a day outside in the winter time. You come in the house and _____ everything.

C: Why do you feel you managed to survive? Why do you feel you survived what others didn't?

S: Surviving is up to the person. When you grow up in a poor house. Those people survive. I have experience. People come from Holland, French, Belgium, rich people. On three months they die. I ask them how come they get here so much later and they're already dead. This doctor, the doctor in our town, a Jewish doctor. He worked in this hospital and I knew him very well. I talked with him and he said this is simple, when you grow up in a wealthy house with good high calorie food and you change rapidly to very poor food. You will not hold up too long. And besides I was lucky I got the _____ from my house. I was close to the camp. I had a little bit of help.

C: How far would you say?

S: I was about 150-200 miles from my house. This was for 2-3 weeks I would get maybe a couple slices of bread. Not much. Bread was the main thing. Secondly, I was, in the concentration camp, a shoemaker and I had a double suit. And I was inside sitting on a chair not working every day. I was lucky the Germans, if I fixed their shoes might give me a piece of bread and a piece of bread and a piece of bread. This was a big, big help. He asked me to fix his pants, I fixed his pants. He asked me to fix his shoe I fixed his shoe. They got everything and I got help for that. The main thing was the piece of bread.

C: Before your liberation, do you remember the last days what did you think about doing?

S: When I was with others I was nothing _____. I was so skinny and so tired. My memory didn't work at all. I knew I only had one _____ to protect myself. And I ran and I closed up the door and I was sitting there all the night. In the daylight I went down to the cellar. This was a little factory they had for the Russians. They cut wood. I can't exactly explain in English. I went to the cellar and saw a closet. I open the closet and a pint food there. There was soup there in a really big pot. I took the soup and ate the soup. I was not thinking about anything except that I am hungry and I ate.

C: How many days after that were you out of there?

S: One day. I got to leave this place. He told me I couldn't stay there anymore. I found my friend and he said come with me. I spent 3-4 weeks in _____.

C: And that's when you stayed in the castle?

S: The castle was the summer of 45 close to the Jewish holiday.

C: Did you feel that you wanted to return to Poland?

S: I didn't have that feeling at all. I have a chance now to go to Poland. I have a _____ . I can't make up my mind. I'm not that interested to go look around. When you leave behind good memories you like to go back. But what kind of life did I have in Poland? A piece of bread and a bowl of soup. Once a week you can imagine a family of eight they divided this for two days so much could they give. You have to remember clothing we were very poor. I don't want to go there. What will I see there today.

C: So you don't think you'll ever want to?

S: I have better things to spend money on. I can go to Florida and spend the money and enjoy it. To go to Poland it is expensive too and you may have to spend hundreds maybe thousands of dollars and you don't want to throw your money away. I'm not a rich man. I make my money and I save up a little bit.

C: Your wife mentioned that to her when she was in _____. She said she remembers how great everything looked. What do you remember the most when you left the last camp?

S: _____ , as I mentioned before was not made for working. Everyone was pushing to get to Germany the French, Russian, and American armies. Nobody beat me there. We just had to push the stones to keep us busy. When we started to walk from _____ to kill other people. We came to a place with 1,500 people. They shot all the people. Policeman said I take care of these people. Nothing will happen to you. 5-6 police officers took care of us while we walked.

You think every gentleman was blood thirsty to kill everyone. I wouldn't say that.

C: Why didn't more officers do these sorts of things like go against their orders?

S: Mostly, all those people thinking these are people and others aren't thinking this is right or this is wrong. They did everything right without thinking.

C: They did everything just blindly?

S: Yeah and they believed it. They said the Jewish had to be killed. Not to leave one Jew alive. Why, I don't know. I know the Jew population was not very big one in Germany. They took 5,500 American people and put them in jail for 144 days. Why, what did they do to you? The same thing with the German. They had the population of a couple hundred thousand Jews. What did they do? Why should you kill them? When he finished the German population started the Holy war. They killed thousands. Jewish were something special.

C: Your wife mentioned the cruel indifference of the German people that she couldn't believe. When they marched through the streets.

S: German people are good people, but they are not smart people. They like to listen to a

higher person. He will tell he is the big one. He can do everything. He say kill and you will kill. This is my personal opinion. I know the Germans. I lived there for 8-9 years. In normal times they are very nice people. We can't talk too much because this is politically and economically.... you can't talk about those things because you are not that famous. This just happened and I leave this up to more intelligent people. To professors, to specialized people. They should do everything not to give a chance to happen in the future. This is the main thing. We are people created from one god. There shouldn't be so much ignorance or I believe in this and you believe in this. As long as you believe in something you are O.K. What is religion about. To be a good human beings. This is the main thing, not killing. So much education the young generation has. I cannot understand why everything is so old. Why? Killing and everything. Why? Something is wrong some place, I cannot understand. You live in a time where life could be much more pleasant, much nicer, much easier. Why should _____ going to your car. Simple _____. In a college or in a High school could such a thing happen. All that education. How would like to see how they get people back to work. I spent 20 years in a factory and I was happy that I worked. I was sorry for those other people that were out of work. They cannot find a job and they are running to the unemployment office. I would like to see a normal time with people working and making a little bit of money to make a normal life because the worst things happen when people are out of work. You are hungry, you go out and steal. When people are working they are occupied became homely and enjoy life.

C: Is there anything you would like to add that you don't think we've covered?

S: That's finished. I leave this to the professors. They are smart. I spent my life working in a factory. No special education. I could talk to much. Maybe its not important.