

In October, 1939, I registered to continue university and to live with my friends (Izzio Igra) in their house in Rynek Stryj. My father was hiding; my mother and my three brothers moved to deft Bolechowska to live with my father's sister. I was never concerned about how to make a living. I took a job for afternoons in the library. But, I realized that I had to be careful and do well in school in order to qualify for admission to the university to study medicine.

In June, 1940, I finished my tenth year of schooling with the highest marks and according to their system I was accepted without an examination to study medicine in Lwow. I was the only one from Stryj to study medicine. Others went for engineering, pharmacy, and others. I was greeted as a man who had to work to support himself and I lived while in Lwow with my uncle Wofkio Koppel. My stipendium for my study went to him. But I never forgot about my mother and my three brothers living with her. Every day before I went to school I went to stand in front of stores for food and clothing and accumulated two valises to bring to Stryj for my family. The Russian police stopped me all the time until the head who gave me permission to go through sometimes, helped me bring them to my mother's house. He happened to be Jewish. Once he made the statement, "Be careful. You're not supposed to go with two valises. It looks like you are a speculator. You can go to jail for that. I would not be here. You will be in trouble." I was concentrating on studying and I did not pay attention to that, but I spoke to my girlfriend, and she said he was right. I spoke to my mother, and she assured me that she could get along without me carrying big, heavy valises. Mother said, "I am working in the Jewish hospital, the kids are working in the school library, and Jacob works in a little flour mill on Krzywaulica."

I took the Captain's advice, and then I did not carry anything with me when visiting my mother and brothers and family in Stryj. At one point suddenly my sister came to see a doctor with her husband Jonah Friedler. The doctor was my brother-in-law's friend. They told me that Conomor Paper was very unhappy that I, syn Bulzuja v. richman [*-hard to read -*] was accepted to study medicine. I asked them to give my regards to Gicialy and Szyjko. I did not mention my father's name, who was hiding in her house. The name of the director of Medical University in Lwow was Makarczenko. He received from the Komcomor Communist Party; he and his Politruk approached me all the time with those words, "Your father left you but we respect you and your desire of helping medically all followers of Stalin. May he live forever." Before Russia occupied Poland these elements believed, and were members of Jewish Bund, part of Socialist. The same people became Stalin-type Communists when the Communists occupied the Eastern part of Poland, and they raised their children that way – to hate Jews, because they owned the stores with food, clothing, etc.

But people who knew my father remembered when my father was very young he joined the army. He spent most of the war years, 1914-1917, in Vienna and worked as a soldier in a flour mill. The owners of that mill liked him and were happy to have him in their house on Friday night because of his knowledge of Torah and enforcing the Ten Commandments. He always said if people would adhere to one, "Love your neighbor as yourself," we would not need any constitution. As a young man, he dreamed of becoming an owner of a flour mill. When he came back, my mother and their four sons and a daughter received him home with open hands.

First he was looking for 2-3 rooms near a river – in Stryj, Marcinowka. A house like that was waiting for him. First he tried the river Stryj and thought he should take advantage of it as a source of power. He put up a wooden transmission and bought a big round stone, bought grain and started to produce flour, and became very popular. The way he sharpened the stone properly made the flour very tasty from a dried out grain. The *razowa[-hard to read -]* maker! His flour became so popular that within two years he bought a regular Walce, one from Germany. By 1918 he hired plain people who built houses, and guided them by making plans a reality. And he had the guts to hire furniture makers to make wooden type machines to make grysik (grits[-hard to read -]) and other Kelloggs type farina, etc. The second building had two floor five pound wodice[-hard to read -] but he never gave up the stone. This part required stronger power; he tried to maneuver with the dam, but realized a motor was necessary. He bought a motor in Germany by 1924. I was already a big boy and he trusted me with the oscillator pumping with not too much oil; too much oil kills the motor. He held them in a special place locked in. I became the specialist in oiling; I learned that oil should be spread thin-smooth, not scraping itself from dryness. My father did not let anyone except himself and me do that every Sunday when he came from Lwow Gelda zbrozowa, to buy grain for the big mill. He did not trust those so-called wholesalers shipping grain.

In 1928 my father started to build a four floor building similar to the one in which he worked near Vienna in Austria. It was a more modern mill; you could enter in a black tuxedo. It did not saw a drop of flour on you. In the summertime he wore white shirts, and in wintertime he wore a white leather jacket coat most of the time. All the time my father preferred that my brother Jacob should be in charge of the mill, buying a scilling [-hard to read -] flour with my sister Sunia. He was very strict, especially when he had to go for business, and meet other people, he took Saralee. To go swimming, she could only go with him, because she was wild and tried to jump into the river from a bridge.

My father considered my mother a stable personality, but she could not stop him from making plans to build the four floors. She used to tell him, “Your plans are good for Vienna, not for Stryj.” The city had about 30,000 residents. She reminded him that he had trouble with a kidney stone and the other kidney did not function right. He had to go very often to see his urologist in Vienna for treatment.

First he planned to finish the flour mill despite my mother’s advice not to make any plans because people in the city were talking about Communists in Russia and their followers in Stryj; she said as soon as they came to Stryj, they would take over the mill, that they would need a flour expert also, and that they would always make a living.

Meantime he insisted that Sunia should marry Rabbi Jonah Friedler about 1937. They had a big wedding which lasted a whole weekend on premises on Maucinouera [*-hard to read -*] Just before the war on September 1, 1939, my father decided that Jonah was not a good businessman, so he decided Siuna should come home from Israel and they would go together to Vienna and concentrate on my father’s medical problems. He got his way. In between 1933-1939 the workers in Stryj went on strike several times but our workers had an agreement that whatever other workers would get, our workers would get 10% more, because the cost of living was jumping up. I heard that one of the owners met my brother Jacob on the train and slapped him in the face. My brother was smooth and good-natured. I decided to go with him the next Sunday to Lovane (Lemberg). Our competitor neighbor apologized to my brother and we agreed not to get involved in a violent way to solve problems, especially since Hitler in Germany was looking to take over the Eastern countries with national resources, like Poland, Russia, and Rumania.

And also, we should try to make peace and stop closing mills like Steierman and Borak – two other big mills. The owners closed their mill and a security watchman was in front in booths. Those tried two years later to open their mills. They found all the mills were robbed; people got in through tunnels and took out what they could.

While my father was busy with doctors, he never forgot his family. Those in need got 25kg flour to support themselves every Friday for Sabbath. The lunchroom cooked Kosher meals to all who came, especially the German Jewish who were forced to leave Germany in exchange for Germans born outside Germany.

My father did not like the grain shipped to our mill by trains. Those deliveries had all kinds of junk inside to make it heavier. He decided in 1936 to build a little store room with weight scales and buy directly from individual farmers. He worked it out with people related to us and whom he knew to be honest, and at the end of the week they all delivered together the grain to our mill. Their exchange was in cash – no promissory notes.

In 1937 when Hitler was forcefully sending the German Jews to Poland and Russia, he confiscated Jewish ownership of factories, especially in the fur line, dresses, and shirts, and forced them back to Poland and Russia. My father felt that in Stryj nobody should die from hunger. The German Jews were forced to leave for Poland. Somehow most of them found jobs in their line – the medical needs, food and housing absorbed them and we all got used to taking care of each other. The young German Johan Meck, whom my father trained in the beginning of 1937, declined to go to Germany. He was very attached to my father. I remember every Saturday after the prayer indicating the Holy Sabbath was finished, my father had a meeting in our house to prepare him for the examination as a obermiller – because he liked his knowledgeable approach to any problem. Sometimes my father asked him a question that Johan Meck was supposed to study. He was a young man and did not study. My father slapped him and asked him why he did not study. He said, “I want you to pass your examination and start to work as a obermiller.” My mother told my father, “The times are very tense. Look what is going on with Hitler.” My father told my mother, “I told him to go home and study. Next Sunday is the examination. I want him to take care of the mill.”

The next day Johan Meck’s father came to see us with a basket of fruit and he told my father how much he liked my father and he did not want to leave to go to Germany. He brought the basket of fruit as an expression of how much they loved my father because he cared for others. When the Russians occupied Stryj, Johan Meck came to say goodbye to us and left for Germany. My father had no other choice and he appointed Hupawloski as obermiller. A few months later, in September, 1939, the Germans (Hitler) made a pact with Russia (Stalin) and the war friends Hitler and Stalin decided to divide Poland between themselves and at the end he wanted to force the world to submission (slavery).

How This Affected My Family

When Germany declared war against Poland in September, 1939, I put on my military uniform and my friend Igwa and I got our assignment to keep the airplanes away from the bridges. I told my friend that the overpass was an area the airplanes would not want to bomb. Both of us went to the real bridges near our mill. We used out the 60 – what is next *[-hard to read -]* Again I noticed the same sergeant and he told us (under the influence of alcohol), “This war is against the Jews; we will clean up from Jews, we will have beautiful apartments.” My friend told him, “This war is against Hitler.” His answer was that he was also Jewish. My friend threw him down the bridge into the water and we went to report this to the Captain. We met him talking to the Captain, saying, “This is what you can expect from “Polaks” – they helped Hitler to eradicate six million Jews.” The Polish army was defeated in 2-3 days according to the agreement between Stalin and Hitler.

In the same time, Hitler was preparing war against Stalin. They were double-crossing each other. When the Russian army occupied Stryj near Lemberg, my father approached the Russian major of the city. The major visited us frequently. He assured us, “Your father built the mill with his sweat and hard work and also on meetings of Komsomol he told you young Communists you should support that Milel should benefit from his hard work, but the young were persuaded by jealousy *[-hard to read -]* of the parents.” The major made a plan to modernize other mills but his talk in the long run was that they would be a loser because Mr. Landau, with his background, could get a job in any other mill as a man with good thinking like a scientist. Without Mr. Landau, he said they could not exist. On about January 15, NKVD and those youngsters watched my family pack up in 15 minutes to leave. My brother was very sick, but it did not help. They (the nutless *[-hard to read -]* Communists) put their own Communist major in Siberia, and my father ran to my Aunt Fohyding, whom my father supported with 25 kg flour. My own mother was surprised how I survived as a medical student in Lwow. Our university was located in Lycharoska – Piekarska Street in Lwow. As a otlchik *[-hard to read -]* (very good marks) what the Russians did to my family was wrong from a moral and practical standpoint and wrong for the economy of Stryj as a city, knowing that my father achieved that with hard work, treating the workers like our own family. Funnie *[-hard to read -]*: The major himself was a Communist and would not do anything without Stalin’s approval. In the same time he gave full power to NKVD to arrest the major, who disappeared. The rumors were that he was sent to Siberia, did hard work and he died there. This proved that the social system could not work.

**(Note - This was hard to follow. Needs to be looked over .)**

I did not know about my father's hiding place. When I asked my mother if she had heard of the whereabouts of Hillel (my father), her answer was that some people like her believed he was in Russia working in a mill, but that nobody knew exactly. I asked my mother why he left her and his brothers. She was very sc[-**hard to read** -] and she said we had to manage without him, the hell with him. Then she told me that Harbersson, our bookkeeper, made a speech in Rynek that Landau had signed documents guaranteeing that because they were not Communists, went to Hebrew school, etc., and my Uncle Mojsze, Grandfather Mendel, and my father Hillel signed and that they had a nerve to sign those documents and Starosta of our city signed that document and he was released from the concentration camp and the Landau brothers and others were liars and they would get punished for lying. This speech made my father leave Stryj for Russia. I did not ask any questions and I told my mother that the Markenczenko office received letters from young members of Party Consomol from Stryj and described me as a son of a very rich name and I should not be admitted to medical school in Lwow.

(Note: names and dates I don't remember.)

When Markenczenko received the letter, he called me in his Politruc. Both said that your father left you but we will not do it. Thanks. Both co Stalin, she (means his daughter) – we kept company; she was a very sweet person. We kept company until the Germans from September, 1940 – June, 1941, when we lived in the same area near the Engineering Politechnika. I lived in [-**hard to read** -]. It was easier to go to Politechnika Library to get medical books and medical anatomy books in university, because 90% of medical students used the university library. My apartment was across the street from the Library Politechnika where you could get used books. In the middle of the Germans' attack on the Western part of Poland (around May/June, 1941), the president of our university, Mr. Makarczenko, came to my house to pick me up and go with his daughter together to deep Russia. Stryj was occupied again by the Germans. The difference between Lwow and Stryj was that in Lwow the Germans allowed the Ukrainians to make pogroms on Jews and their property. The chief rabbi went to see the leader of Greco Katobia and they could not stop the pogrom. On the other hand, in Stryj, it was occupied by the German army, mostly previously moved to Germany from Stryj, like Johan Mack. He became a [-**hard to read** -]man, as you read before. He became in charge. He did not allow any pogrom on Jews; he told them to go back to work or to jail. My father was afraid to face him, because my father was very strict with him. Johan came to my father and offered to put the whole family and take us to Hungary. He told us he was told in advance what would happen. It was German policy (Himmler) to kill Jews and confiscate their possessions, because they were facing a big expense to fight the Russians. If this would not help, they

would do the same thing to other minorities. People like me (Johan) could not be tolerated like the German general who had to commit to killing himself (very famous general).

When Johan Meck left and went to the front against the Russians I went back to my town Stryj where my father's mother had about 100 relatives. During the winter of 1941 the Germans started to confiscate fur coats and put out an order that if any Jew would divest himself [*-hard to read -*] of any valuable things they would immediately be killed. In the same time the Gestapo ordered that the Jews should organize Judenrath and the function was to deliver to work. They produced ten Jews and among them was my father. All ten people refused to cooperate with the order of the Gestapo. So, the Ukrainian police marched them around the Jewish streets. All of them could not take that punishment; every day another of them died. The chief Rabbi's son-in-law accepted the position of the head Judenrath. He organized a Jewish Police Department.

The Germans created a Ghetto; the Jews could not leave the Ghetto without passes. The Jewish Employment Office met the requirements – German K.Z. ASA – Glassforbrik, which we had to build for export to other countries. The main thing we had to do the mixture for was glass tankes. We had to do those things without protection of a mask or gloves on our hands. We saw that the German engineers used to use a mask on their faces and gloves whenever they came to check to see if the mixture was well done. After a few days I realized many of us got sick. I escaped from that place and I went to work at the railroad station. Luckily enough, we had a different kind of supervisors – the Wermacht (elderly soldiers between 40-50 years). They saw how hard we were working, loading coals on the railroad wagon. I saw where the military (Germans) were eating and a lot of good stuff was thrown into a big hole where the officers had their toilettes. We [*-hard to read -*] to get there before it was mixed with the smelly and shipped to be used for sewage to make soil more productive in growing better potatoes and other vegetables. From breads, potatoes, etc., here we had a chance to go into fields and dig out and each of us made a little tunnel under the fence in the middle of the night to organize some food for our families.

Another K.Z. camp was producing parts of tanks and trucks. The leader of that camp was a high German officer. He fell in love with a Jewish girl, the Taylous[*-hard to read -*] daughter. He had two big dogs. Every morning he used to stop the farmers bringing stuff to sell in the city. To him they had to sell for the price-controlled price. He used to protect everyone. Anyone from outside the camp could not come in -- even the Gestapo could not go in, because his officer rank was very high. He never left

that place under the pretext that nobody could take a picture of their work. This was good for his workers. This situation changed in the beginning of 1943. When he saw that situation, he took his Jewish girlfriend into a deep agriculture area, and his mother and his girlfriend hired some boys to work to grow vegetables, fruits, etc. He used to send his mother special packages. He never went to see them, in order not to make suspicions that something was wrong.

Two of my brothers worked in HKP and I got a pass to go to see them. I made a plan with two girls to meet them and together we would visit HKP Camp. We met ¼ of a mile near Herres Baraken Werke. We met (all three of us) ready to go visit HKP – where my brothers and the girls' relatives were. Suddenly a German S.S. man, very young, came to me without asking what I was doing. I tried to show him my pass. He took away the pass and beat me up and threw me into the creek. Then he sent the dog to check if I was alive. I recall one of the girl's names was Sala; the other I don't remember. She was smiling, not moving at all. I met her sister Clara after the war and I told her the story and asked her how she could watch me being beaten to death and smile. She said her sister was his girlfriend and he promised to take her to his family and she heard a rumor that a few days after liquidation of the ghetto he must have killed her. Chevra Kioisha was collecting the dead bodies. They picked me up and I ran away on Belchoisca [-*hard to read* -] near the Aiskyny.[-*hard to read* -] When I came back, my brother-in-law, sister, and mother took me to a bunker under the horses. My mother and sister took care of me. It took a few weeks being in the bunker before I could walk out and meet my neighbor. After liquidation of the ghetto, the Judenrath spread the story. Now the German government decided not to touch the Jews.

The leader of HKP (I think Solmith), it said in all the papers suddenly was given a medal for his H.K.P. company for a very good job, and he was invited by the Fuhrer Hitler to pick the medal himself. He could not decline such an invitation by Hitler. As soon as he left Berlin to pick up the Oeda Lion[-*hard to read* -] for his good work, the Gestapo entered the H.K.P. camp and took all of them in the camp to the woods in Motbutow[-*hard to read* -] and they were killed.

When he saw what happened to his camp, he got sick and his family picked him up and his Jewish girlfriend took care of him. My sister asked her what she would do after the war. She said, "The old lady took care of me. It is my honor to stay with them until they die. What other women did is morally wrong."



After the liquidation of HKP camp, I realized that it was time to run away from the city. To do that, it must be a group of armed men to meet and start. First of all we had to buy a few pistols for that purpose. I spoke to our neighbor, Mr. Schultz, and tried to find a friend in Zamkova Utica. He had a large room under the house. I was close to him. I gave him whatever he liked. My suits and shirts (he *[-hard to read -]* for my ) looked good on him. In return he gave me two pistols and 24 nabo; my brothers did not like my ideas and plans. They did nothing positive. The brother Josia said that the and our cousin went to their friend na Zany. He asked me about our mother. I spoke to Babij when I went to visit that area underground. They called them Sikorski Group and the leader told me that they expect Jewish socialist, who spoke directly to Hitler and he felt nothing would change. He needed lots of money if the Jewish people in America would not persuade Roosevelt to help Germany economically. Hitler made a remark that the Jews in Europe have to cover with their life confiscation of their possessions and their life. I started to talk to Babij; I met him on Babrjozka. My friend used to come to Babrjozka, Dolina.

I was in touch with a man by the name Dubinski; he used to come to Babrjozka and meet with his group and he used to beg dollars and gold pieces from them and he used to sell in Lemberg in Lwow on the black market. He was never invited to a bunker where they slept and kept their money. The bunker was very well kept with enough drinks. Only a few of Babij's friends from before the war had access and were privileged to be invited. One of his friends, Lindenbaum, Jotz and most of them had phony names. I had the chutzpa to ask him if he would take my mother to his bunker, and he said they would find a secure place in the city for her, and maybe for me. He asked, "Why don't you want to be with your sister and brother-in-law, Mr. Jonah Friedler?" I did not want my family to be hiding in one place. None of those were 100% secure. As a matter of fact, one block from my mother's bunker, one Pollak had one Jewish family. The Polish owner called the Germans and those S.S. men killed them. I asked him what happened to the Polish owner of the building. His answer was, "We'll see." Now I had to tell where my father put some of the money. I told him we met in that building downstairs as I described to him the hardware store in Zeisler, our cousins' house before the war.

Everything went smooth on our trip with Caroleia driving a truck with empty beer containers. We were stopped by Ukrainian police. Even the Germans did not trust them with more than one bullet in their rifle. They did not bother us and we were let go. After drilling 5-10 minutes, we found a small package of money. Babij gave me 500*[-hard to read -]* for my mother, and I got 200. My mother was happy we dropped her off at my friend's and Babij told him, "Be nice to my friend Mrs. Landau. She told the

judge we were very friendly when my father was a”*[-hard to read -]* Babij told my friend, “Take good care of her and don’t do what your neighbor will be punished for doing – reporting to the Gestapo and killing the Jewish husband and wife.” Two Babij brothers went out of the truck, and we saw a big fire for almost ½ mile away. They must have been dead. The doors were closed; we did not see anyone coming out of the house. This fire was a warning to other owners of houses not to squeal.

I did not want to see their business. I told him I wanted to see my sister, her husband, and my two younger brothers. After the war when I met my mother, she told me that those people who came to pick her up were the same ones that my father asked the city police to be arrested and one of them appeared before the judge in Stryj and made a statement in front of the crowd. “Mr. Landau, the money was already spent, they around they will come back to you and life, I don’t quanti*[-hard to read -]* you.” The judge after talking made a statement, they promised not to touch each other*[-hard to read -]* Now you don’t need dogs and security – probably the security were afraid of those people. I slept two nights in the bunker ASA camp. Stacica Krzywa street Stryj in early morning in June, 1943, on 3 trucks they announced they needed 30 strong people to work and you would get food three times a day.

No German police were visible until near the flour mill on Drothobyczka and police surrounded three trucks leading to the cemetery. Two people jumped off and they were killed. I realized this time I was a loser. In previous trips they stopped near the jail, and went from the jail to the railroad station. From there we were going to Auschwitz camp. The young people tried to jump off the train when it slowed down. This time we dealt with experience killers.

They counted how many people and they were short two Jews. They went to the street and picked up two people, Jude, they said, but they took off our clothing straight folded. We were pushed to a space between two graves. The music of shooting started, everyone wanted to be hit in their heads. All of us from the smell of shooting submitted to be pushed to the grave. After finishing the killing, they left and the task of covering the grave was given to Jewish Bamengdienst, *[-hard to read -]* before closing the graves, looking for gold teeth. But Pillech *[-hard to read -]*, a boy when he saw me, he pulled me out. I begged him to let me stay – blood all over me. He gave me a shirt, pants and shoes and I started to walk to the Jewish Hospital. All the beds had clean laundry. The nurse at the desk asked me to go. I insisted for two frocks and a hat. This was near the water, River StryJ. The nurse told me she expected 40 German soldiers to be cured in there. “The Red Cross Committee is inspecting whether we give them good service.” She said after the inspection usually if any Jew comes in, when there are more than

one a Gestapo man gives them one bullet and leaves – the Chezora Kidosha takes them to the cemetery. She told me she thought they would liquidate the hospital soon. I asked how I could save myself. She said, “Try crossing the river and the other side of the bushes; you will find people going to Dolina.”

Lindenbaur, JU 72, Stefan Kajs

After walking two nights, I asked where Babijorska was, a famous Babij and his brother had about 100 Jews in those mountain Carpeten [*-hard to read -*] You became one of them. She told me not to take the bullet in my leg out for at least two months. She said to take whatever I could carry and go. While I was walking I noticed two German police on bicycles. Hopefully, I prayed they should miss me. I walked [*-hard to read -*] things I hopefully did not make an impression of being a Jew. Then I decided to do nothing to turn attention on me. Usually the German police were ½ mile away with the Ukrainian police and whenever they saw something they started to shoot. For them this reaction of German shooting was expected. I was very careful; from time to time I met somebody especially Jewish looking for Babij's camps.

I met one couple from my town. We were very friendly with them. She told me my father [*-hard to read -*] persuaded me to camp. In that camp most of the time the same people were very friendly. But we started to lose 2-3 people out of 18. Babij called a meeting and took the responsibility, but said that everyone should participate and give ideas how to act. About the end of August 1943, on all the main streets in the small town near the Danju River we heard spreading movements of German military and more troops and were moving toward the front and a lot of so-called Ukrainian and Polish young people in German uniform used the roads to villages where food was growing. In the middle of the day they entered the villages looking for hidden livestock, hidden potatoes, and other vegetables. [*-hard to read -*] after an action they left and cleaned up food, and took with them horses and cows. Babij ordered us to start shooting at them, but in the same time from the Lysa [*-hard to read -*] we were very successful. A lot of food fell into our possession. One day we started [*-hard to read -*] to shoot and the Ukrainians did not cooperate and we entered their territory.

We brought two men in German uniform to our camp. It looked like they spoke Polish and broken German. My partner and I decided to bring them to our camp. Linderbaum [*-hard to read -*], our elder, was very angry, rightly so, because in that case they could have killed us. He said you cannot trust those crooks. The Bandera Group could not be trusted. We thought that under those circumstances

they would cooperate. Those idiots got German uniforms disregarding that the Germans stole the livestock from and killed all the people and left in their language (German and Ukrainian) letters on the door and put people in one grave and left a message that Jews stole everything and killed your people. The intelligent Ukrainians realized it after struggling for 3-4 months. Babij and company in the evening came back to see who was left; we lost most of the young people.

It was time to think about how to approach them and what to do. About ten of us decided to move toward the Hungarian border. The closer to the Hungarian border we got, the snow got deeper and deeper. In the Hungarian villages from time to time we saw lights; they were very nice. Their villagers looked more orderly and did not see too many Germans, but lots of police on both sides of the border. Then suddenly after walking for four days, a few of us decided to go to the place with light. They (by then) never came back. About seven of us spread, but we did not have any arms. Just in case, we decided to declare we were escaping from the Germans and that we were Polish – according to the understanding between our governments before the war we were very good friends. Three hours after those three people did not return, suddenly I saw a few Hungarians on horses on top of the mountain. The night was cloudy and those Hungarian police passed through. I saw them passing by about ½ meter from my partner and me. I thought they saw two of us, but they did not stop. We decided to avoid the area easiest to walk and we saw one nice house from afar. It looked like candles for Friday night were lit. Three of us decided to enter the house. We told them we had more soldiers waiting for us in that wilderness. At the same time two boys jumped out the window. We told them seven of us needed a truck to go to the city, Hust, where the Jews were expecting us.

We took their weapons from the police and a rich guy came in and made arrangements to take us to Hust in barrels of beer they transferred us to. In Hust they had an office saying Polaks and Hungarians bratsnock [- *hard to read* -] friend for many years. The committee gave us food and arranged for baths and we got suits and were transferred by JOINT, a Jewish organization from New York. We got documents. I had a papers saying my name was Duda Stanislaw, Istvan. By train we were transferred to Budapest Kivijautc 6 Oc [- *hard to read* -] Across the street was a restaurant where more escapees got together. I shared a room with others. They gave us a bed and a mattress. I tried to sleep on the mattress. Despite the fact that I took a shower, I did not expect so much lice, but suddenly I scratched some skin; the other guy said that being in the woods outside so many months, you have a few on your skin like that and it takes a few weeks to clean them off. After a few weeks I went to a barber. The barber took me to a smaller place and he told me he put a certain oil on, and the lice would slowly

disappear. My friend asked me if I wanted to eat. In Dubatca [- *hard to read* -] was a place where you got something to eat. [- *hard to read* -] we learned how to organize food. I asked if I could take one bialy, and I was told to take a little milk and butter.

After being in Budapest a few weeks we decided to buy a jacket and go to eat. This jacket was like paper, [- *hard to read* -] for the time in a restaurant. The owner when he saw us took us to [- *hard to read* -] place and told us after the war we could pay him.

Meantime we had to make other plans to survive in life in Budapest. We all had to be registered with the police. I stuck with my Metryka Duda Stanislaw; my name in Hungary was Istvan. We used to get a few pengo every week. It was from JOINT, a Jewish organization. IMCA was a Polish organization. It received money from Bucharest through to Budapest.

Then I went to a Polish library and got acquainted with a Polish woman who was married to a military man. He was a small man, and she was a beautiful lady. They got married in Warsaw, Poland. I was helping her; they used to get Polish books. Her husband was real Marsalek. She did not have patience with him. He was [- *hard to read* -] Five times we got tickets to the opera in Androsse utca. She was in touch with the Polish Consul in Bucharest. Her invoice was directly paid by IMCA. I don't remember exactly how he got it from a Jewish organization through the Polish IMCA. We had a good time for a few weeks. Then they sent us to Baja (Southern part of Hungary), a small town but full of life. Almost every evening they had dances. All my papers had my name as Duda Stanislaw and now I was looking for a place to sleep.

For a few days I worked in a bakery. I told the owner that my father had a mill and produced the best flour in Stryj, Poland. Whenever he saw that I was tired he told me, "Istvan, lay down on the sacks of flour." I took two empty big material bags. I usually got up early in the morning to distribute bread and other baked goods to the stores. Then, going out to the street, I saw German soldiers walking on the street in our town. I asked myself, "Is that the Stryj Gestapo?" I went back to the store. I told the boss, who said that sometimes they come for a visit from Poland, some of them have a German camp on the Danube River on the other side. Everything was quiet. I walked with a big distribution of my bread. We had to register our residency every Sunday. I met a policeman on the street, who told me to go register like all Polish soldiers in civil uniforms. A few weeks later, they distributed leaflets telling everyone to go register but this time I saw my neighbor who was a detective entering the police

department. I happened to play tennis with his daughter, a very sweet girl. I did not realize that the detectives were to collect all Polish soldiers. Everyone [- *hard to read* -] had to be a soldier escaped from the Germans, who occupied Poland. I went home and saw two detectives knocking out the door on the other side of the street. I had another man sharing a room. (I don't remember the name.) But the next Sunday I went to register I saw the doctors examining who was Jewish. When I was next, my girlfriend's father detective at that moment spoke to the doctor and made a remark. Next, I passed by, and everything was O.K. Then I started to worry whether he knew I was Jewish. I met my girlfriend, his daughter, and she did not say anything. I went with her to church when I came back from the examination, but about 50% of the examined people were declared Jewish and shipped to Aushwitz camp. All women and children were told to go home. Now we had a problem, what to do, having the experience with them and their atrocities. A few of us decided to go to Sabatica and join the Tito Group. We were told to be careful because outside Sabatica a lot of German soldiers were patrolling the area, and that we were better off in the city. All night it was very quiet with no movement of soldiers. The Germans crossed the safety line and escaped to the East side of the Danube River. Now the best thing was to go walk to Arad, the nearest place on the border of Rumania.

All the trains going either way were filled up with people escaping farther and farther from the Germans. We had to go farther because in Budapest we saw a lot of airplanes bombing. It was no use to stay there. It took until November, 1943, before the Germans surrendered Budapest and knocked them out of that area. We reached Bucharest by train and went to Calea Moshitor 36. I met a lot of people. The Rumanian Jews were very friendly. I met their people who I originally met when I came from the forests in Budapest. This was about January, 1945. A lot of Jewish people came to our place. Suddenly a man by the name Hirth [- *hard to read* -] Introduced himself as a man who dealt with my father and he suggested my name to a man who heard about my father and he asked me to distribute money to all survivors. At that time I was a young man with experience. It is better to be expressed as a nice guy, loyal to my friends. Two blocks away from my office was a family occupying a big apartment. A man about 50 asked me a few questions and invited me to his apartment. I was very excited and his wife treated me like my mother, telling me to feel like it was home.

The next day while distributing money from JOINT in New York, I noticed a couple Janek – Fela, standing with a broken leg, and Adam (Henry Herzog), her brother. I left the distribution table and asked them if they had a place to sleep. They answered they just came from the railroad station. I immediately registered them and they got whatever distribution was called for and tried to leave the

place suddenly, saying you are leaving us with those thieves. I knew that gentleman as a friend of my father, and said, "Please cooperate with him and I appointed two other people that I met when visiting a synagogue in the neighborhood of our office and took them up to a my one-room apartment and asked them to feel at home and spoke to Adam in uniform. The next day Adam introduced me to two friends of his. They all came from the same Carpatien mountains. Mr. Hirth was a big businessman and he gave us about 200 dollars and bought cigarettes to smuggle [- *hard to read* -] and Bucharest was short of flexible rolls (elastic [- *hard to read* -] ) for underwear. We brought that to Bucharest and tripled the price. Then we decided to share with four people. Adam got in touch with one Jewish officer (from USSR?), got a truck, and we decided to buy glass in Bucharest to take to Budapest, and we made a few trips and they came back and I in my place sent Willie, a man I knew from Stryj, my city in Poland. Adam approached me and said, "You know your landsman [- *hard to read* -] was no help."

I decided to go back to Mr. Hirth and distribute money and Mr. Hirth said that two nicely-dressed gentlemen asked them when and where they could meet me. They invited me to a conference in Koloswiar [- *hard to read* -] , Cluj and we signed papers and I would be in touch with the Russian Commandant. I went to the station and with Mr. Hirth and made sure they should get enough to eat and rich [- *hard to read* -] Poland. On the way to meet Adam a guy said "you are O.K.," with a smile. Two Jewish Rumanian Jews arrested me without telling me why. I had no contact with anyone speaking Jewish or Polish. In the morning we all were criminals, myself included, and had to do work carrying building material. I was told they would give me a lawyer and I would be free to go. Suddenly Adam in uniform came to take me out of jail. He said I was in the hands of NKWD and their court was special to Rumanian Jews. They were ready to put me in Siberia to work in a mine for my past.

My past was based on the story that my father was a burzuj and that I was hiding it. Adam saw the papers; this was the basis, and the man by the name Eisenberg, who shared with us a room in ASA KZ in Stryj. Whenever I spoke to him, he showed me friendship. He asked me if anyone in my family survived. I told him there was no sign about my brothers and that maybe my sister survived.

I told him that a few peo boys [- *hard to read* -] came to us in Calia Meseilor in Bucharest. It seemed to me that they met Rabbi Jonah Friedler and their mother and his wife. Our office treated them very nicely. When they told us that they might make another trip to Stryj, I asked them to let them know that I was alive and I expected to meet them soon in Poland. Polish Jews and others moved to Nev Poland, most of those people feeling most secure in Silena new borders in exchange the east side like Lwow,

Stryj – Stanislovow [- *hard to read* -] was annexed by the USSR and called themselves Ukrainian East – Poland’s borders exchange on the west part previously occupied by Germans was given back to Poland.

Mr. Eisenberg, when I met him, was talking to me very friendly; he got remarried. I asked him what happened to his wife and two sons. Then he said, “Let’s speak about the future.”

In Calia Moszilor meantime, Polish representatives insisted I should continue to organize and arrange for Polish refugees to go back to Poland. In order to cross borders, all plans had to be accepted by Russian’ comandatura. Mr. Hirth and I spoke Russian well, and I was elected to be the head of that office. My family –my sister Sarah, brother-in-law Rabbi Friedler, and I arranged to meet in Boyton and I met a four years girl with them. We were very happy together. I once more left Bucharest. I left Mr. Hirth to handle a group of lawyers fighting for power to distribute money to all Jews from JOINT (USA). IMKA supported separately taking care of non-Jews. I left Hirth in charge, most of them lawyers (old Polish lawyers) I handled thanks to Mr. Hirth. I told the story of what happened in Bucharest and without Adam and his uniform I would probably be in Siberia. My mother, a very smart person, as you read, advised my father not to build the big mill. If he had not, we would not suffer with a paragraph on our I.D. that rich people (“Burjui”) had a lot of money by hurting the workers, who loved all of us. My mother asked me to resign from all those functions and settle in a small place, city Zabrze. I went back to Bucharest and said goodbye to all those Polish Jewish lawyers with experience to hurt me, because of my father’s famous mill and small town like Stryj, Poland. My approach to life is based on a commandment, “Love your neighbor like yourself,” and when solving problems in life, “Put yourself in the other position.” When I came to Zabrze my mother, brother-in-law and sister Siumia joined us. We started to sell all kinds of flour in Polish zytanio maka and poznicna maka, gognito bialy [- *hard to read* -] , etc.

My sister described how to bake and what to use, including natural things. She was very successful with them. We made a good living. Suddenly a Commission came to Zabrze and one of them called me Duda and he was with me during the war in Baja, South Hungary. We used to go together to meet with girls and eating and dancing. He asked me if I would settle in Katorice [- *hard to read* -] , that they opened a spolempanstwow or hundlova. I told him if the offer would be for Zabrze (Slosk) I would accept the offer. I was invited to have lunch with them. I accepted to organize an office and a warehouse and we were using the front office for making business, especially piece material goods to



make shirts for people and a certain amount for each size. I was a good organizer, but I knew very little. Being a stranger in that industry, it took about six months to know to sell our production to stores.

My mother and my sister told me that I was making [- *hard to read* -] a lot of money by releasing piece goods to the black market. My mother asked me if I understood that by producing too many small sizes for children I had to see how many items our contractors were making and what sizes were most sold in our neighborhood. I myself never accepted anything illegally and my mother insisted I should be strict and all sizes equally produced and I would fine anyone who did the wrong thing.

The Communist Mayor in Zabrze was very friendly. Nobody paid attention, and we were happy as long as the wages were good. We took enough money to pay for our expenses, my assistant “party member,” the general population in Zabrze, Boyton’s Nasbred Katorice [- *hard to read* -] .

Starting the end of 1946, my mother insisted we should go to Stuttgart, Germany, and register to go to the U.S.A. We got the necessary papers and arranged to leave Poland, especially the Communist system, which was if somebody would tell a lie or insist that our father was rich before the war and spread rumors about us, you could wind up in Siberia. “Let’s go start a new life in the U.S.A.” We had papers sent to us from our mother’s sister. We sold our apartment in Poland. It took about a year and in October, 1947, we left by boat to New York, U.S.A.

When my family of four – mother Gicia, sister Sarah, my brother-in-law Jonah Friedler, came to the U.S.A., my mother’s sister Rachelle was very poor. She had an apartment in Harlem, one and a-half rooms for her and her daughter. We had no other choice but to stay in Hias [- *hard to read* -] . Every day people came to look for workers. All of us went a different way and in the evening we met and exchanged our impressions on Sunday. We started to look for one apartment. After six months we put together a few hundred dollars. We got our apartment – a two room walk-up with a toilet on the floor. But we felt freedom in the air, thank God, our own home, but my mother had difficulties walking up after the Ghetto, concentration camp, and all kinds of sicknesses. Going for a walk we met a lady and we started to talk. Next door to her a three bedroom apartment was available and she was willing to sell the furniture for \$500. The rent was about \$75. All three bedrooms were very small. We could hardly put one bed in each room. My sister and her husband moved to Brooklyn three years later. She had a job in Coney Island Hospital. My mother and I stayed there for three years. My mother then went to stay with my sister and I got married and moved to Brooklyn East 13<sup>th</sup> Street. My wife got pregnant; it

was very difficult to raise kids on the third floor. We moved to my friend's house, which he owned in partnership with his in-laws. It was a four room apartment on the ground floor; when the kids got bigger we moved to a five-room apartment near the ocean.

Finally, we got a big enough apartment. In the beginning I thought my mother would stay with us, but she decided to be with my sister. My wife had a job as a bookkeeper with a big company. For 15 years I was in the dress business. I started as an operator, went to school to learn styling, and I was in charge of a shop of 50 workers for a few years. I liked to work with designers like Geoffrey Beane and Adele Simpson. At the same time I knew how to operate a special machine. When I was finished with my regular job, I used to put 16 yards at the bottom of cocktail dresses. They used to make it by hand, which took a long time – about 2-3 hours. By machine I did that in 20-30 minutes. A very thin bottom took about 30-45 minutes.

Originally I came from a rich family but my mother and my brothers went for the summer to the mountains. I was very practical. I like sports like soccer (futball). I liked it when we went to Hungary to Budapest to play with madiar [- *hard to read* -] groups. As a child I saw the officers (army) walking on the main street with beautiful girls. I insisted to go during vacation time to military camps. This kept me out of joining the army at the certain time and during Hitler's time. I was not afraid to go and live in Carpatien mountains. Being active did not help me coming back for a few days sitting in the bushes and seeing my family in the Ghetto and later in the concentration camp Asaglossfabric. Each time I came back, I asked my brothers to come with me. They worked in a place Herresbaracken Werko, HKP. Those places were good because the head of the camp had a nice SS man and their ranks were higher than the Gestapo, so the Gestapo hardly came in. We could get passes to visit the family making plans to escape. They used to say we have time, but my mother was a very smart woman as I described before and my sister with her husband escaped one night before the liquidation of camps. They were shot in the wilderness near Stryj.

Whenever I get older I have to remind myself of Hitler's time. When I came to U.S.A. I appreciated the freedom. In the beginning I went to near 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue to see what I could do. I spoke to many businessmen and I spoke to owners of businesses on Rivington Street and Orchard Street, and saw a store that was big and full of merchandise. I said to myself, "Let me speak to the owner." This was a nylon stockings wholesaler. We had a long conversation about my experience in business but did not speak English. I offered myself to be a good businessman. He asked me how much I would want for a

whole day's work and my answer was could he pay \$5 a day. He consulted his partner and both of them asked me if I was a Galibriaro, I'm from Stryj. The partner said he came from Zychaczov; his father used to sell grain to flour mills. He asked if I knew a man by the name Hillel Landau. I said we were much poorer than Hillel. "Let's talk about a job." They accepted me as a worker and said I should come early in the morning and they would leave the keys with me. I said it was O.K. with me. The second day he asked me if I could drive a car. I told him I had an international license. He gave me his car and I went to pick up nylon stockings from three contractors. Each of them offered me \$5 if I would throw the garbage somewhere. I told them it would be my pleasure to help them. Before putting those socks in the garbage in our building I asked my sister and brother-in-law about that garbage and my sister told me those stockings were irregular but not to throw them in the garbage but ask my mother.

My mother said this is good merchandise; the stockings on both sides near the ankle had to be stitched together if we could get nylon color thread. They went down to our landsman who had a smaller store. He gave them thread to use. "My, we have a few pair of stockings to fix for ourselves." About 50% of the garbage could be used and they started to fix the stockings. My sister asked the peddlers on 34<sup>th</sup> Street in Manhattan if they were interested in buying them and they made a deal and we started to sell them four stockings for a dollar. They took in a few ladies on Broome Street and this business was very good for us for about six months. A big company came out with a machine to complete the merchandise and this put us out of business, but none of us gave up. Where we worked we continued going to school to learn English. I went to night school to learn how to put ladies' skirts, waists, and sleeves together. I liked styling, but I did not give up a job delivering fur coats from jobbers to stores. In between they had machines to put lining in top fur coats. The old lady owner of the place came over to me and asked me what city in Poland I came from. I told her from Stryj. She said, "My son-in-law comes from Stryj and he has a laundry and his name is Jerry Diamond." "Is that Landau?" Before she turned around Jerry appeared before me and kissed me. He could not catch his breath. He called me Tulek, invited us to his house near the river in Bensonhurst. My landsman who came to U.S.A. had families. We also had an aunt who sent us papers to come to U.S.A. She lived in Harlem. My uncle David from Toronto, Canada, came to visit us in Hias and did not mention that my father sent him \$5,000 through an international broker, Mr. Friedlander, and he was advised by my father to buy a farm for us. At that time in the early thirties, \$5,000 was like a million dollars. He admitted that my father sent him \$4,000 and then the Canadian government was investigating where they got the money to buy a lot of land and built the first few floors, building, where there were a few stores, one store with better-quality clothing, a nightclub upstairs with shows and dancing every evening. The occasion was my uncle's grandson's bar-mitzva.

He invited us to that happy occasion. While dancing his lawyer Undes stopped dancing and we exchanged a few nice words. While I was talking to their lawyer my cousin was shaking a finger, which looked like he should not talk to me. “I want to talk to you. I heard so much about Hillel, your father; he wants to know how much money we send to banks in U.S.A. He acts very strange. My uncle’s reason was not to pay back to Hillel’s family the money he received from him. He can’t understand that you lost your whole family in ghettos and concentration camps, came out from bunkers and whole families were wiped out.” The lawyer said to come to see him. I told him, “I’m ready anytime to see you if you pick me up.” My uncle’s daughter was connected with Mafia [- *hard to read* -] in Toronto. She probably made sure not to see me. A few months passed by and my uncle’s daughter came to New York City to see us and told us a story that the government found the money in a hiding place – lots of money and they told them that my father Hillel gave it to him for his partnership. My sister and myself refused to sign, but my mother signed the papers, saying that my uncle “became rich with your father’s money; he was all the time a nobody. Your father sent them money all the time through Broker Friedlander; otherwise his wife wanted him out of their house. If I would not sign he would go to robbing to wish you to die.” My mother was very right; she wanted to have a few good and quiet years in America. We came to the U.S.A. in October, 1947, and she passed away at the age of 94. My uncle’s family, a few grandchildren and his three daughters – all of them died except the two sons-in-law survived by that time.

I conducted myself like my father. Work, work, work, and learn, learn, learn. I realized that everything has a season. Between seasons, it is very important to try from time to time to try business and to go to school, get a few credits from college, get acquainted with all aspects of our life. I saw that finishers in our industry (ladies’ dresses) work very hard making bottoms by hand. It took 16 yards of bottoms 2-3 hours, depending on how the piece goods were cut. I started a new leg attached to the sewing machine leg. I became an expert. I had a few cleaning stores who needed me and this helped to support my family. I also used to go to flea markets before Christmas, but my friend took a lot of merchandise and we sold a lot. All merchants were very happy from our success. Sitting in the car checking the money we forgot to put the boxes back in the car. When we came to our house and opened the back of the car we realized that we lost all our merchandise and since then we gave up on flea markets. Now we feel too old about making money and our worries concentrate themselves on our health. Now we have more time to think about our past. None of us realizes that the good times are over and wondering whether the Preystose [- *hard to read* -] Of our children are to be better health wise and moneywise. We should better concentrate on establishing for our future generations a better tomorrow – and forget our hardship

and LEARN TO LIVE for the future of our children and grandchildren, to make sure that peaceful life exists between members of our family.

I thought everyone of us should try to acquire a few trades. You can't rely on only one trade.

***NOTE: THIS NEXT SECTION SEEMED OUT OF THE CHRONOLOGY WHERE IT WAS IN THE HANDWRITTEN NOTES, SO SEPARATING IT HERE.***

On September 15, 1939, the Russians occupied Stryj, a small town with 35,000 population, about 15,000 Jews. Most Jewish people were middle class and about 25% very poor. About 5% were businessmen, and well-to-do. My father was very outpouring [- ***hard to read*** -] and continuously helping the poor families, most of them lonely, because the younger generation went to the U.S.A., Canada, or Australia.

The major was a Russian Jew, Communist Party member, and he organized Comsomole Party for the younger generation. His personal attitude was that our mill should not be nationalized because of my father's background. Every brick, every minute was in Father -- how to enlarge the mill and keep it in good condition, and our area did not have young people unemployed practically [- ***hard to read*** -] .

Other parts of the city had young people hanging around the area where farmers brought their produce to sell. My father treated everyone as part of a family. Whenever there was a strike our workers were working and protecting their (bread and butter) mill from being destroyed. One of the owners of the biggest mill closed his mill as an answer to his workers' raise in wages. He put a security guard around the mill and left for a few years' vacation in France. After 3-4 years he came back to try to open his mill, but the experts who were hired found the mill in bad shape – 90% of the parts were missing. There was a little tunnel through the wall. Mr. Steierman invested big money; it took another few years to put the mill in motion. The owner rented out the mill to private people. The business struggled until I left Stryj.

The Russian major assured my father that he would never nationalize the mill. At the same time the young Consomol group insisted that the mill should belong to followers of Stalin. When the NKVD took over the city government, the major was sent to Siberia and we were told to leave the mill and all resources untouched and to leave the apartment with one valise for each in 30 minutes.

Buying grain and selling flour was 90% dependent on how much the banks trusted the individual bonds (wachel). After one year of doing business the young Communists who were drawing salaries realized that the major was right but he was sent to Siberia. My father was hiding in the house of a poor Aunt (Gicialy). Nobody wanted to take over the mill. The Committee sent a delegate to Moskow for help. The Moskow government moved to Murmansk, Siberia, to save their necks. Murmansk was the only place that America's military equipment, tanks, and ammunition could be reached by the Russian Army to protect them from the Germans' complete invasion. Baltic (Northern Europe), Dardanelles (South) was completely controlled by German submarines and airplanes.